

TUDOR WOMEN WRITERS FASHIONING
MASCULINITY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis contributes to the growing interest in early modern masculinity and its literary representations by introducing texts by women writers into dialogue with their male-authored counterparts. It argues for a more nuanced approach that recognises that the concepts of masculinity and femininity can only be fully understood when studied in relation with each other.

The first chapter explores how, notwithstanding the wisdom of conduct books and marriage guides, the demands of the state may not always be commensurate with those of the domestic realm and shows that this conflict necessitates a rethinking of existing definitions of masculinity by focusing on selected writings of the Tudor sisters Mary and Elizabeth and Jane Fitzalan's *Tragedie of Iphigeneia*. The second chapter identifies how Elizabeth's unique discursive strategies were designed to elicit support from her male subjects and subdue the belligerence that simmered under polemic like John Stubbs' *Gaping Gulf*. In her letters to Anjou, the chapter examines how Elizabeth manoeuvred around her position as a beloved and as a monarch to fashion a husband who would not only be sympathetic but also subordinate to her political authority. This chapter also shows how the fabulous world of John Lyly's *Galatea* consummates the Queen's desire for the ideal male subject. The final chapter investigates the construction of martial manhood. It juxtaposes Mary Sidney's *The Tragedy of Antonie* with William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* to determine how the figure of Cleopatra, common to both plays, challenges and revises the martial code of masculinity as embodied by Antony. By examining the authorial position appropriated by Cleopatra in the plays and its impact on the narrative, this chapter also extends this thesis' interest in the extent to which female characters within texts compete for diegetic control with male protagonists.

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Sudhā tvamakshare nityā tridhā mātrāitmkā sthithā

Ardhmātrāsthītā nityā yānucchāryā vishesht.

(You are the life-giving force that makes words immortal. You are the sound and form of 'aum' and hence the generative principle behind the three prime letters: 'a', 'u', and 'm'. You are also the author of letters of a lesser rank (consonants) that are not evoked specifically. You are the stable, ever-present entity underlying and facilitating the meaning of words. [*Translation mine*])

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>EEBO</i>	<i>Early English Books Online</i>
<i>ESTC</i>	<i>English Short Title Catalogue</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary Online</i>

INTRODUCTION

FASHIONING MASCULINITY

This thesis was conceived rather memorably in a fairly familiar setting. Jess and I, always easy to please, decided to pamper ourselves one frosty evening in autumn 2006 by watching the 1995 BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice*. Sitting comfortably with a massive pot of tea and a box of chocolates, we immersed ourselves in the cultural milestone, anticipating the most beloved witticisms of the novel and quoting them at each other. By the end of the evening, rendered comatose with chocolates and exhausted by our hysterical squeals at the smouldering chemistry between Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle, I observed how Charles Dickens would never quite create a character like Mr Darcy; Jess calmly agreed and remarked that nor would W. M. Thackeray write a Mr Rochester or a Rhet Butler. ‘I would have forgiven his pride had he not mortified mine’ quoth Elizabeth Bennet, in a marked deference to the novel’s title and defining narrative trajectory.¹ The remark, fairly simple at first glance, is more than a cursory observation on Darcy’s surliness. It also intertwines the identities of Darcy and Elizabeth in a manner that enmeshes the defining trait of pride in cultural ideals of masculinity and femininity. This is a significant braiding of concepts in a novel that parses, among other things, social constructs of a ‘single man with a large fortune’ (p. 225) and ‘an accomplished woman’ (p. 245). I vividly remember the eccentric agitation of my ideas at that moment: there is something distinctive, thought I, even if it is not necessarily unique, about how the female imaginary conceptualises the masculine. With its focus on selected writings of Mary Tudor, Queen Elizabeth I, Jane Fitzalan/ Lumley and Mary Sidney, my thesis is an attempt to understand this curious relationship.

¹ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* in *The Complete Novels of Jane Austen* (London: Penguin, 1996), p. 234.

Increasingly attention is being brought to the flux and the instability of masculinity, highlighting that it is far from the uniform discourse it is purported to be. Catherine Belsey, in an essay evocatively titled ‘Feminism and beyond’, urges scholars to pursue new lines of inquiry into the gendered early modern subject. She observes that ‘[m]asculinity is no more full, single, and original than femininity’, mapping a critical field still to be explored.² That was 1997. Since then the burgeoning interest in early modern masculinity indicates a willingness in critics to pick up the gauntlet thrown down by Belsey. Writing in 2007, historians Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster commented on the fact that early modern masculinity is a relatively unstudied field and has only lately received scholarly attention to emerge as a ‘discrete subject’: the ‘history of early modern manhood, as a subset of gender history, has received a great deal more attention in the last decade’.³

² Catherine Belsey, ‘Feminism and beyond’, *Shakespeare Studies*, 25 (1997), pp. 32-41; 40. Bruce Smith makes a similar point: ‘Only recently has masculinity been subjected to same critical scrutiny as femininity. In every binary, one term implicitly serves as the standard that marks the other term as being different. In the binary ‘masculine’/ ‘feminine’ the criterion has usually been taken to be ‘masculine’. As a result, ‘masculine’ has managed to deflect attention from itself. It is ‘feminine’ that is different, or so the implication goes; it is ‘feminine’ that deserves study. ‘Masculinity’ is, however, just as much a social construction as ‘femininity’ (’*Shakespeare and Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 2). Jennifer Vaught too notes that ‘[i]ncluding the study of men in the field of gender studies implicitly challenges the misleading association of men with the mind and women with the body and avoids perpetuating the illusion that men are the ungendered sex’ (*Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern English Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 6). I am aware that ‘masculinity’ – ‘the state or fact of being masculine; the assemblage of qualities regarded as characteristic of men; maleness, manliness’, (*OED*, 1. a) – did not exist as a word in early modern English. However, the *OED* lists its root in the French word *masculinité* which was in vogue in the Renaissance and would have been familiar to the writers I discuss in my thesis. The closest equivalent in contemporary English would have been the word ‘manhood’, which is defined similarly by the *OED*: ‘the state or condition of being a man rather than a woman’ (4. b) and ‘manliness, courage, valour; (esp.) these qualities collectively, perceived as pre-eminently belonging to or characterizing a man’ (5)’. In my work I use the words ‘manhood’ and ‘masculinity’ interchangeably (see also, Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, pp. 10-11).

³ ‘Childless men in early modern England’ in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster, eds., *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 158-183; 159. There are several notable studies on masculinity in the early modern period; here I would like to discuss those that have influenced my work. While not necessarily cited in the individual chapters to follow, I am beholden to their engagement with the field. In his discussion of heroic masculinity in Shakespeare, Robin Headlam Wells unequivocally states that ‘[f]or the Renaissance the heroic ideal is essentially masculine. The qualities it evokes – courage, physical strength, prowess in battle, manly honour, defiance of fortune – may be summed up in a word whose Latin root means ‘a man’’. He further notes that ‘in Shakespeare’s

The result of this focus on masculinity both in the early modern context and in parallel studies done in other disciplines and on other periods is the realisation that men are only ostensibly the beneficiaries of patriarchy. Pierre Bourdieu notes that '[m]ale privilege is also a trap, and it has its negative side in the permanent tension and contention, sometimes verging on the absurd, imposed on every man by the duty to

lifetime the word masculine was often used to signify martial or heroic qualities'. Wells brings to light how for supporters of militant Protestantism 'the terms 'masculine' and 'manly', together with 'chivalrous', 'virtuous', and 'honourable', were a code that signified allegiance to a well-defined political agenda'. Wells foregrounds how these bellicose notions of masculinity were in conflict with the ones promulgated by the refined and pacifist standards of civic humanism that coalesced to form a Hercules-Orpheus dyad of masculine ideals. With its divergent heroes as Prospero and Henry V, Shakespeare's oeuvre, Wells argues, makes a dramatic use of this conflict thereby excoriating contemporary beliefs on masculinity (*Shakespeare on Masculinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 2; 7; 9). On the competing ideals of Herculean masculinity and gentlemanly conduct also see Bruce Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, pp. 48-49; 57-60. My thesis examines how female authorial impulses unsettle the construct of martial masculinity by juxtaposing Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* with Mary Sidney's *Tragedy of Antonie* (see below). Vaught too examines 'the profound impact of the cultural shift in the English aristocracy from violent warriors to courtiers or gentlemen' that bolsters her critical agenda to read how 'male demonstrations of emotion in public forums and private, interior spaces are empowering, liberating, dignifying, and (politically and financially) useful'. Concurrently, Vaught is alert to the highly gendered nature of emotional exhibitionism: 'Men often express their emotions stoically or moderately, or vent intense emotions through violent action. Women frequently grieve by weeping and wailing and traditionally perform the cultural work of mourning' (*Masculinity and Emotion*; pp. 2-3). Ira Clark focuses on 'the actions when youth won accession to manhood, a passage based on attitudes towards social behaviors rather than on the physiological grounds for those performances'. In his study of comedies from the period, he reveals the 'substantial value and proof of virtue, full manhood, that marriage represented for men, especially youth, in early modern England'. Clark's interpretation is fuelled by early modern homilies that established a neat analogy between the family and the state. Detailed and persuasive though his work is, it does not recognise the conflicting tenets of the corollary between the family and the state which form the focus of my chapter on the correspondence of Tudor sisters – Mary and Elizabeth – with their father, Henry VIII, and Jane Fitzalan/ Lumley's *Tragedie of Iphigeneia* (see below). Alongside examining the manner in which marriage validated masculinity, Clark also investigates the academies of conduct in the period that were designed to instill proper social demeanour in young men, the plight of younger sons who were 'denied the resources to sustain their station', the appeal that controlling a widow's 'sexuality, status, and fortune' held for men desirous of asserting their masculinity, and duelling as a social practice that simultaneously contested and confirmed one's masculinity (*Comedy, Youth, Manhood in Early Modern England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), pp. 12; 25). The concept of moderation, 'one of the defining notions of Renaissance masculinity', is the focus of Todd Reeser's study. Reeser notes that '[b]esides sexuality, other *loci communes* of moderation considered particularly important for the ideal man of the Renaissance include courage, diet, and prodigality' (*Moderating Masculinity in Early Modern Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 13; 14). Alongside these broad assessments of early modern masculinity, critical studies that intertwine configurations of masculinity with specific identity formations have also flourished. Anthony Ellis examines English drama in relation to Italian comedies to delineate the development of the figure of the comic old man and the way in which it intersected with contemporary notions of masculinity (*Old Age, Masculinity, and Early Modern Drama: Comic Elders on the Italian and Shakespearean Stage* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009)). Matthew Biberman's proposition that 'religious identity, like sexual identity, is a construct' underlies his work on the gendered representations of Jews in early modern discourse (*Masculinity, Anti-Semitism, and Early Modern English Literature: From the Satanic to the Effeminate Jew* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 2).

assert his manliness in all circumstances'.⁴ In his study of early modern English literature, Mark Breitenberg formulates how the absurdity of these demands led to 'anxious masculinity'.⁵ Recently Catherine Bates has voiced her suspicion of readings of early modern masculinity that detect an anxiety lurking even in its most robust representations, and of interpretations that capitalise on the performative nature of gender. She identifies a corollary between the critic, eager to master their field of study, and the sovereign subject who voluntarily participates in the discourse of gender to acquire a culturally validated masculine identity. She argues that we need to place this critical commonplace in 'ironic suspension...[to] theorize subjectivities that might otherwise be deemed 'alternative' or 'perverse'. What is at stake for Bates is the notion of subjectivity and agency. Bates writes that 'even claims that manhood does not constitute a natural state...tend to assume the existence of a pre-given, voluntarist subject who chooses to enter into that masquerade, to play that part, to don that role'.⁶ Breitenberg's work in turn is founded upon a 'dialectical understanding of subjectivity in which we are actors as much as acted upon, without which any possibility of change would be negated at the outset', which is based on the model proposed by Louis Montrose.⁷ While appreciative of Bates' critical stance, I argue that the texts themselves emerge as the sites where the fluid constructions of masculinity are recorded in linguistic dexterity and semantic uncertainty and are articulated through

⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 50.

⁵ For Breitenberg, '[m]asculinity is inherently anxious: according to this argument, anxiety is not a secondary effect of masculinity, nor simply an unpleasant aberration from what we might hypothetically understand as normative...masculine anxiety is a necessary and inevitable condition that operates on at least two significant levels: it reveals the fissures and contradictions of patriarchal systems and, at the same time, it paradoxically enables and drives patriarchy's reproduction and continuation of itself' (*Anxious masculinity in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 2).

⁶ Catherine Bates, *Masculinity, Gender and Identity in the English Renaissance Lyric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 22-23.

⁷ Breitenberg, *Anxious masculinity*, p. 10.

and by their subjects. Further, as my discussion of gender and performance below will make clearer, I contend that performativity becomes a mode of containing this fluidity and thereby emerges as a defining principle of gender.

For Todd Reeser the ‘extremely relative definition of the virtue [of moderation]...a defining aspect of male subjectivity’ leads to a precariousness of masculine identity in the early modern period. Unsurprisingly then, ‘[c]losely associating masculinity with a philosophical principle that is ultimately impossible to define in itself, much less achieve, renders this brand of gender identity inherently problematic as well’.⁸ The anxiety around the stronghold of masculine domination in patriarchy is both intriguing and ironic:

[M]asculinity constantly fears the loss of its power and must constantly guard against the threat of disempowerment. Discussions around cuckoldry, for example, point to an underlying male anxiety that women’s sexuality cannot be contained and that male power is insufficient to control women in the household. Masculinity also suffers from an anxiety of hegemony as it fears its own inability to control the self and therefore to merit its domination over the other.⁹

Bourdieu’s incisive comment that ‘the dominant cannot fail to apply to themselves, that is, to their bodies and to everything they are and do, the schemes of the unconscious, which, in their case, give rise to formidable demands’ resonates with the debates beyond early modern masculinity that this thesis is motivated by. Bourdieu summarises how men are ‘dominated by their domination’:

⁸ Similarly, Smith defines ‘masculinity as something inherently unstable, something always in the process of being achieved’ (*Shakespeare and Masculinity*, p. 99).

⁹ Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, pp. 14-15; 21; 30.

If women, subjected to a labour of socialization which tends to diminish and deny them, learn the negative virtues of self-denial, resignation and silence, men are also prisoners, and insidiously victims, of the dominant representation. Like the dispositions towards submission, those which underlie the pursuit and exercise of domination are not inscribed in a nature, and they have to be learned through a long labour of socialization, in other words...of active differentiation from the opposite sex.¹⁰

This process of ‘active differentiation from the opposite sex’ is fundamental to the development of ideals of masculinity.¹¹ However, as my thesis will argue, the curious intersections between masculinity and femininity and the conflicting demands within the models of masculinity complicate and impede a smooth execution of this process. Further, in the early modern period, the Galenic understanding of male and female anatomies simultaneously blurred and, as a likely consequence, insisted on an ‘active differentiation from the opposite sex’.¹² David Gilmore’s assertion that ‘[t]here is a

¹⁰ Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, pp. 69; 49.

¹¹ Ira Clark provides a quick overview of the material conditions that determined the rearing of men in early modern period and that were designed to promote an ‘active differentiation from the opposite sex’: ‘Stages specifically for males began with breeching at age six or seven, that is, with the first gendered differentiation of dress when boys began wearing doublets and hose. Childhood continued through elementary school and household work, most often at home though sometimes as a page in the household of an ally among the privileged. “Budding and blossoming” developed through separation from parents for further work and training in skills. This occurred some time [*sic*] between ages thirteen and eighteen, depending on the environment and vocation; older ages were more common for entry into a university or a London apprenticeship. The final preparation for full entry into manhood was the practice of the newly acquired skills and the foundation of the economic and social bases necessary for marrying and establishing a household’ (*Comedy, Youth, Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 17). For a detailed discussion of the passages of a man’s life in early modern England see Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, pp. 67-99 and Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 21-92.

¹² The one-sex model, as it is popularly known, posited male and female genitalia as homologues. The female genitalia were an imperfect, inverted version of the phallus. This was accounted for by a humoral understanding of human bodies where men were regarded as hot and dry and women as cold and moist. For early modern understanding of humoral psychology and its ramification on gender constructions, see Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, pp. 9-23. For his seminal account of the one-sex model, see Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1990), especially pp. 25-113. In the wake of mounting scepticism over the omnipotent hold of the one-sex model in the Renaissance, Laqueur defended his critical stance in 2003 by asserting that a few stray examples recorded in the anatomical accounts of the period ‘did not fundamentally change the one-sex model because it was so well entrenched and so multiply supported’ (‘Sex in the Flesh’, *Isis*, 94 (2003), 300-306; p. 306). On the impact this model had on early modern notions of gender see Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, pp. 24-25; Stephen Orgel, ‘Nobody’s Perfect: Or Why Did the English Stage Take Boys for Women?’, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 88 (1989), 7-29. Smith

constantly recurring notion that real manhood is different from simple anatomical maleness, that it is not a natural condition that comes about spontaneously through biological maturation but rather is a precarious or artificial state' is consonant with the current understanding of masculinity as something to be proved and achieved.¹³ The lack of a distinct understanding of anatomical difference between men and women, however, further complicates the social performance of gender in the Renaissance and gives it a unique valency. If, as Phyllis Rackin has convincingly argued, 'the body itself – male as well as female – was gendered feminine', the relationship between perceptions of biological difference and cultural projections of masculinity in early modern England merits closer attention.¹⁴

My approach to the categories of sex and gender is drawn from Judith Butler's signal scholarship on the subject. In her pioneering work, *Gender Trouble*, Butler insists that 'sex itself is a gendered category':

Gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on a pre-given sex (a juridical conception); gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. As a result, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/ cultural means by which "sexed nature" or "a

notes that 'Galen's one-sex theory of the human body located masculinity not in the possession of distinctive sexual organs (men's equipment was imagined to be an extruded version of women's) but in behaviour' (*Shakespeare and Masculinity*, p. 106). Breitenberg's observation is similar: '[s]ince the differentiation between men and women is a matter of degree (more or less heat, the descent of the genitals), anatomical science presents an intrinsic contradiction to the belief in essential, God-given sexual difference' (*Anxious masculinity*, p. 14). In a marked opposition, Christian Billing complicates early modern understanding of the one-sex model and contests its influence on the cultural understanding of gender, *Masculinity, Corporality and the English Stage 1580 – 1635* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 2-6; 13-47; see also Winfried Schleiner, 'Early Modern Controversies about the One-Sex Model', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 53 (2000), pp. 180-191.

¹³ David Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 11

¹⁴ Phyllis Rackin, 'Historical Difference/Sexual Difference' in *Privileging Gender in Early Modern England*, ed. Jean Brink (Kirksville, Missouri: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1993), pp. 37-64; 39.

natural sex” is produced and established as “prediscursive,” prior to culture, a politically neutral surface *on which* culture acts.¹⁵

Butler goes on to explain her mistrust of the sex-gender dichotomy. She contends that

Sex [cannot] qualify as a prediscursive anatomical facticity. Indeed, sex, by definition, will be shown to have been gender all along...[T]he body is [customarily] figured as a mere *instrument* or *medium* for which a set of cultural meanings are only externally related. But “the body” is itself a construction, as are the myriad “bodies” that constitute the domain of gendered subjects. Bodies cannot be said to have a signifiable existence prior to the mark of their gender (pp. 11-12, original emphasis).¹⁶

Butler’s formulation in many ways expounds on Rackin’s scepticism of the belief that ‘sexual difference is immutably grounded in the body’.¹⁷ In the early modern context where sexual difference was a matter of degree rather than essence, the importunacy of enacting it and delivering an unmistakable performance cannot be ignored.¹⁸ The performance of masculinity or femininity thus became the mode through which male and female bodies were constructed and sexual difference was stabilised, reified and realised. Yet again, I turn to Butler for her illuminating study of the ways in which sex is constructed and performed.

Butler clarifies that ‘[t]o claim that gender is constructed is not to assert its illusoriness or artificiality, where those terms are understood to reside within a binary that

¹⁵ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (London: Routledge, 1990, rpt. 2007), p. 10, original emphasis.

¹⁶ Butler maintains that ‘[t]he sex/gender distinction and the category of sex itself appear to presuppose a generalization of “the body” that pre-exists the acquisition of its sexed significance. This “body” often appears to be a passive medium that is signified by an inscription from a cultural source figured “external” to that body. Any theory of cultural constructed body, however, ought to question “the body” as a construct of suspect generality when it is figured as passive and prior to discourse’ (*Gender Trouble*, pp. 175-76).

¹⁷ Rackin, ‘Historical Difference/Sexual Difference’, p. 38.

¹⁸ Butler demonstrates sex ‘to be a performatively enacted signification (and hence not “to be”), one that, released from its naturalized interiority and surface, can occasion the parodic proliferation and subversive play of gendered meanings’ (*Gender Trouble*, p. 46).

counterposes the “real” and the “authentic” as oppositional’. Instead, ‘[g]ender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being’. Butler maintains that ‘certain cultural configurations of gender take the place of “the real” and consolidate and augment their hegemony through that felicitous self-naturalization’ (p. 45). She concludes:

Gender is, thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders, as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those productions – and the punishments that attend not agreeing to believe in them; the construction “compels” our belief in its necessity and naturalness (p.190).

Culturally constructed and tacitly accepted concepts of biological differentiation are manifested and produced through the performativity of gender ‘in which the anticipation of a gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself’. The performance of gender ‘is not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual’ (p. xv). Thus the performative feature of the gendered body ‘suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality’ (p. 185).¹⁹

Butler’s theory has made an invaluable contribution to the field of early modern gender studies. Jennifer Vaught remarks that ‘male as well as female gender roles are cultural constructions that are performative and even masquerades’.²⁰ Similarly, Bruce Smith notes that ‘Shakespeare’s comedies often invite the conclusion that masculinity is more

¹⁹ In the main, Butler argues for a fresh understanding of gender: ‘gender identity might be reconceived as a personal/ cultural history of received meanings subject to a set of imitative practices which refer laterally to other imitations and which, jointly, construct the illusion of a primary and interior gendered self or parody the mechanism of that construction’ (p. 188).

²⁰ Vaught, *Masculinity and Emotion*, p. 7.

like a suit of clothes that can be put on and taken off at will than a matter of biological destiny'.²¹ Vaught and Smith are part of a community of scholars who are clearly inspired by and duly acknowledge Butler in their works. Increasingly, critical attention is being paid to how sex was realised and performed in the early modern period.²² Yet, while scholars have found Butler's ideas on sex and gender useful to their studies on the early modern period, they have concurrently censured her ideas as ahistorical.²³ Although Butler does not conduct a sustained historical analysis, she does gesture towards the historical specificity of gender construction when she argues for 'a conception of gender as a constituted *social temporality*' (p. 191, original emphasis). In following Butler's trail, I do not seek to advance a transhistorical model of masculine domination. Instead, through its focus on the masculine subject in relation to the feminine in the Tudor period, my thesis is motivated by the desire to reveal the historical specificities of gender constructions that *appear* to be transcendental in nature.²⁴

I aim to contribute to the burgeoning critical trend of studying early modern masculinity by introducing female-authored texts into the discussion. Studies of

²¹ Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, p. 3.

²² Will Fisher looks at how material tokens such as codpieces, handkerchiefs and facial hair constitute and materialise gender identity (*Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)). Gina Bloom draws attention to the aural traits of masculinity and the manner in which they were realised on the early modern stage ('"Thy voice squeaks": Listening for Masculinity on the Early Modern Stage', *Renaissance Drama*, 29 (1998), pp. 39-71). Marjorie Garber explores the extent to which gender identity is contingent on clothing (*Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London: Penguin, 1993)).

²³ See Vaught, *Masculinity and Emotion*, p. 7, also Clare A. Lees ed., *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), xvii-xix.

²⁴ Breitenberg emphasises the need to recognise the divergent ways in which the illusory omnipotence of masculine domination is created. He notes that '[w]ithout this recognition, without assiduously looking for what is unique about the early modern sex-gender system at the same time as we employ the critical tools of our own period, we are left with an eternal recurrence of the same – a vision as historically inaccurate as it is politically impotent' (*Anxious masculinity*, p. 7). R. W. Connell similarly posits 'that masculinities come into existence at particular times and places, and are always subject to change. Masculinities are, in a word, historical' (*Masculinities* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 185).

masculinity in the period have focused largely on canonical male authors such as Shakespeare who, in Breitenberg's formulation, 'more richly manifest[s] his culture's anxieties about gender and sexuality'.²⁵ Although critics are unanimous in recognising the role women – real or as fictional constructs – played in conceptualising masculinity in the early modern period, they seem hesitant to concede that they functioned as more than an effective backdrop against which masculinity emerged in sharp relief. Smith's remark is typical: 'masculine identity of whatever kind is something men give to each other. It is not achieved in isolation'.²⁶ While Smith is aware that masculinity is not gained in a vacuum, in declaring that it happens exclusively among men, he forecloses women's participation in this social discourse. At best, in comedies women 'serve as catalysts in the formation of masculine identity [for] [c]omedy enables an amiable *rapprochement* between masculine self and female other'.²⁷ Similarly, Breitenberg is 'more concerned with how ideas of "woman" [what he also identifies as "feminine"] function in this period...[and] how those ideas reveal the anxieties and contradictions of masculinity in early modern patriarchy rather than in its oppressive and pernicious effects on women'.²⁸ I do not contest the characterisation of women as the 'other' against which masculinity is fashioned; nonetheless I feel that this dichotomy should be treated with caution lest we duplicate precisely the same binary that we wish to interrogate. Although the category of women or the state of effeminacy were the

²⁵ Breitenberg, *Anxious masculinity*, p. 28.

²⁶ Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, p. 60.

²⁷ Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, p. 110.

²⁸ Yet at the same time Breitenberg demonstrates an awareness of the drawbacks of his approach: 'As to the danger of reproducing in my own criticism the erasure or illegitimacy of women's subjectivities that is such a part of early modern patriarchy, let me say that [his work's] focuses are also its limitations – limitations that have already been answered by a considerable body of early modern social and literary history that has recovered and studied the lives and writings of early modern women' (*Anxious masculinity*, p. 8). Though a significant amount of work has been done on early modern women's writings, there has not been any study that contextualises them in the discourse of masculinity.

positions that normative masculine identity sought to distinguish itself from, it does not implicitly follow that women were 'other' to the discourse of masculinity. Indeed, the discourse of masculinity was also the discourse of femininity for both genders were (and are) constructed in tandem and women were participants in this collaborative social activity.

Similarly for Bourdieu, women's position in relation to the social games that reinforce and perpetuate masculine domination is both 'external and subordinate'. This yields a variety of responses: a 'somewhat condescending pity for the male *illusio*', 'amused indulgence' and an ability 'to grant masculine *concern* [with] a kind of tender attention and confident comprehension'.²⁹ While Bourdieu's lapidary distillation of female responses to the processes behind the construction of masculinity is valuable to my project, I am reluctant to divorce female agency from its creation. A closer examination of the propaganda of masculine sovereignty premised on exclusivity alerts us to the manner in which the female contributions to conceptualisation of masculinity are masked. In their recent revision of the seminal concept of hegemonic masculinity, Connell and Messerschmidt stress that 'women are central in many of the processes constructing masculinities' and 'that research on hegemonic masculinity now needs to give much closer attention to the practices of women and to the historical interplay of femininities and masculinities'.³⁰ *Fashioning Masculinity* contributes to precisely this critical project.

²⁹ Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, pp. 78; 75 (italics in original).

³⁰ R.W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, 'Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept', *Gender and Society*, 19 (2005), pp. 829-59; 848. For a detailed discussion on hegemonic masculinity see Connell, *Masculinities*.

By placing works by women writers in relation to male writers, I aim to emphasise the common ground which these texts tread even as I underscore the different strategies they adopt. In the introduction to her book-length study on familial discourses in early modern England, Marion Wynne-Davies creates a propitious environment for studying female-authored texts in conjunction with those written by men: ‘it is essential that women writers are not ghettoised into a gender-specific unit...because it ensures that their work remains valued within the wider remit of Early Modern textual productivity’. As Wynne-Davies suggests, this thesis attempts to situate ‘male and female writers within the same discursive formation and excavates the differences between their linked productivity and self-representation’.³¹

The dialogic interaction between masculinities and femininities is slowly being recognised in early modern literary studies. Anne Lake Prescott’s remark in her discussion of Mary Sidney’s *The Tragedy of Antonie* is pertinent to my study here:

Most interesting in terms of gender and political abuse is the role (role indeed, for [Anne] Dowriche writes, sig. G3, ‘and heere begins the plaie’) of Catherine de’ Medici, the queen mother who has, we would say, more testosterone than her sons. ‘Plucke up therefore your spirites, and plaie your manlie parts’, she tells the other conspirators before the massacre. What shame, she exclaims, that ‘I (a woman by my kinde) | Neede thus to speake, or pass you men in valure of the minde?’ (sig. G4). Her similarity to Lady Macbeth smites the ear, but more to my immediate point is the calling into question of her sons’ and favourites’ masculinity and the gender ambiguity of her own. She is not a seductress like Cleopatra, but she unmans, or out-mans, the males around her.³²

Prescott’s goal is to emphasise the historical and political undercurrents that resonate in Mary Sidney’s 1592 translation of Robert Garnier’s *The Tragedy of Antonie*. Her

³¹ Marion Wynne-Davies, *Women writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance: Relative Values* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 9.

³² Anne Lake Prescott, ‘Mary Sidney’s *Antonius* and the Ambiguities of French History’, *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 38 (2008), pp. 216-33; 221.

insight into gender construction in the period is consequently pursued through the lens of Henri III's political career. It is nonetheless apparent from Prescott's analysis that early modern texts recognised female participation in the discourse of masculinity. While the above example may suggest that female interventions in the conceptualisation of masculinity are often presented as comic monstrosities, it is equally likely that it is the manner rather than the nature of the intervention that is brought under scrutiny. Both Shakespeare and Dowriche are evidently aware of women's power to inform and transform models of masculinity and the exaggerated manner of their depictions could just as easily be read as an attempt to keep this power in abeyance. In my work I study how even in innocuous roles limited by patriarchal boundaries, such as the familial relationships between fathers and daughters, and through stock portrayals of female passivity, female writers adopted narrative tropes that functioned as interpellations in the discourse of masculinity.

In a different context, Toby Ditz calls into attention the 'puzzling intellectual division of labour' where studies of masculinities work independently from feminist scholarship and vice versa. While Ditz celebrates the recognition of multiple masculinities and the manner in which they intersect with issues of class and race, she also points out that current studies on new men's history have not answered 'how masculinity articulates with femininity'. Ditz urges a number of strategies to address this critical lacuna: comparisons between men and women to reach a subtle understanding of the processes behind the conceptualisation of masculinity and femininity; recognition of the roles played by women, both real and fictional, to ensure the stabilisation of inherently labile masculinities; an attention to alliances with women that are integral to the creation of

masculine identities; examining the impact that a crisis in the masculine order has on male dominance over women; subjecting misogyny, often a response to ‘women who erode, subvert, or directly challenge men’s individual or collective authority over them’, to a measured scrutiny; and studying ‘people whose gender practices and identifications disrupted the conventional categories of man and woman, male and female’.³³

This thesis unites the strategies formulated by Ditz and attempts to produce a refined study of inquiry into early modern masculinity. The first chapter questions the analogy between the family and the state that formed the basis of early modern patriarchy by highlighting areas of conflict. I argue that both Elizabeth and Mary Tudor contested the way in which their father, Henry VIII, wielded his political authority to refashion their familial relationships with him. At the heart of this chapter is a discussion of Jane Lumley’s translation of Euripides’ *Tragedie of Iphigeneia* (c. 1550) that extends my inquiry into the reputedly symbiotic relationship between the family and the state. Compelled to sacrifice his daughter to preserve his political authority, I study how Agamemnon’s predicament precipitates a breakdown in the structural unit of patriarchy, the family, and its impact on male dominance over women in the play.³⁴ I suggest that Fitzalan/ Lumley and the Tudor sisters collectively scrutinise the figure of the father and reposition it within the existing discourses of state and domestic masculinities. Further, I posit that through the figure of Iphigenia Fitzalan/ Lumley’s translation offers a critical reading of governance as the sole prerogative of men.

³³ Toby Ditz, ‘The New Men’s History and the Peculiar Absence of Gendered Power: Some Remedies from Early American Gender History’, *Gender & History*, 16 (2004), pp. 1-35; 2; 3; 22; 25.

³⁴ Alexandra Shepard notes that in ‘early modern England, patriarchy was literally understood to signify rule by fathers’ (*Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 3).

Through these texts I also engage with humanist ideas concerning female education and its impact on early modern girls by bringing Juan Vives' enormously influential treatise on female education, *The Education of a Christian Woman* (1524), into discussion. This gives me the opportunity to study how the conflicting demands of patriarchy facilitate female agency, allowing women to subvert the gender status quo and critique and reconfigure dominant codes of masculinity.

Closely following my reading of how Iphigenia is invested with political authority in Lumley's translation and its impact on masculine domination in the play, gynaecocracy is the focus of my second chapter. I situate my argument in the context of critical consensus that the anomalous figure of the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth Tudor, on the English throne was a source of anxiety for her male subjects. I propose that Elizabeth challenged her belligerent male subjects in a game of semiotic control and fashioned her own 'queendom' – a discursive realm that acted as a counterpart to her political kingdom – where she attempted to formulate a code of masculinity that would celebrate rather than oppose female sovereignty. This chapter centres on the unease surrounding Elizabeth's sexuality and her marriage. I juxtapose the letters written by Elizabeth to her last suitor, François, Duke of Anjou, with John Stubbs' virulent tract *The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf* (1578) that opposed the match. I show how in her correspondence with Anjou, Elizabeth sought to create a model husband for herself who would be sympathetic and subordinate to her political authority. In a remarkable contrast, Stubbs' defiant prose questions the legitimacy of the queen's sexual desire with respect to its implications for her authority. Towards the conclusion of the chapter I direct my attention to John Lyly's *Galatea* (1587/8) to demonstrate how the play, especially

through its titular character, creates a complementary version of masculinity that rejoiced in both female sexuality and sovereignty and thus constructs the ideal subject for Elizabeth's queendom.

The final chapter probes the impact of erotic desire on constructions of martial masculinity. My discussion of William Garrard's *The Arte of Warre* (1591) and Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine, Part I* (1590) serves as a background to my focus on the soldier figure in Mary Sidney's translation of Robert Garnier's *The Tragedy of Antonie* (1592) and Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (1607). The chief interests of this chapter are the untenable demands placed on the body of the warrior to meet the ideals charted in the discourse of martial masculinity and the ostracised positioning of female agency and influence with respect to it. I contend that despite moments of divergence the character of Cleopatra in both plays unsettles these norms. Further, I examine how she is invested with authorial agency in the texts and the manner in which she capitalises on it to redesign martial masculinity.

Although the focus of this thesis is early modern masculinity, the conviction that it is developed in conjunction with femininity and cannot be studied separately is at the heart of this project.³⁵ The texts studied here confront social norms of femininity in a variety of ways. I explore how the writers and texts grapple and negotiate with dominant codes of femininity to disclose how this becomes the means through which masculinity is challenged and refashioned. Critics have dwelt eloquently and insightfully on the predicament of early modern women writers and how they

³⁵ Breitenberg highlights that 'both "masculine" and "feminine" are historically specific deployments of gender differences sensible only in relation to one another' (*Anxious masculinity*, pp. 7-8).

challenged, revised or conformed to contemporary notions of femininity.³⁶ However, in the process of unsettling norms of femininity, women writers in the early modern period displaced an existing gender equilibrium that had a profound impact on constructs of masculinity as well. A sustained study of how women writers' negotiation with idealised femininity enabled and corresponded with their concomitant revisions of dominant codes of masculinity is yet to take place; my thesis is an attempt to address this critical void. This thesis examines the forms of diegetic control and authorial strategies embraced by women writers and female characters within the texts studied. It not only studies the various devices through which women enter into and interrogate the discourse of early modern masculinity but also underscores how integral their participation is to any scholarship on this subject. Connell and Messerschmidt contend that “‘masculinity’ represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices’.”³⁷ *Fashioning Masculinity* examines the ways, various and at times self-cancelling, in which texts written by female authors not only comment on and critique but also reformulate the very practices and techniques that enable this discursive positioning.

The purpose of studying women writers as a group is not to pigeonhole female authorship or make universalist claims about it. Indeed this thesis seeks not only to juxtapose but to integrate women-authored texts with works by their more celebrated male coevals. It is important to note here that I do not claim early modern woman/

³⁶ It is not possible to give a purview of the formidable scholarship done on this subject but see, for instance, the essays in Laura Lunger Knoppers, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) for a recent discussion that summarises and advances key critical thoughts and trends.

³⁷ Connell and Messerschmidt, 'Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept', p. 841.

female author as a singular entity and treat the concept with caution.³⁸ My approach to texts written by women closely mirrors Danielle Clarke's: 'What women writers did share, broadly, was a sense of their social positioning in relation to men, and the common aspects of their work are largely a consequence of shared material conditions and assumptions about their social roles *relative to men*'.³⁹ With the possible exception of Mary Sidney, the writers studied here may not have even regarded themselves as authors in the conventional sense of the word, much less thought of themselves as female authors.⁴⁰ Yet Jane Fitzalan, Mary Tudor, Queen Elizabeth I, and Mary Sidney form a fairly cohesive group to study. They shared a similar social background and enjoyed a privileged upbringing, including access to humanist education. Thus the material conditions in which they wrote were very different from those of a writer like Isabella Whitney who was writing in the same period. Further, their writings fall neatly in a fifty-year time span and were a product of shared socio-political and cultural matrices. Yet even this elite grouping does not generate a uniform subjectivity. While they may be united in terms of rank and cultural capital, in terms of religious principles and practices this group could not be more diverse. Jane Fitzalan was the daughter of Earl of Arundel who was largely responsible for overthrowing Lady Jane Grey and bringing Mary Tudor to the throne. Jane Fitzalan's allegiance to Catholicism was in all

³⁸ On a broader level, Butler notes that 'there is the political problem that feminism encounters in the assumption that the term *women* denotes a common identity. Rather than a stable signifier that commands the assent of those whom it purports to describe and represent, *women*, even in the plural, has become a troublesome term, a site of contest, a cause for anxiety', p. 4 (original emphasis). She goes on to state that 'the insistence upon the coherence and unity of the category of women has effectively refused the multiplicity of cultural, social, and political intersections in which the concrete array of "women" are constructed' (*Gender Trouble*, p. 19).

³⁹ Danielle Clarke, *The Politics of Early Modern Women's Writing* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), p. 3

⁴⁰ On contemporary configurations of what it meant to be an author see Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Douglas Brooks, *Printing and Parenting in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); and Amy Greenstadt, *Rape and the Rise of the Author: Gendering Intention in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

likelihood as strong and politically motivated as Mary Tudor's. At varying times Queen Elizabeth I took refuge in, struggled with, and dissociated herself from the label of the Protestant Saviour of the English Nation. On the other hand Mary Sidney belonged to a radical-Protestant faction and worked tirelessly to advance its cause. While some of the subjects of my study such as Mary Sidney and Elizabeth Tudor may present themselves as obvious choices, it is salutatory to note that compared to their male coevals such as Shakespeare or Marlowe, they have only recently received critical attention. Owing no doubt to the edition of her *Collected Works*, published in 2000, Elizabeth Tudor has only lately been rescued from the state observed by Philippa Berry – '[f]rom the literary perspective, what chiefly remains of Elizabeth Tudor is her silence'.⁴¹ Concurrently, while this thesis acknowledges competing ways of being masculine, it does not claim to analyse all possible codes of masculinity operating within early modern England.⁴² It is a carefully focused study of certain kinds of masculinities operating within social parameters determined by rank, privilege and family dynamics.

Finally, a word about the title which is inspired by Karen Newman's monograph, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama*, published twenty years ago. Newman outlines her research agenda in ways that reflect the emerging critical trends of that period:

I explore how the feminine subject is constructed by looking at representations of women on stage and in proliferating printed materials

⁴¹ Philippa Berry, *Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 7. This is not to discount the considerable body of work that has been done on writings by Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Sidney and which has provided a good foundation for my study on them.

⁴² Alexandra Shepard conducts a helpful survey on the varieties of masculinities co-existing in early modern England (*Meanings of Manhood*).

aimed at them. But I move increasingly away from “women” to ask instead how the category “femininity” is produced and deployed in early modern England.⁴³

Fashioning Masculinity is a direct beneficiary of and deeply indebted to this scholarly discourse. It seeks to advance the field by turning the focus around to ask how masculinities were ‘produced and deployed in early modern England’, how they intersected with contemporary notions of femininity, and to what extent women writers contributed to and evaluated this cultural exercise. Further, unlike Newman’s work that, despite its enduring merits, remains limited in scope by focusing purely on male representations of femininity, *Fashioning Masculinity* recognises both male and female participation to the protean discourse that conceptualised masculinity even as it simultaneously identifies studies on masculinity and feminist criticism as its allies. It is hoped that this unique union between textual materials and critical schools will facilitate a more nuanced understanding of early modern masculinity.

⁴³ Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. xix.

CHAPTER 1

‘LITTLE COMMONWEALTHS’: DOMESTIC AND STATE MASCULINITIES

In *Of Domesticall Duties*, William Gouge underscores the symbiotic relationship between the family and the state. He conceives the early modern family as a ‘little Church, and a little commonwealth, at least a liuely representation thereof whereby triall may be made of such as are fit for any place of authoritie, or of subiection in Church or common-wealth. Or rather it is as a schoole wherein the first principles and grounds of gouernment and subiection are learned: whereby men are fitted to greater matters in Church or commonwealth’.¹ Critics are united in discovering this correlativity between domestic and state realms in early modern England: the household was a microcosm of the commonwealth and its proper management was symptomatic of the stability of the state. Alexandra Shepard in her survey of early modern conduct books, pamphlets and various polemics notes that ‘the household was represented as the primary site of male authority...because the stability of the commonwealth was deemed to depend on its proper ordering’.² Karen Raber’s study of early modern political ideology reaches a similar conclusion – ‘family is at the heart of government structure, from the broadest ideological basis to the most specific individual case’.³ Surveying the critical studies done on early modern family that highlight the protean and evolving nature of patriarchy, Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster observe that ‘one principle [remained] the same: the maintenance of the authority of husbands within the little kingdom of the family (an authority that was mirrored in the super-structures of the kingdom at large), most frequently expressed

¹ William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties* (London: John Haviland, 1622), sig. C2v.

² Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 70.

³ Karen Raber, ‘Murderous Mothers and the Family/State Analogy in Classical and Renaissance Drama’, *Comparative Literature Studies*, 37 (2000), pp. 298-320; 314.

through the idea of a powerful ‘husband and father’.⁴ Thus, the family in early modern England was inherently political, mirroring and reinforcing the hierarchical administration of the state.⁵

Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia* portrays this typical specular relationship between the family and the state:

In this place sometime there dwelled a mighty duke named Basilius, a prince of sufficient skill to govern so quiet a country where the good minds of the former princes had set down good laws, and the well bringing up of the people did serve as a most sure bond to keep them.⁶

Basilius’ ‘sufficient skill’ lies less in reigning with individual purpose and more in the preservation of an established order of governance. In *Arcadia* the smooth functioning of the political apparatus vitally depends upon the good parenting of its denizens. The ‘most sure bond’ that safeguards the political unity of the country is ‘the well bringing up of people’. This establishes the relationship between Basilius and his subjects in terms that are partially filial. Basilius emerges as a surrogate father figure whose authority extends beyond and surpasses the microcosm of family units into the adult lives of his subjects. It is here, in ensuring that the upbringing of his people is in harmony with political ideals, that the reader is invited to locate Basilius’ ‘sufficient skill’. This depiction is entirely in harmony with early modern political ideology. Raber notes that ‘[n]ot only does early modern political and moral thought suggest that

⁴ ‘Childless men in early modern England’ in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster, eds. *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 158-183; 160.

⁵ Mark Breitenberg notes ‘that the family in the early modern period was an especially politicized institution; it was made to serve as an analogy for virtually all other relations in society – between God and man, the monarch and the people, husbands and wives, masters and servants’ (*Anxious masculinity in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 17).

⁶ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 4.

household and state mirror one another...writings like [Robert] Filmer's or like the earlier Elizabethan Homily on Order made family and state mutually constitutive—the latter relied on the former to order and inform behavior'.⁷ However, a dark shadow lurks behind the domestic felicity that the image of 'well bringing up of the people' in Arcadia initially suggests. This civic rearing of Arcadia's citizens is strategically designed to maintain the country's 'good laws'. The relationship between Arcadia and its subjects implies that Arcadians are a crop to nourish and sustain the state. Functioning as units to ensure the perpetuity of an established political enterprise, Arcadians have no scope for dissidence and individuality. In setting forth 'so quiet a country' as Arcadia, Sidney is paying due deference to traditions of the pastoral imaginary; however, the reader is invited to doubt the strength of the country's 'good laws' to sustain it in conflict.

The unhappy discovery of threats to his monarchical and domestic authorities places Basilius in a predicament. Despite being warned that 'in [his] throne a foreign state shall sit', he prioritises his familial authority over the political in retreating to 'a solitary place'. He convinces himself that this move will 'prevent all these inconveniences of the loss of his crown and his children' and abdicates his political responsibilities to an appointed deputy. The position of retirement and confinement may seem as though it offers an opportunity for close surveillance of the female members of his household (the catalysts and agents who will strip him of his domestic authority) but it decidedly thwarts his political interests. Although in the meticulously crafted world of Arcadian statecraft to lose authority in the domestic realm is to lose it

⁷ Raber, 'Murderous Mothers', p. 302.

in the political and vice versa, it is remarkable that the focus of Basilius' anxiety is not the political. Resigning from political authority to reinforce the domestic is peculiar when the former can be wielded to safeguard the latter. I would like to emphasise that while the terms of the prophecy are ambiguous about Basilius' domestic authority which will 'be stolen and yet not lost', they are definitive about the fate of his public power: 'in thy throne a foreign state shall sit' (p. 5). Philanax, Basilius' confidante and surrogate head is unable to understand the logic behind his decision: 'Why should you deprive yourself of governing your dukedom for fear of losing your dukedom, like one that should kill himself for the fear of death?'. However, Basilius, 'wholly wedded to his own opinion' brooks no debate (pp. 7-8).

Tracey Sedinger's blunt judgment that Basilius' 'pastoral retreat is a self-indulgent escape from politics and history' may seem apt at a cursory glance.⁸ However, it is curious to note that notwithstanding this apparent privileging of the domestic over the public, Basilius rationalises his decision on the strength of 'dukely sophistry' rather than 'fatherly care' (pp. 7; 8). This conforms to, yet exceeds, the early modern political idiom that aligned domestic and political fatherhoods. Raber gives a helpful summary: 'early modern culture assumed the monarch's right to rule was based in his patriarchal relationship to his nation, that in effect he commanded their obedience because he functioned as father to them'.⁹ In choosing one model of fatherhood over the other, Basilius reveals a tense relationship between them: even as they underpin each other they have the potential to undermine each other's value. Concomitantly, the hierarchy

⁸ Tracey Sedinger, 'Sidney's *New Arcadia* and the Decay of Protestant Republicanism', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 47 (2007), pp. 57-77; 61.

⁹ Raber, 'Murderous Mothers', p. 299.

between them is far from absolute; it is fluid and uncertain. The model of public authority controls the discourse of the household even as the latter usurps its precedence. By the same token, the language and resources of state masculinity are deployed to reconfigure and refashion its domestic counterpart. The chief interest of this chapter lies in exploring the limits of the congruity between state and domestic masculinities and the manner in which women writers represent the breakdown of this alliance.

In her examination of domestic conduct literature, Shepard discovers that '[h]eading a household was presented as the greatest portion of the patriarchal dividend to which all adult males might aspire, and it was often approached as the precondition of men's political involvement within the wider community'.¹⁰ Yet this 'precondition', far from promising 'men's political involvement within the wider community' could, on occasion, be regarded as the very reason for not allowing it. For Francis Bacon '[c]ertainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men, which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public'.¹¹ This representation of civic and domestic masculinities places them in opposition. Bacon goes on to say that 'single men, though they be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust, yet on the other side, they are more cruel and hard hearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon' (p. 82). This stands in direct opposition to Gouge's dictum where the family unit allows for a 'triall [to] be made of such as are fit for any place of

¹⁰ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, p. 70.

¹¹ Francis Bacon, 'Of Marriage and Single Life', in *Francis Bacon: The Essays*, ed., John Pitcher (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), pp. 81-82; 81.

authoritie' (sig. C2v). The holistic alignment between the family and the state no longer remains certain.

Despite the fact that Raber's study focuses on female characters like Lady Macbeth, Tamora, and Videna – whom she groups as 'murderous mothers' – and their classical precedents like Clytemnestra and Medea, she makes a point relevant to my research:

Murderous mothers in Renaissance drama are motivated first and foremost by blood ties and familial passions. Their existence threatens the integrity or continuity of the *polis*, an entity headed and controlled by the figure of the male monarch, and which requires in contrast an attachment or relationship to abstractions like law, nation, and good or bad rule. They are used, in other words, to oppose passionate, tribal or familial loyalties to the less immediate, but structurally crucial loyalties that bind a subject to the government whose representatives she or he must obey.¹²

Raber's idea that familial loyalties can potentially threaten the existence of the state's structural loyalties may not be solely applicable to 'murderous mothers'. Indeed, Bacon's reservations suggest that male figures in authority could allow familial concerns to override the political. In this chapter I will examine this tense relationship between the realms of the state and the domestic. I will explore the antithesis between domestic and political masculinities even as I focus on the manner in which men used their political authority to reshape their domestic relationships. Further, this chapter will investigate how women writers responded to male manipulation of, and negotiation, between these two roles. I will probe the discursive strategies used by women writers to reflect or revise definitions of domestic masculinity that are premised on masculine principles of governance. I initially examine the diegetic devices

¹² Raber, 'Murderous Mothers', p. 300.

marshalled by the Tudor sisters Mary and Elizabeth that subtly challenge their father's reconfiguration of his relationship with them on the strength of his political authority. The first section studies the ambivalent language in Mary's letter to her father, Henry VIII, as she relinquished her steadfast beliefs in the validity of her parents' marriage and accepted her father's supremacy over the Church of England. With a close focus on the historical context that reflects the amorphous nature of Mary's relationship with her father/ sovereign, this section argues how notwithstanding her circumscribed position, Mary challenged and sought to limit her father's authority and in the process reshaped the congruity between domestic and political masculinities. The second section looks at the letters prefacing Elizabeth's translation of Marguerite of Navarre's *Miroir de l'âme pécheresse* and Queen Katherine's *Prayer or Meditations* to discuss the role of female translation as a mechanism for participating in familial discourse and specifically as a device to redefine domestic masculinity. The remaining sections of the chapter extend these concerns to Jane Lumley's translation of Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*.

In this chapter I am hesitant to use the terms 'public' and 'private'. The terms are not only fraught with complications and contradictions but abstain from any real engagement with the issues at stake.¹³ Further they suggest a sense of neat division

¹³ Ronald Bedford, Lloyd Davis and Philippa Kelly's nuanced study complicates a routine understanding of public and private selves and corresponding social functions in the particular historical context when the works under discussion were written. They argue that 'in early modern English writings there did not exist the sharp division between a private 'I' and the social role permitted to the 'I' (*Early modern English lives: autobiography and self-representation 1500-1600* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 4). Karen Raber argues that the distinction between public and private spheres was blurred in the sixteenth-century ('Domestic Drama: The Politics of Mary Sidney's *Antonie*' in *Dramatic Difference: Gender, Class, and Genre in the Early Modern Closet Drama* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001), pp. 52-110; see especially, 52-54). Somewhat differently, while Lena Cowen Orlin mistrusts assumptions made on a clearly delineated public and private boundary, she does not discount the need for a private self emergent in the writings of the period. Further, she detects 'an abundance of evidence for communal resistance to

between activities in the two realms that is not only unable to withstand questioning, but also excludes any real engagement of women writers with ‘public’ concerns because social precepts forbade such interaction. Susan Wiseman cautions against this scholarly pitfall: ‘the prohibition against women’s participation in the political arena that characterises the early modern period (as opposed to the modern), rather than meaning that women had no relationship to the political arena, set the terms of their relationship to it’.¹⁴ Laura Gowing highlights the fluid and permeable boundary between the public and the private: “‘Public’ and ‘private’, ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ the house were, in fact, no more easily separable than ‘domestic’ and ‘political’”.¹⁵

For the purpose of this chapter, I instead offer ‘state’ and ‘domestic’ as alternatives to ‘public’ and ‘private’ respectively. I categorise domestic masculinity as being premised on household superintendence and paying due regard to familial relationships and broader kinship networks. State masculinity is determined chiefly as the proper acquittal of civic responsibilities, adherence to legal discourse, and an overriding concern for the nation’s political interests. While the sphere of domestic masculinity is circumscribed in comparison to state masculinity, both are motivated by and influence ‘public’ and ‘private’ worlds.

privacy’ (*Locating privacy in Tudor London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 10). My discussion on Agamemnon will elaborate on the idea of communal resistance to private agency.

¹⁴ Susan Wiseman, ‘Exemplarity, women and political rhetoric’ in *Rhetoric, Women and Politics in Early Modern England*, eds., Jennifer Richards and Alison Thorne (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 129-48; 145.

¹⁵ Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 26.

1. *Daughter of a King: Mary Tudor and Henry VIII*

Mary Tudor uses a sophisticated vocabulary that enmeshes the domestic and the state in a letter written to her father, Henry VIII. The letter was written on 22nd June, 1536, just a few days after the execution of Anne Boleyn. Imbued with the colours of flattery and submission, the letter affirmed Mary's relenting to Henry VIII's demands of accepting 'his supremacy over the English church, as well as the invalidity of his marriage to her mother'.¹⁶

Most humbly prostrate before the feet of Your Most Excellent Majesty, your most humble, faithful, and obedient subject, which hath so extremely offended Your Most Gracious Highness that my heavy and fearful heart dare not presume to call you father.

Mary recognises her trespass in a civic lexicon. She stresses her position as a compliant subject to the king and is anxious to dissociate herself from the charge of contumacy. Yet the manner in which she presents her penitent self appears to undo her identity as the king's daughter. A contrite subject can address her king and seek refuge in the 'benignity of [his] most blessed nature'; however, she claims to have lost the courage to acknowledge the more intimate relationship that characterises them: 'my heavy and fearful heart dare not presume to call you father' (p. 664). At first glance this suggests that in not performing the oblations of obedience and gratitude, Mary confesses to having damaged the relationship between her father and herself beyond repair. Yet the heaviness of her heart could just as easily lie in being coerced to accept the dissolution

¹⁶ George M. Logan, Stephen Greenblatt, Barbara K. Lewalski and Katharine Eisaman Maus, eds., *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Eighth Edition, Volume B: The Sixteenth Century, The Early Seventeenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), p. 664.

of her parents' marriage. Concurrently, she testifies her alertness to the complexity of her father's missive: Henry VIII's injunctions are not directed towards a disobedient daughter but a rebellious subject.¹⁷ There is also a spirit of sardonic humour in Mary's self-representation as a subject of the king rather than his daughter, which can be linked directly to her reluctance to accept the divorce of her parents.¹⁸ She is testing the identity of a relationship whose source lies in a union no longer valid.

When she claims that she 'dare not presume' to address Henry VIII as her father, Mary is echoing the First Act of Succession that was passed in 1534, where the king's 'moste humble and obedyent subjectes', declared the marriage between Henry VIII and Lady Catherine to be 'utterlie voyde and adnychyled'.¹⁹ The act cited a 'Brother to mary his brothers wyfe' as one of various instances of marrying within varying degrees of kinship that are 'prohibited by God's lawes' to validate the dissolution of the royal marriage. Further, the parliament unequivocally deemed the 'children procedyng and procreate under suche unlawfull mariage [as not] lawfull ne legittymate' thereby denying Mary's relationship with her father a valid and legal status (p. 472).

¹⁷ That Mary recognised a distinction between Henry VIII's paternal and royal authority is attested by her biographer Anna Whitelock who observes that '[a]lthough Mary loved and respected Henry as her father, she refused to submit to his will as King'. Henry VIII demanded a great sacrifice of personal beliefs from Mary. He wanted her to recognise the Church of England and his supreme headship of it, the invalidity of his marriage with Catherine of Aragon, and her own status as an illegitimate child (*Mary Tudor* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009), p. 61).

¹⁸ On Mary Tudor's persistent but eventually futile struggle against recognising her parents' divorce and her own illegitimacy see Whitelock, *Mary Tudor*, pp. 53-89. The letter studied here was written at the crucial point when, facing political peril and the likelihood of being tried for treason, Mary finally abandoned her resistant enterprise.

¹⁹ *The Statutes of the Realm : printed by command of His Majesty King George the Third, in pursuance of an address of the House of Commons of Great Britain : from original records and authentic manuscripts* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1963), p. 472.

The parliament justifies its intervention in a 'private cause' by declaring that cause to be one 'upon whiche dependeth all [their] joye and welth' (p. 471). Although the members of the parliament admit that 'it is the naturall inclinacion of every man gladely and wyllynglye to provyde for the suertie of bothe hys title and succession', they also recognise that when a 'private cause' is 'unyted and knytte' with public interests, this 'naturall inclinacion' must follow communal goals (p. 471). This is deeply ironic, chiefly because the parliament is following Henry VIII's 'naturall inclinacion' to precision. The gesture was almost undoubtedly staged by Henry VIII to rationalise his private will of divorcing Catherine of Aragon, taking Anne Boleyn as his wife and securing succession to the heirs from the latter marriage on the strength of the 'auctoritie of [the] parliament'(p. 472). However, this should not obscure the fact that it was necessary to dramatise a domestic crisis and its resolution in a public arena, and that external intervention was accorded legitimacy. The parliament's supplication for a 'mooste gracious and royall assente' (p. 472) may be a mockery of the tiered differentiation between the state and the domestic, but its sinister implications will form part of the focus of my study of Jane Lumley's *Tragedy of Iphigenia* later in this chapter.

It is important here to consider the implications of being branded as illegitimate. The *OED* gives a useful indicator as to how the words 'bastard' and 'illegitimate' were understood in the early modern context. Quoting Henry's Second Act of Succession, the *OED* defines illegitimate as 'not born in lawful wedlock; not recognized by law as lawful offspring; spurious, bastard' and then emphasises how this was 'the earliest sense in Eng[lish]'. 'Bastard' is similarly defined: 'One begotten and born out of

wedlock; an illegitimate or natural child'. It is difficult to estimate paternal affection for illegitimate children in early modern England. For Gloucester though 'the whoreson [Edmund] must be acknowledged', it is with an air of reluctance and resignation: 'I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it' (*King Lear*, 1.1.22; 1.1.8-10).²⁰ Aside from the social stigma associated with bastardy, illegitimate children in early modern England had no claim to their father's inheritance.²¹

The First Act of Succession merely formalised Mary's reduced status in the political and consanguineous hierarchy immediately after Elizabeth's birth in 1533. In her biography Anna Whitelock writes:

Within a week of Elizabeth's birth, Mary's Chamberlain, Sir John Hussey, received instructions 'concerning the diminishing of her high estate of the name and dignity of the princess'. Mary was to cease using the title immediately; her badges were to be cut from her servants' clothing and replaced with the arms of the King. She was now to be known only as 'the Lady Mary, the King's daughter': she was a bastard and no longer acknowledged as the King's heir.²²

Mary, however, did not renounce her title of a princess and therefore refused to identify herself as Henry's bastard.²³ Mary's tenacious grip on her convictions blighted the

²⁰ William Shakespeare, *King Lear* in Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard and Katharine Eisaman Maus, eds., *The Norton Shakespeare* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997).

²¹ For a comprehensive discussion of social, moral, and legal implications of illegitimacy in early modern England see Patricia Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England* (Harlow: Pearson, 2004), pp. 124-130. There is evidence that some fathers acknowledged their bastards and even left them bequests. For this minority '[t]heir problem was more likely to be reconciling private feelings with the public view which was anxious to condemn illegitimacy', (Alison Findlay, *Illegitimate Power: Bastards in Renaissance Drama* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 31; 28. For a discussion on the prejudice endemic in the social outlook towards illegitimacy see pp. 1-44).

²² Whitelock, *Mary Tudor*, p. 55. Judith Richards illustrates Mary's diminished social and political status following the birth of Elizabeth: 'Henry's infant daughter [Elizabeth] was accorded all the ceremony and deference once directed to Mary, with the corollary that the elder daughter was generally required to give public precedence to her half-sister. Once at least she was allowed to ride ahead of the litter in which her half-sister travelled, but usually she was forced to submit to the public humiliation of less rich dress, less rich accoutrements, fewer attendants and a subordinate place in the retinue', *Mary Tudor* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), p. 58.

²³ Whitelock, *Mary Tudor*, pp. 55-59. Even in desperate circumstances Mary stood her ground. 'By February 1534 she was 'nearly destitute of clothes and other necessaries', and was compelled to ask her

father-daughter relationship and it was not until the execution of Anne Boleyn that there was a spirit of optimism in her assiduous pursuit of a reconciliation: ‘Now with a new stepmother [Jane Seymour], whose patrons were Mary’s leading supporters at court, there was hope of a return to favour and to the line of succession’.²⁴

This hope for Mary’s rehabilitation in the political genealogy may at first appear extraordinary, particularly when read against the harsh and clearly defined stipulations of the First Act of Succession. However, the question of Mary’s legitimacy was not an easy one to settle. David Loades notes that the First Act of Succession that declared Mary illegitimate may not have withstood close scrutiny. He writes, ‘[t]he omniscience of statute was new and untried, and it was perfectly possible to argue that Mary, having been born in *bona fide parentum* remained legitimate in law even if the marriage of her parents was subsequently found to have been defective’.²⁵ Indeed earlier in the year in April when negotiations to engineer a reconciliation between Henry VIII and Charles V were being conducted, the latter demanded a recognition of Mary’s legitimacy and right to the throne as one of the terms of the alliance on precisely this principle.²⁶ Sir Anthony Browne and Sir Francis Bryan who were believed to be supporting Mary’s reinstatement in the line of succession were arrested in

father for help. But even then Mary remained defiant: the messenger was instructed to accept money or clothing if they were offered, ‘but not to accept any writing in which she was not entitled princess’ (pp. 58-59). Upon contesting Lady Jane’s claim to the throne following the death of Edward VI, the Privy Council painfully reminded Mary that she was ‘Lady Mary’ and that ‘by an Act of Parliament she stood illegitimate and unable to inherit’ (p. 168).

²⁴ Whitelock, *Mary Tudor*, p. 81.

²⁵ David Loades, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (Stroud: Amberley, 2009), p. 72.

²⁶ Whitelock, *Mary Tudor*, p. 81; also, Loades, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, p. 77. Whitelock documents that even after reconciling herself to Henry’s conditions, Mary was compelled to write to Charles V before she would be received at court testifying ‘the acknowledgment of the statutes declaring her mother’s marriage unlawful and her decision to freely renounce her right to the throne’ (*Mary Tudor* p. 91).

June; their interrogation reveals the state's anxiety around the gathering strength of Mary's claim to legitimacy founded on *bona fide parentum* (when the parents believed themselves to be married in good faith). In his examination while Sir Anthony Browne diplomatically testifies that 'touching *bona fides parentum*, he has heard it of many, but cannot remember anyone', he is equally keen to assure Henry VIII where his true loyalty lies: 'if the lady Mary would not submit herself [to Henry's commandments] he would she were buried'.²⁷ The strain between the tenets of the First Act of Succession and the concept of *bona fide parentum* reached this apogee quite possibly because of the difficulty in determining the clauses of the Second Act of Succession that was being prepared. Unless Mary complied with her father's demands and forsook her identity as his legitimate daughter, there would be no resolution. Moreover, '[i]n the eyes of Henry's advisers, Mary's continuing resistance to her father made her an ever more attractive instrument for international Catholic plots against the existing regime'.²⁸

The letter under consideration here, written on June 22, 1536 performed Mary's submission to her father's terms under dire circumstances. Faced with the certain prospect of being tried for treason, Mary recanted the rights she had long fought for. Yet in her letter Mary quickly abandons the initial facade of presenting herself as an ordinary citizen and surreptitiously works towards forging anew her filial relationship with Henry VIII. She reworks the grounds of the terms imposed upon her by Henry VIII and transforms them from a royal command to a 'perfect trial of [her] heart and inward affection'. She portrays herself as a 'miserable and sorrowful child' who is

²⁷ 'The Princess Mary' in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII Vol. 10: 1536*, ed. J. Gairdner. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1887. *State Papers Online*.

²⁸ Richards, *Mary Tudor*, p. 61.

moved to make ‘the perfect declaration’ of her affection for her father. She admits that her refusal to obey Henry VIII’s commands was ‘a thousandfold more grievous than [it] could be [for] any other living creature’. Further, she reproaches herself as having been ‘unnaturally’ inclined towards disobedience, contravening filial piety. Even in her repentance, Mary claims a unique relationship with Henry VIII. She does not seek refuge in her sovereign’s munificence but instead appeals to his ‘fatherly pity’ (p. 664). Within the course of a single letter Mary moves from the initial position of a remorseful subject to an apologetic daughter. Subsequently, her submission is hedged within the grounds of the intimate, familial relationship that she insists upon with her father. Mary’s letter therefore is a measured repositioning of a monarch who exploits his public authority to negate and alter his private relationships. In favouring Henry VIII’s domestic authority over its state equivalent and fastening her submission to this self-created hierarchy, Mary enframes Henry VIII’s masculinity and the concomitant privilege to regulate femininity within domestic bounds.

Mary triumphs in the artful negotiation of repositioning herself in filial terms when she closes her correspondence as a ‘most humble and obedient daughter and handmaid’ and not as one of ‘the most lovyng and obedient subjectes’ who had passed the Second Act of Succession a few days before.²⁹ This act, made on 8th June 1536, yet again pronounced ‘the issue borne and procreated under the same unlawfull marriage, made and solemnized betwene [Henry VIII] and the said Lady Katyne, [as] taken demed and accepted illegitimate’ (p. 658). Given that the politics behind the dissolution of the marriage between Henry VIII and Lady Catherine were inseparable from declaring

²⁹ Norton Anthology, p. 665; *Statutes of the Realm*, p. 655.

Mary illegitimate, Mary's continual regard of Henry VIII as her father rather than her king obliquely questions her acceptance of her parents' divorce. The letter written soon after obtaining Henry VIII's forgiveness on June 26, 1536 awards a syntactic precedence to the familial that mirrors Mary's belief in its primacy; Henry VIII is addressed as her 'most dear and benign father and sovereign'.³⁰ It is important to note that Mary's defiance remains bound to an acknowledgment of the established power hierarchy between her father and herself for it is a relationship she is anxious to reclaim and preserve. She accordingly styles herself as 'humble', 'obedient', and a 'handmaid'.³¹ However, her insistence on the intimate and the familial, which Henry VIII resolutely denied, and her independent reconfiguration of family ties are just as significant.

2. *Translation and the Familial Realm*

Mary's half-sister, Elizabeth, also shared a tumultuous relationship with their father, Henry VIII. If Mary's revision of her relationship with her father was enframed within the art of letter writing, Princess Elizabeth opted for a different discursive strategy, that of translation. Before focusing on Elizabeth's translations, I would briefly like to consider the role of translation in the context of familial discourse. Although translation was a common scholarly activity in the sixteenth century, its rules and methods were uncertain and open to interpretation. Morini observes that while 'the theoretical

³⁰ *State Papers Online*, Gale, Cengage Learning, 2010. 21 August 2010. <<http://go.galegroup.com/mss/i.do?id=GALE|MC4301881246&v=2.1&u=universityofyork&it=r&p=SPOL&sw=w&viewtype=Calendar>>.

³¹ James Daybell remarks that the word 'handmaid' was frequently used by women to denote supplication, humility and self-abnegation in letters of petition in the period (*Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 248-49).

statements contained in the prefaces to sixteenth-century translations are imbued with literalism, in practice the translators behaved in a radically different manner, altering, cutting, and adding to what they found in the text they chose to ‘English’.³² In his study, Morini takes into account the fluid interplay between ‘the humanistic insistence upon accuracy’ and the vestiges of a medieval tradition that marked translations in the first half of the sixteenth-century. Medieval translators were encouraged to rewrite, recreate and transform the original to convey its *essence* and this influenced contemporary translation practices.³³

This discursive uncertainty over the techniques and purpose of translation allowed for the expression of individual subjectivities and preferences. In particular, the advantages of this medium were not lost on female writers. Danielle Clark recognises the ambivalent relationship that translation had to notions of authorship in early modern England. She writes that the ‘relative marginality or slipperiness of ownership [of the translation] can be exploited as a form of agency to figures who otherwise lack it

³² Massimiliano Morini, *Tudor Translation in Theory and Practice* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 3.

³³ Morini, *Tudor Translation*, pp. 1-34. Recent research confirms the fluid nature of translations in the early half of the sixteenth century which, as Morini postulates, was quite likely a product of medieval influences. In her study of Jacob Locher’s translation of Sebastian Brant’s *Das Narrenschiff* in Latin titled *Stultifera navis*, Brenda Hosington remarks how despite the translation being supervised by Brant, Locher ‘omitted and added much, while changing the tone from Brant’s familiar and at times earthy German into that of a more learned discourse, as one might expect from a Latin version’. Locher’s translation was itself translated into English by Alexander Barclay in 1509 which reflected English topography and sensibilities. Twice removed from the original, Barclay’s English text is designed for easy comprehension for his readers and does not follow the theoretical injunctions prizing scrupulous adherence to the source text which would characterise later sixteenth-century translations (‘Sebastian Brant’s *Das Narrenschiff* in Early Modern England: A Textual Voyage’, in *Lexicography, Terminology, and Translation: text-based studies in honour of Ingrid Meyer*, ed. Lynne Bowker (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2006), pp. 145-158; 145). Similarly in her examination of William Barker’s *Dyssputacion off the Noblytye off Wymen* Hosington discusses how Barker adapts the source text to accommodate the socio-linguistic valency recognisable to the audience of his translation. “‘A poore preasant off Ytalyan costume’”: The Interplay of Travel and Translation in William Barker’s *Dyssputacion off the Noblytye off Wymen*’, in *Travel and Translation in the Early Modern Period*, ed., Carmine G. Di Biase (New York: Rodopi, 2006), pp. 143-58.

(women), and as a form of evasion for those who might wish to place some distance between author and text (this category might also include women)'.³⁴ I am interested in the manner in which original texts could be domesticated by women writers to suit their agendas and emerge as a powerful mode to negotiate familial relationships. Clark asserts that '[t]here is no doubt, whatever the nature of the text translated (drama, poetry, theology, romance), that for most women, the household and the family are the crucible within which this kind of activity is forged and encouraged'.³⁵ For the subjects of my study, Elizabeth Tudor and Jane Lumley, the immediate environment which promoted this skill became the foremost object of consideration and assessment.

In a letter prefacing her translation to Marguerite of Navarre's *Miroir de l'âme pécheresse* addressed to Queen Katherine Parr, the eleven-year old Elizabeth Tudor outlines her reasons for choosing this text.

The which book is entitled or named The Mirror or Glass of the Sinful Soul, wherein is contained how she (beholding and contemplating what she is) doth perceive how of herself and of her own strength, unless it be through the grace of God, whose mother, daughter, sister, and wife by the Scriptures she proveth herself to be. Trusting also that through His incomprehensible love, grace, and mercy, she (being called from sin to repentance) doth faithfully hope to be saved.³⁶

The thematic value of the text corresponds neatly with behaviour and ideas associated with virtuous femininity in the early modern period. The woman is defined in terms of the reassuring patriarchal relationships she shares with men that assign her to a

³⁴ Danielle Clarke, 'Translation', in *Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed., Laura Lunger Knoppers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 170.

³⁵ Clarke, 'Translation', p. 174.

³⁶ Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, ed., *Elizabeth I: Collected Writings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 7.

domestic domain: ‘mother, daughter, sister, and wife’.³⁷ Yet in sharing these multiple relationships with a single entity (God) and devising it as a strategy of self-representation, Elizabeth’s trope unsettles even as it complies with normative gender roles and, arguably, transports the woman beyond the household. In her discussion of the original, Anne Lake Prescott notes how Marguerite’s text

...explores a set of analogies through which mortals can indicate otherwise incommunicable religious feelings, expressing them in terms of familial and erotic relationships. This powerful language is valuable, but it is also disconcerting, both because the analogies risk shaping a religious perception according to the anxieties and limitations of human relationships, and because to think about the Incarnation in this way runs rapidly into tangles of metaphor which if applied to other humans would suggest incest, gender confusion, and even loss of identity. Marguerite is thus deliberately playing with psychologically and semantically explosive material, although she has ample biblical precedent.³⁸

In her translation Elizabeth uses the discursive uncertainty of the source text’s ‘semantically explosive material’ to her advantage in reconceptualising her familial position. Elizabeth’s letter presents a singular petition to Queen Catharine. She writes,

But I hope that after to have been in your grace’s hands, there shall be nothing in it worthy of reprehension, and that in the meanwhile no other but your highness only shall read it or see it, less my faults be known to many (p. 7).

³⁷ Marc Shell offers a striking interpretation of these roles that Elizabeth highlights. He contends, ‘Elizabeth notes that the *Miroir* shows how a woman for whom it was once sin to be related to a being as both his daughter and wife can become affined guiltlessly to another Being as “mother, daughter, sister, and, wife”. In her “Glass”, Elizabeth discovers and explores a way to rise above the taboo of ordinary incest’. For Shell this adroit reinterpretation of incest through the prism of *sponsa Christi* was Elizabeth’s way of coming to terms with the charge of incest that led to her mother, Anne Boleyn’s infamous trial and execution and her alleged bastardy. Marc Shell, ed., *Elizabeth’s Glass* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), pp. 19-20; see also pp. 16-29.

³⁸ Anne Lake Prescott, ‘The Pearl of the Valois and Elizabeth I: Marguerite de Navarre’s *Miroir* and Tudor England’, in *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed., Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1985), pp. 61-76; 68.

The translated text emerges as not only a material token commemorating the intimacy and exclusivity of Elizabeth's relationship with Queen Katharine but indeed the very means through which these sentiments can be furthered. In asking Queen Katherine to be the sole reader of her translation, Elizabeth is assigning the text a unique role in her domestic circuit. Further, Elizabeth envisages a distinctive reading engagement with the text. Would the very act of being read by a queen elevate the translation irrespective of its flaws or is the princess inviting her stepmother to participate in a collaborative project? I suggest that the 'grace's hands' are urged to do more than merely hold the translation and are rather solicited to revise it. Elizabeth writes:

Howbeit it is like a work which is but new begun and shapen, that the file of your excellent wit and godly learning in the reading of it, if so it vouchsafe your highness to do, shall rub out, polish, and mend (or else cause to mend) the words (or rather the order of my writing), the which I know in many places to be rude and nothing done as it should be (p. 7).

Marc Shell, in his introduction to a modern edition of the text presents a similar idea: 'Catherine, herself the author of such religious meditations as *The Lamentacion of a Synner* (1547) and *Prayers, or Meditations* (1545), may have amended the manuscript – as Elizabeth had asked her to do in her covering letter – and probably added some new material of her own'.³⁹ Certainly the publication of Elizabeth's translation by John Bale in 1548 as *A Godly Medytacyon of the Christen Sowle* was not without the mediation of her stepmother.⁴⁰ Translations thus served a dual purpose. They created a community of female literary activity as is evident in the textual voyage of Elizabeth's *Glass* and in the intra-textual mechanisms of *Iphigeneia* studied below. Elizabeth's

³⁹ *Elizabeth's Glass*, p. 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

only known letter to Henry VIII testifies how translations were also directed by female writers to rework their familial positions.

The letter in question was written a year after the one addressed to Queen Katharine and significantly was designed to introduce the addressee to a set of translations by the writer. The date of the letter is noteworthy. Written in December, 1545, the letter followed the Third Act of Succession which came into effect in 1544. This final act of succession reflects the mercurial nature of Tudor filial relationships. Unlike Mary, Elizabeth always had a claim to the throne, albeit a peculiar one. The Second Act of Succession asserted that ‘all the issues and childerene, borne and procreated under the same mariage betwene your Highnes and the said late Quene Anne, shall be taken reputed and accepted [too] be illegittimate to all ententes and purposes’.⁴¹ However, political exigency demanded the prioritisation of public interests over private rancour. Unlike the First Succession Act where the parliament’s officious expression of the state’s welfare was merely an insincere exercise to justify Henry VIII’s will, its follow-up was obliged to tackle uncomfortable issues at the risk of displeasing the king. In the absence of any other suitable candidate (Edward VI was born in 1537), the Second Act of Succession was compelled to name Princess Elizabeth as the lawful successor to the throne ‘ayenste all honour equite reason and good consciens’.⁴²

⁴¹ *Statutes of the Realm*, p. 658.

⁴² *Statutes of the Realm*, p. 656. The Act fervently hopes for a successor following the union of Henry VIII and Queen Jane who would displace Elizabeth’s claim as he or she ‘cannot be lawfully truly nor justly interrupted or disturbed of the right and title in the succession of [the] crowne’ (p. 657). This simultaneously alerts us to the nature of Elizabeth’s relationship with her father, which was arguably as complex as her claim to the throne, and the corrosive interplay between the state and domestic worlds.

The Third Act of Succession imitated the template set by its predecessors in declaring Prince Edward as Henry VIII's sole legitimate child: 'Kynge Majestie hathe [one] onlye yssue of his bodye lafullye begotten betwixt his Highnes and his saide late Wief Queen Jane, the noble and excellente Prince, Prince Edwarde' (p. 955). While the pronouncement of Prince Edward as heir apparent is unsurprising, it is remarkable that this final act of succession not only reinstates Mary's claim to the throne but grants her precedence over Elizabeth:

in case it shall happen the Kinges majestie and the saide excellent Prince his yet onlye sonne Prince Edwarde and heire apparaunte, to decease without heire...the saide Imperiall Crowne and all the other pmisses shalbe to the Ladye Marie the Kinges Highnes Daughter and to [her] heires...and for defaulte of suche issue the saide Imperiall Crowne...shalbe to the Ladye Elizabeth the Kinges seconde daughter and to [her] heires' (p. 955).

In this context, Elizabeth's letter to Henry VIII introducing her father to the translations she is presenting as a New Year gift assumes added significance.

In a manner cognate with Mary's, despite the embellished recognition of Henry VIII's sovereignty, Elizabeth insists on situating her relationship with the king in filial, domestic and intimate terms that simultaneously weaves in the political elements of their relationship. The reason she gives for choosing the text for translation – Queen Katherine's *Prayer or Meditations* – is revealing:

...it was thought by me a most suitable thing that this work, which is most worthy because it was indeed a composition by a queen as a subject for her king, be translated into other languages by me, your daughter. May I, by this

means, be indebted to you not as an imitator of your virtues but indeed as an inheritor of them.⁴³

Confronted by taints of illegitimacy, twelve-year old Elizabeth's attempt to establish herself as an 'inheritor' of her father's merit is a daring one. In choosing to translate her stepmother's work, Elizabeth seems to be inviting the King to compare her attitude towards his later marriages with that of Mary. There is a unique union of political and familial vocabulary in Elizabeth: the terms 'king', 'queen', and 'subject' co-exist with the word 'daughter'. Elizabeth thus represents herself as an integral member of a dense network of filial alliances, unprecedented in English monarchy, as opposed to Mary who resists this repositioning.⁴⁴ Moreover, it unsettles the neat binaries between a domestic, secluded space of early modern femininity and the strident masculine domain of the parliament that early modern treatises routinely sought to reinforce. Further, the exchange between the ideas of imitation and inheritance through the presentation of a translated volume concurrently testifies to Elizabeth's attempt to redefine her relationship with her father even as it carries larger implications for the act of translation in early modern England. Translation is not merely a passive imitation or reproduction of its source material but articulates a personal subjectivity. Danielle Clarke affirms that 'translation is one very powerful means by which the early moderns

⁴³ *Collected Works*, p. 10

⁴⁴ On the subject of Elizabeth's relationship with her father I am hesitant to accept Prescott's observations which are based on her analysis of *Miroir*. For Prescott, 'Elizabeth's at times startling deviations [from the source] are worth noting, and unless much psychoanalytic thought is quite mistaken, cannot be without significance. To this English professor's untrained eye they indicate at best a confused anxiety and at worst a deep anger, particularly at her father'. Psychoanalysis is not necessarily an unreliable critical apparatus to decipher early modern subjectivities but needs to be exercised with caution; regardless, my research suggests that Elizabeth's relationship with her father, though complicated and deeply fraught, was something she solicited and attempted to reconfigure. Prescott, 'Pearl of the Valois and Elizabeth I', p. 69.

mediate and measure their relationship with their contested heritage'.⁴⁵ That Elizabeth used this medium to assert her contested genetic rather than literary heritage is apposite.

Finally, masked under standard professions of humility and the translator's modest abilities, the letter's directions to the recipient on how to read the translation are very different from the ones given to Queen Katharine a year previously. Elizabeth exhorts the king to view 'this divine work as more to be esteemed, because it has been composed by the most serene queen, your spouse, and [...] held in slightly greater worth because it has been translated by your daughter' (p. 10). Absent are entreaties to the recipient's finer judgment and superior skills to correct the work, 'fatherly goodness and royal prudence' can evidence themselves only if Henry VIII acknowledges the merit of the translator and her earnest desire to be an integral part of the royal family (p. 10). Elizabeth's cunning rhetoric thus redefines as well as reshapes both domestic and political masculine authorities according to female parameters.⁴⁶ It is evident that precocious young girls like Elizabeth Tudor recognised the value of translations that reached beyond the disciplinary confines of a classroom exercise.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Clarke, 'Translation', p. 168.

⁴⁶ Elizabeth's adroit discursive strategies as a monarch are studied in the following chapter. As my discussion here makes apparent, she started developing them at a fairly young age.

⁴⁷ The dexterous ability with which Tudor girls undertook translations is increasingly being recognised. Critics are recovering important engagements with contemporary literary debates and political ideas that took place in the seemingly insular environment of the Tudor-girl classroom. Case in point is Elizabeth Berkley nee Carey's adolescent translation of two Petrarchan sonnets in English that were discovered a few years ago. The translations survive in a four-leaf manuscript and, as Katharine Duncan-Jones argues, were in all likelihood a classroom exercise for Elizabeth Berkley designed by her tutor, Henry Stanford. The translations not only reflect a personal interpretation of Laura but also transform her into 'an icon of English Protestant virtue' that at once affirm the blossoming poetic merits of the translator but also her awareness of the delicacy with which Catholic imports had to be treated. Katharine Duncan-Jones, 'Bess Carey's Petrarch: Newly Discovered Elizabethan Sonnets', *Review of English Studies*, 50 (1999), pp. 304-19; 314. A similar instance of a tutor encouraging prodigious linguistic and poetic talents of his female pupils is evidenced in the publication of the Seymour sisters' *Hecatodistichon* in 1550 in Paris by

Translations could and indeed did perform an important function in familial discourse of cementing and/ or refashioning relationships. It is with this in mind that I now turn to Jane Lumley's *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia*.

3. *Jane Lumley's 'The Tragedie of Iphigeneia': Dating the Translation*

While Henry VIII's strategic manipulation of ideas of public welfare and the parliament's complicity in allowing it to succeed has been noted above, Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis* explores the sinister implications of state intervention in a ruler's domestic life. A quick summary of Lumley's translation of the play is in order. The Greek army led by Agamemnon to embark upon war with Troy and reclaim Helen is impeded at Aulis for the lack of favourable wind. Divination offers only one solution: the sacrifice of Iphigenia, Agamemnon's daughter, to appease the wrath of Diana. Reluctant but compelled, Agamemnon sends for Iphigenia under the pretext of marrying her to Achilles at the camp. She arrives with her mother, Clytemnestra. Upon their arrival, Clytemnestra quickly discovers her husband's deceit and after failing to convince him to save their daughter turns to Achilles. Achilles agonises over using his name to support the sacrificial scheme (of which he was wholly ignorant) and promises

their tutor Nicolas Denisot. Unlike the texts studied here, *Hecatodistichon* is an original composition of 104 distichs in Latin celebrating the virtues of the lately deceased Marguerite de Navarre. The youngest sister, Jane Seymour was nine years old when the poem was written and while it is fairly likely that she had help from her adolescent older sisters Anne and Margaret, the work attests to the astonishing abilities of young female scholars of the period. See Brenda Hosington, 'England's First Female-Authored Encomium: The Seymour Sisters' *Hecatodistichon* (1550) to Marguerite de Navarre. Text, Translation, Notes and Commentary', *Studies in Philology*, 93 (1996), pp. 117-163. Julie Campbell's insightful account argues that '[t]he circulation of the Seymour sisters' work...may be seen as a joint Franco-English attempt at illustrating accord among members of the highest echelons of French and English society, those who would most profit from being in favor with ruling powers' ('Crossing International Borders: Tutors and the Transmission of Young Women's Writing', in *Early Modern Women and Transnational Communities of Letters*, ed. Julie D. Campbell and Anne R. Larsen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 214-228; 219).

protection to both Clytemnestra and Iphigenia, offering his hand in marriage to the latter. Iphigenia refuses his proposal, discovers glory and renown in the idea of sacrificing herself for her country's benefit, and willingly embraces her fatal destiny. It is later reported that a hart appeared miraculously as a substitute for Iphigenia at the sacrificial altar, strongly suggesting that she found a seat in heaven.

Jane Lumley's translation of *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia* has not been dated with precision. The chronology in the *Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing* lists 1550 as the play's year of composition.⁴⁸ Diane Purkiss, the editor of the play's modern edition, is reluctant to accept this early dating of the play and expresses her reservations about the abilities of juvenile Jane. Purkiss writes – 'Lady Lumley would only have been twelve or thirteen when she completed *Iphigeneia*, not impossible in the sixteenth-century, but rather prodigious'.⁴⁹ The earliest critics of the play reflect a similar prejudice. David Greene's discomfort in stating 'we are then faced with the unusual situation of attributing the first English translation of Greek tragedy to a thirteen-year-old girl' is palpable.⁵⁰ Frank Crane echoes Greene: 'It is very difficult to believe [that] an English girl of fourteen was able to translate the Iphigenia, directly from the Greek, in any manner whatever'.⁵¹

⁴⁸ *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, p. xiv.

⁴⁹ Jane Lumley, *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia* in *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, ed. Diane Purkiss (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 168. All references to Lumley's translation will be from this edition.

⁵⁰ David H. Greene, 'Lady Lumley and Greek Tragedy', *The Classical Journal*, 36 (1941), pp. 537-47; 539.

⁵¹ Frank D. Crane, 'Euripides, Erasmus, and Lady Lumley', *The Classical Journal*, 39 (1944), pp. 223-28; 224. Both Crane and Greene argue that Lumley used Erasmus' Latin translation as a guide. This is generally accepted.

In recent criticism the play is increasingly being dated to the mid-1550s, particularly in the context of Lady Jane Grey's short, tragic reign.⁵² Although this date meets the demands of the general line of argument that critics are following currently in relation to the play, there is practically no internal evidence to support this shift in chronology. The most plausible one is that Jane Lumley did not have access to a Greek edition before 1553. Diane Purkiss' observation is typical:

There is reason to think [the play] must date from after Mary's accession and the overthrow of Thomas Cranmer, since Lady Lumley *appears* to have used his copy of Euripides, *if she consulted a Greek text at all*; with characteristic rapacity, Arundel snaffled Cranmer's library upon the confiscation and sale of his goods. Lady Lumley's translation may have been intended to celebrate these events, and to exalt her father's restoration to the political centre as a sacrifice of leisure for the interests of the state.⁵³ (emphasis mine)

The possibility that Jane Lumley may not have used a Greek text is not pursued further.⁵⁴ While I am not sympathetic to Crane's disparaging comments on Lumley's abilities (he concludes rather viciously, 'Lady Lumley shows no knowledge of Greek, and none of poetry in any language; her version succeeds only in reducing high tragedy

⁵² See Marta Straznicki, 'Private Drama' in *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women*, pp. 247-59; especially, 249-50; also, Patricia Demers 'On First Looking into Lumley's Euripides', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 23 (1999), pp. 25-42. Marion Wynne-Davies proposes, just as credibly, an even later date, 1557, see 'The Good Lady Lumley's Desire: *Iphigeneia* and the Nonsuch banqueting house' in *Heroines of the Golden Stage: Women and Drama in England and Spain: 1500-1700*, ed., Rina Walthaus and Marguerite Corporaal (Barcelona, Reichenberger Press, 2008), pp. 111-128. Wynne-Davies argues that Jane Fitzalan reworks Euripides' tragedy to reflect on Lady Jane Grey's short reign and her family's contribution in deposing her. She remarks that '[i]t is important to recall that Jane Lumley wrote *Iphigenia* before Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*' Protestant valorisation of Jane Grey appeared in print. Thus, like other eyewitness accounts of Lady Jane Grey's short rule, Lumley depicts the Queen as a helpless victim to be pitied, and not as the inspiring martyr she subsequently became' ('Representations of Relations on the Political Stage within the Fitzalan/ Lumley Household' in *Women Writers and Familial Discourse: Relative Values* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 63-88; see especially 80-85; 84).

⁵³ Purkiss, *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, p. xxiv.

⁵⁴ It is of course possible that if Lumley based her translation on the Greek original, the text may have been lost or as Purkiss comments (not without sarcasm) 'was mysteriously removed from the Lumley library' (*Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, p. 168).

to a mediocre tale of “troble”) his argument that Lumley did not consult any Greek edition and translated the play directly from Erasmus’ Latin version is compelling.⁵⁵ I am surprised that recent criticism has not taken Crane into account at all, probably because of his antipathy to a text that has sparked a lively and just interest among scholars. Aside from the temptation of reading reflections of political upheaval in the play, it seems that the later date is also preferred to dissociate the text from the perceived limited abilities of a younger translator. However, Jane Lumley’s youth should not be regarded as a factor in dismissing the claim for a 1550 dating. It was not unusual for young girls to show facility in linguistic and translational skills as has been noted in the case of Elizabeth Tudor, Elizabeth Berkley nee Carey, and the Seymour sisters above.⁵⁶

The editor of the Malone Society edition, Harold Child, steps away from the difficulty of dating the play and is content to observe that ‘the date of translation is not known’.⁵⁷ However, his critical convictions are strong in a different quarter. He is quite firm that the play was ‘of course, produced after Lady Lumley’s marriage’. He imagines the Lumley household as characterised by a literary proliferation that encouraged Jane to undertake the translation of Euripides’ tragedy: ‘husband and wife pursued their

⁵⁵ Crane, ‘Euripides, Erasmus, and Lady Lumley’, p. 228.

⁵⁶ Shell raises some searching questions in his introduction to *Elizabeth’s Glass* that intrigue me. He points out that ‘[t]here has been no readily available edition of Elizabeth’s translation of Marguerite’s poem since 1590...The “Glass” is to this day the only translation of one of Queen Marguerite’s most beautiful and enigmatic meditations. Elizabeth I wrote a fair number of literary works, and most have been published, some in good scholarly editions. Why has this particular work, listed in the oldest bibliographies, been virtually ignored?’. This is despite the fact the ‘text is the combined work of two or three of Europe’s greatest monarchs (Marguerite, Elizabeth, Catherine). As published, it includes important writings by a key theologian of the English Reformation (Bale)’. Shell remarks that this neglect could easily be attributed to the critical commonplace ‘that the “Glass” is merely the effort of an immature young girl’ (*Elizabeth’s Glass*, pp. 5-6).

⁵⁷ Harold Child, ed., *Iphigenia at Aulis translated by Lady Lumley* (Chiswick Press, 1909), p. vi.

classical studies concurrently, and... the present play was translated at no longer period subsequent to their marriage'.⁵⁸ I would like to argue that the translation could have just as plausibly have been carried out before Lumley's marriage. The entry for Jane Lumley in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* is as indecisive on the year of her marriage as the date of the composition of the play is in scholarship. Stephanie Hodgson-Wright records that Jane Fitzalan was married to John Lumley, 'probably by 1550 and certainly before 1553'.⁵⁹ In contrast John Lumley's biographical sketch is far more definite: 'Lumley's manuscript translation of Erasmus, *Institution of a Christian Prince* (BL, Royal MS 17 A.xlix) is inscribed to Arundel at the end, 'your lordshippes obedient sone, J. Lumley 1550', suggesting that he was married by that date'.⁶⁰ I have not come across any other evidence besides the dedication to Lumley's translation of Erasmus to Arundel that can be used conclusively to date the marriage to 1550.⁶¹ A mechanical reading of 'your lordshippes obedient sone' does not take into account the plurality of meanings that filial relationships could take in early modern households.⁶² Felicity Riddy in her insightful essay on the complex network of familial relationships in Thomas More's household draws attention to the fact that the 'Latin word *familia* was not restricted to kin, but referred to a wider, co-resident group. The English word

⁵⁸ Child, *Iphigenia*, pp. vi-vii.

⁵⁹ Hodgson-Wright, Stephanie. "Lumley, Jane, Lady Lumley (1537–1578)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed. Ed. Lawrence Goldman. May 2008. 31 July 2010 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47846>>.

⁶⁰ Barron, Kathryn, 'Lumley, John, first Baron Lumley (c.1533–1609)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online edition, ed. Lawrence Goldman, 2007. 31 July 2010 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17179>>.

⁶¹ The first leaf of the manuscript from which the play is taken has a note in Lumley's hand which reads 'The doinge of my Lady Lumley, dowghter to my L. Therle of Arundell', which could have easily been inserted at a later date.

⁶² David Cressy similarly argues that in early modern England '[t]he basic relational terms – uncle, sister, father, daughter, cousin, etc. – were used without precision or consistency' ('Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 113 (1986), pp. 38-69; 66).

“familie” still carried these connotations in the early sixteenth-century’.⁶³ Riddy cites various examples – John Clement, More’s pupil; Margaret Giggs, More’s foster-daughter; and Joan Aleyn, Margaret More’s servant – who all described their relationships with More in paternal terms, definitions and forms of address that were duly reciprocated by the patriarch.⁶⁴ What is crucial to my argument here is that Anne Cresacre who married More’s son John and William Roper who became husband to More’s daughter, Margaret were part of the More household long before their respective marriages. In light of other evidence, it is highly likely that they thought of and addressed More as their father in the interim period. This observation can be extended to the Lumley-Fitzalan relationship, even more so as Lumley’s own father was executed for treason in 1537 and he developed a close friendship with Henry Fitzalan, the Earl’s son during their time together in Cambridge. It is not unlikely that he discovered a surrogate father-figure in the Earl of Arundel and addressed him in paternal terms even before or while he was affianced to his daughter.

I situate *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia* as participating in a domestic discourse not dissimilar to Elizabeth’s translations discussed above. Among other things, I characterise this discourse as an intimate and exclusive exchange of ideas between the writer and the intended reader, in this case the Earl of Arundel. The play presents the complex attitudes of a nubile girl towards wifhood and daughterhood. In order to

⁶³ Felicity Riddy, ‘Fathers and Daughters in Holbein’s Sketch of Thomas More’s Family’, in *Framing the family: Narrative and Representation in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, ed. Rosalynn Voaden and Diane Wolfthal (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), pp. 19-38. Riddy also contends that ‘[t]he vocabulary of kin was anyway regularly extended in a world in which young people often spent part of their adolescence in service in other people’s homes’ (p. 28).

⁶⁴ Riddy, ‘Fathers and Daughters’, pp. 22-29.

distinguish the approach of this chapter towards the play from received criticism, I shall address the author as Jane Fitzalan instead of Jane Lumley. In doing so I am not claiming the superiority of my position with respect to the conjectural date of the translation and Jane Fitzalan's marital status at the time over the established one. I am merely pointing out that in the absence of any conclusive evidence both positions are equally possible. Indeed I do not view my interpretation of the play in opposition to but rather as a parallel to current scholarship, sharing the mutual aim of furthering its study.

4. *Jane Fitzalan's 'The Tragedie of Iphigeneia', Humanist Education, and Ideals of Femininity*

Henry Fitzalan ensured that his daughters received a thorough humanist education that reflected and strengthened the cultural capital of his family. Danielle Clarke recognises 'a deep commitment to humanist learning' in the Fitzalan-Lumley households that Jane demonstrably benefitted from.⁶⁵ For Purkiss, in introducing his daughters to the broad expanse of humanist education, Henry Fitzalan 'was buying a commodity, or rather, he was following the standard practice of Renaissance nobles in turning his daughter into a sign of his own wealth, prestige, power, and fashionability'.⁶⁶ Making a broader claim in her study on Jane Fitzalan, Straznicky alerts us to the differing nature of the impact of receiving humanist education on women. She writes that although 'women's program of education was in no sense invested with the professional and political objectives that were at the heart of humanist pedagogical reform, neither should their learning be dismissed as a mere instrument in advancing a family's political

⁶⁵ Clarke, 'Translation', p. 174.

⁶⁶ Diane Purkiss, 'Blood, Sacrifice, Marriage: why Iphigeneia and Mariam have to die', *Women's Writing*, 6 (1999), pp. 27-45; 29.

ambitions'.⁶⁷ I situate Jane Fitzalan's examination of the correspondence and conflict between domestic and state masculinities within the framework of the humanist education she profited from. I have chosen Juan Luis Vives' *The Instruction of a Christian Woman* (1523) as a comparative text to argue that Fitzalan's translation challenges several humanist principles concerning gender, as typified in Vives, even as it seems to conform to them. I argue that the paradox of simultaneous submission and subversion present in Fitzalan is a mirroring of Vives' own rhetoric.⁶⁸

Purkiss cautions that

we have seen [*Tragedy of Miriam* and *Tragedy of Iphigeneia*] as representations of rebellious or (more modestly) subversive rereadings, rewritings, refigurations or re-presentations of gender ideology. We might pause to ask ourselves whether the gendering of the protagonists of these two plays does not simply reproduce gender ideologies and gendered signifiers which are common to men's as well as women's work.⁶⁹

While I am sensitive to Purkiss' position, it is as naive to assume a 'simple reproduction' of gender ideologies in texts as it is to dismiss translation as a servile adherence to its source. Further, the question of what gender ideologies have been chosen to be reproduced in the text is revealing in itself. Finally, 'subversive rereadings, rewritings, refigurations' need not be located in a separatist enclave (which is Purkiss' chief objection to this style of interpretation); interrogating gender roles was at the very heart of the early modern patriarchal project.

⁶⁷ Marta Straznicky, *Privacy, Playreading, and Women's Closet Drama 1550-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 21.

⁶⁸ For a detailed discussion of the impact of Vives' seminal humanist work on English drama see Ursula Potter, 'Elizabethan Drama and *The Instruction of a Christian Woman* by Juan Luis Vives' in *What Nature Does Not Teach: Didactic Literature in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, ed. Juanita Feros Ruys (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 261-286.

⁶⁹ Purkiss, 'Blood, Sacrifice, Marriage', p. 28.

Juan Luis Vives' *The Instruction of a Christian Woman* (1523) was dedicated to Catherine of Aragon with the aim of steering and enhancing young Mary Tudor's learning: 'Your daughter Mary will read these recommendations and will reproduce them as she models herself on the example of your goodness and wisdom to be found within her own home'.⁷⁰ Thus the ideal household acts as a standard for domestic virtues that every young member should aim to mimic. It is not unlikely that the Earl of Arundel, who was devoted to Mary Tudor, would have ensured that Vives' conduct book played a role in the education of his own daughter. While Vives rehearses the familiar dictum of silence as virtue incarnate in a maiden, there is a curious tension on the subject of female speech in Vives' polemic. The valorisation of silence co-exists with laudatory remarks on women who published their ideas in both oral and written discourse as testaments to their learning. Vives emphatically delivers his position on the virtue of silence in achieving normative femininity: 'I am not at all concerned with eloquence. A woman has no need of that; she needs rectitude and wisdom' (p. 71). At the same time he presents as a role model for his female readers Hortensia, who

so matched her father in eloquence that as a woman worthy of honor and respect, she delivered a speech in behalf of her sex before the triumvirs designated to establish the republic, that later ages read not only in admiration and appreciation of female eloquence but also for imitation (p. 67).⁷¹

This baffling contradiction extends to Vives' position on female learning. He asserts that 'learned women are suspect to many [vices] the mental ability acquired by learning increase[s] their natural wickedness' while declaring that in Jerome's time 'all holy

⁷⁰ Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, ed. and trans., Charles Fantazzi (London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 50.

⁷¹ Hortensia is just one example of many illustrious, erudite and vocal women that Vives lists in his tract.

women were very learned' (pp. 63; 69). Vives is keen to ensure that his young female readers model themselves on the civic values of Jerome's age. He states quite categorically that 'we would not find any learned woman who was unchaste' (p. 65). Chastity of course is regarded as the foremost virtue for women, paradoxically acquired by learning even as it is endangered by it. Vives maintains that 'in the education of woman the principal and, I might almost say, the only concern should be the preservation of chastity' (p. 71).⁷² In his preface to Margaret Roper's translation of Erasmus' *A deuoute treatise vpon the Pater noster* Richard Hyrde underscores female virtue as inseparable from learning:

For I neuer herde tell nor reed of any woman well lerned that euer was (as plentuous as yuell tonges be) spotted or infamed as vicious. But on the otherside many by their lernyng taken suche encrease of goodnesse y^t many may beare them wytnesse of their vertue.⁷³

If women are supposed to be educated in a particular manner to inculcate certain moral and social values, it is at one level imperative for them to demonstrate that they have imbibed those virtues through and in their speech and writings, or to use Hyrde's expression 'beare them wytnesse of their vertue'. Translation, located in the interstitial space between silence and eloquence, conforming to yet evading cultural prescripts on feminine decorum, is precisely that kind of evidence which Fitzalan is offering.⁷⁴

⁷² Chastity is Vives' favourite subject. He returns to it frequently and almost always with a sense of narrative urgency. His discussion on the nature of chastity and its relationship with virginity is particularly illuminating of his beliefs (pp. 80-86).

⁷³ Margaret Roper, *A deuoute treatise vpon the Pater noster* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1526), sig. ¶ 7.

⁷⁴ Christina Luckyj's book length study challenges critical orthodoxy on the subject of silence in relation to early modern women and unearths a powerful subjectivity therein. Luckyj contends that 'the traditional gendering of speech as male and active, silence as female and passive, is merely one formulation among many in early modern culture'. Her perusal of early modern texts leads her to conclude that '[o]nce silence has been endorsed as a strategic strength for both genders, it can no longer be held simply a sign of submissive inferiority'. Christina Luckyj, "*A moving rhetoricke*": *Gender and*

Concomitantly, Iphigenia is at once an avatar of the ideal femininity that patriarchy can produce (quite literally self-effacing) even as she presents the greatest threat to it. This recalls the alchemy between imitation and inheritance that Elizabeth alluded to in her letter to Henry VIII. Christina Luckyj discovers an interesting alliance between silence and authorship:

Juan Luis Vives admonishes all women to follow the example of the Virgin, who 'was but of fewe wordes, but wonderous wyse'; he follows this injunction with an allusion to 'Theano Metapontina a poet, and a maide excellent cunnyng, [who] reked that Silence was the noblest ornament of a woman' (43; emphasis added). When wisdom, knowledge and authorship all coexist with silence, one begins to wonder whether 'scilence' (as it is sometimes spelled during this period, as in the margin of Vives' text) has been conflated by some false etymology with 'science', knowledge or wisdom.⁷⁵

Luckyj develops this connection further in her analysis of Catherine Parr's writing. She suggests 'Parr's written recommendation of silence for women may rely on the fact that, unlike public speaking, writing was a liminal mode: though mass production meant that it could potentially reach a wide audience, it was produced and frequently consumed in a private, silent space'.⁷⁶

Laura Lunger Knoppers notes that 'while translation was clearly envisaged as a means by which virtue might be inculcated in women, the consequences of placing women at

Silence in early modern England (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 48-49; 52. Similarly, Danielle Clarke contests the formulaic understanding of female speech in the early modern period that is patterned on the 'chaste, silent, and obedient' dictum. Through her focus on the Ovidian myth of Echo and its various manifestations in Milton, Shakespeare, and Wroth, Clarke invites us to reconsider this subject. She writes, '[t]here were, of course, several ways in which women's language was positioned as trivial or marginal, but, equally, fissures and contradictions that enabled representations of female speech as power, agency, comfort, piety or necessity' ('Speaking women: Rhetoric and the construction of female talk', in *Rhetoric, Women and Politics*, pp. 70-88; 72).

⁷⁵ Luckyj, *Gender and Silence*, p. 54.

⁷⁶ Luckyj, *Gender and Silence*, pp. 122-23.

the heart of an activity central to rhetorical culture were...less predictable'.⁷⁷ Richard Hyrde's preface to Margaret Roper's translation of Erasmus' *Pater noster* from Latin into English coalesces around the cultural anxieties of the period that identified the subversive potency of humanist training in classical languages and feared its availability to women. Hyrde deftly deals with his peers who doubt 'whether it shulde be expedyent and requisite or nat a woman to haue lernyng in bokes of latyn and greke' (sig. ¶ 2). For most commentators, women if they 'shulde haue skylle in many thinges that be written in the latyn and greke tong compiled and made with great crafte and & eloquence, would be enabled to more subtilyte and coueyaunce to sette forward and accomplyshe their forward entente and purpose' – a reprehensible possibility that will destabilise existing strategies to maintain a particular gender status-quo (sig. ¶ 2). Hyrde's introduction to Roper's translation insists on the safety and preservation of established gender roles without really commenting on the main issue at stake: the impact of humanist education on women and the possibility they may seize on its subversive potential. Hyrde emphasises that a woman's 'lernynge [of Latin and Greek] shall cause her to be moche the better. For it sheweth the ymage and wayes of good lyunge euyn right as a mirror sheweth the symylitude and proporcion of the body' (sig. ¶ 7). Yet the 'symylitude and proporcion' reflected by mirrors are characterised by lateral inversion and it is this inversionary logic that makes Jane Fitzalan's translation remarkable, as I demonstrate below. Through its eponymous character Fitzalan's *Iphigeneia* subverts even as it affirms the 'symylitude and proporcion' that characterised the relationship between the domestic and the state. Fitzalan's translation is at once a product of and a challenge to the humanist education programme and its

⁷⁷ Knoppers, *Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, p. 12.

differential gendered purposes of preparing young men for public offices and of indoctrinating girls to embrace their circumscribed roles. The play she chooses to translate is interesting. Raber suggests that '[w]hat Renaissance writers found in the ancient plays was the struggle between the state and the family dramatized over and over again, almost always represented through the conflicting interests associated with feminine attachments to blood and primal familial ties'.⁷⁸ It is with this thought I return to the central theme of this chapter and explore the representation of a conflict between state and domestic masculinities in Fitzalan's translation.

5. *Conflicting Masculinities and 'The Tragedie of Iphigeneia'*

The Tragedie of Iphigeneia opens with domestic masculinity in an irredeemable state of crisis. Agamemnon has submitted to the demands of the Greek army that his daughter Iphigenia 'be slaine and sacrafised to the goddes Dyana that then the whole hooste shall not onlye have free passage to Troye, but also victoriously conquer it' (81-83). Yet at the start of the play he is remorseful and eager to change his decision. This leads to Menelaus' questioning of Agamemnon's capability to rule: 'sometimes whan they do rule the common welthe whiche are unmete for it' (234-35). Agamemnon counters this attack not by valorizing his statesmanship but by deriding Menelaus on his incapability to govern his household: 'Do you lament the taking awaye of your wife? But we can not promise you to get hir againe for you. For you your selfe have bene the occasion of your owne troble' (250-52). This slippage of argument between the state and the domestic is apt. What it also serves to highlight is that codes of masculinity are deeply

⁷⁸ Raber 'Murderous Mothers', p. 305.

intermeshed and a threat to one is compounded as a threat to all. Menelaus' flagging domestic masculinity needs to be rescued and made secure through Agamemnon's state masculinity and the martial codes of manhood of the Greek army. Agamemnon's hesitation and dilemma in responding to the demands of the 'common welthe' reminds one of Bacon's reservations on the aptitude of husbands and fathers to truly hold public offices. Enfeebled by the 'tenderness' that he feels for his daughter and his family, Agamemnon lacks the severity and cold reason that is demanded by the 'hooste'. Yet in the strategically crafted web of masculinities, a different kind of domestic masculinity, in which the female subject is erased, emerges that buttresses the importunate demands of state masculinity: Menelaus and Agamemnon are brothers. Unlike Basilius, Agamemnon eventually privileges state over domestic masculinity and sacrifices Iphigenia. Crucially though he does it in a manner that abdicates him of all responsibility: 'for I do not this of my selfe, nor yet for my brothers sake, but rather by compulsion of the hooste' (719-720). Participation by the 'hooste' in deciding upon matters germane to the domestic, which was so eagerly sought by Henry VIII and which laid the foundation of Arcadia's placid political stability, takes a malevolent turn. The difference between the aphorisms voiced by the Choruses in Fitzalan and Euripides indicates the extent to which Fitzalan reoriented the tragedy to dramatise the conflict between the state and the domestic. Fitzalan's chorus notes

Truly we may see nowe, that they are mooste happie, whiche beinge neither in to hye estate, nor yet oppressed withe to moche povertie, may quietly enjoye the companie of their frindes (366-68).

‘Friend’ in the early modern period could connote a variety of meanings including ‘a kinsman or near relation’. This passage is entirely of Fitzalan’s invention and is absent in Euripides.

In Fitzalan, honour is inseparable from holding public and political positions. Right at the start of the play her Agamemnon describes his plight in terms of being bound to a code of honour particular to state masculinity: ‘for trulie I do thinke that mortall man to be verye fortunate, whiche beinge witheout honor dothe leade his life quietlye: for I can not judge their estate to be happie, whiche rule in honor’ (19-21). Fitzalan puns on the word ‘estate’ to expand and make explicit the cares of state masculinity. A comparative analysis of Fitzalan’s translation of Euripides with a modern one serves to highlight this. In Euripides Agamemnon paints his situation using broader terms and wistfully seeks ‘an unendagered life – unknown, unfamous’ (17-18).⁷⁹

On her first arrival at the camp, Iphigenia expects Agamemnon to greet her and Clytemnestra with tenderness. She embraces him and then makes an innocent demand:

Althrough in dede a captaine over an hooste shall be disquieted withe sondrie causes, yet I praye you set aside all soche troubles, and be merie with us whiche are therefore come unto you. (388-391)

Through Iphigenia, the play articulates the predicament that Agamemnon faces of choosing or not being able to choose between the demands made by state and domestic codes of masculinity. Once Iphigenia has entered the dramatic action, this conflict no

⁷⁹ Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, trans. and ed. Mary-Kay Gamel in *Women on the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides* (London: Routledge, 1999), 17-18. All subsequent references will be to this edition.

longer remains an idea in Agamemnon's consciousness but acquires a material and undeniable reality. He lacks the agency to make the choice, regardless of individual preference: 'Indede I am desirous so to do, although I can not as yet have libertie' (406-7). Agamemnon's desire to 'folowe your councell daughter' does not prevail but serves to highlight his discontent with the normative conduct of state masculinity and the potential for female agency to offer a reprieve from the demands of state and military manhood (392). Iphigenia's 'councell' is to put aside the cares of war urged by Agamemnon's other counsellors which consequently privileges the domestic over the state.

Yet in Euripides the portrayal of Agamemnon as a man unable to resist the inevitability of fate is stronger and more persuasive as compared to Fitzalan where he comes across as callous, even indifferent to the fate of his daughter in the interests of his political position. Euripides' Agamemnon is tormented: 'Taking this awful step [of sacrificing Iphigenia] fills me with horror, wife,/ but not to take it is horrifying too. I have to do it' (1257-58); 'It's Greece for which I must sacrifice you [Iphigenia],/ whether I want to or not. We are all less important than this' (1271-72). In comparison, Agamemnon in Fitzalan not only registers no horror at the idea of sacrificing his daughter but even his submission to the 'hooste' is lamely argued for: 'it lieth not in my power to withstande them: for I am not able to make any resistance againste them. I am therefore compelled daughter to deliver you to them' (723-26). I would like to stress here that Agamemnon's weak speeches in Fitzalan are not a product of incompetent translation but rather indicate his very different set of values in Fitzalan's version of the play. This is further noticeable in Fitzalan's neat deletion of one of the reasons that

Agamemnon proffers in Euripides for his uneasy acquiescence to Iphigenia's sacrifice. Agamemnon exclaims to Clytemnestra that '[t]hese men will kill my daughters in Argos/ and both of you, and me, if I reject the decrees of the goddess' (1267-68).

Crucially for Euripides' Agamemnon, Iphigenia's sacrifice is necessary to protect his wife and the rest of his children. He is therefore not solely interested in preserving his political authority but is equally anxious to fulfil his domestic duties as a father and husband to the best of his ability given his circumscribed position. Fitzalan neglects this portrayal of Agamemnon and aligns him more closely with fathers who privilege their state masculinity at the expense of the domestic. In Fitzalan, Agamemnon is more invested in his duties as a ruler and in safeguarding his state authority than in his domestic roles as a husband and a father. In the middle of his altercation with Menelaus, Euripides' Agamemnon makes a resounding declaration:

I will not kill my children. It would be unjust
for your affairs to turn out well, for you to get revenge for
your faithless bedmate,
while I'll be worn out every night, every day, with tears,
because I committed unjust crimes against my child (395-98).

There is no parallel statement in Fitzalan which has the effect of portraying Agamemnon as an indifferent father. In a curious transplant of speeches, in Fitzalan it is Menelaus rather than Agamemnon who reflects on what causes 'strife between bretherne' and concludes that it is 'ambition and desire of welthe'. For Euripides' Agamemnon '[d]iscord often arises between brothers over love affairs,/ or the family estate' (508-509). Thus in Euripides Menelaus' immoderate sexual appetite for Helen is implied as being the reason behind the conflict between him and Agamemnon. Fitzalan

transforms this to focus on Agamemnon's desire to stabilise his political position. Fitzalan thus creates room within the play's concern with networks of kinship and personal relations to accommodate a study of the difficulty of negotiating competing codes of masculine conduct.

Vives stresses the role of a husband as a protector and guardian of his wife. He writes,

nature in her great wisdom has instructed us that the male has the role of defender and the female follows the male. She takes refuge under his protection and shows herself obedient to him in order to live more safely and comfortably (p. 194).

Achilles' passionate declaration conforms to Vives' position on the role of a husband. Fitzalan's treatment of Achilles' marriage proposal to Iphigenia is an interesting example of how she adapted elements of the play in service to her concern with state and domestic masculinities. Achilles' proposal is weak in Euripides as compared to Fitzalan. This is partly because Euripides' Achilles already considers himself as married to Iphigenia. The translator of a modern edition of the play offers a useful commentary on the nuances of Greek customs and social relations which cement the betrothal between Iphigenia and Achilles even though the latter's consent was not sought. Mary-Kay Gamel writes

Klytemnestra speaks of herself as *numphagogos*, "conductor of the bride", and the procession that brings Iphigenia to Aulis resembles that which conducted a bride to her bridegroom's house. This was the most public aspect of an ancient wedding...In this case, although the wedding has not yet occurred, the public nature of the procession...may be interpreted to mean that a marriage has in fact taken place; Klytemnestra so interprets it (904-908) and Achilles agrees (936).

In Euripides, Achilles identifies Iphigenia as his 'future bride' when he attempts to resist the Greek army who in turn deride him as being 'a slave to [his] wife' (1354-55). Fitzalan's translation where Achilles explains to Clytemnestra how his attempt to withstand the Greek army was futile stands in a marked contrast:

No truly, for even they also did speke againste me saienge, that I was in love
withe her, and therfore I did preferre myne owne pleasure, above the
commodite of my countrie (761-63).

Nowhere in Fitzalan is Iphigenia assumed to be Achilles' wife or even his intended bride except when Clytemnestra is taken in by Agamemnon's deceitful scheme. The marriage proposal and the feelings of tenderness that Iphigenia inspires in Achilles can therefore be credited entirely to her person and rhetorical abilities. On the other hand, in Euripides Achilles' marriage proposal to Iphigenia is enmeshed with his incensed verbal volley against a perceived personal affront (Agamemnon did not solicit his permission to use his name as a cover for deceit) and is hardly a novel turn in the narrative as he already regards her as his wife.

The protection that Achilles offers to Iphigenia in Fitzalan is decidedly more meaningful. He is vociferous in his denunciation of Agamemnon and the idea of sacrificing one's child for the state. His remarks to Clytemnestra – 'I do even abhorre this cruell dede of your husbände', 'what a grevous thinge it is to be called a destroyer of his owne children' (553-54; 599-600) – are strong protestations that sympathise with her and Iphigenia's position. Parallel remarks by the Euripidean Achilles are decidedly tepid: 'I too find fault with your husband, and that's no simple matter' (898-99); 'kneel to him and beg him not to kill children' (1015). This can be attributed partly to the fact

that Achilles in Euripides is not opposed to the principle behind the sacrifice: '[Agamemnon] should have *asked* me for my name/ as a snare for the child...I would have given my name to the Greeks, if the trip to Troy/ was endangered because of that' (962-66, emphasis mine).

In both Euripides and Fitzalan Achilles first marvels at Iphigenia's bravery and oratory on her declaration to die for her country and then proposes to her. Commensurate with the changes Fitzalan makes in her translation, she expands on Achilles' marriage proposal and makes it more powerful and heartfelt. This is how it stands in Euripides:

So greater desire to marry you comes over me,
now that I see your true nature. You are noble.
But look: I want to help you out
and take you to my house. I am upset – let Thetis know this –
if I am not to save you by going to battle the Greeks (1410-14).

Fitzalan transforms this into:

Wherefore I beinge not onlie moved withe pitie, for that I see you brought into suche a necessite, but also stirred up more withe love towards you, desiringe to have you to my wife, will promise you faithefullye to withstande the grecians, as moche as shall lye in my power, that they shall not sleye you. (830-35)

Expressions like 'love' and 'promise you faithefullye' echo marriage vows and elevate Iphigenia's character by emphasising the impact she has on Achilles. While in Euripides Achilles' decision to fight for Iphigenia is to avenge a personal affront, in Fitzalan's translation it is Iphigenia's dynamic personality that spurs him to play the protective suitor to her. However, with her own father as an example, Iphigenia has discovered that assurances of protection may be a mandatory prescription of domestic

masculinity but lack strength in opposition to the demands of state masculinity. In choosing to decline Achilles' offer of marriage, she exposes the fraudulent analogy between state and domestic masculinities.

Concurrently Iphigenia distances herself from the circumscribed position in which her mother, Clytemnestra, finds herself. In Vives' preface Mary Tudor is encouraged to reproduce the (ideal) domestic femininity that she can find 'within her own home'. In Fitzalan's translation, Clytemnestra is deeply invested in her domestic roles of a wife and a mother. She unhesitatingly follows the initial command of her husband to fetch Iphigenia to Aulis. While arguing for her presence at Iphigenia's fake wedding which Agamemnon obviously does not want her to attend, Clytemnestra emphasises the model of wifely subservience she has faithfully adhered to: 'What cause have you, O kinge, to saie so, for whan did I ever disobey you?' (456-57). Clytemnestra believes in paying due regard to the established social customs when it comes to motherhood, a role that is a direct consequence of the proper acquittal of wifely duties. She is unable to comprehend why Agamemnon insists on her return to Greece. She believes in the propriety of established gender conduct which leads her to remark that 'the mother ought to be at the mariage of the daughter' and that she intends to ensure that 'all thinges [are] made redie for the mariage' (468; 472-73). Clytemnestra's discovery of Agamemnon's 'crafte' in planning to sacrifice their daughter not only dismays her but throws into confusion her neat understanding of the corollary between the twin domestic roles of wife and mother (646). She exclaims 'if you kille my daughter, what lamentacion muste I nedes make, Whan I shall goo home, and wante the companie of her? consideringe that she was slaine bi the hands of her owne father' (670-73).

Clytemnestra's implicit faith in domestic masculinity and its promise of security and succour is shaken by the betrayal of her husband and the lack of any recourse to redress her injury. Unique to Fitzalan's translation is Clytemnestra's inability to understand the conflict between the domestic and the state and her attempt to reorient them to the congruence accorded between them in early modern political thought. She admonishes Agamemnon: 'you weare chosen the captaine over the grecians to execute justice to all men, and not to do bothe me and also your children suche an injurie' (686-88). Her argument is underpinned by a fundamental belief in the domestic-state analogy. Executing 'justice to all men' is integral to and not divorced from the compassionate duties of a father and husband. Iphigenia, falsely lured to Aulis under the pretext of marriage, sees through the propaganda of domestic masculinity to realise its vacuity and its toll on both men and women. In rejecting Achilles' proposal, Iphigenia is effectively rejecting the destiny of her mother.

The play extends its interrogation of masculinity from the domestic to the domain of the state by demystifying the exclusive relationship of masculinity with politics and underscoring female participation therein. This is achieved through Iphigenia's bristling and convincing rhetorical abilities that dissuade both Achilles and Clytemnestra from revolting against the decree of the 'common welthe'.⁸⁰ Statesmanship and political agency are blended with rhetoric in a way which complements the 'close association perceived between training in rhetoric and political action' in the early modern period. Iphigenia's eloquence stands in sharp contrast to her

⁸⁰ Mastering the art of rhetoric made a significant contribution towards developing a masculine identity in the Renaissance (Walter J. Ong, 'Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite', *Studies in Philology*, 56 (1959), pp. 103- 124).

father's weak suasive powers who, despite 'usinge all maner of meanes to perswade', is coerced to accept the 'cruell requeste' of sacrificing her. Rhetoric itself 'can be understood, in the first place, as a body of rules, a list of devices that rationalise the act of 'speaking well' and persuasively'.⁸¹ For Clytemnestra the mortal peril that looms ahead of her daughter is an adequate reason to step away from social niceties and join her in her eloquent plea to Achilles for protection. She urges: 'Daughter, you muste laie awaie all shamefastenes nowe, for you may you use no nicenes: but rather prove by what meanes you maye beste save your life'. (746-48)

On the other hand, Vives advises his readers to:

[s]how as much courage by your silence as others do in speaking in the forum. In that way you will better defend your cause of chastity, which in the eyes of fair judges will be made stronger by your silence than by your speaking (p. 133).

Iphigenia's eloquence is cause of both wonder and concern to those around her. Her liveliness torments Agamemnon as it reminds him of his affection for her: 'Trulye daughter the more wittely you speake, the more you troble me' (402-3). Similarly, Achilles marvels at the 'bouldness of [Iphigenia's] minde', the word 'bold' cunningly tying in notions both of courage and audacity. Yet the very resolution of the conflict in the play is entirely dependent on Iphigenia's persuasive rhetoric. Further, she preserves her physical chastity but in her adroit rhetoric that admonishes and instructs those around her loses the appearance of chastity, that is, temperance and restraint in her speech. For Bacon, '[c]haste women are often proud and forward, as presuming upon

⁸¹ Richards and Thorne, eds., *Rhetoric, Women and Politics*, p. 2.

the merit of their chastity'⁸². *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia* dramatises a conflict where a proud, forward and presumptuous narrative of female heroism in expounding chastity is imperative to secure the very foundations of the society that it destabilises.

Female characters in Euripides are fascinated with the glamour of male heroism. At one point the chorus captures the essence of this pervasive feature in Euripides:

I ran through the grove of Artemis
where many sacrifices are held,
blushing like a girl,
because I'm embarrassed
by how much I want to see the shields,
the tents full of armor,
the throng of horses. (185-191)

The absence of an equivalent in Fitzalan is entirely in keeping with a translation that undermines masculine projections of heroism in war and statecraft and rejects the polarisation of male and female virtues.

Euripides' Iphigenia claims that her sacrifice does not replace but achieves female destiny. Her sacrifice, she exclaims, will be '[her] children, [her] marriage' (1399). By the very act of defining her sacrifice in a way that aligns it with proper feminine roles and conduct, Iphigenia in Euripides is complicit with the overall masculine agenda. Iphigenia thus serves one of the primary features of Greek tragedy identified by Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz as a 'representation of women's willing subordination' by allaying 'masculine anxieties about female strength'. Rabinowitz concludes that Euripides 'grants [Iphigenia] this stereotypically masculine and public fame without disturbing

⁸² Bacon, 'Of Marriage and Single Life', p. 82

her femininity'.⁸³ In contrast, Fitzalan's Iphigenia does not circumscribe her act in terms of normative femininity. Though their fates and resolve are similar, Fitzalan's heroine is crucially different from her Euripidean counterpart for her rhetoric does not cement 'the masculine order' but infiltrates and implodes the discourse of masculinity.⁸⁴

Jennifer Richards and Alison Thorne emphasise that in the early modern period rhetoric was used to reinforce hegemonic ideology, 'its function being not only to regulate instances of verbal and social indecorum but also, and by extension, to maintain the 'natural' hierarchical ordering of the household and commonwealth which language should reflect'.⁸⁵ On the surface, Iphigenia's rhetorical dexterity is a bulwark for this 'natural' hierarchical ordering'. She reproaches her mother for not conforming to the ideal of wifely submission thus consolidating the 'natural' hierarchy of the household where the husband takes precedence over the wife: 'I perceive you are angrie with your husband, whiche you may not do' (794-96). Similarly, she accepts her fate with a tranquil acceptance of the 'natural' hierarchy where the commonwealth is deemed superior to the household and urges Clytemnestra to do the same: 'Againe remember how I was not borne for your sake onlie, but rather for the commodite of my countrie' (808-10).

⁸³ Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 35; 48.

⁸⁴ In my analysis of Cleopatra later in this thesis, I will explore the subversive elements behind performances of female passivity and sacrifice and how they afforded an opportunity to revise masculine conduct.

⁸⁵ Richards and Thorne, *Rhetoric, Women and Politics*, p. 5.

Yet Iphigenia's argument, in Fitzalan, betrays the very principles it seems to reinforce. She enquires of her mother 'for do you not thinke it to be better that I shulde die, then so many noble men to be let of their journey for one womans sake? for one noble man is better than a thousande women' (814-16). This is sophistry at its most shrewd for the war of Troy came into being for 'one womans sake', Helen, something which Iphigenia is well aware of. Moreover, Iphigenia may exhort Clytemnestra to conform to the ideals of domestic femininity, but she never refers to her identity as a daughter or views her stoic acceptance of her sacrifice as an aid to Agamemnon. Iphigenia's final allusion to her father is elliptical: she asks Clytemnestra 'not to hate [her] father for this dede: for he is compelled to do it for the welthe and honor of grece' (873-75). The starkest reconfiguration of the father-daughter relationship in Fitzalan's translation is at the moment of Iphigenia's sacrifice. Alongside defining her sacrifice for 'the whole land of Greece' in Euripides, Iphigenia draws attention to her filial responsibility to Agamemnon when she assures him: 'Father, I am here for you'. While Fitzalan retains Iphigenia's patriotism – 'O father, I am come hether to offer my bodie willinglie for the wellthe of my countrie' (926-28) – she does not present Iphigenia's sacrifice as circumscribed within relationships determined by domestic masculinity. This is a studied manoeuvre rather than a simple omission by a young girl still coming to grips with translation. In every context of Iphigenia's sacrifice, Greece is mentioned as 'fatherland' in Euripides. Fitzalan replaces 'fatherland' found in Euripides with the gender neutral term, 'countrie'. While Euripides seems to be stressing Iphigenia's filial responsibility to her father and fatherland, Fitzalan is doing the reverse.

It is evident that Fitzalan's Iphigenia chooses not to represent herself as a dutiful daughter but works towards fashioning a narrative of singular heroism and ensuring a legacy of glory and renown. She claims that 'through [her] death [she] shall purchase the Grecians a glorious victory' and 'leave a perpetual memory' of her self-sacrifice (733-34; 820). Iphigenia has a better grasp on the delicate political situation of the play than anyone else. Agamemnon and Menelaus vacillate between being bewildered and being afraid of Ulysses (350-359); Clytemnestra's character, albeit sympathetically portrayed, lacks any understanding of the power dynamics in the play; and on being used as bait, Achilles nurses an injury to his personal codes of chivalry and honour. In using the platform of an ideal daughter to demonstrate her political acumen Iphigenia (and, equally, Fitzalan) becomes representative of '[m]any early modern women [who] used their familial or domestic identities to speak or write of matters that exceeded the confines of domestic life'.⁸⁶

Susan Wiseman studies how female characters like Arria, Cornelia, Esther and Lucretia were an integral part of early modern political ideology. She focuses on 'the significance of the example as it discloses women's relationship to political rhetoric' in the early modern period where exemplary women are cited not as 'political agents' but 'indices of political virtue'.⁸⁷ In Fitzalan's version, Iphigenia emerges both as a political agent and a self-defined index of political virtue. Fitzalan's argument, which applauds the manner in which Iphigenia 'perswadeth hir mother' (p. 6) is plainly aware of the relationship between humanist pedagogy, which included the study of

⁸⁶ Richards and Thorne, *Rhetoric, Women and Politics*, pp. 13-14.

⁸⁷ Susan Wiseman, 'Exemplarity, women and political rhetoric' in *Rhetoric, Women and Politics*, pp. 129-148; 129; 132.

Latin and rhetoric, and political action. Women's classroom experience had different ends to male education and Fitzalan appears to be pointedly questioning this difference. Fitzalan's text participates in a crucial contemporary debate that centred on the extent of women's activity in the domain of state and politics. *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia* questions the rigid dichotomy between the domestic confines of femininity and the political arena of masculinity that humanist scholars including Vives draw in their texts. Characteristically, these binaries are far from absolute. Vives relates an anecdote of how the older citizens in a certain city of Spain 'prophesied great ruin of their republic' for the young men were sunk in the turpitude of 'idleness and opulence'. Anxious to preserve their political welfare these older citizens sought an alliance with the young maidens of the city 'to whose judgment the young men ascribed such importance'. These maidens responded to the political needs of their country and put their plan 'into execution with all discretion'. As a consequence of their clever powers of persuasion:

Within a short time, the young men changed from profligate and debauched youth into men of great sagacity, skilled in public and private administration, and that city emerged more thriving under those young men than it had been under the old men, and in intelligence and experience they far surpassed their ancestors (p. 163).

Vives uses this particular instance to exhort his frivolous and vain female readers to value good sense over Epicureanism in choosing husbands. Quite how he derives this particular moral from the story is difficult to discern, given that the young girls in this instance have not only shown a greater capacity than men for exercising prudence but have also laid the foundation of good government.

On the other hand, Vives gives several examples of exemplary wives who ought to be emulated for their preference to ‘endure danger themselves rather than their husbands should do so’. However, these raise alarming questions. For instance, Vives lavishes praise on Turia ‘who hid her husband, recently proscribed by the triumvirs, between the ceiling and the roof of her bedroom’. Sulpicia receives similar accolades for following her condemned husband (p. 187). While these narratives undoubtedly demonstrate courage and loyalty in face of peril, Vives’ injunctions seem entirely unaware they may be advocating rebellious, if not outright treasonous, conduct.

It is impossible to determine with accuracy Fitzalan’s motivation in undertaking the translation of *Iphigeneia*. Unlike the Tudor sisters whose letters furnish vital clues to appreciate the complex way in which they were negotiating their relationship with their father, Fitzalan’s translation has no guiding paratexts. The discourse mediating the father-daughter relationship has been internalised in the text with its focus on Iphigenia and Agamemnon. It is possible that Fitzalan, who received the same kind of humanist education that was engineered towards preparing young men for public offices, found the idea of women inhabiting that space a discursive curiosity worthy of exploration. On the brink of matrimony, Fitzalan, through her translation, seems to be testing the conflict between wifely duties and civic ones that Vives presents.⁸⁸ In her impassioned speech where she persuades Clytemnestra to support her resolution of sacrificing herself as she is ‘the commodite of [her] countrie’ (809-10), Iphigenia demonstrates a

⁸⁸ Purkiss has deep misgivings against the treasure-hunt that most critics embark upon, detecting ‘signs of gender rebellion’ in works by female authors, which I share, ‘Blood, sacrifice, marriage’, pp. 27-28. However, my project is not to create an anachronistic hagiography of Jane Fitzalan as a prototype of a twentieth-century feminist or to assert that the character and the writer are interchangeable. Although my approach is influenced by feminist scholars, my study of the gender conflict in the play is rooted in textual analysis and a focus on contemporary debates.

shrewd insight into matters of politics, governance and commonwealth. Menelaus forges a semantic relationship between 'witte' and statecraft and the ability to rule in Fitzalan's translation. He asserts: 'Wherfore truly I thinke that no captaine ought to be chosen for dignite, nor yet for favour, but rather for witte: for he that shulde rule an hooste, oughte in wisdom to excell all other' (240-42). With a meticulous attention to detail, Fitzalan ensures that this trait remains unique to Iphigenia, preparing her readers for her heroine's political rhetoric while criticising Agamemnon for being 'halfe out of his witte' (531-32).

Further, Euripides' Achilles offers a different reading of Iphigenia's determination to sacrifice herself by regarding it as impetuous. He assures her of his presence near the altar should she change her mind and declares 'I won't allow you to die because of your own thoughtlessness' (1430). Fitzalan retains Achilles' promise to be at the altar and protect Iphigenia but is anxious that her heroine's resolve is not imbued with 'thoughtlessness' and she quietly erases the offensive line. Iphigenia's decision to sacrifice herself thus stems from a shrewd understanding of the delicacy of political affairs, a carefully deliberated move rather than mere 'thoughtlessness'. Fitzalan's translation thus questions the formulation of essential gender traits and roles and complicates the fundamental principles underpinning early modern masculinity by allowing them to be appropriated and better executed by a female character.

Yet in early modern discourse the story of Iphigenia would be divorced from its political context and used as a trope to consolidate the standard female virtues of chastity. David Clapham's 1542 translation of Agrippa's *Of the Nobility and*

Excellency of Womankind serves as an example where Iphigenia is ranked amongst ‘innumerable other [women] whose hartes were so fyxed on vyrgynitie and chastitie, that the very dethe coulde not remoue theym’. She is presented as one of those exemplary women who ‘estemed vyrginite aboue kyngdomes, yea and aboue theyr very lyues’.⁸⁹ This glorification of virginity and chastity are entirely in keeping with the putative wisdom of the period. Vives may aver that ‘in a woman, no one requires eloquence or talent or wisdom or professional skills or administration of the republic or generosity; no one asks anything of her but chastity’ (p. 85). However, the dramatic urgency of Fitzalan’s play places precisely these demands on Iphigenia. The play, quite possibly translated in 1550 when there were no women in public offices, makes a remarkable affirmation of female abilities in statecraft and prophetically looks forward to an England which would soon be ruled by female monarchs for a period of fifty years.

Even in the light of Fitzalan’s humanist education that laboured to create separate spheres for male and female activity, her astuteness in recognising women’s capacity for political action is not as peculiar as it may seem at first glance. The very fact that humanist writers tirelessly sought to create gendered boundaries between the ‘public’ and the ‘private’ suggests that these boundaries and gender roles were far from universally observed. The tension between the goals of a humanist education and Fitzalan’s translation are evident in the nature of the translation itself. Marta Straznicky neatly encapsulates this: ‘Lady Jane Lumley’s translation of Euripides’s *Iphigenia at*

⁸⁹ David Clapham, *A treatise of the nobilitie and excellencye of vvoman kynde, translated out of Latine into englysshe by Dauid Clapam* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1542), D8v-r.

Aulis, the earliest complete play in English by a woman and the earliest English translation of Euripides, plainly departs from the academic ideal'.⁹⁰ Straznicky elaborates upon this divergence:

[Fitzalan's] translation departs so strikingly from the humanist norm: substantial sections of the original are simply cut, including most of the metrically complex choruses, while sequences of dialogue are compressed into single speeches and – most unusually – the play is rendered from verse into prose, a much-debated and largely discouraged form of translation.⁹¹

While Fitzalan's motivations behind the curious nature of her translation are indeterminate, what is clear is that the translation is the product of the very system it confounds.⁹²

Patricia Demers observes that 'when it comes to representing the sexual betrayals that have necessitated a virginal daughter's sacrifice, Lumley is much less explicit'. She compares Fitzalan's feeble words such as "naughtie" to describe Helen's infidelity with the imprecations such as 'wanton' and 'harlotry' that find favour in Euripides and Erasmus.⁹³ However, the constant use of words such as 'good', 'naughtie', 'noble', 'trouble' and their variations to cover a spectrum of meanings could also suggest something else. The tautology and monotony of such a vocabulary serves to critique the vague yet insistent gendered and moral values that dominate the play. Further, they

⁹⁰ Marta Straznicky, 'Private Drama', in *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, p. 248.

⁹¹ Straznicky, 'Private Drama', p. 248.

⁹² Critics have explored the possibility that Jane Fitzalan conceived her translation as a performance text and Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, Marion Wynne-Davies and Straznicky lead the field in this train of argument. Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, 'Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia at Aulis: Multum in parvo*, or, less is more', in *Readings in Renaissance Women's Drama: Criticism, History and Performance 1594-1998*, ed. S.P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 129-141; 'The good Lady Lumley's desire', pp. 111-127; *Privacy, Playreading, and Women's Closet Drama*, pp. 41-46.

⁹³ Demers, 'On first looking into Lumley's Euripides', p. 33.

reflect the discursive style of conduct books which use the same vocabulary in a circular manner that underscores the fluidity of these values and frustrates any solid interpretation:

Feelings of *good* will are strong among *good* persons, but not lasting among the wicked. With *good* reason Aristotle says that those states that do not provide for the proper education of women deprive themselves of a great part of their prosperity. Obviously there is nothing so *troublesome* as sharing one's life with a person of no principles [(*Education of a Christian Woman*, p. 45) emphasis added].

All three uses of the word 'good' here depend on each other for signifying varying inflections of the word without ever making explicit what their meaning is. Clytemnestra's threat and complaint to Agamemnon is a close parallel: 'take hede leste you compelle me to speke thos thinges, that do not become a good wife: yea and you your selfe do thos thinges that a good man ought not' (674-76). The moral values encoded in 'good' and 'thos thinges' are hopelessly vague and, given the context of the play, stand as a tragic mockery of the standards propounded in conduct books. That Fitzalan's translation of *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia* could simultaneously profit from yet threaten humanist pedagogy is in itself an exposition of the innate contradictions of patriarchal demands on both men and women.

Further, Fitzalan's play participates in important debates of the period that regarded literary production as cognate with paternity.⁹⁴ In the letter affectionately addressed to

⁹⁴ See Katharine Eisaman Maus, 'A Womb of his own: male Renaissance poets in the female body' in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institution, Texts, Images*, ed. James Grantham Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 266-88. In his introduction to an edited collection of essays, Douglas Brooks stresses the extent to which printing and parenting were conceptually inseparable. It was not easy, he writes, 'to think or talk about authorship, printing, or publication in the same period without recourse to the language of parenting...[s]ons who did not resemble their fathers

Mary Sidney prefacing *Arcadia*, Sidney hopes that his work ‘for the father’s sake, will be pardoned, perchance made much of, though in itself it have deformities’ (p. 3). Montaigne famously wrote: ‘I am not at all sure whether I would not much rather have given birth to one perfectly formed son by commerce with the Muses than by commerce with my wife’.⁹⁵ In what comes across as a deliberate attempt to exclude female creativity, these models routinely associated authorship with fatherhood. Iphigenia’s gentle injunction to the chorus of Grecian woman to write her narrative would have resonated with the young Jane Fitzalan pursuing an authorial activity: ‘Wherfore I shall desier all you women to singe some songe of my deathe’ (892-93). The parallel instruction to the chorus in Euripides is very different. Iphigenia does not ask for her individual glory to be recounted to posterity but instead asks the chorus to ‘sing a hymn of praise to Zeus’ daughter Artemis’, thus reinforcing her submission to the established hierarchy that determined her tragic fate (1468). Furthermore, in Euripides it is Agamemnon who achieves ‘undying fame throughout Greece’ (1606) (presumably for displaying fortitude in sacrificing his daughter), whereas in Fitzalan it

became ‘badly printed’; books that were ineptly printed or published without authorial consent became ‘bastards’; conception, understood principally as the act of imprinting a moist female womb, came to be suspiciously similar to the printing house process by which a dampened sheet of paper received letters from inked type’ (*Printing and Parenting in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 2-3). Wendy Wall argues that because ‘nondramatic works printed between 1557 and 1621 conceptualized the relationship between writer, text, and new reading public in particularly gendered terms, the developing concept of authorship was masculinized’ (*The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell Press, 1993), p. 4).

⁹⁵ Montaigne, ‘On the affection fathers have for their children’, in *The Essays of Michel de Montaigne*, trans. and ed., M.A. Screech (London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1991), pp. 432-52; 451. This assertion has figured prominently in the works of scholars who argue for a complete indifference of parents towards their children in the early modern period. Robert Woods argues that this quotation has been misrepresented and instead posits that ‘the passage containing Montaigne’s poetic conceit may be a deflection from Montaigne’s genuine sentiments for his children’. The subject of parental affection in early modern period has been vigorously pursued by social historians. I am hesitant to draw parallels between Agamemnon and early modern fathers but it is likely that contemporary models of masculinity insisted on an emotionally restrained engagement with children. Agamemnon’s dilemma is predominantly due to a failure to adhere to this model and the dramatisation of this dilemma suggests difference between precept and practice. For a detailed discussion see Robert Woods, ‘Did Montaigne Love His Children? Demography and the Hypothesis of Parental Indifference’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 33 (2003), pp. 421-442.

is Iphigenia who receives ‘perpetuall renowne for ever’ (903-904). Concurrently Iphigenia’s heroic assertion – ‘I throughe my deathe shall purchase the grecians a glorious victorie’ – is absent in Euripides.

In translating the text, Fitzalan is fulfilling Iphigenia’s last wish and transferring the legacy of female creativity from the Greek chorus to English quills. The narrative of female heroism and poetic memorial displaces the supremacy of masculine discourse that precipitated the tragic chain of events in the play. Crucially, it succeeds where Agamemnon’s attempts to author an alternative discourse did not.

At the start of the play Senex is curious to know what Agamemnon is writing:

But me thinkes you are writinge a letter by candle lighte: what is this writinge? that you have in your hande? whiche sometime you teare, and then write againe: otherwise you seale it, and anone unseale it againe, lamentinge and wepinge. For you seme to make suche sorrowe, as though you weare out of your witte. (34-38)

Agamemnon struggles to author an alternative discourse that refuses to respond to the demands made by the company of men and privileges his domestic masculinity as opposed to its public twin. The vacillating acts of writing and tearing, sealing and unsealing the letter attest to Agamemnon’s confusion and fear of a rebellious discursive intervention in the codes of masculinity. The conflation of fatherhood and literary productivity does not allow this alternative to flourish. The letter once laboriously written is intercepted by Menelaus and is used by him to interrogate Agamemnon’s claim to a patriarchal prerogative. In Fitzalan, Agamemnon merely explains to his servant that he has retracted his previous injunction to Clytemnestra and urges him to

deliver his letter with haste before she arrives at the camp with Iphigenia (97-101). Euripides' Agamemnon goes a step further and reads out the contents of the letter, rather the tablet (107-123). This omission in Fitzalan underscores Agamemnon's fruitless attempts to author an alternative discourse and serves to glorify Iphigenia's triumph in achieving the same. Critics are alert to the competing narrative impulses in the play. In her study of the original, Rabinowitz notes:

Folded like a vagina and receiving the incisions of the phallic stylus, the *deltos* [the surface that is used for writing, translated as 'letter' in Fitzalan] itself stands for the body of Iphigenia, who will replace it as the contested site for the representation of male honor and power, and who will in her person receive the cut to the throat.⁹⁶

By foregrounding her narrative, Fitzalan's translation instead presents Iphigenia as the agent rather than the site of representation. Further, in a complex intra-textual mechanism, the promised narrative of Iphigenia's heroism emerges as a therapeutic alternative to the discourse of masculinity for men like Agamemnon who are caught between the conflicting tenets of state and domestic masculinities.

Yet paradoxically this triumphant space for female authorship is created in the niche created by patriarchy's inherent contradictions and consequent liminality. Hyrde's letter prefacing Roper's translation and addressed to Frances S. demonstrates how female learning and authorship were used as positive role models for young girls. In Hyrde's formulation, Roper's translation is 'an instrument towarde [Frances'] successe and furtheraunce...lytell in quantite but bigge in value tourned out of latyn in to

⁹⁶ Rabinowitz, *Anxiety Veiled*, p. 42.

englysshe by [Frances'] owne forenamed kynswoman whole goodnesse and vertue' (sig. ¶ 10). Even Vives does not discount the influence that learned women can have on the ignorant members of their sex. He argues that women who are 'ill-adapted to the learning of literature...may also learn from other learned women of her own age, either when they read to her or recount the things they have read' (p. 72).⁹⁷ In investing narratological authority in women, Iphigenia asks them to exercise precisely this art of recounting, but with a crucial difference. The women will not be recounting 'the things they have read' but will be reciting a new narrative based on what they have witnessed. Iphigenia literally means 'mothering a strong race'.⁹⁸ Considering her fate, her name is tragically ironic. However, Fitzalan is able to transform Iphigenia into a metonymic icon of literary fertility and procreativity even as she herself mothers a strong race of early modern English women writers. *Iphigeneia* may or may not be the first English translation of a Greek tragedy but it certainly has the merit of being the first extant play written in English by a woman.

In conjunction with this metaphoric rendering of motherhood, the play reconfigures notions of fatherhood on a spiritual plane. Critics have noted Christian elements in Fitzalan's translation. Robert Miola observes that '[c]hristianizing the terms and meanings of the ancient drama, [Fitzalan] transforms the alien pagan sacrifice into a

⁹⁷ It is fascinating to see how this literary trope resurfaces in Margaret Cavendish's works. Judith Haber highlights how in the figure of the young virgin, frequently central to her drama, Cavendish 'counters the narratives of patriarchy with the stories told by young virgins, which suggest different possibilities for the future' (*Desire and Dramatic Form in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 125).

⁹⁸ Robert Graves, *Greek Myths 2* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960), p. 56.

contemporary martyrdom'.⁹⁹ Similarly, Elaine Beilin suggests that in reading Erasmus' Latin translation of the play concurrently with his *Education of a Christian Prince*, Fitzalan viewed Iphigenia as a 'crypto-Christian imbued with the spirit, if not the knowledge and grace, of a Christian'.¹⁰⁰ The figure of Iphigenia was mined for its theological value in early modern typography and could be offered as an analogy for Christ's resurrection:

Thou hereste that he rose agayne and that he shal dye no more and doest thou say that he died not hymselfe: but that another man was brought in in his stede and was his vicare in suffrynge deathe: lykewise as it is redde in poetes fables that in the ilonde called Aulis a whight hynde was conuayde in in the stede of Iphigenia which sholde haue ben slayn in sacryfyce?¹⁰¹

Parallels were also drawn between the biblical story of Abraham who was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac in the name of God and Iphigenia:

Abraham was commaunded to sacrifice his sonne to please the Lord; Agamemnon was bid to sacrifice his daughter, to please the prince of darknesse. A ram was slaine for Isaac: for Iphigenia an hind.¹⁰²

What sets Fitzalan's translation apart from these customary references to Iphigenia is the way in which it prefers the 'Father in heaven' to his mortal deputy which indicates that early modern women did have an alternative resource to frame paternal authority on their terms. This is reminiscent of Elizabeth Tudor's deft allusion to *sponsa Christi* but echoes Mary Tudor's rhetoric even more strongly. In her letters to Cromwell, who

⁹⁹ Robert S Miola, ed., *Early Modern Catholicism: An Anthology of Primary Sources* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 337; also Purkiss, 'Blood, Sacrifice, Marriage', pp. 34-36.

¹⁰⁰ Elaine V. Beilin, 'Joanna Lumley (1537?-1576/7)' in *Readings in Renaissance Women's Drama*, pp. 125-28; 127.

¹⁰¹ Desiderius Erasmus, *A playne and godly exposition or declaratio[n] of the co[m]mune crede (which in the Latin tonge is called Symbolum Apostolorum) and of the. x. co[m]maundementes of goddes law* (London: Robert Redman, 1534).

¹⁰² George Abbot, *An exposition vpon the prophet Ionah Contained in certaine sermons* (London: Richard Field, 1613), sig. Y5v.

was negotiating a reconciliation between her and Henry VIII, Mary assured her supreme love and loyalty to her father but ‘next to Almighty God’. However, Cromwell took ‘exception to her qualified response’ and regarded it as a furtive slur on the king’s authority and demanded an unequivocal stance from Mary.¹⁰³ A perplexed Mary wrote to Cromwell, clarifying her meaning:

I see by your letters that you mislike my exception in my letter to the King. I assure you I did not mean it as you take it, “for I do not mistrust that the King’s goodness will move me to do anything which should offend God and my conscience. But that which I did write was only by the reason of continual custom; for I have always used both in writing and speaking to except God in all things.”¹⁰⁴

The ‘continual custom’ of granting God precedence over mortal obligations could be regarded as a subterfuge to challenge (in this case) paternal authority. Fitzalan’s Iphigenia, Mary and Elizabeth Tudor each in their own unique way challenged the political and paternal masculinities of their fathers.

¹⁰³ Whitelock, *Mary Tudor*, p. 85.

¹⁰⁴ Mary Tudor, ‘Princess Mary to [Cromwell]’ in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII Vol. 10: 1536*, ed. J. Gairdner. London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1887. *State Papers Online*.

CHAPTER 2

THE QUEEN'S QUEENDOM: CONTROLLING EARLY MODERN GENDER DISCOURSE

Considering the egregious historical inaccuracies in *Elizabeth* (1998), it is prudent on Shekhar Kapur's part to classify his opulent period-drama as an 'interpretation, not of history, but of personality'.¹ The only occasion in the film where the Queen addresses her parliament offers an interesting example of this interpretation of personality by giving the audience a glimpse of her politic language. Clad in robes of flaming red, which distinguish not only her royal status but also her femininity in the otherwise all-male congregation swamped in non-descript greys and blacks, Cate Blanchett, playing the titular character, proposes The Act of Uniformity to the parliamentarians. With an uneasy body language exhibiting anxiety and fear, she continues delivering her carefully rehearsed speech over cries of dissension until openly challenged by an MP who remarks, '[M]adam, by this act you force us to relinquish our allegiance to the Holy Father'. Although her speech does not prepare her for this interjection, Elizabeth is able to deflect it by her witty repartee: 'How can I force you, My Grace? I am a woman'. This verbal dexterity is delivered with a coy smile that genders the political question at stake. Elizabeth chooses not to respond to the theological concerns of the speaker but instead focuses on his language and choice of words. The monarch's female body natural challenges the parliamentarian's heady assurance of the discursive language that recognises the supreme currency of 'force' or physical strength for the male body politic.

This striking reference to Elizabeth's body in the discourse of the state highlights the discursive fissure that the Queen's dual bodies presented. By manipulating the sexual

¹ 'The Making of Elizabeth' in *Elizabeth: The Golden Edition*, dir. Shekhar Kapur (Universal Studios, 1998, DVD).

difference inherent in the political discourse, Elizabeth hints at a profound change in the manner and language of governance. The parliamentarian is unable to retort and is silenced; the viewers later learn that the proposed act was successfully voted for. Enmeshed with cultural responses to the incongruity between her body natural and body politic is the subject of Elizabeth's marriage. Elizabeth's tackling of this vexed subject in this scene is concomitant with her earlier artful evasion of the theological concerns of the parliamentarian. The parliament urges her to marry, in response to which she craftily says: 'But marry who your Grace?...For some say France and others Spain and some cannot abide foreigners at all. So I am not sure how best to please you unless I married one of each'.

This scene sets in motion aspects of Elizabeth and her writings that concern this chapter: her discursive strategies that battled, even as they revised, a male subject's relationship with his sovereign, her anomalous position as an unmarried female monarch, and her sexuality. Discussing Camden's *Historie of Princess Elizabeth*, Ilona Bell notes that 'Elizabeth's most remarkable achievement is...keeping her own unruly male subjects, the "stout and warlike" English, from rebelling against her female rule. Camden's history is at once a tribute to a woman who successfully wields power in a man's world and a forceful reminder that it *is* a man's world'.² Bell's central concern is with the ways in which Elizabeth reconfigures the 'distribution of power' and in the process 'unsettles society's expectations of appropriate female behavior'. Bell's scholarship details Elizabeth's perseverance in maintaining a 'bold and radically

² Ilona Bell, 'Elizabeth I – Always Her Own Free Woman', in *Political Rhetoric, Power, and Renaissance Women*, ed. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 57-84; 57, italics in original.

difficult position', which qualifies her apotheosis in being her 'own free woman'. However, Bell does not study the Queen's 'most remarkable achievement' of confronting and vanquishing insubordinate masculinity, the underlying strategy through which Elizabeth establishes and maintains her political supremacy and defies social expectations rooted in gender.³ Similarly, Stephen Cohen recognises Elizabeth's 'radically difficult position', observing that 'Elizabeth grappled with the problem of defining and justifying herself in response to her subjects' fears about a female monarch [which were rooted in]...the queen's gender-based inadequacy'.⁴ This chapter's purpose is to both illustrate how some Elizabethan subjects registered their 'fears about a female monarch' in the discursive realm and how the Queen confronted them.⁵ I will contextualise my analysis by maintaining a historical focus and examining the ramifications of the theory of the king's two bodies on the Queen's identity as a sexual subject. I will argue that Elizabeth asserted her sovereignty through controlling and moulding discursive practices and representations of her authority, in the process fundamentally reshaping the way masculinity was articulated. Contiguous to the political realm that the Queen ruled, I identify a desire in her to create a discursive queendom where she had absolute semiotic control. I shall examine John Stubbs' *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf whereinto England is likely to be swallowed by an other French marriage* (1579) as representing belligerence towards gynaecocracy. In my examination of Elizabeth's speeches and letters, in particular the ones she wrote to the Duke of Anjou, I will read her own attempts to style a masculinity that facilitated and

³ Bell, 'Always Her Own Free Woman', pp. 71;77;.74

⁴ Stephen Cohen, '(Post)modern Elizabeth: Gender, Politics and the emergence of early modern subjectivity', in *Shakespeare and Modernity: early modern to millennium*, ed. Hugh Grady (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) pp. 20-39; 24.

⁵ I shall present Elizabeth as 'Queen' instead of 'queen' to highlight the discursive anomaly she embodied as an unmarried woman on the English throne, without precedence, in early modern society.

rejoiced in her authority. In conclusion, I will discuss John Lyly's *Galatea* (1585) as constructing a code of masculinity that did not perceive either female rule or sexuality as threatening during Elizabeth's reign.

1. *'Perfect Understanding': Confounding the Discursive Adversary*

In this section I will lay down the framework for my analysis in this chapter. I propose that the initial submission to the Queen's authority by her male subjects was conditional. The medieval theory of the King's two bodies provided a medium through which Elizabeth's male body politic was privileged over her female body natural to command her unruly male subjects who were unwilling to surrender to female governance. Louis Montrose succinctly presents the state of affairs: 'From Elizabeth's accession until her death, the circumstantial fact that the body politic of English kingship was incarnated in the natural body of an unmarried woman ensured that gender and sexuality were foregrounded in representing the Elizabethan state'.⁶ Bell notes that 'the system of sovereignty was for all practical purposes predicated on a male body'.⁷ In a different essay Bell detects a 'trauma of female power' afflicting Elizabeth's male subjects⁸; an examination of Hans Eworth's painting *Elizabeth I and the 3 Goddesses* (Fig. 1) offers itself as an example of a coping mechanism for this trauma. The painting is a reworking of the Greek myth, 'The Judgment of Paris', where the three goddesses Juno, Minerva and Venus submit to Paris' verdict in a contest of

⁶ Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 115.

⁷ The anxious masculinity generated through the incongruity presented by a female 'king' will be explored in this chapter. Ilona Bell 'Souereaigne Lord of lordly Lady of this Land', in *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Glorianna*, ed. Julia M. Walker (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 99-117; 102.

⁸ Bell, 'Always Her Own Free Woman', p. 57.

celestial beauty.⁹ All three goddesses attempt to bribe Paris and sway his judgment. While Juno's and Minerva's schemes to tempt Paris prove unsuccessful, Venus promises him a magnificent conquest: Helen. Enchanted by the description of Helen's beauty and assured of gaining her love, Paris promptly declares Venus to be the winner. Paris remains oblivious to the consequences of his bargain for although he succeeds in captivating and abducting Helen, the incensed losers Juno and Minerva seek vengeance, eventually bringing about the fall of Troy.

Eworth's painting, in which Elizabeth plays Paris' part of the arbiter, diverges from both the myth and contemporary artistic representations. In the myth Paris persuades the goddesses to disrobe to aid his judgement. Illustrations of the myth, like Lucas Cranach, the Elder's 'The Judgment of Paris' (Fig.2), preserve this element and usually depict all the three goddesses as naked. In contrast, Eworth's interpretation of the myth has only Venus in the nude. This sets a dichotomy between the regally robed Elizabeth and the naked Venus; in Valerie Traub's words, '[a]s the direction of Elizabeth's walk and gaze propels the viewer's eyes from dark to light across the allegorical spectrum, they come to rest appreciatively on Venus's spectacularly naked body'.¹⁰ Elizabeth on the opposite end holds in her hand a globe with a cross on the top as a visual emblem of her political power and one sees nothing of her body but her hands and her face. This stark polarisation of Elizabeth and Venus allows a celebration of Elizabeth's body politic where the body natural is sacrificed, divorced and transferred on to Venus, the archetypal seductress, and the body politic is preserved, glorified and brought into

⁹ The myth can be read in full in Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths Volume 2* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), pp. 270-273.

¹⁰ Valerie Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002), p. 138.

sharp focus. While this erasure of Elizabeth's body natural may seem expedient to reify her authority in the presence of her male subjects, it did not prove itself to be a lasting solution.¹¹ Montrose observes that despite being a sovereign, Elizabeth 'remained a woman in her body natural, and therefore subject to those pervasive cultural perceptions of female weakness and disability that called into question the propriety and effectiveness of her authority'.¹²



Figure 1: Hans Eworth [?], *Elizabeth I and the 3 Goddesses* (c. 1569).

¹¹ Amanda Shephard observes that 'the defences of women considered the issue of separating the office from the individual holding that office, and differentiated between the private woman and the public office of a queen'. Shephard demonstrates how this differentiation helped create an atmosphere of acceptability towards female rule by focusing exclusively on her body politic (*Gender and Authority in Sixteenth-Century England: The Knox Debate* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1994), pp. 81-101; 92).

¹² Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, p. 1.

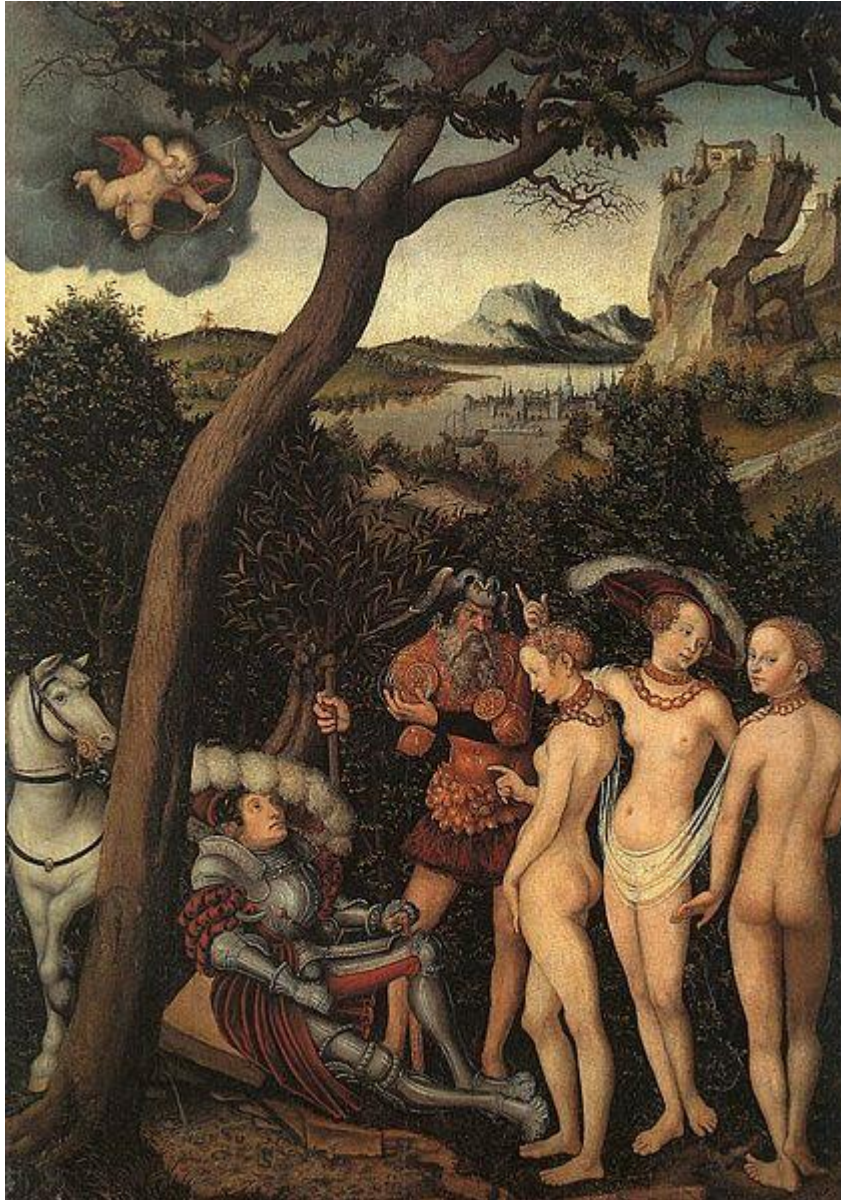


Figure 2: Lucas Cranach the Elder, *The Judgment of Paris* (c. 1528)

Critics recognise the need to privilege Elizabeth's body politic over her body natural and present Elizabeth as not only supportive of but also as encouraging this strategy. Cohen firmly states that 'Elizabeth used the medieval insistence on the priority of the traditionally male body politic to counterbalance the innate inadequacies of her body

natural'.¹³ Although Mary Beth Rose delineates a complexity in Elizabeth's self-representation, she too regards Elizabeth as valorising the male body politic at the expense of her female body natural: 'one of Elizabeth's major rhetorical strategies is to claim her femaleness in order to discard it, thus disarming her subjects and neutralizing their insecurities about female rule by attaching herself to the greater prestige of male heroism and kingship'.¹⁴ I believe that Elizabeth used a series of 'rhetorical strategies' to manipulate early modern gender discourse in a far more nuanced manner than has been hitherto recognised. While her words did '[disarm] her subjects', they did not exalt 'the greater prestige of male heroism and kingship'. My discussion will make clear that Elizabeth's 'rhetorical strategies' insisted on a celebration of gynaecocracy.

Elizabeth was alert to the dialectic of her two bodies and the discursive quandary in which it placed her subjects. In her very first speech as Queen, made at Hatfield in November 1558, she alludes to the doctrine of the king's two bodies:

And as I am but one body naturally considered, though by His permission a body politic to govern, so I shall desire you all, my lords (chiefly you of the nobility, everyone in his degree and power), to be assistant to me, that I with my ruling and you with your service may make a good account to almighty God and leave some comfort to our posterity on earth.¹⁵

The speech hints at Elizabeth's knowledge of her body natural being incompatible with her authority. She seemingly overlooks her 'one body naturally considered' to focus

¹³ Cohen, '(Post)modern Elizabeth', p. 24.

¹⁴ Mary Beth Rose, 'Gender and Construction of Royal Authority in the Speeches of Elizabeth I', in *Gender and Heroism in Early Modern English Literature* (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 26-54; 37.

¹⁵ 'Queen Elizabeth's first speech, Hatfield, November 20, 1558' in Leah S Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose, eds., *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press), p. 52.

strongly on her 'body politic'.¹⁶ She is aware that it is her body politic that gives her the right 'to govern'. And it is on this premise that she seeks the assurance of assistance and 'service' from her lords. However, her gratitude, whether genuine or not, towards divine providence underscores the paradoxical nature of her demand. As Eve's daughter she is designed to be an 'assistant' to Adam's son and not vice versa. In asking her lords to be her 'assistant' Elizabeth may appear to capitalise on her (male) body politic. Yet insofar as 'politic' could also mean something 'skilfully contrived' (*OED*, adj. 2.a), a sense that was in vogue in the early modern period, Elizabeth's shrewd manipulation of her two bodies indicate a 'politic' language that re/writes her subjects' masculinity. The deftness and assurance with which Elizabeth deals with the privileged discourses of theology and monarchy to comment on her body natural and simultaneously shape male compliance reflect her politic language.

Concern over Elizabeth's marriage was another fear that was inextricably bound up with the perturbing and unusual case of the monarch's body natural. Rose comments that '[a]t the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, her encounters with Parliament clarify a lack of faith in the possibility of a single female monarch's success; this pessimism takes concrete form in Parliament's attempts to persuade her to marry, accompanied by the implicit hope that she would share power with a male consort'.¹⁷ Helen Hackett bluntly asserts that even in the defences of her reign, male writers 'accommodate Elizabeth to the familiar role of queen as prompt producer of an heir, and securer of the

¹⁶ Somewhat differently Cohen reads this speech as an instance where Elizabeth pleads 'the inadequacy of her body natural to secure aid for her body politic' ('(Post)modern Elizabeth', p. 25).

¹⁷ Rose, *Gender and Heroism*, p. 31.

male dynasty'.¹⁸ Eworth's *Elizabeth I and the 3 Goddesses* is a reflection of the parliament's vehement desire to intervene in and control Elizabeth's courtship. I suggest that the painting, dating from the late 1560s, was participating in the political debate surrounding Elizabeth's marriage and that it encodes a didactic message.¹⁹ Through this painting Elizabeth is warned of the perils that not only she but also her country faces in the event of choosing a 'wrong' consort, lest she, like Paris, governed by a moment of sensual illusion, engenders a political calamity. The painting expresses a subtle impatience with and fear of her stubborn attitude towards marriage where she maintained the primacy of her own choice in choosing her husband. John Stubbs' *Gaping Gulf*, which will be analysed later in the chapter, represents the climactic moment of the tension between Elizabeth and her subjects on the subject of her potential marriage with Anjou.

In her examination of Elizabeth's public speeches, Rose stresses that the Queen 'cogently formulates and defines her authority' to secure her 'legitimacy as the reigning monarch'.²⁰ I am indebted to Rose for highlighting discursive practices as the site of

¹⁸Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the cult of the Virgin Mary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995), p. 50. Bell offers a similar argument that the Parliament expected marriage to solve all 'problems posed by Elizabeth's sex and marital status' ('Always Her Own Free Woman', p. 58).

¹⁹ Critics have unwaveringly accepted Roy Strong's interpretation of the painting. Strong takes his cue from the verses on the frame of the painting which declare, 'Pallas was keen of brain, Juno was queen of might,/ The rosy face of Venus was in beauty shining bright,/ Elizabeth then came/ And, overwhelmed, Queen Juno took to flight;/ Pallas was silenced; Venus blushed for shame'. Strong concludes that the goddesses stand 'united in their defeat' as Elizabeth's individual merit not only combines their virtues but excels them. While Strong recognises that the painting is 'a celebration not of a triumphant virgin queen but of a ruler who was still expected to marry', his critical emphasis is on detecting panegyric hues in the work. Yet flattery can easily function as a mode of instruction and as I highlight, the obvious paean to Elizabeth subtly conceals an injunction (*Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Pimlico, 1987), pp. 65-69; p. 66. For a continuing critical trend see, Traub *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*, pp. 137-38).

²⁰ Mary Beth Rose, 'The Gendering of Authority in the Public Speeches of Elizabeth I', *PMLA*, 115 (2000), pp. 1077-82. Rose's critical position does not seem quite clear. In her essay she contends that

conceptualising and reinforcing normative gender codes. The scene from *Elizabeth* analysed above hints at a peculiar trait in Elizabeth's authorial style. As early modern gender codes did not license a 'woman' to wield 'force', Elizabeth's remark is an ironic comment that highlights the incongruity between what she is allowed and what she actually enjoys as a monarch. However, the parliamentarian cannot determine whether or not Elizabeth is 'forcing' him to submit to her will. As a monarch expecting her subject to comply against his own wishes, there is an inhering and implicit device of 'force' that Elizabeth is using to her advantage. Yet in accordance with early modern gender codes, there is a perceived limit to a woman's persuasive powers. This presents a conundrum as to whether or not Elizabeth is capitalising on 'force' here. The parliamentarian cannot continue the debate for Elizabeth I places him in a position beyond logic or reason. Confounding belligerent subjects and situating them discursively in a position where they cannot argue are used as tools to coerce them.

This chapter will recognize an alogical device in Elizabeth I's writings as a method to silence hostile masculinity. However, before doing that I would like to pause and examine the unlikely alliance that this narrative device forges with *l'écriture féminine*.

Diane Price Herndl characterises *l'écriture féminine* and its difference from "masculine writing" in the following manner: 'his language is rational, logical, hierarchical, and linear; her language is arational (if not irrational), contralogical (if not illogical),

Elizabeth's process of political self-representation is figured in 'explicitly gendered terms' where Elizabeth creates a 'specifically female mode of defining authority' (p. 1077). Rose concludes that Elizabeth I's speeches reflect a 'profound rejection of male heroism' that exalts glory in death by privileging the Queen as a survivor (p. 1080). However in her book *Gender and Heroism* published two years later, Rose argues that Elizabeth '[attaches] herself to the greater prestige of male heroism and kingship' and 'completes the process of self-definition by inscribing herself in prestigious male discourses' (pp. 34-35). Rose's apparent revision of her critical perspective detects survival as 'a key component' of Elizabeth's heroic identity that is not necessarily incompatible with 'prestigious male discourses' (p. 54).

resistant to hierarchies, and circular'.²¹ *L'écriture féminine* calls for the woman author to write her body and it is tempting to use this theoretical apparatus to examine the way in which the Queen voices her body natural. I will argue that certain shared traits make Elizabeth I's writings a prototype of *l'écriture féminine*. These shared traits work towards confounding models of masculinity which are unsupportive of the Queen's authority by voicing her body natural in a manner that turns early modern gendered political discourse inside out. I am alert to the complexities of appropriating the theory of *l'écriture féminine* in an early modern context.²² While the concept recognises a polyvalence of female bodies and celebrates their infinite experiences, it does not take cognisance of a body like the Queen's, which is culturally determined as both masculine and feminine. Yet Elizabeth's writings that foreground her body natural challenge phallogentric language, thus inhabiting a discursive space shared with *l'écriture féminine*.

In her seminal essay, 'The Laugh of the Medusa' Hélène Cixous writes that

[n]early the entire history of writing is confounded with the history of reason, of which it is at once the effect, the support, and one of the privileged alibis. It has been one with the phallogentric tradition.²³

The history of reason has a confounding effect on the history of writing for it erases the female voice and assigns it to the domain of the repressed. But what happens when

²¹ Diane Price Herndl, 'Body', in *Feminisms: an anthology of literary theory and criticism*, ed. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl (Houndsmill, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997), pp. 343-46; 343.

²² Jonathan Gil Harris insists on 'unexpected conversations between diverse agents across time' and weds Hélène Cixous and Margaret Cavendish for a fruitful study on how these authors conceptualise pluralities of bodies in opposition to their singular identity that is privileged in patriarchy. Similarly, identifying common elements between Elizabeth and Cixous' writings is crucial to my understanding of the Queen's authorial practices. Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), pp. 148-68; 166.

²³ Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', in *Feminisms*, pp. 347-62; 350.

l'écriture féminine does not oppose but confronts reason, the privileged alibi? 'The Laugh of the Medusa' bristles with motivational fervour that encourages *l'écriture féminine*. Although the essay is radical in its approach towards the act of writing, it does not address the question of its audience. For the purposes of my study, what form of *l'écriture féminine* should be adopted for a male audience? In describing the distress of a female speaker/ writer Cixous describes how the female author's 'words fall almost always upon the deaf male ear, which hears in language only that which speaks in the masculine' (p. 351). I hope to show that Elizabeth uses 'masculine language' in her communication with a male audience and the apparent catering to traditional gender beliefs immanent in this language masks a subversive and dynamic voice initiating a socio-political revision.

Elizabeth's speech to her parliament at the close of its session in March 1576 is an interesting example of her politic language. She begins like an apprehensive author who demands control over the meaning of her words.

Do I see God's most sacred, holy Word and text of holy Writ drawn to so divers senses, being never so precisely taught, and shall I hope that my speech can pass forth through so many ears without mistaking, where so many ripe and diverse wits do offer bend themselves to conster than attain the perfect understanding?²⁴

Elizabeth's authorial anxiety about misinterpretation is bound up with the nature of her audience. 'Ripe and diverse' wits of the all-male assembly work towards 'constering' female speech rather than achieving its 'perfect understanding'. As we will soon see,

²⁴ 'Queen Elizabeth's speech at the close of the Parliamentary session, March 15, 1576', in *Collected Works*, p. 168.

Elizabeth in her speech confounds these ‘ripe and diverse’ wits by simultaneously demanding and refusing access to ‘perfect understanding’ of her words. Further, while acknowledging her authorial position by drawing parallels between her speech and the ‘text of holy Writ’ she rejects a conventional authorial stance and remarks that ‘[i]f any look for eloquence, I shall deceive their hope’ (p. 168). In deceiving the hopes of her male audience, Elizabeth baffles them. In a similar vein, despite her wry remark on ‘ripe and diverse wits’ and their exertion towards interpretation rather than ‘perfect understanding’, Elizabeth acknowledges that her actions have previously been ‘favourably interpreted’ by the assembly (p. 168).²⁵ Elizabeth simultaneously robs her audience of, and invests her audience with the power of interpretation, thereby seeking a monopoly over semiotics. Reminding the audience of her expectations is less a retraction of her earlier fear of misinterpretation and more a clever narrative device to entrance them and thus facilitate a positive reception for her speech.

Elizabeth proceeds to thank God for the ‘good success’ of the seventeen years of her rule and then makes a remarkable declaration:

Not the finest wit, the judgement that can rake most deeply or take up captious ears with pleasing tales, hath greater care to guide you to the safest state, or would be gladder to establish you where men ought to think themselves most sure and happy, than she that speaks these words (p. 169).

After disparaging ‘rich and diverse wits’ in the beginning of her speech, Elizabeth rebukes ‘the finest wit’ for its interference with her governance and its attempt to channel her authority. She displays her awareness of the subtext of the ‘pleasing tales’

²⁵ As the editors of the *Collected Works* note, Elizabeth is responding to the Speaker, Mr Bell, who had ‘humbly and earnestly petitioned her majesty to marriage’.

that effectively questions her royal power, and is equally dismissive of ‘the judgement’ that tends to excoriate her words rather than achieve ‘perfect understanding’ from them. This ‘perfect understanding’ would free ‘captious ears’ of narratives that are hostile to Elizabeth’s authority, and yield submission. Read in conjunction with her refusal to play the part of an eloquent speaker, Elizabeth’s distrust of ‘pleasing tales’, and by extension their authors, indicates a resistance to phallogentric writings which consolidate early modern gender codes while signalling the development of a new narrative practice. This narrative style shrewdly borrows aspects from masculine language that further its interests of shaping her subjects’ masculinity and anticipates *écriture féminine*. Elizabeth’s reproachful manner towards ‘finest wit’, ‘captious ears’ and ‘pleasing tales’ is neatly followed by one of instruction where men ‘*ought to think themselves most sure and happy*’ in her rule (italics mine). For men to achieve ‘the safest state’ they must place all their faith in the narrative of ‘she that speaks these words’ and disregard ‘pleasing tales’.

This speech exposes a power struggle between the Queen and ‘the judgement that can rake most deeply’ which demanded her marriage. Interestingly, while the concerns around her marriage were essentially political in nature, Elizabeth reads them as reflections on her body natural where she is reduced to early modern gender norms that demand marriage. She reminds her audience that she is ‘not a milkmaid with a pail on [her] arm, whereby [her] private self might be little set by’ (p. 170). The analogy works at two conflicting levels, yet in a bizarre way both reinforce Elizabeth’s authority. The stark contrast between the Queen and a milkmaid censures the parliament for their insolence in instructing a sovereign. At the same time however, Elizabeth, in likening

herself to a humble female subject, demands an equal right of making a personal choice on the question of marriage. The speech constructs Elizabeth as an ‘indifferentest judge’ on the subject of her marriage which stands in contrast to prescriptive ‘pleasing tales’ (p. 170). Elizabeth’s narrative frames her as empowered. She may be indifferent but she has not lost the right to exercise judgment; indeed she has deftly and cleverly delivered it. The Queen not only separates herself from the patriarchal economy of marriage but also artfully demands that the male assembly acquiesce to her decision. This demand is accompanied by a tacit threat where she warns the parliament: ‘let good heed be taken lest in reaching too far after future good, you peril not the present’ (p. 170). Having deemed herself as the only one who can ensure their ‘safest state’, Elizabeth reminds the audience of the ‘peril’ that ensues from royal displeasure.

The curious note on which the speech ends makes it an excellent example of the arational feature of *l’écriture féminine* recognised by Herndl (p. 343). Elizabeth finishes her speech by wishing that the assembly ‘had tasted some drops of Lethe’s flood to deface and cancel these...speeches out of [its] remembrance’ (p. 171). This self-effacing note does little to diminish the force of the words preceding it that act as a testimony to Elizabeth’s position on marriage. The speech earlier refers to the speaker’s ‘good lesson’ where Elizabeth was ‘required with *reason* to remember’ the absolute desirability of her marriage (p. 170, italics mine). Elizabeth’s wish confounds the listeners and acts as a gleeful and subversive antithesis to the faculty of ‘reason’, which Cixous recognizes as phallocentrism’s ‘privileged alibi’. Moreover, the non-linear progression of an argument that begins with Elizabeth’s demand for her narrative to

have supremacy over 'pleasing tales' and concludes with her wish to obliterate it reinforces her oppositional narratological policy.

Early modern discourses of politics and gender intersect dramatically in this speech where the Queen lays down the terms of her relationship with the parliament. The textual transmission of this speech is equally revealing of Elizabeth's subversive approach to gender codes that fashions a language of control. One of the surviving copies of this speech has been discovered in the library of Elizabeth's godson Sir John Harington. Harington personalised his copy by noting Elizabeth's 'good advices' that were delivered along with it. The bestowal of this copy – a mark of royal goodwill – was accompanied by a gentle but powerful instruction:

Boy Jack, I have made a clerk write fair my poor words for thine use, as it cannot be such striplings have entrance into Parliament assembly as yet. Ponder them in thy hours of leisure and play with them till they enter thine understanding; so shalt thou hereafter, perchance, find some good fruits hereof when thy godmother is out of remembrance; and I do this because thy father was ready to serve us and love us in trouble and thrall (p. 167).

In a manner which is analogous to the actual delivery of the speech, Elizabeth presents this written copy as unworthy of serious study: her words are 'poor'. As discussed above, this dismissal barely conceals the language of authority and control. While on the surface Elizabeth may desire her godson to 'play' with her 'poor words' in his 'hours of leisure' as if they were little more than amusing diversions, she expects them to enter his 'understanding'. 'Boy Jack' or Sir John Harington was 15 in 1576 and in encouraging an 'understanding' of the female sovereign and her fierce independence, Elizabeth's injunction may be read as an attempt to breed a supportive class of courtiers

willing to comply with her demands in the future.²⁶ This ‘understanding’ of her words is an echo of the ‘perfect understanding’ that Elizabeth demanded in her speech, and once achieved it will yield ‘good fruits’ that can be read as promises of royal favour. What bolsters this reading is Elizabeth’s quick reminder to ‘Boy Jack’ that the royal favouritism he enjoys is due to his father’s faithful service. The continuation of the Queen’s goodwill depends on whether ‘Boy Jack’ will follow in his father’s footsteps and ‘love’ and ‘serve’ the monarch on her terms ‘in trouble and thrall’.²⁷

2. *‘Flattering glosses’ and Discursive Belligerence*

The above section establishes the tension that existed between the Queen’s two bodies and the manner in which Elizabeth’s male subjects’ subordinate masculinity was contingent on continually privileging the body politic over the body natural. Yet this hierarchy could not effectively placate the male anxiety generated by the Queen’s sexuality and her unmarried status. In early modern society ‘Elizabeth’s conjugal

²⁶ For Sir Harington’s vexed relationship with the Queen in his later years see Jason Scott-Warren, *Sir John Harington and the Book as Gift* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), in particular, pp. 25-55; 203.

²⁷ Steven May’s meticulous study of the nature of courtiership in Elizabethan England unequivocally identifies Elizabeth as the presiding deity who advanced or frustrated her courtiers’ ambitions, noting that ‘[t]he key criterion in all matters of courtiership was Elizabeth’s personal recognition and acceptance’. Further, May also observes how Elizabeth ‘could have elevated anyone to courtier rank...And she was quite capable of suspending or demoting her courtiers’ (*The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Contexts* (Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1999), pp. 9-40; 20; 21). Paul Hammer’s magisterial study of Essex’s rising career recognises a more complex power structure operating between the courtiers and the Queen. His observation that ‘[r]oyal favour was the very linchpin’ (p. 56) of Essex’s meteoric success echoes May’s stance. However, Hammer also notes how ‘[d]espite her expressions of anger, the exigencies of war provided an unanswerable excuse for ambitious men to establish a degree of autonomy from the dictates of their female sovereign’ (p. 396). The Queen’s authority was thus far from stable, especially in circumstances where social understanding of femininity disempowered her. This chapter explores her desire to control the discursive realm of Elizabethan England to buttress her monarchical power and construct a complementary code of masculinity. *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585-1597* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

status...poses the most disturbing ideological problem of all'.²⁸ My analysis demonstrates that Elizabeth took advantage of this ideological instability to calculate and form discursive skills that granted her semiotic control. She uses alogical and circular narrative devices that twist putative gender truths and coerce male audience into accepting her authority; the 'poor words' written to 'Boy Jack' are an excellent example of this narrative practice. However, this device relies heavily on the Queen's ability to control hermeneutics in the discursive arena in which she plays. In this section I will examine John Stubbs' *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf* as stubbornly refusing to play this game of hermeneutics on the Queen's terms.

The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf, published in 1579, is a charged piece of writing vehemently opposing the proposed marriage between Elizabeth and François, Duke of Anjou.²⁹ The proposed marriage was a step to advance diplomatic negotiations between England and France. The polemical tract goes to extraordinary lengths to convince the reader that Stubbs' fears are justly founded. The argument, particularly in the light of the St Bartholomew Day's massacre, is persuasive and stirring. The political and religious danger that England faces because of this alliance is made imminent through Stubbs' provocative prose. Stubbs warns Elizabeth not to fall prey to the council of her advisers who are canvassing this alliance. His concern is that a Catholic consort would inevitably result in England's fall into Catholicism. He depicts the French, particularly the ruling dynasty, as scheming, duplicitous and a treacherous race, venomous to the

²⁸ Bell, 'Always Her Own Free Woman', p. 59.

²⁹ Blair Worden remarks that '[t]he Anjou match was the most intense and controversial issue to have visited Elizabethan politics'. Along with the letter Sir Philip Sidney wrote to the Queen to dissuade her from the match, Worden contextualises *Arcadia* in relation to these developments ('Delightful Teaching: Queen Elizabeth and Sidney's *Arcadia*', in *Elizabeth I and the Culture of Writing*, ed. Peter Beal and Grace Ioppolo (London: The British Library, 2007), pp. 71-86; 71).

political health of the country.³⁰ Historical evidence of unhappy Anglo-French royal marriages is amply referenced in his work, inviting the reader to conclude that the match between Elizabeth and Anjou will have disastrous consequences for the English nation (pp. 86-87).

The *Gaping Gulf* plays on fears that England will be reduced to a colony furthering French political ambitions. Stubbs presents a variety of scenarios where the Queen may have to leave the country in the hands of a governor to take up residence in France with her husband. Likewise he showers the reader with every conceivable permutation of the possible offspring the couple may have, relentlessly denying that any of them would solve the vexed issue of Elizabeth's succession (pp. 51- 56). The text oscillates between being scathing in its scrutiny of the repercussions of this alliance and pleading in its direct addresses to Elizabeth. Stubbs' militant Protestantism is veiled by an ostensible devotion to the Queen and his over-riding concern for her well-being. However, the Queen was far from being flattered by the fervent exclamations of loyalty and devotion that litter the *Gaping Gulf*.³¹ The proclamation that banned the tract interprets these as 'flattering glosses towards her majesty to cover the rest of the manifest depraving of her majesty and her actions to her people'.³² This not only demonstrates the Queen's keen grasp of hermeneutics but also alerts us to the terms on

³⁰ John Stubbs, *Gaping Gulf*, in *John Stubbs's Gaping Gulf with Letters and Other Related Documents*, ed. Lloyd E. Berry (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1968). This is a recurring theme in Stubbs' text but see in particular pp. 24-25.

³¹ These exclamations did not only characterise the printed text: Camden in *The History of Princess Elizabeth* documents how Stubbs affirmed his loyalty to the Queen in a startling manner where after his right hand was cut off, he declaimed 'God save the Queen', with blood still oozing out of the wound. Bell admits that this is 'a remarkable expression of loyalty and courage' ('Sovereign Lady', p. 113. Berry too studies the relevant extracts from Camden and comments on the public sympathy Stubbs' dramatic gesture elicited. *Gaping Gulf*, pp. xxxv-vii).

³² Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds., *Tudor Royal Proclamations Volume II: The Later Tudors, 1553-1587* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 447.

which Stubbs' 'flattering glosses' were offered. A close examination of the work reveals that the root of Stubbs' 'manifest depraving of her majesty' lay in his inability to come to terms with female authority and a masculinity that felt imperilled under it. It is, however, important to first appreciate the intricacies surrounding the Anjou alliance.

The matrimonial alliance between Elizabeth and Anjou was first proposed by Catherine de Medici and Henri III with a view to strengthening the Treaty of Blois signed by England and France in April 1572. The Treaty of Blois was a crucial political alliance between the two countries which responded to a delicate international climate that was witnessing a formidable growth of Spanish power. Although it was in the best interests of both countries to preserve and honour the terms of the treaty, it is clear that France viewed the durability of this newly forged friendship with its historic rival with a degree of scepticism. For France political alliance had little value unless validated by a dynastic alliance. It is worthwhile to observe the note of surprise in Elizabeth's letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, her ambassador in France, dated July 23, 1572 on first receiving this proposal where she comments on the 'matter [as] somewhat strange' (p. 205). Elizabeth was struck by the difference in age between her and Anjou (then Duke of Alençon) for at the time of the letter she was thirty-eight and he seventeen. Previous negotiations to wed her and Henri III of France had proved futile. Yet notwithstanding Elizabeth's initial dislike of the match, the marriage negotiations lasted for twelve years and concluded only with Anjou's death in 1584. It is not difficult to identify the reasons behind this protracted courtship. In the same letter to Walsingham, Elizabeth is impressed by the French vehemence and insistence concerning the suit. Commenting on the French delegation, Elizabeth remarks,

...yet such was their importunacy in reciting of many reasons and arguments to move us not to mislike thereof, in respect as well of the strength of the amity which this amity should give to the continuance of this last league...tending to remove the difficulties and to gain our contentation and liking of the said duke (p. 206).

While the French delegation exalted the ‘worthiness of the said duke of Alençon’ and recited his ‘excellent virtues and good conditions’, the political thrust of the suit was evident: for the French ‘the strength of the amity [the Treaty of Blois]’ was contingent on the realisation of ‘this amity [the proposed union between Anjou and Elizabeth]’ (p. 206). Elizabeth was correct in recognising that this instance of ‘very great goodwill’ was designed to ensure ‘the very perfect continuance of the amity lately contracted’ (p. 207). She was clearly attentive to the diplomatic demands of the situation for although she acknowledged ‘the difficulties in this matter...[which she] could not digest’, she declined ‘to give any such resolute answer as might miscontent the [French] ambassadors’ (p. 206). The awkwardness of Elizabeth’s situation in this instance is undeniable as rejecting the marriage proposal could result in damaging repercussions for the much-required Anglo-French alliance. Elizabeth feels this awkwardness keenly enough to instruct Walsingham in the letter to assure the French that she has ‘as great a desire to have the same amity continued and strengthened’ as them (p. 207). It is difficult to evaluate the exact sentiments of Elizabeth on this match but it is likely that she did not consider it to be worthy of prolonged deliberation and that ‘the inconvenience of the difference of the age’ seemed a reasonable and insurmountable objection. Yet she did not consider the matter resolved to her satisfaction and wrote to Walsingham again two days later ‘to lay open before the king [her] conceit in the

matter' (p. 210). It is in this letter written on July 25, 1572 that Elizabeth's distinctive authorial practices are employed to take advantage of the political opportunities this match presented.

In unfolding her 'conceit' to the king, Elizabeth I uses ambivalent language that effectively erases her rejection of the match. While she compounds the difficulties of the match by identifying religious differences as equally important as the difference in ages, she recognises the courtship as a channel for communication that will facilitate diplomatic negotiations and therefore solicits it. For the purposes of my study it is noteworthy how she lays down the terms of the courtship. She represents herself in a unique position which enables her to make demands. She insists on a personal interview, remarking that in marriages 'nothing doth so much rule both parties as to have their own opinions satisfied' (p. 210). Anticipating French disapproval of such a request, Elizabeth I commands Walsingham to

dare affirm that you know there can be no example showed us of the like of this: that is, that either the elder son of France or any younger was at any time to be matched in marriage with such a prince having such kingdoms as we have, by whom such an advancement might have grown as may by marriage with us, both to the duke himself and to the king and crown of France (p. 211).

Her language reveals her expectation that her potential husband will recognise her political authority. Uniquely, her political position empowers her to advance her husband's merit and raise his worth rather than the other way round. This nonpareil discursive location creates an unprecedented requirement for the Queen to fashion a code of masculinity for her husband that is sympathetic to her sovereign status. This is

evident in Elizabeth's demand that Anjou's arrival in England be 'secret and privately, without any outward pomp or show' to avoid public resentment (p. 212). However, the French royal family was uneasy that the Duke's visit should be marked by relative austerity and obscurity as it compromised his royal standing. This is clear in the number of times Elizabeth has to make this demand in her letters to her ambassadors. She insists that the Duke must 'come over in some disguised sort', shrewdly observing that 'if there follow no liking between [them] after a view taken one of the other, the more secretly it be handled the less touch will it be to both [their] honours' (p. 222).

However, one of her later letters, written nearer to Anjou's visit, reveals that Elizabeth was chiefly concerned with the impact it may have had on the political stability of her rule if her prescriptions were not scrupulously attended to. Elizabeth I was alarmed at Charles IX's proposal to accompany his brother on a sea trip and give it an air of a whimsical, spontaneous plan. This suggestion was probably meant as a compromise between Elizabeth's demand for secrecy and the French wish to maintain the social graces that befitted Anjou's noble position. However, this was an issue on which Elizabeth had no inclination to compromise for this would advertise her 'affection to this marriage' (p. 226). Further, this arrangement was unpleasant to her for it lacked 'consideration of [her] state and calling' (p. 226). Given the gendered paradigm of early modern society, Elizabeth's demand that her future husband be sensitive and adapt to the needs of her 'state and calling' is singular. Even in her marriage negotiations the Queen is keen on fashioning a masculinity that will be supportive of her rule and not threaten her political position. Her suitor has little, if any, say in the mode of his self-representation and he is expected to come to terms with the primacy of

Elizabeth's political position over his. Elizabeth's authorial manoeuvres subvert contemporary adages which suggested that her body natural debilitated her body politic. She works towards creating a unique union between her two bodies that strengthens her authority.

In contrast, the *Gaping Gulf* negates the possibility of successfully achieving this unique union and is irreverent towards Elizabeth's discursive attempts to realise it. Stubbs typically rehearses aphorisms which identify the Queen's body natural as debilitating to her authority, thereby urging readers to share his hostility towards the French match. He argues that the French have:

not [sent] Satan in body of a serpent, but the old serpent in shape of a man, whose sting is in his mouth, and who doth his endeavour to seduce our Eve, that she and we may lose this English paradise. Who because she is also our Adam and sovereign lord or lordly lady of this land, it is so much the more dangerous, and therefore he so much the more busily bestirs him (pp. 3-4).

The comparison of Elizabeth to both Adam and Eve represents the conflict that her two bodies posed and the confounding effect it had on her male subjects. Stubbs is unable to wholly accept her female body natural as a monarch. Her body politic is his 'sovereign lord' and her body natural needs to be accounted for by subjugating it to her body politic: she is a 'lordly lady'. 'Lordly' not only grammatically takes precedence over the 'lady', it also offers a vigilant male presence lording over the female. However, in alluding to the biblical tale of the Fall, the text reveals a moment where the strategy of privileging Elizabeth's body politic over her body natural no longer serves the purpose of prompting abiding subservience from her male subjects. Though

Stubbs' tone is that of conjecture and speculation – 'we *may* lose this English paradise' – the surety of the metaphor conceals within it Stubbs' personal verdict on the situation: Adam *was* beguiled by Eve and they *did* lose their paradise. Later in his argument, his allusion to the narrative of the Fall in his discussion of the Queen's body natural compounds this sense of tragic inevitability. Dismissing claims of Monsieur going through a religious conversion under Elizabeth's influence, Stubbs insists that the reverse is more likely to happen. He argues that if the 'weaker vessel, be strong enough to draw man' – Eve successfully convinced Adam to transgress – one can readily determine 'how much more forcibly shall the stronger vessel pull weak woman' (p. 11). Elizabeth's possible marriage to Anjou presents such an imminent danger that Stubbs ignores the Queen's body politic altogether and focuses solely on her body natural.

Stubbs opines that Elizabeth's body politic does not safeguard her from the social position that her body natural is expected to occupy. By divine decree she 'oweth both awe and obedience [to her husband], howsoever the laws by prerogative or her place by pre-eminence privilege her' (p. 11). The text generously references accepted wisdom on a wife's subordination to her spiritually superior husband. Stubbs is doubtful whether 'it be safe that a stranger and Frenchman should as owner possess our Queen' (p. 37). He is convinced that her husband shall 'rule her', a point that he reiterates in wondering whether a 'French heart be kindlike enough to rule [the] queen' (p. 34). In referring to the monarch being ruled, the text reflects the compelling influence of early modern gender codes where the Queen's body natural, though 'weaker' than her body politic, mutates the power of her stately being resulting in the loss of its superior

position. If this reversal of hierarchy was not worrying enough, Stubbs' paranoia escalates when he suggests that by not following the designated path for her body natural, Elizabeth risks losing her body politic altogether. He writes that if Elizabeth chooses to honour her body politic and decides to remain in England while Anjou dwells in France she will see 'herself despised or not wifelike esteemed' and will therefore be reduced to an 'eclipsed sun diminished in sovereignty' (p. 49). Bell rightly remarks that 'Stubbs, who is incapable of seeing Elizabeth's female body except in terms of conventional gender roles, assumes that she must either be ruled by her husband or by her advisors'.³³

While Stubbs' perspective on a woman's place in society seems to be in concordance with established norms of early modern times, his reference to it in discussing the monarch's marriage reveals an astonishing gap in the literature written in the defence of Elizabeth's rule in the early part of her reign. Though there was an acknowledgement of her authority by her 'faithful and true subjects', those male writers seem to be assured that if not in the public at least in the private sphere Elizabeth would be under some degree of male supervision, namely that of her husband.³⁴ Both Deborah and Judith, biblical characters who were often used to create a sense of acceptance of Elizabeth's anomalous position, were married women. The absent male figure of the husband could have been a source of comfort for Elizabeth's

³³ Bell, 'Sovereign Lady', p. 111.

³⁴ This is a reference to the title of John Aylmer's defence of Elizabeth's rule written in response to John Knox, *An harborovve for faithfull and trevve subiectes agaynst the late blowne blaste, concerninge the gouernme[n]t of vvemen. wherin be confuted all such reasons as a straunger of late made in that behalfe, with a breife exhortation to obedience* (London: John Day, 1559). For a detailed discussion on the manner in which defendants of female rule were concerned with the preservation of patriarchal power through institutions like marriage and parliamentarian control over a female monarch, see Shephard, *Gender and Authority in Sixteenth-Century England*, pp. 22-105.

male subjects who were baffled with the lack of precedence of an unmarried Queen on the English throne.

Though Elizabeth's subjects had no certain idea that the Anjou alliance would be the last attempt to manifest the elusive husband figure, they were beginning to realise that the Queen had effectively escaped the patriarchal surveillance guaranteed by the institution of matrimony. With the reassuring husband-on-the-horizon figure sinking away, a discursive lacuna began to emerge which necessitated a reconfiguration of the Queen's two bodies. This is evident in Stubbs' tract. His initial stance on the issue of Elizabeth's choice of suitor and time of marriage appears marked by nonchalance: 'whensoever and whomsoever she shall marry' (p. 37). Yet it rests on the precept that marriage is a certainty. Towards the end of his argument Stubbs completely forecloses the possibility of a husband materialising for Elizabeth. He writes: 'I must needs say I know none other unmarried prince worthy of her, and I cannot choose but say that this prince of France, of all other unmarried prince is most unworthy of her' (p. 88). This shift in the representation of the husband-to-be from an essential figure providing solace to a superfluous presence that can be easily dismissed is not without reason. In the progress of his argument Stubbs deftly deals with the ramifications of the presence of an unmarried woman in the position of supreme authority and the volatile effect it has on the previous understanding of her two bodies.

In order to conserve the supremacy of the Queen's body politic, Stubbs' argument capitalizes on Elizabeth's age and attempts to desexualize her body natural. Stubbs lists the joining of 'youth with decrepit age' as one of the examples of ill-fated unions in his

preamble to the discussion of Elizabeth-Anjou marriage (p. 9). Although the reference to Elizabeth in this instance is vague – forty-six could hardly be described as ‘decrepit age’, even according to early modern standards – Stubbs returns to the theme of unequal ages. Stubbs calculates Anjou’s ‘youth of years [as] an apparent inequality of this match’ (p. 72). Further, he notes that his passion for Elizabeth ‘is quite contrary to his young appetites, which will otherwise have their desire’ (p. 72). This argument feeds into Stubbs’ depiction of the French as guileful and dissembling; elsewhere he paints Anjou as using a ‘cloak of love’ to conceal his true intentions (p. 79). However, it can also equally be read as Elizabeth’s incapacity to inspire erotic desire. In his observance of Elizabeth’s attitude towards marriage Stubbs contrasts her erstwhile ‘flower of youth’ with her present age that makes a prudent and cautious approach a matter of necessity. The advantage of youth allowed her a ‘constant dislike and indisposed mind toward marriage’ but ‘at these years’ she must submit to ‘best heed and faithfulest advice’. No longer in ‘the flower of her youth’, Elizabeth is forcefully reminded of her diminishing capital in the marriage industry (p. 69).

Stubbs develops an innocuous alternative to the Queen’s sexual body natural by casting it in maternal garb that also bolsters her body politic.³⁵ Although Stubbs labours over the ‘expectation of death to mother and child’ if the forty-six year old Elizabeth were to

³⁵ Although Carole Levin observes how Elizabeth cast herself as a mother ‘in positive, rhetorical ways’ to extend the influence of her political power, it seems to me that it was an effective strategy for the initial years of her reign, which is the political timeline Levin refers to, that had run its course by the time *Gaping Gulf* was published (‘All the Queen’s Children: Elizabeth I and the Meanings of Motherhood’, *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, 30 (2004), pp. 57-76). I am more in agreement with Rose’s critical stance who argues that ‘[g]iven the realities of English Renaissance constructions of gender and sexuality, that Elizabeth refrains in her public rhetoric from identifying fervently and consistently with the roles of virgin and mother is unsurprising; indeed it makes sense.’ Careful consideration of contemporary dialectic on the subject leads Rose to conclude that ‘maternity was incompatible with the public domain’ (*Gender and Heroism*, p. 77). On depictions of Elizabeth as a ‘nursing mother’ in the early part of her reign, see Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, pp. 50-52.

experience childbirth, he readily terms her a ‘natural mother’ when it comes to governing her subjects (pp. 51; 49). This is a clever strategy. Stubbs’ discussion of Elizabeth’s age helps him create her asexual body natural which wards off the political perils that will ensue if the marriage negotiations are consummated. Simultaneously, it hems in the Queen’s sovereign power in benign maternal terms making it unlikely to be read as a ‘monstrous regiment’.³⁶ Moreover Stubbs elaborates on acceptable maternal behaviour in a subtle manner, which is key to understanding the religious conditions upon which fealty to the Queen were predicated. He refers to the biblical tale of Asa whose behaviour towards his mother contravened filial piety who was yet rewarded with ‘holy praise’ (p. 18). To preserve faith, Asa deposes his idolatrous mother for practicing ‘wicked religion to the dishonour of God’. Stubbs instructs Elizabeth to mark the supreme authority of religion and follow Asa’s precedent in condemning impiety and blasphemous rituals, both of them associated with Catholic France, thus effectively steering her away from the marriage proposal.

While there is nothing exceptional about alluding to biblical figures to urge Elizabeth to strengthen the hold of Protestantism in England and keep Catholic threats at bay, the figure of the ‘bad’ mother complicates Stubbs’ argument. Insinuated in this metaphor is a clear threat, as Stubbs suggests a mode of action to Elizabeth’s subjects as much as he does to her. If she accepts Anjou’s proposal, Elizabeth will turn her back on the preservation of Protestantism, a duty expected from the supreme governor of the Church of England. This would transform Elizabeth from a ‘natural mother’ to an

³⁶ This is an allusion to John Knox’s vitriolic tirade against female rule, *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* (Geneva: J. Poullain and A. Rebul, 1558).

unnatural one, which would compel her sons/ subjects to follow Asa's lead.³⁷ Stubbs reinforces his point by alerting Elizabeth to the public affection she enjoys as being founded on 'the chief and first benefit' she brought about in 'redeem[ing] [England]...from a foreign king [Philip II]' (p. 36). However, her marriage to Anjou – 'a more dangerous foreigner' – would spawn 'discontentation' in her subjects. It is hardly surprising then that the *Gaping Gulf* was read as 'seditious'.³⁸ The ordination of masculinity may involve violating filial dues and disregarding the sovereign where maintenance of religion is in question. He therefore likens the men advancing Anjou's motives in Elizabeth's court to 'unkind mothers' who have abandoned 'their own child, the Church of England, to be nursed of a French enemy and friend to Rome' (p. 20).

The gender-incongruous imagery of a faction of men in court being represented as 'unkind mothers' suggests that there is a degree of propinquity between Stubbs' anxiety over the Queen's two bodies and his concern for the masculinity of her subjects. Stubbs views the French alliance as having an emasculating effect. As Stubbs condemns the alliance as sacrilegious, he fears that its execution will invite God's retribution and in

³⁷ Stubbs supplements his metaphor by giving another example of an unnatural and reprehensible mother in a political context. He portrays Catherine de Medici as a manipulative woman who uses her maternal power in devious ways to meet her self-interest. He writes, 'When we speak...of France and of the practices there against the Church, of their sometime mitigated nature towards religion, or of dissensions in appearance and bruits of jealousy which the Queen Mother puts as vizard upon her practices, we must cast our eye wholly to her, as the very soul whereby the bodies of the King, of Monsieur, of their sister Margaret, and of all the great ones in France do move as a hundred hands to effect her purposes', (p. 25). Catherine de Medici's conniving 'practices' to 'effect her purposes' illustrate the danger that Stubbs perceived in casting political power in maternal terms. Maternity infused with political strength, if not guarded by caveats can be equally potent in its ability to threaten the commonwealth. The Queen Mother's command over 'the great ones in France' disconcerts Stubbs as it suggests that the English constitution notwithstanding, Elizabeth too may be able to override the Parliament. He thus attempts to neatly polarise 'natural' and 'unnatural' mothers in terms of their religious and political choices to force Elizabeth into following his dictate. Further, as Hackett notes, 'the opposing images of good mother and bad mother, virgin and whore, were...well-confirmed as means of representing the opposition between the two churches' (*Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, p. 133).

³⁸ *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, p. 446.

his fury the Lord 'will justly take away all the wisdom from our wise men and courage from our valiant men' (p. 34). Both wisdom and courage were regarded as masculine virtues, and in risking them Stubbs fears a universal loss of English masculinity. Stubbs considers proponents of the French alliance as lacking both wisdom and courage and disparages them as effeminate. He dismisses their claims of repossessing English territories lost to France through this union and writes:

if these men's either wisdom were such as were like to get it [the recovery of lost territories], or their courage such as were like to keep it, they would remember that in times past the noble Englishmen delighted rather to be seen in France in bright armor than in gay clothes and masking attire; they did chose rather to win and hold by manly force than by such effeminate means (p. 57).

He concludes that these men have compromised their masculinity by preferring 'effeminate means' to 'word and sword'. As a wise man pontificating upon the right course of action, Stubbs works towards securing his masculinity in his text through the very process of writing. He may not brandish a sword but he can certainly wield the masculine authority of the word. He represents France and England in a contest of masculinity where English supremacy would be compromised through this 'needless friendship' (p. 63).

Stubbs writes: 'hitherto without their help and in despite of their beard we continually have holden our own and many times prevailed upon their' (pp. 62-63). Beards in the renaissance were an indisputable sign of masculinity and held a tremendous symbolic

value.³⁹ The success of English masculinity ‘prevailing’ over its French counterpart is attributed to the degree of autonomy that England enjoys. Stubbs fears a transfer of masculinity from England to France through Elizabeth’s marriage to Anjou. He argues that the success of this proposal will result in ‘[putting] our sword into another hand’ (p. 82). The phallic associations of ‘sword’ and the surrender of masculinity that Stubbs fears reveal the extent to which he feels unsettled because of the impending marriage. Stubbs is terrified that this depletion of masculinity would be recognised in a ritual where Germany, a ‘man-like’ nation that makes a ‘small reckoning of France’, will view England as ‘odious’ because of its ‘fellowship sake with Monsieur’ (p. 66).

Elizabeth’s marriage will signal a process of effeminization: ‘in this marriage our Queen is to be married, and both she and we poor souls are to be mastered, and which is worse, mistressed to’ (p. 58). In his formulation of Elizabeth’s husband as ‘our husband’ and in his fear of being ‘mistressed to’, Stubbs dissolves the distinction between the Queen’s two bodies. While celebrating ‘more than twenty years of sweet freedom’, Stubbs is horrified how the alliance would ‘stain the entry of her second twenty years’ (p. 36). Further this would ‘blemish the praise’ of Elizabeth’s glorious reign. Words such as ‘blemish’ and ‘stain’ are strongly suggestive of how the perceived virginal sanctity and impenetrability of Elizabeth’s body natural lend themselves to serve the interests of her body politic, which is made synonymous with the nation. The

³⁹ For an insightful scholarship on the importance of beards in the renaissance, see Will Fisher, ‘The Renaissance Beard: Masculinity in Early Modern England’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 54 (2001), pp. 155-187. Fisher argues that ‘facial hair often conferred masculinity during the Renaissance: the beard made the man’ (p. 155). Elsewhere, Fisher asserts that beards also played a crucial role in vocalizing religious differences. Analysing contemporary portraits and sermons Fisher notes that ‘the distinction between bearded Protestant divines and clean-shaven Catholic priests and monks had a gendered subtext’ and that ‘Protestant preachers often explicitly promoted bearded masculinity’ (*Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 99-100).

borders of the country and Elizabeth's hymen become metonymic tokens as Stubbs commoditizes Elizabeth as 'our most precious rich treasure...the highest tower, the strongest hold and castle in the land' (p. 37).⁴⁰ The importunate urging in *The Gaping Gulf* are imaginative conceits that allow Stubbs to play the warrior in 'bright armor' that protects and secures Elizabeth and thus asserts his masculinity; he does not caper in 'masking attire'. Stubbs makes a mockery of Elizabeth's insistence on choosing her match and nearly accuses her of allowing herself to be swayed by flippant desire when the political future of the country is at stake: Elizabeth and the country are inseparable; it is a 'marriage of a queen *and* her realm' (p. 70, emphasis added). He believes that it is 'a faithless, careless part to leave her helpless in her choice of the person and personal conditions of her husband to her own only consideration' (p. 70). Stubbs' text may boost his gallantry and consequently anchor his masculinity by depicting Elizabeth as 'helpless' but it works towards robbing her of authority, discretion and autonomy. Juxtaposing *The Gaping Gulf* with Elizabeth's letters to Anjou reveals how the Queen tactfully manipulates and appropriates discursive tropes of feminine foibles for political leverage. This juxtaposition placed the Queen and Stubbs in a textual and hermeneutical contest in which the Queen was determined to triumph.

3. *Constructing 'The Choice Man of Choice'*

⁴⁰ Montrose's study is particularly insightful in this context. He writes: 'As an unmarried queen regnant, ruling an island country that was of increasing strategic consequence in a world racked by religious and geopolitical strife, Elizabeth herself was frequently made the representational medium for religious controversy, patriotic fervor, and xenophobic diatribe. In such cases, the discourse was almost invariably gender-coded, and it made meaning through symbolic manipulations of the royal body. In particular, those symbolic manipulations focused upon the sexual purity or pollution of the Queen's body, upon the integral strength or the dangerous permeability of its contours and orifices' (*The Subject of Elizabeth*, p. 116). The inviolate body of the Queen therefore suggested an impregnable nation.

In her letters to Anjou, Elizabeth draws on early modern notions concerning gender to ensure a positive reception even as she sneers at them. In a letter dated February 14, 1579 for example, written at a critical time when Anjou's army deserted him in the Netherlands and he solicited her political acumen, Elizabeth I frames her advice around characteristic traits of early modern femininity. She writes:

as for the advice that it has pleased you to ask of me, while protesting that I recognize my lack of wit keen enough to instruct you; nevertheless, you will be pleased to accept it as from such a one who will never have a thought that is not dedicated to your honour, and who will not shortly betray you with her advice, but will give it as if my soul depended on it (p. 233).

Her admission of 'lack of wit' complements contemporary feminine decorum, as does her apparent reluctance to instruct her suitor, but neither prevents her from sharing her political opinions with Anjou. This technique of baffling a male audience with a simultaneous assertion and denial of authority has been noted earlier in Elizabeth's speeches. What marks her language in the letters as distinct in the letters to Anjou is the way in she also uses the position of a fretful and anxious beloved to reinforce her argument. Elizabeth postures as the steadfast beloved concerned solely with the well-being of her lover to ensure Anjou's acquiescence to her demands.⁴¹

Towards the end of 1579, when it seemed that Anjou might withdraw his support from the king of Navarre and his Huguenot forces, Elizabeth describes herself as 'she who

⁴¹ While standard tropes of humility and submission were routinely deployed in women's letter-writing, Alison Wall detects how they could also encode rebuke and much more: 'women's letters to their husbands could mingle submission with mockery, advice, even defiance'. In examining Joan Thynne's letters to her husband, Wall observes how Thynne 'instructed [her husband] acerbically about his political career at court, their lawsuits, farming and financial matters, but inserted occasional humble words between forceful phrases' ('Deference and Defiance in Women's Letters of the Thynne Family: the Rhetoric of Relationships', in *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700*, ed. James Daybell (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 77-93; 82; 78-79).

has lodged [him] in the first rank of what is dearest to [her]' to tactfully continue an interventionist policy in international politics. Earlier in the decade, the St Bartholomew's Day massacre had brought forward the need for a strong Protestant faction in France to combat Catholic oppression.⁴² Notwithstanding Elizabeth's reluctance to administer and encourage an aggressive Protestant politics in the continent, she was perpetually plagued by the demands of those in her council who endorsed militant Protestantism. Anjou's existing alliance with the king of Navarre was exactly what Elizabeth needed, a platform from which she could covertly guide and monitor international politics.⁴³ At the first sign of slackness on Anjou's part, Elizabeth impressed the need for the continuance of Huguenot forces' 'greatest sureties' upon him. But her political instructions were couched in the language of a well-meaning beloved who wished 'all the honour and glory that can accrue to the perpetual renown of a prince' (p. 238).

Elizabeth's language in her correspondence with Anjou is dynamic and playful but, importantly, unrelenting in its demands on the recipient. This is most striking in her letter dated December 1579 where yet again the intimate language of lovers is used as a vehicle for Elizabeth's political agenda. Elizabeth declares her commitment to Anjou: 'I confess that there is no prince in this world to whom I would more willingly yield to be his, than to yourself' (p. 243). This steadfast declaration of love is contrived to draw Anjou into a pact that demands reciprocity of affection through meeting the beloved's

⁴² I found R.J. Knecht's historical study helpful to my understanding of the massacre, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598* (New York: Longman, 1996), see especially pp. 42-51.

⁴³ Montrose observes that Elizabeth 'had long regarded full military and political engagements in the Low Countries with deep suspicion, as a financially extravagant and strategically risky continental entanglement on behalf of those whose reformist religious beliefs and republican political tendencies she regarded with considerable suspicion' (*The Subject of Elizabeth*, pp. 132-33; see also 132-143).

demands. Religious differences between the two acted as a major deterrent to the consummation of the courtship and all negotiations witnessed Anjou being firm in his desire to continue attending private Mass. Elizabeth articulates her stand on this subject in no uncertain terms and lets him know ‘that the public exercise of the Roman religion sticks so much in [English] hearts’, and that this would be ‘a thing so hard for the English to bear that [he] would not be able to imagine it without knowing it’. Elizabeth’s narratological manoeuvre situates political difference in a realm of experiential knowledge beyond Anjou’s imaginative reach. However, the narrative and the performance of the role of the beloved recognise Anjou’s ‘rare virtues and sweet nature’. This enables Elizabeth I to impress on her suitor ‘to make other resolution than the open exercise of religion’ (pp. 243-44). Further, it furnishes an opportunity for her to voice her resentment on the subject of his allowance, as I discuss below.

In a letter to the English ambassador in France, Sir Amyas Paulet, earlier in the year Elizabeth makes obvious her disapproval of the articles of marriage as demanded by the French. The French demands – that Anjou should have joint authority with Elizabeth and be crowned king and that should have a pension of sixty thousand pounds during his life – sought to dilute Elizabeth’s strength and effectively reduce England to France’s political minion. Elizabeth was clearly aware of the political currency of the match but it is remarkable that she chose not to respond to Anjou’s demands by presenting a comparative tally of French and English political merits and power. Instead she chose to act as an injured beloved whose worth in courtship is questioned and held to be trivial in the light of political advantages. She complains that Anjou’s ‘most earnest speeches and protestations’ led her to believe that her ‘person

was the only thing that was sought'. Aware of the two discourses in operation, namely the political and the amorous, Elizabeth shrewdly privileges the latter in a way that allows her to control negotiations effectively. She wonders whether Anjou's 'affection were so great as is pretended' for the 'mark that is shot at is [her] fortune and not [her] person' (p. 235).

'Mark' is a particularly appropriate word to use in this context and it reveals Elizabeth's competent skill in wielding and switching between available discursive resources to gain advantage. 'Mark' could refer to both the destined spot for Cupid's arrow or as the target of an aggressive martial campaign. As a target of an aggressive martial campaign, Elizabeth's fortune and political authority were much desired by Anjou to fund his imperialist campaign in the Low Countries once his brother, Henri III, had refused to sponsor it. The play on the word 'mark' indicates Elizabeth's desire to appropriate the field of love discourse with Anjou where she can direct his actions. Elizabeth claims that her affection for Anjou prompts her to 'act against [her] nature...to intermeddle in someone's else's doings' and she capitalizes on this premise to monitor and direct Anjou's activities in the Low Countries (p. 246). This admission works along with twisting recognised truths about gendered behaviour to place Anjou in a perplexing position where he must identify her as a confidante. She writes, 'I have never heard any news from you either of France or of the Low Countries or of any other parts...and believe that you doubt too much of a woman's silence or otherwise I would learn less by other means and more by you' (p. 244). Amorous banter here is imbued with a tone of accusation which suggests that her ostensible self-representation as a devoted beloved allows Elizabeth to be politically vigilant. However, the tone of

accusation is tempered by notes of flattery. Elizabeth has plenty of resources or ‘means’ to keep herself abreast of developments in international politics. Yet the unique relationship between Elizabeth and Anjou makes him her preferred informant, and, in alluding to their courtship, Elizabeth is making a strong case to be Anjou’s political mentor and consciousness. Her coy admissions of affection bristle with political counsel as ‘with clasped hand’ she pleads with Anjou ‘to remember that [they] who are princes’ must be cautious in their conduct, political or otherwise.

The same letter gives Anjou a ‘fair mirror to see there very clearly the foolishness of [her] understanding’ (p. 246). Debora Shuger’s signal scholarship on Renaissance mirrors studies the complex relationship between them and their viewers. She demonstrates that the symbolic function of mirrors was to inspire emulation of an ideal rather than reflect the viewer’s face: ‘the notion that viewers should attempt to mold their own features so as to resemble what they behold in their mirrors – with its curious implication that the face seen in the mirror is not their own – recurs in countless early modern texts’. Further, Shuger observes that ‘a second oddity characteristic of Renaissance mirrors is implicit in the first: as they do not reflect the face of the person who looks into them, so they ignore the viewer’s subject position – his or her “subjectivity”’.⁴⁴ Elizabeth’s imagined gift of a ‘fair mirror’ to Anjou daringly attempts

⁴⁴ Debora Shuger, ‘The “I” of the Beholder: Renaissance Mirrors and the Reflexive Mind’, in Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt, eds. *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 21-41; 22-27. In their book, Ronald Bedford, Lloyd Davis and Philippa Kelly, devote an entire chapter to studying the polyvalent meanings encoded in the mirror motif in literature. They comment how ‘[t]he literary trope of mirrors would customarily feature in a discussion of the virtues of ideal friendship. One’s friend would act as a mirror, reflecting one’s strengths and weaknesses and exhorting towards self-development’. This notion of a friend in an advisory capacity is sympathetic to Elizabeth’s ostensible agenda in writing to Anjou. Yet in the early modern period the metaphor of the mirror also reflected subversive meanings. In the light of the bellicose subject of religious practices, the scholars’ note that the mirror was a ‘conventional Protestant means of self-

to establish the superiority of her subject position over his; simultaneously the metaphor works to encourage Anjou to ‘mold [his] own features’ to hers and thereby consolidate Elizabeth’s political position. Moreover, in her writing, Elizabeth seeks to monopolise all forms of discursive practice: she anticipates responses, channels reception, and controls both the mode of her self-representation and the effect it will have on the audience. Anjou is allowed to see the ‘foolishness’ of Elizabeth’s understanding but only because she has bestowed a ‘fair mirror’ upon him. The self-reflexivity of the text makes it impossible for Anjou to determine any meaning not sanctioned by its author. The ‘foolishness of [Elizabeth’s] understanding’ is a natural consequence of her gender but the self-reflexivity with which her narrative recognises and challenges it is not.

In a letter to Sir Edward Stafford, the then ambassador to France, in August 1580, Elizabeth asks him to warn Anjou not to ‘procure her harm whose love he seeks to win’ and therefore ‘to suspend his answer’ to the offer of sovereignty of the Low Countries (p. 248). This clever ploy helps Elizabeth deflect France’s expectation of her sponsorship of Anjou’s military campaign in the Low Countries. She confides in Sir Edward that she has no desire that her ‘nuptial fest should be savoured with the sauce

improvement in the eyes of God’ makes Elizabeth’s bestowal of a ‘fair mirror’ to Anjou profoundly ironic. Moreover, Bedford et al.’s discussion of *The Booke of the Governor* highlights how Elizabeth’s use of this familiar literary trope also strengthens her superior position: ‘In *The Booke of the Governor*, Sir Thomas Elyot also writes of selves that act as glasses, though his trope of reflection is more conventionally hierarchical...in Elyot’s view the ‘excellent’ self should be elevated through ‘the glasse of authority’, enlightening those of ‘inferior understanding’. This reflected self is not *simply* superior, however: the act of elevation enables it to ‘se and also be seene’. Its ‘excellent witte’ measures the movement of those beneath it at the same time as it confirms its own superiority’ (‘Framing a Reflected Self: Language and the Mirror’ in *Early Modern English Lives: Autobiography and Self-Representation 1500-1660* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 97-121; 111; 113-114, original italics).

of [her] subjects' wealth'.⁴⁵ As the editors of *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* note: 'by marrying a French prince who was sovereign of the Netherlands, Elizabeth would court reprisal in the form of a Spanish attack on England [and]...she also feared the ruin of English trade with the Continent'. Concomitant with her desire for Anjou to visit England incognito, Elizabeth demands the primacy of her political position over Anjou's and expects it to be reflected in his diplomatic negotiations. Elizabeth's letter to Sir Edward reveals a remarkable degree of self-awareness of and commitment to her public office. Addressing herself in the third person she writes, '[s]hall it be ever found true that Queen Elizabeth hath solemnized the perpetual harm of England under the glorious title of marriage with Francis, heir of France?' (p. 248).

Considering Elizabeth's sentiments on the subject, Anjou's acceptance of the supreme governorship of the Netherlands in 1582 damaged the courtship beyond repair. However, one sees that Elizabeth's decisions continued to take account of the delicacy of England's relationship with France into account and she maintains the cover of courtship to mend affairs. Elizabeth's letter to Anjou dated May 14, 1582 plays on Elizabeth's 'melancholic malady' – caused equally by their 'doleful parting' and the bruised vanity of a beloved whose suitor disregards her injunctions – to disguise her political motives. She entwines her identity as the Queen with that of a beloved who asks her suitor to be aware of her 'honour', inseparable from her 'love of [her] nation', and his responsibility to defend it. Similarly, Elizabeth's protestations and assurances

⁴⁵ Elizabeth instead deflected the pestiferous question of sponsorship by naming Henri III as the ideal sponsor for his brother's enterprise. Skilfully using the trope of a beloved she accuses Henri III as attempting to 'make a spot on our [Anjou's and Elizabeth's] friendship, or break it altogether'. She argues, 'the king, our brother- is he so feeble a prince that he is not able to defend you without another neighbour who has enough on her back, or so weakened as to open a path for assailants?'(p. 259).

of her ‘affection and constancy’ to Anjou are persistent calls for him to not ‘overturn [their] good designs’ and to correct his blunder (pp. 251-53). It is worth noting that Elizabeth’s situation at that moment was precarious. Her courtship with Anjou was public knowledge and her desire to maintain France as an ally meant that she could not dissolve it. Yet, for the reasons discussed above, Anjou’s aggressive actions in the Netherlands posed a grave threat to England. Anjou’s death in 1584 obviated the necessity for Elizabeth to do something drastic to resolve the political quandary in which she found herself.

After Anjou’s death, Elizabeth seized on the alternative role of a bereaved beloved to preserve the diplomatic alliance with France and her consolatory letter to Catherine de Medici reflects her keen political acumen. She writes:

It remains to me at this point to avow and swear to you that I will turn a good part of my love for [Anjou] towards the king my good brother and you, assuring you that you will find me the most faithful daughter and sister that ever princes had. And this for the principal reason that he belonged to you so nearly, he to whom I was entirely dedicated (p. 261).

Elizabeth infuses the familial relationship of the ‘most faithful daughter and sister’ with a lynchpin that makes her devotion rest on their respective political positions: ‘that ever princes had’.

4. ‘*A Lewd, Seditious Book*’

As authors both Stubbs and Elizabeth not only share similar concerns – the subject of a monarch’s marriage, the Queen’s two bodies, the relationship between the Queen and

her realm, international diplomacy, and the politics of religion – they also employ similar discursive tropes. The stark disparity with which they wield their textual authorities through gendered language makes us aware of the tense undercurrents in early modern gender discourse. The proclamation that denounced the *Gaping Gulf* labels it a ‘lewd, seditious book’ and thus offers an insight into Elizabeth’s reaction to the tract.⁴⁶ It appears that she intelligently deconstructed the ‘lewd’ representation of her body natural by Stubbs as a manifestation of his paranoid masculinity. ‘Lewd’ also had the connotations of being unlearned, unlettered and ignorant in the period. The Queen is furious both at a ‘lewd’ (*OED*, adj. 2.a, unlearned, unlettered and ignorant) understanding of politics and her self-representational strategies, and a ‘lewd’ (*OED*, adj. 7, lascivious, unchaste) depiction of her sexuality. The proclamation recognises Elizabeth as an intelligent and rational woman and stresses that she ‘ought best to understand by the true information of her own faithful ministers and hath had just cause of long time by many good means to try and examine the actions and intentions of the said prince’.⁴⁷ Simultaneously, the proclamation reiterates the Queen’s personal and political stance on the issue of marriage where she alone has the right to ‘try and examine’ potential suitors and decide their worth.

These are traits that do not resonate in Stubbs’ text where the Queen is depicted as naïve, gullible and, as Eve’s daughter, capable of transgression. Further he mocks the Queen’s notoriously long and inconclusive courtships and her insistence on choosing

⁴⁶ In their introduction to *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, Hughes and Larkin note that any proclamation has ‘its origin in the royal prerogative... [and] involves, at least in principle, the advice of the King’s council’ (*Tudor Royal Proclamations*, pp. 446, xxiii-xxiv). While the actual words of the proclamation banning *A Gaping Gulf* may not have been Elizabeth’s, they certainly had her approval.

⁴⁷ *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, p. 447.

her consort by referring to him as ‘the choice man of choice’, contemptuously suggesting that in the delicate matters of politics, a woman who is inclined to surrender to her heart should not be encouraged. Stubbs seems to be mocking the Queen’s determination to find a consort who is sympathetic to her authority and answers to her demands. ‘The choice man of choice’ may satisfy a woman’s caprice and vanity but is likely to enfeeble England’s autonomy. This slyly questions Elizabeth’s right to rule at all, and though a watered down version of Knox’s infamous tract against the ‘monstrous regiment’ of female rulers, is equally potent. In condemning the *Gaping Gulf* as a ‘trump of sedition’, the proclamation furthers its association with Knox’s misogynist ‘first blast of trumpet’ (p. 448). Elizabeth’s punishment for Stubbs, who attempted to secure his masculinity under a female monarch through perverse means, was carefully measured. As Stubbs’ fashioned and maintained his masculinity through his writings, royal fury ensured that his right hand was severed. The Queen sent out a clear message; she was neither going to reward a form of masculinity that triumphed in diminishing her authority nor allow hermeneutical politics that rivalled hers.

The proclamation goes on to note Elizabeth’s ‘marvel’ as to how sentiments concerning her marriage, regarded as a political necessity and most assiduously urged, could have such a ‘strange and contrary effect’ as recorded in the *Gaping Gulf* (p. 448). Elizabeth’s ‘marvel’ is understandable: after years of being urged to get married in order to secure the political fortune of England and guarantee a successor, her marriage had suddenly become a calamity. The political repercussions of the French marriage notwithstanding, in alluding to Elizabeth’s advancing years and the consequent dangers of childbirth, *The Gaping Gulf* captures the moment when her marriage was no longer considered as

an option. Thus, in a manner probably unintended, *The Gaping Gulf* does ‘discover’ a discursive gulf where the status of Elizabeth’s sexuality gaped through, unsettling the subordinate masculinity predicated on submission to her body politic. It is not accidental then that while Knox’s sententious tract attracted spirited refutations that were keen to appease the wrath of the new Queen and act as emissaries for their authors, Stubbs equally contumacious work did not generate a flurry of defences of Elizabeth’s reign. Perhaps Stubbs had addressed unease over a middle-aged, unmarried Queen that his countrymen shared.⁴⁸

Although the proclamation does its best to allay the public’s fears about the religious and political subjugation of England by Catholic France, it is silent on the issue of the Queen as a sexual subject, which is a theme that simmers under the surface of the *Gaping Gulf* and from which the text derives much of its rhetorical power. Moreover the proclamation does not address the anxieties generated by the Queen’s body natural at all, which are elaborately manifest in Stubbs’ argument. Even the Queen’s marriage, a subject inextricably linked with her body natural by the very nature of the institution of marriage and the succession crisis it was expected to quell, is presented as a diplomatic negotiation, a routine office of the body politic. According to the

⁴⁸ The origin of the ‘cult of Elizabeth’ that exalted her virginity as a superhuman virtue seems in part contrived to address this anxiety. Yet as recent scholarship has shown, the ‘cult of Elizabeth’ that idolised her virginity did not start until the mid-1580s. Hackett remarks that ‘until around the mid-1570s Elizabeth was viewed by her subjects as a Virgin Queen not in the sense of perpetual virginity on the model of Virgin Mary, but in the sense of being nubile, in a state preparatory to and ripe for matrimony’. In her study of court entertainments and masques Hackett detects that around the mid-1570s there was a ‘growing uncertainty as to whether to represent Elizabeth as marriageable or as ever-virgin’. This uncertainty did not have an early resolution and texts published as late as 1582, such as Blenerhasset’s poem, *A Revelation of the True Minerva*, seem ‘to keep open the possibility of royal matrimony’ (*Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, pp. 72-123). Montrose notes that ‘the promotions of paeans to the Queen’s inviolable virginity [were constructed] by that faction which sought to obstruct her proposed marriage alliance with the French Catholic François, Duc d’ Anjou’ (*The Subject of Elizabeth*, p. 70).

proclamation, Elizabeth's marriage should be 'honorable to her majesty, profitable to the estate of the realm, and not hurtful to the continuance of the peaceable government of the same, both in state of religion and policy' (p. 449). This does not offer a rebuttal to Stubbs' derisive reference to Elizabeth's search for a 'choice man of choice'. On the contrary it is dangerously close to Stubbs' own position on Elizabeth's marriage.

5. *'I am content, because she is a goddess': Gynaecocracy and the Ideal Male Subject*

Laurie Shannon remarks on 'Elizabeth's clear sense of how the political exigencies of heterosexual marriage would have cancelled her sovereign identity, subordinating her to another's rule. As her case makes abundantly clear, sex difference in marriage forecloses the possibility in Renaissance terms, of a union of likes or balanced marriage – wifely status would dethrone even a sitting monarch'.⁴⁹ Shannon's forthright observation summarises early modern conceptions of female authority; gendered inferior, it has to dissociate itself from sexual expression in order to maintain itself. In this section, I argue for a fresh perspective on John Lyly's *Galatea* (1588) that recognises the play as creating a parallel gender paradigm where female sexuality and female authority exist in a state of happy union. I explore how the play concomitantly revises contemporary codes of masculinity to offer alternatives which facilitate female sovereignty and are not threatened by expressions of female sexuality.

⁴⁹ Laurie Shannon, 'Nature's Bias: Renaissance Homonormativity and Elizabethan Comic Likeness', *Modern Philology*, 98 (2000), pp. 183-210; 195.

Galatea in its position on contemporary notions of femininity has inspired substantial scholarship. There is certainly a memorable and distinctly visible female presence in the play; in Shannon's words *Galatea* is 'a drama populated substantially by female characters'.⁵⁰ The play's focus on Galatea and Phillida's romance, the motif of the virgin sacrifice and the subplot revolving around Diana and her nymphs have proved a fertile ground for feminist studies. However, these studies do not adequately realise that the play is equally concerned with notions of masculinity and the very first act of the play establishes a crisis of masculinity. Although Jacqueline Vanhoutte notes that 'the chaos that ravages the community in *Galatea* results from male rather than female misrule', she does not identify the source of and the reason behind 'male misrule'.⁵¹ I argue that the play presents characters who feel varying degrees of insecurity about their masculine identities, and exposes contradictions and conflicts both within and between different codes of masculinity endorsed by patriarchy. Both these elements unite in precipitating 'male misrule' in the play.

It is appropriate to note here that the ritual of the virgin sacrifice, according to the play, was established as a punitive measure not merely for the impious acts committed by the Danes but also for another transgression. Tityrus notes that in destroying the temple dedicated to Neptune 'men had swerved beyond their reason' (1.1.32).⁵² Thus the sacrificial rite was also introduced to re-inscribe a normative masculinity that had been

⁵⁰ Shannon, 'Nature's Bias', p. 199.

⁵¹ Jacqueline A. Vanhoutte, 'Sacrifice, Violence and the Virgin Queen in Lyly's *Gallathea*', *Cahiers Elisabethains: Late Medieval and Renaissance English Studies*, 49 (1996), pp. 1-14; 4.

⁵² John Lyly, *Galatea* in George K. Hunter, ed. *John Lyly: Galatea and Midas* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000). All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

temporarily displaced due to men forfeiting the masculine faculty of ‘reason’.⁵³ At the very outset of the play we realise that we are entering a world where the cultural codes defining masculinity are weakening. Tityrus sees himself as a ‘fearful father’ who has to cope with the ‘vexing care’ of controlling the fate of his daughter Galatea who he believes is destined to be sacrificed to Neptune (1.1.74-75). In contrast to Fitzalan’s Agamemnon, Tityrus does not want his daughter to sacrifice herself, even when she is glad to pursue the road to martyrdom. In response to Galatea’s advice to submit to the will of the realm, he remarks that ‘it’s hard for the sick to follow wholesome counsel’ (1.1.101-02). In admitting to be ‘sick’, Tityrus’ assertion of masculine authority reveals its ailing state. Similarly, Melibeus’ decision to disguise Phillida is an attempt to preserve his own masculinity. He instructs Phillida: ‘thou shalt therefore disguise thyself in attire, lest I should disguise myself in affection in suffering thee to perish’ (1.3.6-8). For Hunter this speech indicates Melibeus’ fear that being overwhelmed with grief at his daughter’s death will make him unrecognisable. I suggest that Melibeus is concerned that displaying emotion and loss of self-control at his daughter’s possible death will compromise his masculinity, and therefore works toward preventing it. Melibeus says that the ‘disguise in affection’ would be necessary if he were to pretend that he accepted the necessity of her death; trying to protect her (through her disguise) prevents him having to ‘disguise’ himself by dissimulating his fatherly care. The word

⁵³ Christopher Tilmouth remarks on the significance of the faculty of reason in the works of humanist moralists who advocated ‘using reason to suppress the passions (since, if left unchecked, the latter would drive men to intemperance)’. Tilmouth recognises that this ‘austerely rationalist model of self governance’ held a ‘position of dominance’ in Western thought till the turn of the seventeenth century (*Passion’s Triumph over Reason: A History of the Moral Imagination from Spenser to Rochester* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 1-2; see also 15-36). On reason being deemed a masculine faculty in opposition to emotions judged as feminine, see Phyllis Rackin, ‘Historical Difference/Sexual Difference’, in *Privileging Gender in Early Modern England*, ed. Jean Brink (Kirkville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1993), pp. 50-51. Alexandra Shepard states that a display of excessive emotion was widely regarded as flagging the loss of manhood (*Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 67).

‘disguise’ used twice in Melibeus’ speech carries the weight of his anxiety. Phillida’s ‘disguise’ is meant to be superficial and easily cast away as it affects only her ‘attire’. This is designed as a precautionary measure to prevent a grave and irreversible ‘disguise’ where Melibeus risks losing himself. Thus, ironically, in insisting on Phillida disguising herself and trespassing gender boundaries, Melibeus seeks to reinforce those very boundaries.

Melibeus and Tityrus are interesting figures who expose the inherent fault lines in a patriarchal society. Later in the play the character Augur commands the public to ‘think it...against sense to destroy [their] country’ and instructs them to yield their daughters to be sacrificed for the greater good (4.1.5-6). Tityrus, in an attempt to deflect public attention away from his daughter Galatea, cautions Melibeus: ‘I hope you are not so careful of a child that you will be careless of your country, or add so much to nature that you will detract from wisdom’ (4.1.28-30). ‘Sense’ and ‘wisdom’ are close allies of the masculine faculty of reason and in not allowing these traits to determine their actions both Melibeus and Tityrus risk losing the state of manhood granted to them. If Melibeus does not surrender his daughter, he ceases to be wise and thus masculine, yet if he does so, his grief will render him irrational, which would equally result in the loss of his masculinity. The irresolvable conflict that Melibeus’ masculinity faces unveils the unjust construction of gender codes. It also discloses a lack of individual agency in choosing where the two fathers want to situate their masculinity – in protecting their family or serving the communal good.⁵⁴ It later

⁵⁴ The conflict between the two codes of masculinities, one grounded in domestic control and the other in political authority, has been explored in the preceding chapter, especially in its discussion of Agamemnon.

emerges that gender norms are designed to preserve and perpetuate patriarchal hierarchies which in the play privilege the supreme patriarch, Neptune. On the grounds of Tityrus and Melibeus not honouring the tenets of this hierarchy, Neptune brandishes them as ‘unreasonable’, thereby divesting them of their masculinity (4.3.6).

Alongside anxieties surrounding gender identities in the world of men, *Galatea* also dramatises a gendered conflict within the divine social order. Cupid believes one of Diana’s nymphs is challenging his masculinity by making disparaging remarks on his relatively low status in both the hierarchies of gender and divinity. He is addressed as ‘a fair boy’ (1.2.3), hence not belonging to the privileged community of men, and a ‘little god’ (1.2.32), thus insignificant in terms of authority and rank. For Christopher Wixson, ‘Cupid feels wronged and seeks retribution, but forgets his place in the social order’. As Wixson’s agenda is to deal with the disruption of class structures in the play and emphasise the primacy of Neptune’s authority, he focuses on how Cupid’s ‘ego-driven rebellion...must be settled, ultimately, by Neptune’.⁵⁵ He does not, however, examine the degree to which Cupid’s ‘ego-driven rebellion’ is motivated by his dissatisfaction at his position in the hierarchy of gender. Cupid nurses an injured masculinity and implied in his determination to coerce Diana and her nymphs into acknowledging him a ‘great god’ is his desire to raise himself on the engendered chain of beings. He and his subsequent revenge scheme emerge, therefore, as a comical counterpart to Neptune’s sinister threats.

⁵⁵ Christopher Wixson, ‘Cross-dressing and John Lyly’s *Gallathea*’, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 41 (2001), pp. 241-56; 247.

Apart from experiencing chagrin at not being granted the status of divinity he believes himself to be entitled to, Cupid also resents Diana and her train as they seem to have formed a self-governed, exclusively female community with Diana as its sovereign. The refusal of this community to participate in the economy of marriage and the discomfort Cupid experiences on confronting female authority mislead him to believe that Diana and her nymphs are located in an enclave beyond patriarchal control. I shall later examine how Diana and her nymphs rather consolidate patriarchal commandments than advocate radical and separatist ideas. Cupid's wounded masculinity seeks to reassert itself on two planes. He not only wants to violate the private, inner world of the nymphs by forcing them to reassess their commitment to Vestal vows, he also seeks to replace Diana and establish himself as the normative male authority over this community. Diana's ideology of virginity fuels her authority and acts as an adhesive that maintains the political unity of her train. In declaring a preference for amorous dalliances over vows of chastity, Diana's nymphs do not come across as challenging her in an ideological debate but instead emerge as mutinous subjects. To disagree with Diana's advocacy of virginity is synonymous with an act of rebellion and a disregard for her authority. Telusa declares, 'I will forsake Diana for [Melibeus/ Phillida]' (3.1.103). The nymph Servia whose name has an ironic etymological resonance with notions of service and submission is another such rebel. Ramia relates how Servia 'loveth deadly, and exclaimeth against Diana' (3.1.91). Diana's fury at the loss of her subjects' allegiance is understandable: 'Diana stormeth that, sending one [nymph] to seek another, she loseth all' (3.1.89-90). Eurota and Ramia too voice their dissent from Diana's philosophy: Ramia says 'Love is a god, and lovers are virtuous' to which

Eurota concurs, 'Indeed, Ramia, if lovers were not virtuous, then wert thou vicious'.
(3.1.78-81).⁵⁶

Diana senses the infringement of her political authority and the disloyalty of her subjects most keenly: 'Is there no place but my groves, no persons but my nymphs?' (3.4.81-82). Mistakenly believing Venus to be the agent behind the pandemonium in her kingdom, Diana declares 'Well shalt [Venus] know what it is to drib [her] arrows up and down Diana's leas' (3.4.5-7). Diana claims sovereignty within the territorial boundaries of her kingdom: the groves are hers as are the leas and she will not suffer attempts to usurp her. It is unsurprising therefore that Diana employs martial language on confronting Cupid to re-establish her authority: 'I will use [Cupid] like a captive, and show myself a conqueror' (3.4.105-06). Cupid is effectively a prisoner of war and the manner in which Diana scorns him and his ideological stance reveals the gender dynamics operating in the play. Diana identifies Cupid's challenge to her authority as crucially linked to his self-propounded model of masculinity. Her imperatives therefore not only work towards forcing Cupid to acknowledge the primacy of female rule in her kingdom but are also designed to have a humbling effect on his masculinity. Cupid is commanded to 'weave samplers all night' (4.2.81-82), which, having been the chore of Diana's nymphs at an earlier point in the play, is associated with feminine activity (3.4.55). He is further instructed to rewrite narratives in a way that best please his

⁵⁶ I thus disagree with Theodora Jankowski who does not detect these elements of rebellion against Diana's authority ("Where there can be no cause of affection": redefining virgins, their desires, and their pleasures in John Lyly's *Gallathea*, in *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture*, ed. Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan and Dympna Callaghan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 253-74). Jankowski writes that '[a]lthough tricked by Cupid, the nymphs never betray or challenge Diana outright...The nymphs never sacrifice their friendship or loyalty to each other, or to Diana, for love' (p. 260).

audience: ‘All the stories that are in Diana’s arras which are of love you must pick out with your needle, and in that place sew Vesta with her nuns and Diana with her nymphs’ (4.3.85-88). Cupid is made to rework narratives of love, which valorised his masculinity, into encomiums on virginity that exalt Diana’s power and influence.

Despite its fabulous setting *Galatea* engages with concerns over Elizabeth’s authority that were frequently articulated in the socio-political climate of the period. In her study of the play, Vanhoutte makes a crucial link between *Galatea* and Elizabeth’s courtship with Anjou. She writes, ‘Lyly wrote *Gallathea* during the period of transition that accompanied the failure of Elizabeth’s last courtship, and the play reflects contemporary anxieties concerning the stability of the state’. Shannon also comments that ‘with the departure of Alençon, Elizabeth’s virginity, her transgression of accepted definitions of femininity, compounded her anomalous position at the head of a patriarchal society’. I have already discussed how this escalated the existing anxieties around the Queen’s two bodies and the manner in which Stubbs tries to ease them by regarding the monarch as a gentle mother. Vanhoutte correctly remarks that Elizabeth’s subjects’ ‘insistent request that she marry and provide a male heir reveal a concern with the stability of the country, but these petitions also betray a desire to see the queen appropriately mastered by a husband’.⁵⁷ This desire is undoubtedly linked with the unharnessed status of the Queen’s sexual being and *Galatea* is an attempt to find a way to dispel anxieties while concurrently reinstating faith in Elizabeth’s rule.

⁵⁷ Vanhoutte, ‘Sacrifice, Violence, and the Virgin Queen’, pp. 5; 6.

Theodora Jankowski's study of *Galatea* crystallizes an approach to the play that endeavours to find flattering references to Elizabeth in the play. Jankowski regards the play as John Lyly's 'paean to virginity' and remarks that '*Gallathea* (1592) is about virginity in a way that only works designed to flatter Elizabeth I could be "about" virginity'.⁵⁸ This is a common critical fallacy that presumes a self-conscious desire in Elizabeth to see herself represented in exalted references to virginity.⁵⁹ Jankowski observes that cross-dressing enables both Galatea and Phillida 'to explore not only the possibilities of a woman-only society, but of an economy of desire that is similarly woman-centered'. Jankowski's reading of the play is geared towards buttressing her own study on the nature of virginity in the period that focuses on close-knit exclusive communities of virgins 'that existed in some separatist context'.⁶⁰ Jankowski's scholarly agenda takes her away from the play itself. Neither of the two girls consciously experience nor explore the possibility of a 'woman-only society'. In the only scene in the entire play where the girls and Diana and her train are on-stage together, the girls express no interest in benefiting from a 'woman-only society'. Phillida agrees to become a part of Diana's hunting party 'not for [the] ladies' company' but to court Galatea (2.1.64-66). Excepting the anagnorisis, in the remaining

⁵⁸Jankowski, 'Redefining virgins', pp. 256; 253.

⁵⁹ Montrose regards the 'cult of Elizabeth neither as a quasi-mystical object of belief nor as a mere courtly game but rather as a core component of Elizabethan statecraft, one within which elements of devotion, diversion, and duplicity were inextricably mixed'. Montrose does not claim Elizabeth to be the sole creator of this political strategy that was designed 'to catalyze common people's loyalty to the regime'. He notes that this 'ideological apparatus [was] operated by those who constituted the political nation: the Queen, her court and council and their clients, the members of parliament and the civic elites' (*The Subject of Elizabeth*, p. 113). Montrose's scholarship demonstrates that there was a significant conflict of interests within the 'political nation'. Thus, the Queen's wishes may not have always been considered in representations of virginity. Further, the 'cult of Elizabeth' may have served the political demands of the period but it does not necessarily imply that Elizabeth wished to be glorified exclusively through terms of virginity.

⁶⁰ Jankowski, 'Redefining virgins', pp. 258; 256.

scenes in the play the girls are shown to be in each others' company, each believing the other to be a man.

While I do find Jankowski's notion of a 'woman-centered economy of desire' operating in the play useful for my own discussion, I would like to stress that the economy of desire functions in a far more complex manner than Jankowski admits. If the kinetics of desire in the play are at all 'woman-centered' they are only so in the minds of the audience who are aware of the true sex of the characters. It is important to appreciate that, notwithstanding the suspicions that plague them about the other's real sexual identity, the girls are deceived by each other's disguises. At the conclusion of the play Galatea testifies, 'I had thought the habit agreeable with the sex' (5.3.127). Phillida echoes the sentiment, 'I had thought that in the attire of a boy there could not have lodged the body of a virgin' (5.3.129-30). It is even more fascinating to note that the girls' disguises also elude detection by Diana, the goddess of virginity. Diana's encounter with the girls is marked by a curious exchange between Galatea and herself:

Diana. Godspeed, fair boy.

Galatea. You are deceived, lady.

Diana. Why, are you no boy?

Galatea. No fair boy. (2.1.36-39)

For all her celestial powers, Diana is still hoodwinked into assuming both Galatea and Phillida to be boys purely by the force of their apparel. As the discomfort experienced by both the girls at their disguises remains unremarked by other characters in the play, it may have either passed undetected or be attributed to an adolescent awkwardness.

Kent Cartwright argues that *Galatea* ‘makes sexual attraction into something performed’.⁶¹ It is the performance of masculinity, however unconvincing, that facilitates the girls’ romance.

The play’s mockery of the performance of masculinity is inseparable with the reconfiguration of notions of femininity through which Lyly sought to please his audience: the play was performed in front of the Queen on New Year’s Eve 1587/88.⁶² The play reworks definitions of virginity and questions patriarchal restrictions on female desire and agency. Jankowski neatly encapsulates the contemporary position on virginity: ‘[t]he virgin’s bodily integrity is reinforced by a similar “spiritual” integrity, a purity of thought as well as deed, which suggests that she herself is neither desired nor desiring...The virgin is expected to be the object of desire or pleasure, never the subject actively engaged in desiring an other or obtaining pleasure for herself and/ or another’.⁶³ The dialectic of desire in the play forces the characters to either embrace or reject the parameters of virginity thus defined. Diana’s nymph rehashes patriarchal condemnation of female sexuality in disparaging Venus as ‘amorous and too kind for [her] sex’ (1.2.31-32). Telusa is distressed on discovering how expressing desire undoes her identity as a virgin in a patriarchal society: ‘O Telusa, these words are unfit for thy sex, being a virgin, but apt for thy affections, being a lover’ (3.1.7-8). Phillida joins the chorus that finds proper feminine behaviour incompatible with expressing sexual desire: ‘It were a shame, if a maiden should be a suitor (a thing hated in that

⁶¹ Kent Cartwright, ‘The Confusions of *Gallathea*: John Lyly as Popular Dramatist’, *Comparative Drama*, 32 (1998), pp. 207-39; 209.

⁶² John Lyly, *Gallathea and Midas*, ed. Anne Begor Lancashire (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd., 1970), pp. xi-xii.

⁶³ Jankowski, ‘Redefining virgins’, pp. 255-56.

sex)' (3.2.14-15). Yet emboldened by their masculine attire and empowered by their love for each other, both Phillida and Galatea trespass gender boundaries. Phillida determines to 'transgress in love a little of [her] modesty' (2.5.7-8); the transgression is to be measured in terms of voicing female sexuality, in becoming a desiring subject rather than a desired object, and in taking control of her sexual destiny. The reason why Diana's nymphs want revenge on Cupid is because although they may hold on to the physical aspect of virginity, experiencing carnal desire has effectively divorced them from the circumspect definition of virginity which patriarchy endorses and with which they identify themselves. That the definition of virginity encompassed more than the intactness of the hymen is evident in the urge to find the 'chastest virgin' (1.1.48) as a sacrifice, thus suggesting that there are degrees of virginity with the chastest being the one who has had no sexual experience either physically or emotionally. Thus at the end of the play neither Galatea nor Phillida are any longer the 'chastest', though their hymens remain intact.

Metamorphosis in the play is shown to be a device through which men seek control and reassert their masculinity when they perceive it to be threatened. Melibeus and Tityrus impose disguises on their daughters, Cupid assumes the 'shape of a silly girl' (2.2.1), and Neptune, along with being associated with the monster Agar, also confesses to have 'taken sundry shapes' (2.2.21) to reify his authority. Peter, the Alchemist's apprentice, wants Rafe to appreciate the need for 'cunning men [to] disguise themselves' (2.3.77). However, the comic energy of the play transforms the mechanisms of metamorphosis and instead of bolstering the characters' masculinity, they enfeeble it. Male characters' forays into metamorphosis yield results which are

contrary to their expectation and purpose. Cupid's disguise as a 'silly girl' situates the nymphs outside patriarchal control where they are empowered to act as a 'subject actively engaged in desiring an other or obtaining pleasure for herself and/or another'.⁶⁴ Melibeus and Tityrus experience a similar fate where both Galatea and Phillida experience a liberating sense of autonomy that emboldens them to overrule their fathers' decisions on the subject of their marriage at the end of the play (5.3.157-168). Neptune is not only not seen in his 'shape of a shepherd' (2.2.24) but his purpose to 'mark and mar all' through his disguise is not realised and he eventually has to submit to Venus. The patriarchs' unhappiness at the final transformation is understandable. In the world of *Galatea* where metamorphosis is a device to consolidate validated notions of masculinity, Venus appropriates control over it to redefine existing gender norms.

Deceived by each other's disguises both Galatea and Phillida believe the other to be a boy and recognise the other's desire as functioning on a masculine rather than feminine principle. It is important to note that although there is a nascent lesbian desire at work in their relationship, both Galatea and Phillida define their attraction in heterosexual terms.⁶⁵ In each other's eyes they become the ideal male lover whose economy of desire mirrors and complements theirs. The assured metamorphosis at the end is designed to ensure that the girls' (and by extension female) fantasy of an ideal male

⁶⁴ Jankowski, 'Redefining virgins', p. 256.

⁶⁵ Traub analyses the representation of this 'lesbian' desire and the 'mimetic nature of [the girls'] mutual desire' (*Renaissance of Lesbianism*, pp. 327-29; 5-6). However, in context of the play's staging it is more likely that 'the homosexual appeal of the youth and beauty of the Children of Paul's' and the accompanying 'gay' erotic undertones in the performance of the boy actors would have been taken cognisance of (Reavley Gair, *The Children of Paul's: the story of a theatre company, 1553-1608* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 28). Mary Bly's remarkable study shows how 'the body of the cross-dressed [boy] actor is aggressively eroticized' and while it acts as a source of homoerotic titillation it also presents itself as an object of sexual desire for female audience (*Queer Virgins and Virgin Queens on the Early Modern Stage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 23).

lover is realised. The desire to hold on to their fantasies probably prevents the girls from determining each other's real sex despite their increasing suspicions. The expression and survival of female desire is shown to be contingent on the availability of a heterosexual parameter, the just 'cause of affection' (5.3.141). Yet the play's subversive conclusion celebrates female agency that simultaneously creates a male figure and establishes a new code of masculinity which corresponds to female desire. Curiously, although Galatea has no knowledge of how men behave, she is aware of '(the question among men [that] is common), 'Are you a maid?'' (2.1.32-33). Masculinity is a performance so searchingly evaluated that in her inability to enact it, Galatea either risks exposing her true sex or being dubbed effeminate. She is aware that the affirmation of one's masculinity is made in an exclusively male domain which demands the correct response to the common question. *Galatea's* comic buoyancy changes this exclusively male rite of passage in the end where masculinity is created and affirmed by a female agent. This echoes Elizabeth's strategies to mould the masculinity of her subjects and insist on a consort sympathetic to her state and calling. Through a finely calibrated play on gender, *Galatea* acknowledges and respects Elizabeth's right to 'the choice man of choice'.⁶⁶

Galatea is an interesting example of how the Queen's strategies to control early modern narrative terrain were adopted by John Lyly, who sought to impress Elizabeth.

Commenting on the prologue, Vanhoutte writes,

⁶⁶ *Galatea's* magical resolution where a virgin is promised the ideal husband may indicate a wistful longing for the monarch's spouse lingering in the nation's imagination. This thus reflects Lyly's earlier work in the decade, *Euphues and His England* (1580), which according to Hackett, 'hovers between wishing for Elizabeth's marriage and accepting that her virginity is perpetual' (*Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, pp. 119; also see pp. 112-19).

By assigning the play's meaning to Elizabeth, the prologue carefully pre-empts criticism and wisely defers to the *iudgement* of an audience notoriously prone to interpreting court entertainments in terms of her person. But, craftily, the prologue also directs Elizabeth's interpretation: she can only see her own *vertue* in the play, because to do otherwise would be to fall short from the *perfit iudgement* Lyly ascribes to her. Elizabeth remains the embodiment of *vertue* only so long as she acquiesces to the virtuousness of Lyly's dramatic enterprise; her virtue is thus subject to the play's.⁶⁷

Lyly's manoeuvre of pre-empting criticism and employing language in a way that facilitates the desired reception is strongly reminiscent of Elizabeth's own style. In his prologue to *Galatea*, John Lyly claims to have 'endeavoured with all care' that his play 'should neither offend [Elizabeth] in scene nor syllable' (13-15). The *OED* lists a now obsolete meaning of the word 'syllable' that had currency in early modern England: 'minute details of language or statement; exact or precise words'. This suggests Lyly's awareness of the Queen's gendered discursive practices that reified her authority and his attempt to commemorate them. Imitation being the sincerest form of flattery, conforming to the Queen's English does seem the ideal way for the playwright to apply to Elizabeth's 'wonted grace' (5) in order to further his ambitions at court. *Galatea* and *A Gaping Gulf* represent the polar ends in the narrative and authorial field that was patrolled by the Queen. Both male authors sought influence over Elizabeth but while Stubbs' literary style was in obstinate defiance to the Queen's, Lyly was willing to play the game on the Queen's terms.

There is a certain kinship between Elizabeth's and Lyly's writing styles. Both are characterised by a sophisticated wit and a formidable energy that places ideas in a state

⁶⁷ Vanhoutte, 'Sacrifice, Violence, and the Virgin Queen', p. 2.

of ‘intellectual antithesis’.⁶⁸ Leah Scragg identifies a ‘destabilisation of meaning in the Lylian corpus’. Scragg remarks: ‘words are constantly discovered to have more than one meaning, destabilising the relationship between the signifier and the signified’ and Lyly was himself aware of ‘the wider process of deconstruction in which he was engaged’. This in turn ‘challenge[s] the capacity of language to communicate’.⁶⁹ In *Galatea* the one-to-one equation between the signifier and the signified is suggestive of a masculine linguistic economy maintaining gender norms. As this chapter demonstrates, Elizabeth too challenged ‘the capacity of language to communicate’ and purposefully allowed words to have a multiple resonance in order to baffle her hostile male subjects, and thus coerce them into submission. *Galatea* celebrates this protean and fluid quality of language by portraying it as superior to its masculine, rigid counterpart.

The two parallel worlds that are inhabited on the one hand by Rafe and his brothers, Robin and Dick, and on the other by the pair of lovers and Diana’s nymphs are distinguished linguistically. The boys are confronted by a rigid structure of language to which they are unable to relate. This linguistic universe demands a memorisation of definitions set by male authorities rather than encouraging an imaginative rethinking. Willing to comply with patriarchal prescriptions, Rafe and his brothers are desirous to find a master, but are continuously thwarted in their efforts. They are defeated not because of a lack of sincerity but by their inability to comply with linguistic demands, which is evident from the very beginning. Hoping to find their social fortune in

⁶⁸ Lancashire, p. xxix.

⁶⁹ Leah Scragg, ‘John Lyly and the Politics of Language’, *Essays in Criticism*, 55 (2005) pp. 17-38; 17; 18.

seafaring, they apply to the knowledge of the Mariner. To the Mariner's query, '[w]ill you learn?', Dick replies simply: 'Ay' (1.4.49-50). This willingness however does not transcribe into a successful attempt at learning the 'singular nature' (1.4.52) of marine language. Robin is disheartened – 'I shall never learn a quarter of [the language]' (1.4.61) and Rafe prophetically declares, 'I will never learn this language' (1.4.69). The scene ends with an exasperated Mariner leaving the brothers who have failed in their attempts to integrate themselves in the Mariner's linguistic community. The play then focuses exclusively on Rafe's peregrinations towards the hallowed destination of masculine hierarchy.

Unhappy with his 'wooden luck' (2.3.3), Rafe sees fairies in the forest who are 'dancing and playing' and resolves to 'follow them' for he is certain that he 'never can have...hard fortune' in their company (2.3.7-8). However, he is distracted by Peter, the Alchemist's apprentice who enters on stage ranting that 'none almost can understand the language of [alchemy]' (2.3.13). The fleeting moment where Rafe is enchanted by the lyrical quality in the fairies' discourse is suggestive of his desire to escape the untenable geometric definitions that he is expected to conform to. Rafe however still has to experience the worlds of alchemy and astronomy before he can become a member of a fluid linguistic world. Rafe's question, 'how might a man serve [the Alchemist] and learn his cunning' (2.3.52) is answered by Peter in an expected manner: 'First seem to understand the terms' (2.3.53). Patriarchal structures are predicated upon rigid linguistic premises and serving masters in this structure requires an understanding of and compliance to these premises.

It comes as no surprise therefore that as part of his vengeance, Cupid also wants the nymphs to rehearse the verbal pyrotechnics of desire that are sanctified by patriarchy. In a speech that is cluttered with tired Petrarchanisms, Cupid discusses love as ‘a heat full of coldness, a sweet full of bitterness, a pain full of pleasantness, which maketh thoughts have eyes and hearts ears, bred by desire, nursed by delight, weaned by jealousy, killed by dissembling, buried by ingratitude’(1.2.18-21). In introducing an unknown concept to the uninitiated and anticipating their espousal of it, this speech bears a remarkable affinity to those made by the Mariner, Peter, and the Astronomer. Cupid’s triumph is complete when Telusa worries over ‘what new conceits, what strange contraries, breed in [her] mind’ (3.1.1-2) as ‘strange contraries’ are characteristic of Cupid’s language of love.

Linked with this linguistic economy is the desire in the male characters to exercise absolute authorial control. The play begins with a tale of ‘sweet marvels’ (1.1.40) narrated by Tityrus that reveals the nature and the history behind the ritual of the virgin sacrifice. However, there are narrative elements that are surrounded with secrecy. On Galatea’s enquiry after the fate of the virgin ‘bound to endure that horror’ (1.1.58), Tityrus’ reply – ‘whether she be devoured of [Agar] or conveyed to Neptune, or drowned between both, it is not permitted to know, and incurreth danger to conjecture’ (1.1.60-62) – is curious considering that the virgin’s fate is not exactly a secret. Later in the play the Augur comments publicly that the monster Agar carries the maiden away to Neptune and it is said in a manner that suggests it to be common knowledge (4.1.11). In the meticulously crafted world of *Galatea*, this does not strike me as a dramatic inconsistency and instead hints at a motive behind Tityrus’ refusal to answer Galatea.

Remarking on Hebe's arrival, a citizen notes: 'Here she cometh, accompanied only with men, because it is a sight unseemly (as all virgins say) to see the misfortune of a maiden, and terrible to behold the fierceness of Agar that monster' (5.2.4-6). Hebe is unaccompanied by fellow-virgins as they deem it 'unseemly' to witness the sacrifice. Yet Galatea's curiosity about 'the misfortune of a maiden' leads one to believe that what 'virgins say' may be very different from male representations of it. Moreover, what is 'unseemly' for virgins and what is not is defined by male surveillance. This suggests that the fate of the virgin to be sacrificed is a crucial detail in the narrative that is shared exclusively among men to preserve their authority.

Neptune also exhibits deep authorial anxieties on realising that the characters in his plot are not behaving in the way they ought to. Neptune is infuriated both by the defiance of the fathers in the play and by the nature of the disguises that muddle gender boundaries – 'Do silly shepherds go about to deceive great Neptune, in putting on man's attire upon women?' (2.2.17-18). According to the narrative structure established by Neptune, gender boundaries are preserved and at the set interval of five years, Neptune expects the plot outcome to be the one established by him. Stung by a challenge to his authorial agency, Neptune's resolve reflects his desire to punish the errant characters and to ensure that the ordained conclusion is achieved, thereby preserving the sanctity of his narrative: 'I will into these woods and mark all, and in the end will mar all' (2.2.26-27).⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Wixson argues that 'Neptune clearly is driving the narrative' in the play and quite inexplicably reads Neptune's 'I will into these woods and mark all, and in the end will mar all' (2.2.26-27) as 'forecasting the restoration of order at the conclusion of the play' ('Cross-dressing and John Lyly's *Gallathea*', p. 247). If anything Neptune's declaration suggests a tragic denouement rather than the comic one which is achieved.

Diana recognises that authorial agency lies with male figures. On discovering her nymphs' lovelorn state Diana admonishes them in a speech that discloses the extent to which she has internalised patriarchal doctrines: 'I blush, ladies, that you, having been heretofore patient of labours, should now...use the pen for sonnets, not needles for samplers' (3.4.53-55). Diana fears that in becoming desiring subjects rather than desired objects, her virgins have not only contravened patriarchal regulation on the sexual conduct of women but have also shown their susceptibility to trespass into the masculine domain of writing. She fears representations of this transgression – 'shall it be said' – rather than believing herself to be capable of self-representation (4.3.31).

In contrast, other characters exhibit narrative fluencies to voice their departure from patriarchal constructions of meaning. Phillida invites Galatea to consummate their relationship – 'come, let us into the grove, and make much of one another, that cannot tell what to think one of another' (3.2.62-63) – yet when we next see the girls they remain uncertain about each others' true sexual identity. Thus, Phillida imbues the euphemism 'to make much of one another' with a new shade of meaning.⁷¹ Rafe uses the vocabulary of alchemy in a burlesque manner to expose its delusions of grandeur: 'I saw a pretty wench come to [the Alchemist's] shop, where with puffing, blowing and sweating, he so plied her that he multiplied her' (5.1.20-22). Diana and her nymphs find it impossible to communicate with Galatea and Phillida. Phillida testifies 'I understand not one word [Diana] speaks' (2.1.53). This has an uncanny resemblance with Rafe and his brothers who, in their forays into various trades, are equally unable to

⁷¹ Jankowski rightly reads this line as revelling in 'an economy of pleasure that is focused on the lovers' entire selves rather than that small portion located between their legs' (*Pure Resistance: Queer Virginity in Early Modern English Drama* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 21-22).

understand the language they are challenged with. Galatea's interaction with Telusa is equally confounding for her:

Telusa. Saw you not the deer come this way? He flew down the wind,
and I believe you have blanched him.

Galatea. Whose dear was it, lady?

Telusa. Diana's deer.

Galatea. I saw none but mine own dear.

Telusa. This wag is wanton or a fool. (2.1.41-46)

The comic confusion generated through the homonyms 'dear/ deer' clearly indicates that the discourse sanctioned by Diana and her nymphs reflects their ideological position. There can be no 'dear' in the language revered by virgins. Instead of accepting the sterility of a linguistic structure that does not celebrate a plurality of meanings, Telusa dismisses Galatea as a 'wanton or a fool'. In Telusa's terms, the word 'wanton' with its connotations of being unruly and lascivious is closely associated with being a 'wag' who indulges in indiscreet speech. In her determination to 'bridle [Cupid's] tongue' (4.3.101) and her admission, 'Diana cannot chatter' (5.3.61), Diana advocates modesty in speech which reveals her adherence to patriarchal tenets of ideal femininity. Diana regards Venus as an antagonist not only because the latter is 'amorous and too kind for [her] sex' (1.3.32-33) but also as she believes Venus to flout the decorum of speech. Diana's accusation against Venus is clear: 'your tongue is as unruly as your thoughts' (5.3.59-60).

In her discussion of the play, Phyllis Rackin draws on two strands of early modern literary philosophy, one urging the need for mimetic representation and the other working towards creating a golden world of poesy. She identifies the former with a masculine reality principle and the latter with a feminine fantastical energy. The masculine reality principle in drama works towards replicating the phallogentric hierarchy that is found in the real world and ends by ‘banishing the feminine principle’. Fantastic drama on the other hand, Rackin argues, reverses phallogentric equations and glorifies female subjectivity. Rackin identifies a neat divide between the two plots of *Galatea* where the main plot that focuses on the girls’ love for one another is deemed a fantastic drama. For Rackin, ‘Lyly contains [the masculine reality principle] within the comic subplot’. Rackin reaches this conclusion through observing that the boys’ dramatic fate is mimetic in nature. She comments that ‘[t]he boys in Lyly’s subplot, contemporary English types, never lose their social or sexual identities, and at the end of the play their problems are resolved when they are invited to sing at Gallathea and Phillida’s wedding – invited, that is, to be become the boy choristers their actors really were’.⁷²

This analysis, however, does not recognise a major shift that has occurred. The boys may be cast in terms of a masculine reality principle that is mimetic in its impact on dramatic representation, but this mimesis is crucially not a mimesis of phallogentrism, rather it is a mimesis of the play’s own fabulous main plot. The boys sing rather than suffer from the verbal diarrhoea of definitions. They choose to follow Venus and hence

⁷² Phyllis Rackin, ‘Androgyny, Mimesis, and the Marriage of the Boy Heroine on the English Renaissance Stage’, *PMLA*, 102 (1987), pp. 29-41; 34; 37.

prefer a mistress over a master. The masculine reality principle in the play thus departs significantly from its narratological function and instead facilitates and serves the female fantastical principle that celebrates female sexuality and authority.

If *Galatea* is meant to flatter the Queen (and we can safely assume this from both the performance history of the play and Lyly's well-documented goal to further his ambitions in the court) we need to look for affirming representations of female authority in the play.⁷³ Vanhoutte joins the chorus of critical consensus that 'John Lyly's plays depend on the presence of Elizabeth I for a full deployment of meaning'. She goes on to note that 'although *Gallathea* is one of the only two plays that Lyly set in England and the only one for which a prologue addressed explicitly to the queen survives, charting its connection to Elizabeth has proved quite difficult'. One of the problems that Vanhoutte notes is that '*Gallathea* offers no readily identifiable ruler figure'.⁷⁴ Critics who have approached the text with a view to finding an 'identifiable ruler figure' that may flatter the Queen have reached curious conclusions.

Wixson regards the play as an attempt to 'solidify [Elizabeth's] authority during a turbulent decade...and to try and reconcile her femininity with her very masculine authority', a critical perspective that I am aligned with. However, I disagree with his reading of the play's attempt to resolve this tension. For Wixson, it is Neptune, the supreme patriarch in the play, who stands in for Elizabeth's authority and works to

⁷³ Written in 1584, the play was performed in front of the Queen on 1 January 1588 (*Galatea*, p. 5). For Lyly's lifelong struggle to gain prominence in the court and win Elizabeth's favour, see G.K. Hunter, *John Lyly: The Humanist as Courtier* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1962), pp. 69-88. Also, Steven May, 'The Social Organization of the Court' in *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets*, pp. 35-36.

⁷⁴ Vanhoutte, 'Sacrifice, Violence, and the Virgin Queen', p. 1.

legitimise it. Wixson argues, rather unconvincingly, that Neptune is ‘the primary image of divine authority in *Gallathea*...[and] the play works to legitimate him as a ruler and ideologically to devalue the unnatural defiance of patriarchal and monarchical authority’. Wixson does away with the issue of Neptune’s responsibility for establishing and maintaining the violent custom of virgin sacrifice. He argues that the introduction of the monster Agar ‘blurs the connection between Neptune and the brutalized virgin’ thus sanitizing Neptune’s authority and making it acceptable in the eyes of the Queen.⁷⁵ In assuming that the play advocates a synonymy between patriarchal and monarchical authority, and in his reading of the play as duplicating, instead of interrogating, hierarchies of Greek Gods, Wixson’s study becomes an interesting example of how even critical readings submit to patriarchal structures. In a similar manner Shannon proposes Neptune as the ‘identifiable ruler figure’ in the play. This inevitably creates a need for Shannon to make the association between Neptune and the virgin sacrifice as indistinct as possible. She writes, ‘whatever offense might have touched Elizabeth’s authority in Lyly’s representations of Neptune (as an irrational devourer of virgins whose legitimacy might be impugned thereby) is substantially obviated by the play’s identification with the virgins and by its constant affirmation of Neptune’s ultimate authority’.⁷⁶

When not forging a connection between Neptune’s ‘ultimate authority’ and Elizabeth’s sovereignty, critics concur with Anne Lancashire who states that ‘[t]here may even be a light mockery of Elizabeth in Lyly’s presentation of Diana raging against love; her

⁷⁵ ‘Cross-Dressing and John Lyly’s *Gallathea*’, pp. 245-46.

⁷⁶ Shannon, ‘Nature’s Bias’, p. 200.

speeches become somewhat shrewish, a bit shrill'.⁷⁷ This comes dangerously close to rehearsing patriarchal aphorisms of an unmarried old maid: a bitter termagant who is rancorous on seeing other women experience love. While I do not deny the element of mockery in the depiction of Diana, I argue that it is directed towards patriarchal constructions of virginity which the play seeks to redress. Jankowski rightly observes, 'Diana's speech, as well as her dialectical conflict with Venus throughout the play, serves to isolate virginity – and virgins – from love and desire and thus reinforces the early modern construction of (biological) virginity'.⁷⁸ Wixson argues plausibly that the play was designed for 'the maintenance, legitimization and celebration of [Elizabeth's] authority'.⁷⁹ What could be a better way to celebrate Elizabeth's authority than to glorify a figure that unites female sexuality and female authority in a happy marriage that radically departs from patriarchal prescriptions? In *Venus* John Lyly creates precisely this figure.

Diana's and Venus' argument is not only motivated by Cupid's imprisonment but is also charged by the diametrically different positions that they take in relation to patriarchal notions of femininity. Venus' unruliness lies in her insubordination to tenets of ideal womanhood. In *Galatea*, Venus employs her formidable imagination to conclude the narrative of the play in a manner that also rewrites existing narratives. On learning their true sexual identities both Galatea and Phillida are dismayed at the fate that awaits their passion: 'Unfortunate Galatea, if this be Phillida!', 'Accursed Phillida, if that be Galatea!' (5.3.120-121). Neptune and Diana, patriarchy's advocates, are in

⁷⁷ Lancashire, p. xxii.

⁷⁸ Jankowski, 'Redefining virgins', p. 259.

⁷⁹ Wixson, 'Cross-dressing and John Lyly's "Gallathea"', p. 244.

unison. For Diana, the girls must rid themselves of ‘fond-found affections’ (5.3.133) and for Neptune their choice of partners is ‘strange and foolish’ (5.3.139). Phillida moans that her ‘sweet desire’ turned out to be a ‘sour deceit’ (5.3.131). The ‘sour deceit’ was a product of both Tityrus and Meliebeus who sought to shape the narrative in a way that consolidated their own masculinity. In the right course of patriarchal narratives, the girls’ characters should end on a note of bereavement and in Cupid’s terse summary of the patriarchal economy of marriage, their sexual future will be determined ‘by money, not love...by force, not faith, by appointment, not affection’ (4.2.45-46). Venus, the *deus ex machina*, intervenes and announces, ‘then shall it be seen that I can turn one of them to be a man, and that I will’ (5.3.151-52).

It is crucial to note that Venus relies not merely on her divine powers to bring about this magical transformation. She cites an example from the past where she had brought about a similar transformation: ‘Was it not Venus that did the like to Iphis and Ianthes?’ (5.3.154-55). But it was not Venus but goddess Isis who was the benign deity that facilitated the union of this unusual pair. Mark Dooley comments that the audience of the play, with a good memory of Ovid (where the tale of Iphis and Ianthes comes from) would have found Venus’ attitude towards the myth cavalier. Dooley concludes that through this manoeuvre and in concealing which of the two girls will become a man, Lyly offers ‘a radical alternative to heterosexual marriage by resisting the closure offered in his source’.⁸⁰ While I agree with Dooley, I would like to add to his observation. In reworking the Iphis - Ianthe myth and in directing the dénouement,

⁸⁰ Mark Dooley, ‘Inversion, Metamorphosis, and Sexual Difference: Female Same-Sex Desire in Ovid and Lyly’, in *Ovid and the Renaissance Body*, ed. Goran V. Stanivukovic (London: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 59-76; 73.

Venus appropriates the authorial agency that has until this point rested with Neptune. The last scene begins on an ominous note with Neptune's determination to write the conclusion of the play on his terms: 'I will make havoc of Diana's nymphs, my temple shall be dyed with maidens' blood' (5.3.16-18). But as Venus counters 'what is to love or the mistress of love impossible?' (5.3.154). Venus transcends gender-based authorial limitations to write a narrative where female desire, sexuality and autonomy prospers. Further in refusing to disclose which of the two girls will be transformed into a man, Venus asserts a degree of authorial secrecy which parallels the mystery surrounding the fate of the sacrificial virgin.

Along with disregarding Neptune's authorial supremacy, Venus compounds the primacy of her position among the deities by appropriating a jurisdictional authority that is only associated with Neptune and Diana. It is Venus who lays down the terms and conditions of the arrangement in her address to Neptune: 'if ever Venus stood thee in stead, furthered thy fancies, or shall at all times be at thy command, let either Diana bring her virgins to a continual massacre, or release Cupid of his martyrdom' (5.3.55-58). Neptune judges there to be 'no cause of affection' (5.3.141) between the girls and considers the dispute to be settled. He asks Venus, 'how you like this, Venus?', soliciting her approval (5.3.141-42). Venus' reply asserts her authority over and above Neptune's: 'I like well and *allow* it' (5.3.143, emphasis mine).⁸¹

⁸¹ This is an interesting moment in the play and full of exciting possibilities for staging. Neptune is silenced by Venus' response and he does not utter a word for the next 36 lines and then, quite ironically, does so only to agree with Venus' decision on the fate of the girls. How is Neptune supposed to react to this challenge to his authority? What manner of expressions and body language should he display in performance? Should his consent to Venus' decision on the fate of the girls be clouded with shades of resentment and sullenness?

Although Venus does not reveal which of the two girls will be transformed into a man, textual evidence strongly hints that it will be Galatea. Critical opinions are divided on the subject of the final metamorphosis. Rackin writes ‘that neither we nor the characters know or care which of Lyly’s girls will be transformed demonstrates the arbitrary quality of sexual difference’.⁸² But there are nuances in the performance of gender that constitute the sexed body which Rackin does not quite acknowledge. Thus she does not examine how the ‘arbitrary quality of sexual difference’ promised at the end will have a material impact on the politics of gender. Cartwright expresses a viewpoint akin to Rackin’s: ‘[t]he metamorphosis ought not to be completed onstage nor the choice revealed because the maidens resemble each other enough to make the selection irrelevant, so the argument goes’.⁸³

In contrast, Vanhoutte makes a distinction between Galatea and Phillida judging the former to be ‘public, verbal, masculine’ and the latter to be ‘private, visible, feminine’. She notes various ‘gender based distinctions between the heroines in the play’ to conclude that ‘Gallathea herself will become a young man’.⁸⁴ Reavley Gair observes how this distinction was in all likelihood realised in the play’s performance before Elizabeth – ‘Phillida is played by a boy with a voice still soprano, whereas Gallathea is a superannuated chorister, with a broken voice (or one breaking): Phillida remarks, ‘I feare me he is as I am, a mayden...Tush it cannot be, his voice shewes the contrarie’

⁸² Rackin, ‘The Boy Heroine on the English Renaissance Stage’, p. 37.

⁸³ Cartwright, ‘The Confusions of *Gallathea*’, p. 222.

⁸⁴ Vanhoutte, ‘Sacrifice, Violence, and the Virgin Queen’, pp. 8-9.

(D4^v)'.⁸⁵ Unlike Phillida, Galatea is uniformly disguised as a boy throughout the play. Galatea's own desire to become a man, 'Oh, would the gods had made me as I seem to be' (2.1.4-5) and her request for Venus to be her benefactor – 'sweet Venus, be my guide' (2.4.14) – strengthens the probability that eventually it will be Galatea who transforms into a man.⁸⁶

Cupid characterises vows articulated by 'a man's tongue' as fickle and unreliable: 'it is the fairest and the falsest, done with greatest art and least truth, with best colours and worst conceit' (4.2.53-55). In sharp contrast, Phillida insists that Galatea's 'faith is imprinted in [her] thoughts by her words' (5.3.137-38). Eurota too falls in love with Tityrus/ Galatea because of his/ her 'sweet words' and testifies that 'the remembrance of his wit hath bereaved me of my wisdom'. (3.66-68). In becoming the male spouse in the union, Galatea's metamorphosis also transforms the ideological position of 'a man's tongue'. It expands beyond the ordinary as illustrated by Cupid to accommodate and ally itself with female desire which is distinguishable by the characteristics listed by Venus – 'unspotted, begun with truth, continued with constancy, and not to be altered till death' (5.3.146-47). The extraordinary way in which this male figure is

⁸⁵ Gair, *The Children of Paul's*, p. 106. Gina Bloom studies the unsettling effect that boy actors whose voices were breaking produced. She writes, '[i]f early modern patriarchal systems were, as scholars have argued, predicated on clear and fixed differentiation between the sexes, then the pubescent voice--unpredictably modulating between (female) squeakiness and (male) gravity--not only upset binary gender systems but the logic and operation of early modern patriarchy itself' ("Thy voice squeaks": Listening for Masculinity on the Early Modern Stage' in *Renaissance Drama*, 29 (1998), pp. 39-71; 43). The textual questioning of early modern patriarchy was thus neatly complemented by the performative aspects of *Galatea*.

⁸⁶ Moreover, the name Galatea has its origins in the Greek myth of Pygmalion and Galatea where Pygmalion, mesmerised by Venus' beauty, creates a sculpture of a woman that bears likeness to Venus and calls it Galatea. Moved by the sincerity of Pygmalion's affection, Venus brings the sculpture to life. The leitmotifs of metamorphosis and insurmountable barriers to love being removed by Venus in this myth bear a close affinity to the dramaturgy of *Galatea*.

created at the end of the play not only makes him the ideal lover but also the ideal male subject under female rule.

Galatea becomes the ideal male subject for numerous reasons as his/her happiness remains contingent upon the female authorial figure (Venus), and his/ her 'words' inhabit a narrative terrain where female desire and authority co-exist. In a striking affinity with its character of Galatea whose 'words' flatter Phillida, *Galatea* signals an authorial cross-dressing in a narrative terrain where female desire and authority are in a state of harmony, and the dichotomy that Eworth's painting established between Elizabeth and Venus is effectively dissolved. John Lyly thus flatters the Queen by celebrating her discursive Queendom. The male subject created in *Galatea* defers to female authority for the fulfilment of his desires, celebrates female sovereignty and is not threatened by female sexuality. The establishment of a new order under female governance is hinted in Rafe's declaration, '[n]o more masters now, but a mistress if I can light on her' (5.1.1), and is eventually realised in Venus' command to Rafe and his brothers to 'follow' her. Peter, the alchemist's old apprentice and the one who inveigled Rafe into becoming his successor, on the other hand comments, 'so I had a master, I would not care what became of me' (5.1.56-57). Although disenchanted with the Alchemist, Peter is still trapped in a world under male control. Peter's exclusion from the comic festivity at the end of the play is therefore entirely appropriate even as it serves as a grim reminder of the inexorable teleology of patriarchal gender norms in the 'real' world.

For Wixson, '[since] the main female characters are always under the control of a father or a male ruler, the social ideology becomes patriarchal, intertwining the relationship between rank (privilege) and gender'. My reading of the ending of the play leads me to conclude just the opposite. The main female characters are freed from both the control of their father and the male ruler (Neptune). In a footnote, Wixson casually writes that 'the goddesses eventually submit to their male superior [Neptune]'.⁸⁷ This is not wholly accurate. The deities consult to reach a pact where everyone benefits in some manner: Diana agrees to free Cupid only if Neptune were to put an end to the ritual of virgin sacrifice and Neptune concedes to Diana's offer only when reassured by Venus of her aid in matters of love. *Galatea* is not therefore a 'paean to virginity' but a panegyric devised for the Queen that models itself on her narratological practices, does away with the polarisation between female sovereignty and female sexuality to celebrate them harmoniously, and formulates codes of masculinity that supports the Queen's sexual politics.

⁸⁷ Wixson, 'Cross-dressing and John Lyly's "Gallathea"', pp. 251; 256, n. 25.

CHAPTER 3

‘CAGED IN [THE] HOLD’: INTERROGATING THE HOLD OF MARTIAL MASCULINITY IN MARY SIDNEY’S *THE TRAGEDY OF ANTONIE* AND SHAKESPEARE’S *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*¹

¹ Mary Sidney, *The Tragedy of Antonie*, in *Renaissance Drama by Women: Texts and Documents*, ed. S.P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 1.129. All subsequent references are to this edition.

William Garrard's *Arte of Warre* (1591) is an insightful repository of prevalent notions of martial masculinity in early modern England. Captain Robert Hitchcock prefaces the work by recounting its interesting journey to publication: the work was transported from Spain by its dying author William Garrard to his kinsman Sir Thomas Garrard in England.² The emotive textual journey, recounted with eloquence, demonstrates how the book is a metonymic token of an exclusively male rite of passage, which is written by men to tutor themselves in the art of masculinity. More specifically, the *Arte of Warre* is a military manual engaged in constructing and consolidating martial masculinity. It is designed to appeal to 'manly and valiant mindes' and is prescriptive in its agenda, offering itself as 'a myrrour to looke in [for] euery vnlearned Souldiour' (sig. A3r). In his dedication to Robert Devereux, the earl of Essex, Thomas Garrard insists that 'there cannot be a more worthy subject then this to write on' and it is 'worthy both of knowledge and practise' (sigs A3v; A2r).³ The purpose of the work is to fashion a masculine identity grounded in a martial ethos. The principles of this masculinity are 'drawn out from fatherly counsell and graue admonition' in a discursive space which excludes female participation even as it fashions a man extracted from feminine influences (sig. A4r). Racial and cultural hostility

² William Garrard, *The Arte of Warre* (London: Roger Warde, 1591), sig. A5v.

³ Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine have pointed out a form of stylized reading that was concomitant with a politics of writing that facilitated Elizabethan military ideals. Foregrounding the 'conjunctions of reading practice and application to specified goals', Grafton and Jardine argue how this kind of reading was 'intended to *give rise to something else*' (original emphasis). They take particular note of a letter written by Sir Philip Sidney to Sir Edward Denny apparently in response to 'an inquiry from Denny as to what he should read to improve his mind (and presumably his prospects)'. Sidney's letter underscores how 'in the face of Elizabeth's determined resistance to military engagement aspiring men of action like himself and Denny [had] a good deal of time on their hands, and that "reading" and "study" are the approved, character-forming way of relieving boredom'. Grafton and Jardine also note that in their collaborative reading of Livy Gabriel Harvey and Sidney were enthralled by the 'heroic feats of arms that [Livy] so vividly described' and 'deliberately ignored – as men of action perhaps should – the humanist commentaries' available with the revered text ("Studied for Action": How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy', *Past & Present*, 129 (1990), pp. 30- 78; 33; 30; 38-39; 68; 37).

notwithstanding, Garrard praises the ‘incredible and marvellous’ strength of the Turkish army and attributes it as much to the absence of women as to the absence of effeminacy: ‘amongst so many men, I saw not one woman’ (sig. E4v).

Barton C. Hacker’s reveals that women were, in fact, an indispensable part of military life in early modern Europe, and, on occasions, even fought battles. He brings to light the ways in which women’s participation in military life was deliberately obliterated as part of an attempt to present martial life as exclusively masculine.⁴ Hacker painstakingly documents how women were essential to the daily lives of soldiers, contributing to life at camp through cooking, laundry, nursing and other similar jobs. Nina Taunton too examines female presence in early modern military life and concludes, ‘[o]fficially excluded yet indubitably there, women in the sixteenth-century camp occupy an uneasy and often self-cancelling space as part of gift-giving reciprocities on the one hand, and on the other as defilers of space consecrated to masculinity’.⁵

Unsurprisingly therefore, Garrard’s text does not ever mention female activity. Alan Shepard notes that women were portrayed as ‘incompatible with a life ‘at arms’...[in] virtually all the Elizabethan military conduct-books’ for ‘[p]leasure is...detrimental to reserves of strength’.⁶ In omitting women’s presence this cultural understanding of

⁴ Barton C. Hacker, ‘Women and Military Institutions in Early Modern Europe: A Reconnaissance’, *Signs*, 6 (1981), pp. 643-71.

⁵ Nina Taunton, ‘Unlawful presences: the politics of military space and the problem of women in *Tamburlaine*’, in *Literature, Mapping, and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain*, ed. Andrew Gordon and Bernhard Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 138-54; 152.

⁶ Alan Shepard, *Marlowe’s Soldiers: Rhetorics of Masculinity in the Age of the Armada* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 68.

martial masculinity seeks to ensure a smooth run of the ritualised process through which this particular code of masculinity is constructed. Pierre Bourdieu's incisive observation that manliness 'is an eminently *relational* notion, constructed in front of and for other men and against femininity, in a kind of *fear* of the female, firstly in oneself' seems especially true for early modern martial masculinity.⁷ Female voices and influence endangered the cultural project of defining martial precepts which was carried out in a 'space consecrated to masculinity'.

This chapter will investigate the manner in which cultural tenets of martial masculinity are explored and challenged in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (1607) and Mary Sidney's translation of Robert Garnier's *The Tragedy of Antonie* (1592) from the French.⁸ Beyond the obvious similarity of the basic plot that both writers dramatise, there is another rationale behind juxtaposing Shakespeare with Sidney. By virtue of

⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 53, original emphasis.

⁸ Critics have proffered varying opinions on Sidney's translation of Garnier. Steven May regards it as 'compulsive literalism' ('The Sidney Legacy' in *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets* (Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1999), p. 207). Howard Norland discusses the technicalities of Sidney's translation and while he remarks on Sidney's fidelity to the original, he also notes how she 'wisely does not attempt to reproduce in English the rhymed alexandrines of the original but adopts instead blank verse' (*Neoclassical Tragedy in Elizabethan England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009), pp. 204-206; 205). Eve Rachel Sanders argues differently: 'While her attention to the details of the original French text suggests a profound appreciation of Garnier's imagination and craft, Sidney shapes *Antonius* according to her own poetic sensibility and knowledge of classical sources'. Sanders lists several instances where Sidney's translation deviates from its source to bring to light the manner in which it 'convey[s] the psychological dimension of a character's predicament' (*Gender and Literacy on Stage in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 106-17; 108; 111-12). Like Norland, Coburn Freer also comments on Sidney's decision to depart from the alexandrines of the original and remarks that '[t]he results of this change are most evident in the heightened contrast between the speeches of the principal characters and the choruses. The self-control of the principals seems at once looser and subtler because of the contrast between their blank verse and the choric stanzas. The gain in a naturalistic range of expression is enormous' ('Mary Sidney', in *Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation*, ed. Katharina M. Wilson (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987), pp. 481-90; 486). Karen Raber studies how Sidney's translation of Garnier's *Antonie* and its eventual publication influenced the literary milieu of the period and participated in the contemporary anxieties around translation as articulated by Thomas Kyd and Margaret Tyler ('Domestic Drama: The Politics of Mary Sidney's *Antonie*' in *Dramatic Difference: Gender, Class, and Genre in the Early Modern Closet Drama*, (London: Associated University Presses, 2001), pp. 52-110; 65-77).

being the first English dramatisation of the tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra, the influence of Mary Sidney's *Antonie* on succeeding plays that dealt with the same subject is widely acknowledged. While she commissioned Samuel Daniel to write a companion piece to her translation, *The Tragedy of Cleopatra* (1594), what is of particular interest to this chapter is her contribution to the imaginative process fuelling Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.⁹ Mimi Still Dixon wonders whether 'Sidney's Cleopatra, with her single-minded devotion, [is] the unspoken subtext of Shakespeare's play' only to conclude that the tantalising silences and elliptical utterances of the Shakespearean heroine lend her more 'depth and complexity'.¹⁰ Although Helen Wilcox and Rina Walthaus find sharp contrasts between Sidney's Cleopatra, who embodies Neoplatonic ideals of beauty and virtue, and Shakespeare's *femme fatale* they also foreground both plays' recognition of the dramatic and subversive possibilities inherent in Cleopatra's political authority.¹¹ Ernest Schanzer observes that in both *Antonie* and *Antony and Cleopatra* 'condemnation and glorification of the love of

⁹ Tina Krontiris notes that '[w]hile patronage offered Mary Herbert a way of channelling authorial creativity, it also became a kind of cultural trap for her, pushing her further into a conventional role' ('Mary Herbert: Englishing a purified Cleopatra', in *Readings in Renaissance Women's Drama: Criticism, History, and Performance 1594-1998*, ed. S.P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London: Routledge, 1998) pp. 156-66; 157). For a comparison between Daniel's play and Sidney's translation see Joyce Green MacDonald, 'Cleopatra: Whiteness and Knowledge', in *Women and Race in Early Modern Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 21-44; 38-43. Raber insightfully contextualises *Antonie* within a complex web of literary kinships: the relationship of Samuel Daniel with his patron, Mary Sidney, the warm regard of Amelia Lanyer and Mary Wroth for their female predecessor, and the varying ideological and authorial impulses driving Samuel Brandon's *The Vertuous Octavia* (1598) ('Domestic Drama', pp. 98-110).

¹⁰ Mimi Still Dixon "'Not Know Me Yet?": Looking at Cleopatra in Three Renaissance Tragedies', in *The Female Tragic Hero in English Renaissance Drama*, ed. Naomi Conn Liebler (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 71-92; 87.

¹¹ Helen Wilcox and Rina Walthaus, 'Gendered Authority: Cleopatra in English and Spanish Golden Age Drama' in *Heroines of the Golden Stage: Women and Drama in Spain and England 1500-1700*, ed. Rina Walthaus and Marguérite Corporaal (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2008), pp. 32-49. Indeed, the need to create a heroine radically different from Mary Sidney's may be read as a product of Shakespeare's 'anxiety of influence' (Harold Bloom, *Anxiety of Influence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)).

Antony and Cleopatra' coexist, lending dramatic ambiguity.¹² For John Wilders, the editor of the Arden edition of the play, Shakespeare 'may have been influenced by [*Antonie*] when he created the resolute, idealizing Cleopatra of the final scene'.¹³ Similarly, Sasha Roberts hints that Shakespeare 'may have borrowed... [Cleopatra's] stoic dignity in death from Sidney'.¹⁴ In identifying the activity of parsing martial masculinity as a pursuit common to both the plays, this chapter makes more fully explicit Shakespeare's artistic debt to Sidney.¹⁵

The chapter aims to supplement my conceptualisation of martial masculinity in *The Tragedy of Antonie* and *Antony and Cleopatra* by drawing parallels with Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great, Part I* (1590) and William Garrard's *Arte of Warre*.¹⁶ I will argue that Antony embodies a code of masculinity rooted in martial values, which are threatened by Cleopatra. Both the plays that I am looking at depict

¹² Ernest Schanzer, 'Antony and Cleopatra', in *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare: A Study of Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure, Antony and Cleopatra* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 132-183; 152.

¹³ William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. John Wilders (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 62.

¹⁴ Sasha Roberts, 'Reading Shakespeare's Tragedies of Love: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* in Early Modern England', in *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works Volume I: The Tragedies*, ed. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 108-33; 116.

¹⁵ Critics have also discovered the influence of Mary Sidney's translation on Shakespeare's other plays. Notably, Lisa Hopkins detects a resonance between *Tragedy of Antonie* and the lurid 'Pyramus and Thisbe' sequence in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* ('*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Mary Sidney', *English Language Notes*, 41 (2004), pp. 23-28). In the introduction to her edited collection of essays Margaret Hannay notes that Mary Sidney's 'importation of Senecan drama, with its emphasis on character development through soliloquy and dialogue, may have encouraged Shakespeare's combination of the English tradition of depicting action with the Continental tradition of depicting character and it introduced the Continental custom of using Roman drama to comment on contemporary politics' (*Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550-1700 Volume 2: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. xxxii). Although I disagree with Michael Steppat's unfavourable judgment on Sidney's verse, his account of Shakespeare's debt to Sidney is interesting ('Shakespeare's Response to Dramatic Tradition in *Antony and Cleopatra*' in Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*, pp. 111- 36; especially 111- 128).

¹⁶ I am not suggesting that either Mary Sidney or Shakespeare had, indisputably, read Garrard's work. Such contention is not vital to my argument. Garrard's text informs us of the contemporary ideas about martial life and gives us clues to read martial masculinity. These ideas were in general circulation and, quite possibly, may have influenced the characterisation of both the plays.

male anxieties generated by Cleopatra's interrogation, subversion, and eventual revision of martial masculinity. As my discussion will make clear, the tenets of martial masculinity center on the construction of the martial body, are ostensibly authored by men, and are apparently designed to provide their subscribers with enduring masculinity. However, an examination of representations of Antony in the plays will illustrate that an espousal of martial values does not make their adherents immune to gender anxieties. This, coupled with the lack of space to practice individual autonomy, leads to dissatisfaction with the dominant code, culminating in dissidence. This chapter shall examine moments of resistance in the plays offered by participants in martial masculinity, most notably the chorus of Roman soldier in *Antonie* and Ventidius and Enobarbus in *Antony and Cleopatra*, that also promote its interrogation. Though these moments are powerful, the dissidents' complicity in sustaining martial masculinity limits their ability to completely overhaul its premise. Cleopatra, on the other hand, capitalises on her position as an 'outsider', and her incisive perception of the fault lines in the discourse of martial masculinity enables her to fashion an alternative. I shall analyse how Cleopatra defiles the 'space consecrated to masculinity' and re-fashions martial masculinity from an exclusive to female-inclusive model.

1. 'Glow[ing] like plated Mars': Constructing the Body Martial

The eponymous hero of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great, Part I*, eagerly identifies a gendered dichotomy at work behind the cultural ideal of martial masculinity and assiduously chooses to orient himself with masculine principles. He interrupts his

impassioned praise of the abducted Zenocrate to observe how effeminate thoughts can engineer a loss of manhood, which is founded on the ‘discipline of arms and chivalry’:

But how unseemly is it for my sex,
My discipline of arms and chivalry,
My nature, and the terror of my name,
To harbour thoughts effeminate and faint!¹⁷

This realisation marks a shift of his focus from ‘fair Zenocrate, divine Zenocrate’ (5.1.135) to ‘fame...valour and...victory’ (5.1.181). This shift is necessary to preserve the martial ethos on which Tamburlaine has built his masculine identity. That this shift is desirable is affirmed by Techelles’ appearance at this precise moment to inform Tamburlaine of their triumph over Damascus (5.1.196-97). The semantic cues in Tamburlaine’s progress of ideas reveal how the social construction of gendered behaviour is offered as an indisputable product of biological differentiation. His ‘nature’ and his ‘name’, both a direct consequence of his ‘sex’, are inseparable from the ‘discipline of arms and chivalry’. Notwithstanding the word ‘discipline’, which marks a formal training towards acquiring a learned masculine behaviour, Tamburlaine naturalises arbitrary constructions of gender. He uses a modest variant of the monstrous or the unnatural – ‘unseemly’ – and quickly detaches himself from ‘thoughts effeminate and faint’.

Martial masculinity pays a peculiar emphasis on the physicality of the warrior’s body to materialise its premise of gendered differentiation. Tamburlaine dramatically casts

¹⁷ Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine The Great Part I* in David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen eds. *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.1.174-77. All subsequent quotations are from this edition.

off his shepherd's clothes to embrace the visual symbols of martial masculinity as he swears he

...means to be a terror to the world,
Measuring the limits of his empery
By east and west as Phoebus doth his course.
Lie here, ye weeds that I disdain to wear!
This complete armour and this curtle-axe
Are adjuncts more beseeming Tamburlaine. (1.2.38-43)

Interestingly, a change in dressing transforms the manner in which Tamburlaine's body is perceived and interpreted. Tamburlaine's body becomes the vehicle which is naturally destined to fulfill the code of masculinity to which he now subscribes. The sun's natural course during the day is employed as an example to reinforce how natural it is for Tamburlaine's body to carry out the precepts of martial masculinity by anticipating his dominion to extend over the world. Techelles discovers Tamburlaine's 'frowning brows and fiery looks' (1.2.56) as an unquestionable testimony to the desired moulding of his body. Tamburlaine's appropriation of his body to meet the demands of his martial masculinity and the dramatic, but essential, change in clothing suggest that the body is meant to be a neutral landscape where martial symbols – 'complete armour', 'curtle-axe' – may be imprinted at will. This facilitates a reading of the body itself in martial terms and recalls the synonymy between the culturally constructed categories of sex and gender as formulated by Judith Butler.¹⁸

¹⁸ Tamburlaine's gesture embodies a fascinating interplay of the two meanings of the word 'fashion'. 'Fashion' as an indicator of contemporary sartorial sensibilities was only beginning to emerge in the sixteenth-century. The word 'fashion' was more commonly understood as the act of making, moulding, or creating something or someone and in its latter intonation had a strong Biblical resonance. Tamburlaine's hubristic assertion of a newly 'fashioned' martial subjectivity is interwoven with his adoption of a new 'fashion' of clothing. In their book-length study Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass insist that '[t]o understand the significance of clothes in the Renaissance, we need to undo our own social categories, in which subjects are prior to objects, wearers to what is worn. We need to understand the animatedness of clothes, their ability to "pick up" subjects, to mold and shape them both

In the *Arte of Warre*, Garrard explains with great emphasis how

he that desires to become a Souldier of assured good quality, to the intent he may be able to perseuer in each enterprise, beare out euery brunt stoutly, and serue sufficiently, he ought to haue a strong body, sound, free from sicknesse, & of a good complexion (sig. B1r).

The body's 'good complexion' is vital to the construction of martial masculinity and contributes to achieving the higher goal of 'assured good quality' in a soldier.¹⁹ The representations of the body are, however, designed to coerce it into meeting cultural demands; purporting to be contrary, gender constructs, in fact, impose themselves on the body rather than arising organically through it and in the process reconfigure the way the body is socially understood and represented. Philo's opening speech in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* reflects precisely this hierarchy between the male body and martial masculinity where the body has no function except to naturalise martial masculinity and consolidate its foundation. Antony's eyes are directed towards the 'files and musters of the war' (1.1.3) and his heart in 'great fights hath burst/ The buckles on his breast' (1.1.7-8). Antony's body, 'glow[ing] like plated Mars' (1.1.4), becomes the deified, identifiable and material representative of martial masculinity.

physically and socially, to constitute subjects through their power as material memories' (*Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 2).

¹⁹ Michael Schoenfeldt notes that the word 'complexion' in the period was understood as a commingling of various bodily humours. In early modern thought these bodily humours, Schoenfeldt argues, could be controlled through measures such as diet and exercise. For Schoenfeldt, this physiological self-fashioning was part of a larger moral paradigm: 'By emphasizing the individual subject's willing and unembarrassed adoption of therapies of self-regulation, I want to show how self-discipline not only entailed the forced assimilation of corporeal urges to societal pressure but also produced the parameters of individual subjectivity' (*Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 7; 15). In my discussion of *Antony and Cleopatra* I will emphasise the extent to which Antony's martial masculinity is measured in bizarre dietary terms.

However, biology and gender performance are so fused together that a rejection of martial masculinity results in the male body losing its manliness. Philo laments how Antony's male body 'reneges all temper/ And [has] become the bellows and the fan/ To cool a gipsy's lust' (1.1.8-10). Cleopatra's train that enters on stage at this precise moment has eunuchs fanning her. While in embracing martial masculinity Tamburlaine validated his male body, Antony, in distancing himself from it, has alienated his own body to be aligned with a eunuch.

Laura Levine insightfully observes how Prynne's *Histrio-matrix* suggests that 'the adoption of effeminate behavior will lead to biological change in the warrior's gender itself...even that "valiant man of courage", the most masculine person in the culture, can be transformed'.²⁰ Antonie's self reflections in *The Tragedy of Antonie* mirror this curious progress of effeminacy in a reversal of the body's biology. The opening monologue of the play has a demented energy as Antonie tries to make sense of his defeat at Actium and constructs a tragic self. He locates his tragedy in the 'heart-killing love' he bears for Cleopatra, which has made him disdainful of his true profession of a warrior (1.140). He laments the loss of his former fame:

Thy virtue dead, thy glory made alive
So oft by martial deeds is gone in smoke.
Since then the bays, so well thy forehead knew,
To Venus' myrtles yielded have their place;
Trumpets to pipes; field tents to courtly bowers;
Lances and pikes to dances and to feasts. (1.65-70)

²⁰ Laura Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-theatricality and Effeminization, 1579-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 44, italics in original.

For Antonie virtue and glory cannot be divorced from success on the battlefield. He claims his virtue is 'dead'; in the same breath he moans that his glory is no more 'alive'. Defeat necessarily leads to loss of both, and as Antonie identifies himself purely as a warrior he claims, 'I me lost' (3.295). He then proceeds to embroider a tragic narrative around the loss of his warrior-self over the course of the play. While I have argued that this warrior-self is the product of a polarised gender discourse where the masculine is cast in essential contrast to the feminine, what is interesting about Antonie's speech is the manner in which feminine forces are labelled feeble and yet, paradoxically, are recognised to have the potential to overwhelm their 'stronger' masculine counterpart.

Antonie establishes an opposition between bays, a symbol of martial and masculine achievement, and myrtles, sacred to Venus the goddess of love, thus hinting at a profound gender displacement at the root of his defeat and, successively, his tragedy. The subsequent binary relationships he sets up between trumpets and pipes, field tents and courtly bowers, lances and pikes, and dances and feasts accentuate this sense of displacement even as they reflect the extent to which he has internalised the presiding hierarchies of gendered discourse. He admits to having favoured Cleopatra's 'eyes' grace' (1.35) over 'fiery sparkling arms' (1.89), thus tainting his spirit with 'coward-courage' (1.75) and bringing about his downfall. He refuses to concede victory to Octavius and instead surrenders to Cleopatra: '[t]hou only Cleopatra triumph hast' (1.31). His attempt to substantiate this claim is marked by confused and contradictory imagery. At one level, since his defeat is primarily martial, Cleopatra needs to be refashioned in a masculine manner, for war, in Antonie's understanding, is the province

of men. He grieves that Cleopatra has robbed him of his 'ships and men of war' and continues to lament: 'That nought remains (so destitute am I)/ But these same arms which on my back I wear./Thou should'st have them too' (1.23-25). In his frenzied imagination Antonie visualises Cleopatra as wielding arms, usurping his generalship, commandeering his forces, and 'yielding [him] to Caesar naked of defence' (1.26).

He concludes:

Thou only Cleopatra triumph hast,
Thou only hast my freedom servile made,
Thou only hast me vanquished...
None else, henceforth, but thou my dearest queen,
Shall glory in commanding Antonie. (1.31-38)

There is a marked emphasis on the exclusivity of Cleopatra's victory in the above lines, which is at odds with the outcome of the battle of Actium where both Antonie and Cleopatra were defeated by the forces of Octavius. Yet the imagery – 'triumph', 'vanquished' and 'commanding' – is martial and combative. Clearly then, Cleopatra's triumph, though gained outside the battlefield, is achieved through asserting supremacy in a conflict of some kind. Antonie locates it in a conflict of gender-appropriate behaviour where his obsession with Cleopatra results in the loss of his masculinity: 'Alas what was the day,/ The days of loss that gained thee thy love' (1.51-52). The 'days of loss' are the opportunities for consolidating his virility on the battlefield – the ultimate litmus test of martial masculinity – that he has lost due to his predilection for 'languishing in [Cleopatra's] arms' (1.77). This dichotomy is fully established when in his consuming passion he rebukes himself: 'that [he] for war had'st such a goddess left' (1.106). The lexical marriage between 'days of loss' and gaining Cleopatra's love is

suggestive, therefore, of Antonie's loss of manhood, which is marked by a process of effeminisation. It is here that Antonie locates Cleopatra's triumph as she succeeds in reducing his masculine self to its degenerate feminine counterpart, reducing him 'from a soldier to a chamberer' (3.290). By arriving at this conclusion Antonie relinquishes agency for his actions and accuses Cleopatra of ensnaring his body to sensual pleasures. He alleges that Cleopatra 'in wanton love...misleads' forcing him to lie in 'foul sink' (1.120-21). The image of depression and hollowness evoked by 'foul sink' is a perverted representation of the female anatomy. This invocation of women's genitalia functions as a representational mode for an effeminised male body that is unable to meet the cultural expectations of a particular performance of masculinity, while simultaneously reinforcing normative understanding that demands gendered behaviour be registered biologically. Even in his own imagination Antonie's body has to be effeminised to reflect his faltering martial masculinity.

A close examination of *Antony and Cleopatra* suggests that, in contrast to the transformations of Sidney's Antonie, Antony's disavowal of his body is not due to the corrupt influence of sybaritic Egypt; Antony's body was never his to claim. Instead it was the site where idealised symbols of martial masculinity could be inscribed. Roman martial discourse valorizes the construction of a soldier's body when it is subject to deprivation. The body needs to be pushed beyond the domains of the ordinary to that of the grotesque in order to validate its true function. Caesar exalts the manner in which Antony battled against famine at Modena where he

...didst drink
The stale of horses and the gilded puddle
Which beasts would cough at...
On the Alps,
It is reported, [he] didst eat strange flesh
Which some did die to look on. (1.4.62-69)

This body is offered in stark contrast to what it has metamorphosed into at Egypt where it 'fishes, drinks and wastes' (1.4.4). This degeneracy leads to a complete collapse of manhood, let alone martial masculinity, and Antony 'is not more manlike/ Than Cleopatra, nor the Queen of Ptolemy/More womanly than he' (1.4.5-7). While this gender inversion is presented as grotesque and a gross violation of the natural in Roman discourse, it is noteworthy that the ideal soldier's body is equally, if not more, monstrous.²¹

Such perverse understanding of the hardness of the male body in martial discourse resonates in the *Arte of Warre*. Garrard constructs the ideal soldier's body as capable of enduring hardship:

So shall hee bee able to resist the continuall [toil] and trauaile, which of necessitie hee must dailie take, as continual and extreame cold in the winter, immoderate heate in the Sommer, in marching in the day, keeping sentinell in the night, and in his cold Cabben, in secret ambushes, and in Trenches, where perchance hee shall stand a number of houers in the water and myre vp to the knees: and besides vpon Bulwarkes, breaches in espials, Sentinels, perdues, and such like, when occasion

²¹ Levine astutely observes how Caesar's panegyric to Antony's exceptional endurance is 'a glorification of perverse appetite', suggestive of a perverse masculinity (*Men in Women's Clothings*, p. 59). For Janet Adelman this portrait of masculinity is the 'consequence of denial of...the female' (*Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to The Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 176). The denial of the female is, of course, what martial masculinity primarily seeks to achieve. Anne Barton recognises that 'there is something both unattractive and maimed about the exclusively masculine world of Rome' ('Nature's piece 'gainst fancy': the divided catastrophe in *Antony and Cleopatra* (1974/1992)', in *Essays, Mainly Shakespearean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 113-15; 120). The Roman soldier's grotesque body embodies this unattractive and maimed nature.

requires and necessitie constraines: of all which exploits and discommodities he must perforce be partaker...in respect that a Souldier must be as well acquainted, and as [able] to beare continual trauail, as a Bird can endure to [fly], yea and to put on a resolute minde to beare all the miserics and hardes of warlike affaires (sigs B1r-B2v).

There is a great similarity in the way Caesar and Garrard present their versions of martial masculinity. Both of them cast it as a natural product of a body biologically designed to respond to their exhortations. Caesar compares Antony to a stag whereas Garrard likens this body to that of a bird. Similarly, Techelles finds Tamburlaine's body to be like those of 'princely lions' (1.2.52). Though naturalised, this body is also curiously sterile, for neither Garrard nor Caesar allows it to express and indulge in desire. While this ideal of masculinity requires 'the complete repudiation of sexuality', this chapter will later comment on how Cleopatra challenges it by compelling the martial body to acknowledge desire.²²

Moreover, in such a construction of masculinity the body is characterised as immutable and not as a subject that can change freely. Remarkably, there is no space in this model of masculinity to accommodate the body's natural ageing process.²³ Both *Antonie* and *Antony and Cleopatra* have Antony voicing age-related insecurities at crucial moments. Even as they confront gender stereotypes, critics regularly fall prey to them by addressing Cleopatra's fading youth and corresponding anxieties in their analysis of the

²² Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing*, p. 63. Shepard in his analysis of Tamburlaine's slaying of Damascus' virgins, who were sent to appease his (martial) fury, comments, '[t]he soldiers desecrate what Damascus takes to be supreme objects of desire – and thus desecrate desire itself' (*Marlowe's Soldiers*, p. 35).

²³ Alexandra Shepard researches the multiple codes of manhood that competed for patriarchal benefit in early modern England and observes that old men's continued access to masculine privileges was hardly secure (*Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 38-46; also see, pp. 54-58).

Shakespearean play while failing to detect a similar concern plaguing Antony.²⁴ What could be more ‘natural’ than a woman becoming insecure as she withers and loses beauty, her only currency in a patriarchal world? I suggest that Antony is equally, if not more, anxious about his age and that this anxiety is inextricably intertwined with his identity as a soldier. Garrard stresses that ‘a Soldier is generally [to] be chosen betwixt 18 and 46 yeares’ (B2v). The historical Antony was fifty-two at the battle of Actium and thus, by early modern standards, on the brink of losing the role that determined his masculine identity.

Inconsolable and self-reproachful after his defeat at Actium, Shakespeare’s Antony inadvertently makes the connection between his faltering martial masculinity and growing age: ‘My very hairs do mutiny, for the white/ Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them/ For fear and doting’ (3.11.13-15). The collapse of martial masculinity, indicated by the word ‘mutiny’, is entwined with Antony’s concern about his age. He fantasises how Cleopatra will send his ‘grizzled head’ to ‘boy Caesar’ as a trophy to validate Caesar’s victory (3.13.17).²⁵ The difference between the triumphant Caesar’s and vanquished Antony’s age and the emphasis on this difference is not a coincidence; it is a reflection on how martial masculinity is contingent upon the warrior’s age. Caesar renders Antony’s martial identity redundant both on the grounds of Antony’s

²⁴ Cleopatra’s age has elicited considerable critical commentary. See Barton, *Essays, Mainly Shakespearean*, p. 124. Linda T. Fitz also addresses the issue of Cleopatra’s age in her seminal essay, ‘Egyptian Queens and Male Reviewers: Sexist Attitudes in ‘Antony and Cleopatra’ Criticism’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 28 (1977), pp. 297-316, especially 300-301.

²⁵ Allusions to Caesar’s youth, including ‘scarce-bearded’ (1.1.22) and ‘boy’ (3.13.17) among others, are generally construed as pejorative epithets, indicating that his masculinity is yet to reach its peak. However, most of these are articulated by Antony and cannot be taken at face value. Adelman recasts the age difference between Caesar and Antony in Oedipal terms, ‘making it resonate with the son’s contest against the father he must idealize, possess, and, above all, subdue’ (*Suffocating Mothers*, p. 181).

humiliating defeat and his age by rejecting his challenge for a personal combat and calling him an '*old ruffian*' (4.1.4, italics mine).

Similarly, Mary Sidney's *Antonie* is not entirely oblivious to his bodily changes. Unfortunately, he is not aware enough to comprehend how this irrevocable change in the material body alienates him from the codes of martial masculinity. *Antonie* declares that: 'Of combat I unto [Caesar] proffer made,/ Though he in prime, and I by feeble age/ Mightily weakened both in force and skill' (3.188-90). 'Force and skill' is a textual cue that urges juxtaposition with its earlier appearance. *Antonie* reminisces about his 'force and skill in matters martial' (3.88) as he elaborates his various victories. Implicit in the argument is the suggestion that this 'force and skill' ensured his 'happy puissance.../ Which erst [he] had by warlike conquest won' (3.77-78). *Antonie*'s confession of the limitations of his body- 'feeble age', 'mightily weakened'- indicates that he can no longer benefit from a martial code of masculinity. *Antonie*'s predicament is a clear indicator that such a construct of masculinity is not all-encompassing for it does not cover warriors past their prime. His recounting of his military exploits comes across like a dirge to the martial masculinity of which his advancing age has robbed him.

The limits of this code of masculinity however are acknowledged. In *Antonie* Lucilius observes that 'we daily see, who in their youth/ Get honour there, do lose it in their age' (3.267-68). *Antonie* is perplexed at what he thinks is a sudden loss of manhood and ponders, 'Strange! One disordered act at Actium/ The earth subdued, my glory hath obscured' (3.251-52). He scarcely realises that this loss was gradual in its coming and

was inevitable, being dependant on the body's natural deterioration after its prime. Antonie, however, is unable to grasp the temporal nature of martial masculinity and steadfastly refuses to move beyond it. Lucilius recounts the histories of Lepidus and Lucius who, like Antonie, faced defeat at the hands of Octavius but were allowed to retire with 'sacred dignity' (3.180).²⁶ Antonie repudiates the notion of being classed as one of them, for he asserts that they, unlike him, possessed 'feeble force' (3.181). This sits at odds with the admittance of his 'feeble age' that 'mightily weaken[s] both...force and skill'. Antonie deems the mutilation of his body by a formidable opponent in a battlefield as a preferable end to surviving an ignoble defeat: 'My body through-pierced with push of pike,/ Had vomited my blood, in blood my life...' (3.226-27). The only relief Antonie can envisage from his confining circumstances is a dismemberment of the very body that renders him incompetent to continue practicing a martial code of masculinity: 'Then what he will let Caesar do with me,/ Make me limb after limb be rent, make me,/ My burial take in sides of Thracian wolf' (1.48-50). Unable to realise this ambition Antonie resolves to devise 'a noble death,/ A glorious death, unto [his] succour call' (3.375-76).

However, Antonie's clumsy suicide is hardly the 'courageous act' (3.379) that will mark a 'glorious death' and stamp his identity in martial discourse. Directus reports how Antonie's blood like 'A gushing fountain all chamber filled' (4.265), which fulfils

²⁶ In contrast Shakespeare's Antony sends an ambassador to Caesar asking to 'let him breathe between the heavens and earth, /A private man in Athens' (3.12.14-15). Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra*, unlike the uniform characterisation that *Antonie* casts him in, constantly vacillates between relinquishing his martial masculinity – 'No more a soldier' (4.14.43) – and striving to re-achieve it. Perhaps Neo-Senecan dramatic imperatives prevent *Antonie* from exploring these complexities. For example, unlike the multiple motives that govern Antony's suicide in Shakespeare, Mary Sidney's Antonie, as Dixon notes, 'dies, finally, to redeem his honor' ('Looking at Cleopatra', p. 80).

Antonie's fantasy of his body vomiting blood. Yet for the spectators of Antonie's 'lingering death', this has 'plunged [him] in extreme wretchedness', thus denying his wish for a 'brave end' (4.273-74). Moreover, Antonie is deluded by the glamour of the glorified martial body in the discourse of martial masculinity. Whereas Cleopatra promises Antonie's corpse its 'due rites' (5.184), notwithstanding the loyalty his supporters extend towards the tenets of martial masculinity, their corpses lack the promised grand farewell assured to them. Though Caesar acknowledges that they 'with courage fought' (4.127), their slain bodies are 'left for pleasing food/ To birds, and beasts, and fishes of the sea' (4.138-139). Read in conjunction with his counterpart in *Antony and Cleopatra* who idealises Antony's resigned appetite for 'strange flesh', Caesar's indifferent eulogy of the fallen warriors in *Antonie* shows that martial bodies, both in life and in death, are subject to a peculiar gastronomic violence.

In the moment of his 'noble death' Mary Sidney's Antonie demands homage to what he believes his body represents: a fallen warrior with life ebbing away. 'But no man willing, each himself withdrew', emphasises Antonie's alienation from the code that earlier glamourised his manhood (4.275). Antonie's clumsy suicide mocks constructions of the male body as valorized by martial code of conduct and for Danielle Clarke, 'signals the extent of his effeminisation'.²⁷ It is deeply ironic that his body gains relief through Cleopatra's physical labour of lifting him up into her tomb. Antonie, limited by his martial ethos, is unable to perform the 'courageous act' that will give him the succour he longs for. Instead, his body requires a 'courageous act' from

²⁷ Danielle Clarke, *The Politics of Early Modern Women's Writing* (London: Pearson, 2001), p. 89.

the one he constantly identifies as the ‘other’: Cleopatra. It is Cleopatra who ‘this life-dead man courageously upraise[s]’ and who promises him a ‘noble death’ (4.303).

Similarly, in Shakespeare Antony wants his suicide to recover his Roman martial identity by ensuring that he is a ‘Roman by a Roman/ Valiantly vanquished’ (4.15.59-60). Yet, insofar he believes that Cleopatra has died before him, he resolves, ‘I will o’ertake thee, Cleopatra, and/ Weep for my pardon’ (4.14.45-46). Antony’s resolution to ask Cleopatra’s pardon, who is uniformly vilified in Roman discourse and to do it in tears, which indicate effeminacy, could not be further from his purpose to re-affirm his martial identity.²⁸ Moreover, Antony’s suicide is a response to Cleopatra’s staged suicide making it suitable for mockery. This comic incongruity is highlighted in the exchange just before his death with Cleopatra where she keeps disrupting his tragic narrative even as he pleads for narrative space: ‘let me speak a little’ (4.15.44), ‘one word, sweet queen’ (4.15.47) and ‘gentle, hear me’ (4.15.49). Eventually, it will be Cleopatra’s speeches fusing martial and erotic epistemologies that will redeem Antony’s ‘well-divided disposition’ (1.5.56) from ridicule to place it firmly within the tragic ‘heavenly mingle’ (1.5.62).

2. *‘In Mars his school who never lesson learned’: Alternatives to Martial Masculinity*

²⁸ Cynthia Marshall notes how Antony’s suicide could not be further than the masculine agenda it was designed to fulfill: ‘Wounded, bleeding, and lacking agency, Antony takes on a typically feminine position’ (‘Man of Steel Done Got the Blues: Melancholic Subversion of Presence in *Antony and Cleopatra*’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 44 (1993), pp. 385-408; 403). On tears as indicators of effeminacy see Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*, pp. 187-189.

The Tragedy of Antonie underscores how Antonie's desire to achieve a 'brave end' is frustrated by his inability to comprehend multiple codes of manhood. He is deeply wounded at his supporters giving ground to Caesar and leaving him. He laments that he is 'Left and betrayed of thousand thousand friends/ Once of [his] suit' (3.109-110). This, however, does not concern his audience, Lucilius, at all. Shifting allegiances seems to be endemic to the martial code of conduct. Given the premises of such a system, Lucilius' 'never-changing love' (3.99) for Antonie strikes a discordant note and suggests that his masculinity lies beyond the domain of war.²⁹ Notwithstanding his gratitude for Lucilius' faithful company, Antonie is unable to identify multiple models of masculinity operating simultaneously.

Moreover, Antonie attempts to emasculate Caesar who does not assert his masculinity on the battlefield, which for Antonie is the sole arena of masculine performance:

A man who never saw enlaced pikes
With bristled points against his stomach bent,
Who fears the field, and hides him cowardly
Dead at the very noise the soldiers make. (3.235-38)

Antonie scorns Caesar's triumph by comparing him to 'false Ulysses' and lists 'fraud, deceit, and malicious guile' as his virtues (3.239-40). Yet this rationalisation does not dismiss Caesar's indisputable victory at Actium and his earlier triumphs over Lucius and Lepidius. Even the comparison with Ulysses is weak, for it was Ulysses who, with his dubious virtues, designed the fall of Troy and turned the war in favour of the

²⁹ One is tempted to read Lucilius' 'holy love' (3.112) for Antony in terms of Renaissance notions about male friendships, particularly when seen in the light of his steadfast vow: 'Men in their friendship ever should be one,/ And never ought with fickle fortune shake' (3.117-18). Alan Bray's essay 'Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England', *History Workshop Journal*, 29 (1990), pp. 1-19 is a useful entry point in this critical terrain.

Greeks. This uneasy presentation of proverbial wisdom indicates that the space of battlefield can breed more than one form of masculinity. While the Ulysses-Caesar comparison alerts the reader to the fractures within the discourse of masculinity that Antonie valorizes, he is peevishly oblivious of them and therefore cannot comprehend defeat at the hands of Caesar:

A man, a woman both in might and mind,
In Mars his school who never lesson learned,
Should me repulse, chase, overthrow, destroy,
Me of such fame, bring to so low an ebb? (3.197-200)

Antonie, who considers masculinity and martial strength to be synonymous, labels Caesar a 'coward creature' and subsequently, an unworthy foe (3.187). Seeking to secure his own crumbling masculinity, Antonie's framing of Cleopatra as masculine is matched by his depiction of Caesar as effeminate, a 'woman both in might and mind'. This also reinforces the polarisation of masculinity and femininity that he has drawn before. Paradoxically, however, Antonie achieves this by a singular syntactical formulation that blends the two genders: 'A man, a woman'. Yet Caesar's victory and by extension the triumph of his version of masculinity over Antonie's remain incontrovertible and are 'brave end[s]' in their own right. Through characterising Caesar as 'a woman both in might and mind', Antonie has levelled Caesar and Cleopatra on the axis of gender. It is revealing that he uses the same words to describe both Caesar and Cleopatra. If Caesar is 'false Ulysses', Antonie vilifies Cleopatra as 'false she' (3.240, 3.29). Similarly, he holds both Caesar's and Cleopatra's 'fraud' accountable for his defeat (3.27, 3.239). Even in Antonie's narrative that relies so heavily on binary constructions of gender, there are no essential descriptors of

masculinity and femininity. Masculinity and femininity thus emerge as ideological constructs that determine biological differentiation rather than being its effects. Antonie is doubly trapped within the discourse of masculinity to which he subscribes: not only is he unable to acknowledge a multiplicity of forms of masculinity, he also does not realise that boundaries between gender performances are not as distinct as he thinks them to be.

This is not to say that Caesar's triumphant masculinity goes unchallenged in Antonie. Agrippa may hail Caesar as the 'One only lord [who] should rule this earth below' but he does not suspend his critical faculties and differs from Caesar on points of administration (4.145). Agrippa's alternate political masculinity of a 'gracious prince' (4.172) challenges Octavius' desire to be a ruler who is '[f]eared to be, and see, his foes to fall' (4.163). Though this debate is abruptly dropped when Directus enters the scene to report Antonie's suicide and is never renewed, it is an important passage that admits room for alternative performances of masculinity and alerts the reader to the same.³⁰

³⁰ Many critics argue that *Antonie* engages with contemporary political debates on the nature of monarchical authority and posit that through the figure of Caesar in *Antonie* Sidney critiques tyranny. May reads *Antonie* as a flattering gloss on Elizabeth's reign and remarks that it expresses Sidney's 'approval of Elizabeth's rule and, with far greater emphasis, [her] misgivings about how [Elizabeth's] death might affect the benign rule they had so long enjoyed' ('The Sidney Legacy', pp. 175- 76; 176). On the other hand, Raber compellingly argues that 'Sidney's play is not mere praise and celebration of [Elizabeth], but counsel for her, offered in decorous but powerful form' ('Domestic Drama', pp. 84-98; 97). On Mary Sidney's relationship with Elizabeth see Margaret Hannay, "'Do What Men May Sing": Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication' in *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women Writers as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. Margaret Hannay (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1985), pp. 149-65. For how *Antonie* sits within broader contemporary historical and political contexts see Anne Lake Prescott, 'Mary Sidney's Antonius and the Ambiguities of French History', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 38 (2008), pp. 216-233. Victor Skretkowitz positions Sidney's translation in the context of Protestant politics of the period. He argues that in 'Robert Garnier's *Marc Antoine* [Sidney] found an allegory on the tragic consequences of the warring French factions that was readily adaptable to her crusade on behalf of the Huguenots' ('Mary Sidney Herbert's *Antonius*, English Philhellenism and the Protestant Cause', *Women's Writing*, 6 (1999), pp. 7-25; 22). I am not entirely convinced that Garnier's staunch Catholicism could be so readily amenable to Sidney's Protestant agenda. This reading is perhaps more fitting to understand why Sidney translated Philippe de Mornay's *Discourse of Life and Death* which was presented as a companion piece to *Antonie* when the

3. *'Rust the sword consume': Questioning Martial Masculinity*

Though both *Antonie* and *Antony and Cleopatra* emphasise Antony's personal tragedy as a tragedy of martial masculinity, their interrogation of it extends beyond his characterisation. The chorus of Roman soldiers in *Antonie*, for instance, refuses to embrace the deified symbolism of war that enchants Antonie. Their voices lack jubilation at victory and instead are full of weariness, resentment and persistent questioning:

Shall ever civil bate
Gnaw and devour our state?
Shall never we this blade,
Our blood hath bloody made,
Lay down? These arms down lay
As robes we wear alway?
But as from age to age
So pass from rage to rage? (4.368-375)

The chorus does not endorse Antonie's emblem of the eager soldier, ever desirous to meet another challenge on the battlefield to consolidate his martial masculinity and seek glory therein. On the contrary, their wishes stand in marked contrast: '[R]ust the sword consume,/ And, spoiled of waving plume,/ The useless morion shall/ On crook

play first appeared in print. I am in agreement with Alison Findlay's reading of *Antonie* wherein she suggests that Sidney is critical of the 'self-destructive tendency implicit in a Protestant military ideal' (*Playing Spaces in Early Women's Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 25). A related subject of interest is the manner in which Mary Sidney represented herself in relation to her brother, Sir Philip Sidney, who championed the Protestant cause. This, however, is beyond the scope of this thesis. Margaret Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) is an illuminating book on this issue. On the impact that Sir Philip Sidney's death had on Mary Sidney's literary output see Krontiris, 'Englising a purified Cleopatra', pp. 156-58. On how Mary Sidney positioned herself as a writer with respect to her brother's literary abilities see Beth Wynne Fisker, 'To the Angell Spirit...': Mary Sidney's Entry into the 'World of Words' in Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*, pp. 25-37; Raber 'Domestic Drama', pp. 77-84.

hang by the wall' (4.420-24). This indicates a growing unrest among the adherents of a martial code of masculinity. The victorious Roman soldiers reject the laurels, solicitously pursued by Antonie to free himself from heady 'Venus' myrtles', and condemn them as 'barren bays' (4.415). Further, in a gesture that stands in a remarkable contrast to Tamburlaine, these soldiers wish to disinvest themselves from the material signifiers that construct their martial masculinity. Their arms are likened to robes they are tired of wearing on their backs, the sword is fantasised as corroding beyond function, and the helmet is disinherited from any glorious value by being dubbed as 'useless'. Not only is Antonie unable to recognise alternative codes of masculinity he has also failed to identify discontinuities and fissures in his very own model. Masculinity is not a singular, uniform concept and in Antonie's inability to recognise its protean quality lies the heart of his tragedy.

Similarly, minor characters in *Antony and Cleopatra* act as a lens that brings martial masculinity under uneasy scrutiny. Garrard's precepts are indicative of the conflict that characters such as Enobarbus and Ventidius find themselves in. Read in the light of the following passage from *Arte of Warre*, Enobarbus seems doomed to an inglorious death after deserting Antony:

He ought likewise to beware, vnder paine of great punishment, for running from one campe to another, for what occasion soeuer shal vrge him to it, but is bound to serue that partie with which he doth first place himselfe, euen vntill the ende of the warres (sig. D2r).

Enobarbus is caught between martial injunctions as laid down by Garrard who forbids soldiers abandoning their generals in favour of another and the larger martial paradigm. For Enobarbus Antony's actions have 'eat[en] the sword [he] fights with' (3.13.205).

Robbed of his sword, Antony has no place in the discourse of martial masculinity and cannot effectively present himself as an emulative model of masculinity. Indeed, Antony himself is subject to Garrard's harsh reproof. Garrard doubts his martial valour for 'he was drowned in the deepe and gaping gulfe of Lecherie, Gluttonie, and riotous gaming' (sig. F1v). Enobarbus is thus trapped in the conflicting demands of martial masculinity that demand both allegiance to and rebellion against Antony. Plagued by Antony's 'mine of bounty' (4.6.33), death is the only escape for Enobarbus.

Unique to Shakespeare is a scene that marks the triumph of an uncelebrated soldier, Ventidius (3.1). Superfluous to the main plot, the scene stresses the ironic distance between the idealised martial masculinity the triumvirate is deemed to embody and their actions which continually belittle it by focusing on a puny soldier's devotion to his duty. It reveals how Antony's much eulogized soldiership actually rests on the conquests of his more competent subordinates who fight wars in his name. Though it is Ventidius who has achieved victory on the battlefield, he demurely sacrifices it to the general production of Antony's 'great property' (1.1.59). He decides, 'I'll humbly signify what in [Antony's] name/ That magical word of war, we have effected' (3.1.31-32). To claim victory as his own would elevate Ventidius into 'his captain's captain' (3.1.22), thus threatening the hierarchies inherent in the structure of martial masculinity which must be preserved. Garrard's admonition is worth quoting here:

Present him neuer with any thing, specially with any thing of valour: for thy Captaine which hath no need of that which is thine, and perceiuing thee to present him that which is not correspondent to the merite of his worthinesse, will esteeme the same to be done in maner of merchandise, as proceeding of craft: but if thy Captaine demaund any thing vnder shew of praising and commending the same, or the beautie thereof, it is then requisite that the

same be liberally bestowed vpon him, it being a curteous demaund, which he commonly will magnificently recompence, as did *Artaxerxes* (sig. F2v).

Inadvertently, Garrard introduces an element of skepticism towards martial heroism that it, despite emphatic assertions to the contrary, is derived rather than achieved. Enobarbus and Ventidius in *Antony and Cleopatra* and the chorus of Roman soldiers and Antonie's supporters (whose corpses were 'overwhelmed with waves') in *Antonie* emerge as the victims of a structure designed to grant power to only a few.

Even before *Antony and Cleopatra* steers towards its inevitable tragic denouement, the audience has witnessed a soldier's body being treated with mockery rather than veneration. Pompey and the triumvirate negotiate a cautiously manipulated treaty where Pompey's belief in Antony's apocryphal soldiership plays a crucial role. On discovering that the 'ne'er-lust-wearied Antony' (2.1.39) is heading towards Rome to check his continuing military triumph, Pompey demurs (2.1.39). He recognises that Antony's 'soldiership/ Is twice the other twain' (2.1.35-36) and is insecure about his own military prowess if Antony '[dons] his helm/ for such a petty war' (2.1.34-35). The celebration following this transient surrender of guard is marked by drunken revelry, which seems wholly uncharacteristic of the Roman ethos. In particular, it exposes Caesar's disapproval of Antony's proclivity as hypocrisy. Caesar frowningly says: 'From Alexandria/ This is the news: [Antony] fishes, drinks, and wastes/ The lamps of nights in revel' (1.4.3-5). Caesar's reproof above notwithstanding, it is noteworthy that the only drunken revelry that the play portrays is located in what is always highlighted as the polar opposite of Egypt – Rome. The drunken soiree intended to celebrate the truce between the triumvirates and Pompey comes across as less of a

carnival and more of a travesty of the polarities that the Roman world strives to maintain between itself and Egypt.³¹ This scene unsettles the dichotomy upon which the characters construct their identities. The festivity is likened to an Alexandrian feast and the all-pervasive interest in Egypt and its culture sits at odds with the ostensible purpose of the setting, which is to mark Rome's recovered political security.

In the middle of this scene an inebriated Lepidus, 'the third part of the world' (2.7.91), needs to be borne off stage as if he were a corpse. Lepidus' intoxicated state is subject to jocund remarks and the remaining Romans, who seemingly embody Rome's martial values, decide to dance like 'the Egyptian Bacchanals' (2.7.104). Pompey's approval of this idea with '[l]et's ha't, good soldier' (2.7.106) is profoundly ironic as it highlights the contrast between the martial values Roman soldierhood advocates and the hedonism it condemns but nonetheless practices. This paradox develops a satiric edge when these Roman icons accompany the unnamed boy's song with a frivolous dance routine (2.7.113-116). In terms of possibilities for performance this satire against the Roman martial ethos can be reinforced if the actor playing Cleopatra doubles as the boy to whose song these warriors dance. This would strengthen her metonymic value in the play as the expositor of the inherent instability of Roman military values. Further, this would lend her fear of being performed by a 'squeaking Cleopatra boy' (5.2.219) a

³¹ There is another moment in the play when Rome unsettles the binaries between itself and Egypt (3.6.44-56). Caesar despairs that Octavia's arrival in Rome resembles that of a 'market maid to Rome' and lacks 'ostentation'. This reminds the reader of Cleopatra's opulent pageantry, associated with Egyptian decadence, on Cydnus. That Rome demands a similar exhibition testifies to how fluid the dichotomy between the two is. Sara Munson Deats surveys the manner in which critical industry has dealt with the polarisation between Egypt and Rome in her essay 'Shakespeare's Anamorphic Drama: a Survey of *Antony and Cleopatra* in Criticism, on Stage, and on Screen', in *Antony and Cleopatra: New Critical Essays*, ed. Deats (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 1-93; 3-12. Also see James Hirsh, 'Rome and Egypt in *Antony and Cleopatra* and in Criticism of the Play', in *New Critical Essays*, pp. 175-91.

poignant and realistic currency while simultaneously revealing the fraudulent binaries that Roman discourse postulates between itself and Egypt.

Antony's emasculated state at the hands of Cleopatra is the subject of much Roman lamentation. Yet Cleopatra is not the only person in the play who 'robs' Antony of his sword in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Derectus plans and carries out a similar theft: 'This sword but shown to Caesar with this tidings/ Shall enter me with him' (4.14.113-114). Kay Stanton compares Derectus' theft with Cleopatra's wearing the sword Philippan:

Cleopatra only borrows [Antony's] phallus/ sword for her (and/or their) mutual pleasure. The actual castration is initiated by Antony's self-mutilation and completed by Derectus' theft of his sword, showing that it is obsessive fixation on an exclusively male heroic ideal that actually annihilates a man, by "spending" his essence in ways disallowing his projection of his fleshly existence into future, fears of the self-destructive effects of mingling with the female to the contrary.³²

Derectus confesses to Caesar how he 'robbed' Antony of his sword (5.1.25). This predatory rite of passage makes any identity founded on the premise of martial masculinity inherently insecure.³³ Robbed twice of his sword, Antony's pledge to Cleopatra – 'I and my sword will earn our chronicle' (3.13.180) – will not be fulfilled (3.13.180). Martial heroism will be recast in what it most persistently denied – a female voice and Cleopatra's 'immortal longings' (5.2.280) – to earn a triumphant chronicle for itself.

³² Kay Stanton, 'The Heroic Tragedy of Cleopatra, the "Prostitute Queen"' in *Female Tragic Hero*, pp. 93-118; 100. Adelman too makes a similar point, *Suffocating Mothers*, p. 183.

³³ Jacqueline Vanhoutte bluntly terms Derectus' act as 'cold-blooded opportunism', 'Antony's 'secret house of death': suicide and sovereignty in *Antony and Cleopatra*', *Philological Quarterly*, 79 (2000), pp. 153-75; 173.

3. *'Fie, wrangling queen': Subverting Martial Masculinity*

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Cleopatra, who 'beggar[s] description' (2.2.208), frustrates Rome's characteristic discursive certitude and conducts a ceaseless and astute enquiry into the nature of this 'magical word of war' (3.1.32) to reveal its vacuity. Due to her insistence upon the inclusion rather than exclusion of femininity in Roman martial discourse, she is demonised as a treacherous seductress who emasculates men.³⁴ Antony's faith in the Roman discourse leads him to anticipate Cleopatra's emasculating effect *a priori* and meet her on Cydnus after 'being barbered ten times o'er' (2.2.234).³⁵ Antony's accusation that Cleopatra is a 'vile lady' who has 'robbed [him] of [his] sword' (4.14.24) is a projection of his – and the Roman – view of Cleopatra. This vilified perception hinders the understanding of Cleopatra's subversive project in the play which is to challenge the male authored discourse of martial masculinity and replace it with one that allows female participation. Cleopatra who is 'cunning beyond man's thought' (1.2.152) uses all her cunning to deconstruct, go beyond and construct an alternative to martial masculinity, a product of '*man's thought*'.

Shakespeare's Cleopatra aggressively participates in the all-male martial discourse and parodies it. In the very first scene of the play, Antony is presented as a celebrated warrior who responds to Cleopatra's jibes with self-assured hubris: 'kingdoms are clay!' (1.1.36). Antony's 'great property' (1.1.59) gives him immunity to the extent

³⁴ Lisa S. Starks reads Cleopatra's vilification in the context of male masochism where the male longs to be emasculated 'by his goddess, whose overwhelming power he fears and dreads, even as he yearns to be dominated by it' ('Like the lover's pinch, which hurts and is desired': the narrative of male masochism and Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*', *Literature and Psychology*, 45 (1999), pp. 58-73; 59).

³⁵ On beards as a powerful visual emblem of masculinity, see Bruce R. Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 31-32. See also, Will Fisher, 'The Renaissance Beard: Masculinity in Early Modern England', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 54 (2001), pp. 155-87.

that he can momentarily disassociate himself from martial masculinity to stage a verbal contest with his ‘wrangling queen’ (1.1.49). Cleopatra first mocks Antony’s anticipated response to Caesar’s ‘powerful mandate’ (1.1.23), slyly compelling him to defy the ‘office and devotion’ (1.1.5) to martial tenets, only to insist on his conformity to them by asking him to grant audience to the ambassadors. Thus, Cleopatra demands that Antony simultaneously validate and refute the martial ethos and effectively frustrates his claims to martial manhood in the play. She ‘laugh[s] [Antony] out of patience’ even as she concurrently ‘laugh[s] him into patience’ (2.5.19-20). Such a fluid behavioural pattern unsettles Antony’s tenuous grasp on Roman martial values. I recognise this moment as crucial for my reading of Cleopatra’s participation in martial discourse in the play. I suggest that in effect Cleopatra is laughing *at* Antony and the martial values he embodies. As Elizabeth Brown astutely observes, ‘Cleopatra, even on the level of grammar, is the agent of all the action and Antony her passive object’.³⁶ In the very same speech Cleopatra recapitulates the famous moment where she put her ‘tires and mantles on [Antony], whilst/ [she] wore his sword Philippan’ (2.5.22-23). This appropriation of Antony’s arms had a tragic impetus in *Antonie* (1.26) but the image Shakespeare offers is decidedly comical; transvestism is a familiar trope in Renaissance comedy and regularly features in Shakespearean comedy. As Anne Barton summarises, ‘[t]his essentially comic image of a transvestite Antony has for many readers epitomized the destruction of his masculinity at the hands of Cleopatra’.³⁷ I would like

³⁶ Elizabeth A. Brown, ““Companion Me with My Mistress”: Cleopatra, Elizabeth I, and their Waiting Women’, in *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women’s Alliances in Early Modern England*, ed. Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 131-145; 140.

³⁷ Barton goes further and comments that the ‘love story has fluctuated continually between the sublime and the ridiculous, the tragic and the comic’. She argues that this fluctuation between genres is finally controlled by Cleopatra’s tragic, albeit theatrical, suicide where ‘comedy flowers into tragedy’ (‘The

to complicate Barton's argument by suggesting that Cleopatra does not destroy Antony's masculinity but rather overthrows a particular form of masculinity, namely the martial, and delivers an alternative.

In the *Arte of Warre*, Garrard instructs his soldier-reader to ape their captain's humour to preserve their place within a martial ethos and masculinity: 'séeme ioyfull whilest thy Captaine is merrie, and sorrowfull when he is griued' (sig. F1r). Garrard's earnest advice reveals the extent to which martial masculinity is a matter of mimetic performance independent of the martial body that he constructs elsewhere. In her analysis of gender identity Judith Butler argues that 'acts, gestures, enactments...are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means'.³⁸ Garrard's treatise reveals how male anatomy does not assure martial masculinity by default and needs to resort to 'fabrications' such as following the behavioural pattern set by the captain of the troop. This emulative behaviour may not always deliver its promise of reinforcing martial masculinity but could just as easily call it into question. Canidius' remark to a random soldier in *Antony and Cleopatra* reflects this anxiety: 'Soldier, thou art. But [Antony's] whole action grows/ Not in the power on't. So our leader's led,/ And we are women's men' (3.7.68-70). The materiality of the soldier's body is never in question – 'soldier, thou art' – present as it is on the stage in military investiture; its ability to meet the exhorting demands of martial masculinity is less certain. Antony's effemination is contagious, for the

divided catastrophe in *Antony and Cleopatra*', pp. 119-20; 131; 132). For a full discussion on the play's famous ability to frustrate genres see Deats, 'Shakespeare's Anamorphic Drama', pp. 12-14.

³⁸ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 185 (italics in original).

discourse of martial masculinity has no answer for its own incongruities. In aping their captain's humour, the martial bodies of Antony's supporters risk losing the masculinity they are assured of by becoming 'women's men'.

In taming Antony and by extension his troop to become 'women's men', Cleopatra is strategically playing the precepts advocated by Garrard to her own advantage. Her demeanour comes across as a playful perversion of the mimetic component of martial masculinity when she instructs Alexas thus: 'If you find [Antony] sad,/ Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report/ That I am sudden sick' (1.3.4-6). Cleopatra's penetration into the Roman code of martial masculinity and the discursive tumult it achieves, of which the chief consequence is the effeminisation of Antony, is radical to the extent that Shakespeare coined a new word for it, 'unseminared'. The *OED* glosses the word as 'deprived of virility' and records it as the only use of the word in the English language. Cleopatra earlier reveals the mask she puts on in her interactions with Antony: 'I'll seem the fool I am not. Antony/ will be himself' (1.1.43) Here when Cleopatra refuses to believe Antony's hyperbolic assurances of love, she plays the skeptical beloved who refuses to be complicit in masculinity's agenda to aggrandise itself. This stands in sharp contrast to Zenocrate's gullibility in *Tamburlaine*. Both *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Tamburlaine the Great, Part I* introduce their warrior heroes bantering with their beloveds. However, the manner in which Zenocrate and Cleopatra position themselves is radically dissymmetrical. This difference reveals Cleopatra's promise as a subverter of gender identities. Philo disapproves of Antony's 'captain's heart' (1.1.6), which has degenerated to recite hyperbolic avowals of love to 'cool a gipsy's lust' (1.1.10). Like Antony's exaggerated protestations – 'here is my space/

Kingdoms are clay' (1.1.35-36) – Tamburlaine offers all his 'martial prizes' (1.2.102) to Zenocrate and pretends to place his love for her over his martial duties (1.2.82-105). In a manner remarkably similar to Philo, Techelles, Tamburlaine's soldier-follower, questions this alarming change of disposition and is immediately reassured of Tamburlaine's true loyalties. The exchange occurs as an aside, intensifying Zenocrate's exclusion from and ignorance of a parallel discourse of masculinity that is prioritised:

Techelles. What now? In love?

Tamburlaine. Techelles, women must be flatterèd. (1.2.106-107)

This insincere flattery is as triumphant as Tamburlaine's military exploits in the play. The next time Zenocrate is on-stage, Agydas brings her attention to the incongruity between desire and martial discourse to restrain her affection for Tamburlaine: 'When you look for amorous discourse,/ Will rattle forth his facts of war and blood –/Too harsh a subject for your dainty ears' (3.2.44-46). However, Agydas' arguments are fruitless. Thanks to Tamburlaine's spurious flattery, Zenocrate is convinced of her own 'unworthiness' (3.2.65) and deifies him as her 'lordly love' (3.2.49). The contrast between *Antony and Cleopatra's* first scene and the wooing scene in *Tamburlaine the Great, Part I* is intensified by the stark difference in the reception of messengers. Whereas news from Rome 'grates' Antony (1.1.19) and he is impatient to return to bantering with Cleopatra, Tamburlaine is alert- 'How now, what's the matter?' (1.2.110). He leaves effusions of love and immediately starts devising military strategies to confront Mycetes' force.

Whereas Tamburlaine succeeds in making Zenocrate a fool, in seeming the fool she is not Shakespeare's Cleopatra makes Antony look and act like a fool. She returns to this mode of seeming fool to make a fool of another self-assured soldier. She misleads the 'sole sir o'th'world' (5.2.119), Caesar, into believing that she intends to remain alive and makes him an 'ass unpolicied' (5.2.307). This posturing as a fool is striking and deeply ironic in the scene where both Cleopatra and Eros arm Antony. Even as she dresses Antony in various parts of his armour, Cleopatra feigns ignorance about them: 'What's this for?' (4.4.6), 'Thus it must be' (4.4.8). She cleverly plays the part of a witless woman assigned with a task which she is culturally unprepared for yet displays an alacrity that a seasoned soldier like Eros can scarcely match. This leads Antony to remark, '[t]hou fumblest, Eros, and my queen's a squire/ more tight at this than thou' (4.4.14-15). I treat this knowledge as a reflection of Cleopatra's incisive perspective on the dictates of martial masculinity that helps her to parody it.³⁹

Antony's later lament after the humiliating defeat at Actium that 'she has robbed [him] of [his] sword' brings back the comical visual image of Cleopatra prancing with his sword Philippan (4.14.23). Mardian's entry at this point with the false news of Cleopatra's suicide makes the moment truly tragi-comic. As discussed above, the very first scene establishes a correlation between Mardian the eunuch and Antony. Mardian acts as Antony's substitute in Egypt; in Antony's absence Cleopatra turns to him to mock and divert her (1.5.9-19). By equating Antony's warrior body with the eunuch

³⁹ Further, considering how central the use of props and prosthetics was in understanding and constructing early modern gender, here Cleopatra is, quite literally, building Antony as a martial man. On the central role played by material objects in constructing gender see Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Mardian, *Antony and Cleopatra* mocks at the exclusionist principle on which martial masculinity operates. Mardian's eunuch-body is the monstrous amalgamation of the masculine and the feminine that is inimical to martial masculinity. In Levine's words, 'Mardian stands at the center of the play as a reminder of the real danger of emasculation at the hands of Cleopatra.'⁴⁰ This astutely reflects Roman perceptions of Cleopatra. However, Cleopatra jeers at Mardian's inability to experience desire. He can only 'think' but is unable to do what 'Venus did with Mars' (1.5.18-19). Through mocking Caesar's elegiac construct of a warrior-body that cannot practise desire, Cleopatra caricatures it as what it most fears, the eunuch-body. Cleopatra who describes herself as 'a morsel for a monarch' challenges the soldier-self constructed around famine and deprivation, which is exalted by Caesar (1.5.32). In Enobarbus' famous formulation 'Other women cloy/ The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry/ Where most she satisfies' (2.2.246-248). By provoking insatiable desire Cleopatra frustrates the dictates of martial masculinity as advocated by Caesar. Her 'infinite variety' (2.2.246) tests Antony's 'infinite virtue' (4.8.17) and dismantles the Roman *virtus* that fuels Antony's virile sense of masculinity.⁴¹

Antonie's subversion of martial masculinity is less obvious. Unlike her strident Shakespearean counterpart, Sidney's Cleopatra does not tease readers with her 'infinite

⁴⁰ Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing*, p. 47.

⁴¹ Roman *virtus* is the subject of Coppélia Kahn's fascinating study, *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds, and Women* (London: Routledge, 1997). On the relationship between the Latin word *virtus* and masculinity see *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, pp. 41-42. Also see Michael Hattaway, 'Blood is their argument: men of war and soldiers in Shakespeare and others', in *Religion, culture and society in early modern Britain: Essays in honour of Patrick Collinson*, ed. Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 84-101.

variety' and presents herself as a guilt-ridden, apologetic and stoic heroine.⁴² Though this stock-figure of the passive, grieving heroine is easy to dismiss, the text unsettles a monochromatic reading of this stereotype by subverting unchallenged metaphors in Antonie's petulant cries for recognition. For Antonie, Cleopatra represents a deviant and dangerous femininity that is uncontained and works to poison and infect masculinity. He describes her as a 'fair sorceress' offering him 'poisoned cups' (1.82). He claims that Cleopatra's 'guileful semblant doth/ (Wandering in [him]) infect [his] tainted heart' (1.111-12). He is 'tainted' and 'infected': a profound displacement, suggested by 'wandering', has occurred that needs to be reversed. The location of a tragic self, which was earlier identified in the loss of virtue and glory, has now taken a sinister and diseased turn with the recognition of a monstrous gender dislocation. This 'wandering' is fatal to the generation of a tragic and heroic self and Antonie has to work towards arresting it immediately. Accordingly therefore, this displacement is transplanted onto Cleopatra, its instigator and vehicle. This gives Antonie license to 'justly complain' that she 'not constant is, even as [he] constant [is]' (1.141-42). Through this claim Antonie is able to find a state of constancy to extract him out of the state of 'wandering' and reassert his lost masculinity. He reinforces and secures this repossession of his (natural) masculine self by reiterating popular misogyny that

⁴² MacDonald's incisive appraisal of Sidney's translation grounds its heroic representation of Cleopatra in effacing her racial and cultural difference from Rome which mutes 'the historical sense of her distance from Roman values and of her opposition to Roman political strategy'. MacDonald also insists that Cleopatra 'reads her affair with Antony conservatively, as a violation of monogamous standards'. However, in the light of Roman moral standards, Cleopatra's perception of her relationship with Antonie is far more subversive than MacDonald acknowledges. I am therefore hesitant to accept her verdict on Sidney's translation uncritically: '[Sidney's] whitened field of racial reference marshals support for her vision of Cleopatra as a new model of female exemplarity, but consciously draws on the resources of an existing language of color and of femininity in order to do so', p. 43. While I find MacDonald's account of the extent to which the erasure of Cleopatra's racial difference contributes to her heroic subjectivity suasive, the manner in which conventional modes of femininity have been deployed in characterising it merits a closer look ('Cleopatra: Whiteness and Knowledge', pp. 37-39; 38; 43).

transfers his own state of 'wandering' onto the female body which by its very nature is 'wavering':

But ah, by nature women wavering are;
Each moment changing and rechanging minds;
Unwise who, blind in them, thinks loyalty
Ever to find in beauty's company (1.145-48).

Antonie attempts to consolidate his polarisation of masculinity and femininity by employing familiar tropes and metaphors that have popular currency. Such metaphors have an air of proverbial wisdom that deflect scrutiny and demand a tacit acknowledgement of their value. However, the play challenges such metaphors by unsettling them.⁴³ Although Antonie genders Love as feminine, Philostratus genders it as masculine (2.47). Labelling Paris 'fair, false guest, Priam's son' (2.50), Philostratus tacitly identifies Antonie not only as an uninvited intruder and the sole perpetrator of Egypt's destruction but also accuses him of deceit, thus reversing Antonie's accusations towards Cleopatra. This allusion to the Trojan War is in harmony with the play's regular subversion of popular metaphors. Philostratus does not accuse Helen but Paris of being responsible for the war and follows this accusation with an elegy to the warriors who fell in Troy (2.53-56). It is precisely this tragic mantle of a fallen warrior that Antonie covets for himself. While Antonie seeks to absolve himself of all responsibility and presents himself as a passive victim of Cleopatra's schemes, Philostratus' assessment highlights his active participation in his ruin. He unflatteringly

⁴³ Krontiris observes that *Antonie's* 'ideas and attitudes are bold and at times subversive in the context of sixteenth-century ideology and culture. The play interrogates conventional definitions of masculine and feminine virtue, opposes the established association of overt female sexuality with loose morals, and reveals the psychological and sexual complexes of those holding political power' ('Englishing a Purified Cleopatra', p. 100).

recognises Antonie's 'evils' as responsible for him being 'abandoned' and 'betrayed' (2.33-34).

On closer inspection, Antonie's attempt to demonise his love for Cleopatra is riddled with contradictory imagery. He claims that his passion for her was ignited by 'some Fury's torch, Orestes' torch,/ Which sometimes burnt his mother-murdering soul' (1.57-58). Antonie, in viewing masculinity and femininity as binaries and in attempting to reclaim his 'masculine' self from the diseased, effeminate version into which Cleopatra has now transformed it, is in effect murdering the mother or rather the feminine within himself.⁴⁴ Further, in light of the vitriolic diatribe against women that concludes his soliloquy, this veiled reference to the Greek story of Clytemnestra is odd. Clytemnestra, who together with her lover murdered her husband Agamemnon after his return from Troy, was a universally condemned figure in Renaissance literature, representing female inconstancy and iniquity.⁴⁵ Yet as my reading of Jane Fitzalan's *Tragedie of Iphigeneia* shows, her motive for murdering Agamemnon was complex. Antonie's allusion to Clytemnestra's tale is therefore problematic: given the overall purpose of his speech it sits uneasily. He not only does not denounce her but places guilt and blame on Orestes, her son and murderer. It is therefore interesting to note that Antonie's narrative reinforces contemporary perceptions of Cleopatra as a treacherous

⁴⁴ In her analysis of Antony's suicide in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Marshall notes that Antony 'attempts to kill the Cleopatra incorporated as love object within himself...the overwhelming un-Roman element within him that he feels he must eliminate' ('Man of Steel Done Got the Blues', pp. 391-92). The un-Roman or the un-martial element as highlighted by Marshall is indisputably the feminine. However, as I will argue, neither play allows Antony's enterprise of murdering the feminine to succeed.

⁴⁵ For example, in his address to the Duke of Lenox, John Burel damns her as an 'vnhapie hure' who 'so filthilie offend' normative wifely conduct that she deserved her 'wikit end' (*To the richt high, Lodvvik Duke of Lenox* (Edinburgh: R. Waldegrave, 1594), sig. H4v).

seductress. The play, however, powerfully rebuffs this model by ironically fulfilling Antonie's desire for tragic stasis in Cleopatra's 'fixed intent' (2.414).

Cleopatra's reason for accompanying Antonie to Actium is founded on a legitimate suspicion 'lest in my absence Antonie/ Should, leaving me, retake Octavia' (2.229-30). Though she denigrates herself as a 'fearful woman' (2.219) regarding her presence at Actium an 'offence' (2.216), her insistence on being at the battlefront is a moment of intervention and ultimately disruption of the exclusively masculine discourse of war. This initiates a re-examination of the equation between war as a masculine performance and the sole vehicle for male heroism as formulated by Antonie, which continues throughout the play. Cleopatra labels war as 'doubtful' (2.220), thus introducing a sense of deep distrust of any intrinsic value associated with martial triumph.

4. *'Thou only Cleopatra triumph hast': Revising Martial Masculinity*

Roman (male) hegemony in *Antony and Cleopatra* constructs martial masculinity as a collective identity where there is no space for exercising individual agency. Levine observes how Antony is 'the embodiment of the military ideal itself'.⁴⁶ He is vital as the ensign of martial ethos but as an individual is wholly dispensable. In his analysis of representations of soldiers in early modern literature, Michael Hattaway makes a related point. He stresses that though the Renaissance is customarily celebrated as an

⁴⁶ Levine also notes how *Antony and Cleopatra* depicts 'a world where masculinity exists only as a highly codified performance, and it presents the moment of crisis in which that performance breaks down'. Her study concludes that 'such a performance has none of the liberating associations we have come to identify with performative notions of gender, but is itself highly codified, culturally rigid, externally defined' (*Men in Women's Clothing*, pp. 47; 46; 55).

‘age of the individual’, ‘it is also important to realise that it is the age of the nation-state in which the interests of the individual needed to be subordinated to those of the polis or at least those of the group’.⁴⁷ Hattaway posits this as one of the reasons why the ‘code of valour’, practised by the ‘military caste’, came under scrutiny by Shakespeare. Hattaway focuses primarily on Shakespeare’s history plays and does not consider *Antony and Cleopatra*.⁴⁸ Yet it is quite possible that the dissatisfaction with martial masculinity that the play voices may indeed have its source in the early modern paradox outlined by Hattaway. Antony’s interests are subordinated to Roman values and his death ensures the supremacy of cultural currency over the individual. Antony is never as celebrated as he is after his death. Antony’s death, in Vanhoutte’s analysis, ‘allows the Romans to restore the link between Antony’s “great property” and Antony, and thus to restore Antony to his previous position as the paragonal [*sic*] Roman soldier’.⁴⁹ Adelman proposes a similar argument: ‘in the scarcity that rules [Rome’s] emotional economy, it must first establish, and then destroy, its legendary fathers’.⁵⁰

The divide between the martial code of masculinity that Antony is expected to endorse to validate his function in Roman discourse and his individual self is so sharp that characters easily distinguish between the two. This conflict is mapped in the very first scene through Philo’s observation: ‘Sir, sometimes, when he is not Antony,/ He comes too short of that great property/ Which still should go with Antony’ (1.1.58-60). The

⁴⁷ Hattaway, ‘Blood is their argument’, p. 86.

⁴⁸ Hattaway has an interesting approach and locates the dissatisfaction with the ‘code of valour’ in socio-economic factors. He offers low salaries, soldiers’ dissatisfaction with the social status that was accorded to them, loss in the old values of chivalry and honour, and an evolution in military equipment that led to a decline in the practice of warfare, as the reasons for this dissatisfaction. My focus is on the overbearing gender constructions in the code of martial masculinity generating anxiety and dissidence.

⁴⁹ Vanhoutte, ‘Suicide and Sovereignty’, p. 172.

⁵⁰ Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*, p. 183.

‘great property’ is the Roman martial discourse, and though Antony has agreed to fulfil its demands, he is not allowed to rewrite its principles. The demands of being the metonymic vessel for Rome’s martial masculinity do not permit Antony to focus on anything beyond ‘the files and musters of the war’ (1.1.3). When Philo invites Demetrius and the audience alike to ‘behold and see’ (1.1.13) the disjunction between the roles that Antony is expected to perform and the one he chooses to play in Egypt, he brings to the surface a crucial element of the tragedy. Octavia is suggested as the ‘unslipping knot’ (2.2.134) that will prevent Antony’s wandering and fetter him to his ‘office and devotion’ (1.1.5). She will act as the ‘staunch hoop’ (2.2.122) that will ensure that Antony’s ‘great property’ (1.1.59) assists Rome’s ‘great designs’ (2.2.157). However, in choosing Cleopatra over Octavia, Antony exercises his individual agency, which his functional presence in the Roman martial discourse does not allow. Antony, as Enobarbus notes, in marrying Octavia has ‘married but his occasion here’ (2.6.133). One of the ways in which the OED defines ‘occasion’ is as ‘something that a person needs to do; necessary business; a matter, a piece of business, a business engagement’ (OED, ‘occasion, n.1’, 10a), thus suggesting a degree of compulsion associated with the act. The ‘here’ in Enobarbus’ remark refers to Antony’s location in the Roman discourse, which forces upon him an ‘occasion’ to perform. This ‘here’ contrasts sharply with Antony’s ‘here’ in his triumphant claim for a personal space in Egypt: ‘Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch/ Of the ranged empire fall! Here’s my space! (1.1.34-35)

Egypt in *Antony and Cleopatra* serves a dual purpose of being both a distinct geographical location and a discursive field that offers itself as an alternative to Rome.

In this discursive arena, things are granted space to be themselves: a crocodile is ‘shaped...like itself’ (2.7.42) and on Lepidus’ enquiry after its colour, Antony replies simply with ‘[o]f its own colour too’ (2.7.48). Caesar’s uncertainty over and dissatisfaction with Antony’s response – ‘Will this description satisfy [Lepidus]?’ (2.7.51) – reveal that Roman martial discourse believes in asserting its definitive power by restricting things and individuals within the parameters of the descriptors it recognises. Antony’s claim – ‘Here’s my space!’ – indicates how the geographical distance between Rome and Egypt bolsters the ideological distance between Egyptian and Roman discourses. In a powerful self-reflexive moment, reinforced by the verbal cue ‘here’, Antony is able to see the divide between his two separate selves, one struggling to practise autonomy and the other to maintain the Roman enterprise of martial masculinity: ‘Here I am Antony,/ Yet cannot hold this visible shape’ (4.14.13-14). This indeterminacy between the two selves is at the heart of Antony’s tragedy; his botched suicide takes this indeterminacy to farcical heights.⁵¹

Cleopatra capitalises on the conflicting impulses in Antony’s suicide and aptly remarks, ‘O withered is the garland of the war,/ The soldier’s pole is fallen...(4.15.66-67). The withered garland of the war recalls Sidney’s ‘barren bays’ and the suggestive ‘fallen pole’ encapsulates the loss of masculinity founded singularly upon martial values. In her revision of martial masculinity Shakespeare’s Cleopatra rejects the model based on

⁵¹ Marshall’s essay offers an interesting psychoanalytical reading of Antony’s character and examination of the ‘experiential effect of Antony’s dramatized fragmentation’ (‘Man of Steel Done Got the Blues’, p. 390). For Vanhoutte, Antony’s suicide is a momentary assertion of sovereignty ‘within the context of his broader struggle to regain possession of his own body’. She concludes that the suicide was *but* a ‘moment of unfettered sovereignty’ that ultimately fails (‘Suicide and Sovereignty’, p. 173). In an atypical look at Antony’s suicide Kahn defends it as a success. Though this reading strengthens her analysis of the ‘troubled partnership of Antony and Caesar’, it relegates Cleopatra to the margins (*Roman Shakespeare*, pp. 110-143).

scarcity and sterility. She instead uses her prodigal imagination to construct an alternative martial masculinity entrenched in fecundity, a feminine trait ironically associated with her in the play: 'For his bounty,/ There was no winter in't; an autumn it was/ That grew the more by reaping' (5.2.85-87). Antony's soldier-self as constructed by Cleopatra is able to rise above the confining discourse of martial masculinity. Cleopatra, in an image akin to Garrard's 'bird', Caesar's 'stag' and Techelles' 'lion', casts the martial body as the body-natural of a 'dolphin': 'His delights/ Were dolphin-like: they showed his back above/ The element they lived in' (5.2.87-89). Finally, she transforms the conceited soldier, who, notwithstanding his claim of kingdoms as clay, has never been depicted in a moment of triumph, into the invincible warrior that martial masculinity continually seeks to produce and would unhesitatingly eulogize: 'In his livery/ Walked crowns and crownets; realms and islands were/ As plates dropped from his pockets'⁵² (5.2.89-91).

In contrast to Antony, Cleopatra is acutely aware of gendered identity as a social construct and she manoeuvres between compelling external forces and her own desire to form an autonomous self. In *Antonie* this struggle surfaces in her explanation to Charmion, justifying her 'fixed intent' of remaining steadfast to Antonie even in his ruin: 'Help, or help not, such must, such ought I prove' (2.3.12). Cleopatra recognises

⁵² For Barton, like most critics, Cleopatra's suicide 'redeems the bungled and clumsy nature of Antony's death' (*Essays, Mainly Shakespearean*, p. 133). I do not wish to discount the force of Cleopatra's suicide in delivering the definitive tragic voice in both the plays. However, Antony's clumsy death is also redeemed through Cleopatra's re-characterization of martial masculinity as discussed above. In her analysis of Cleopatra's 'triumphant' suicide, Adelman remarks, 'her triumph turns crucially on her capacity not to destroy but to recreate Antony, remaking him from her own imaginative amplitude'. Adelman reinforces her argument by detecting similar elements in the Isis-Osiris myth, and concludes that Antony's masculinity 'is finally founded on the incorporation of the female' (*Suffocating Mothers*, pp. 165; 177; 183-84; 190). Kay Stanton also examines the Isis-Osiris myth in her examination of how the play goes 'beneath and beyond the phallogenic model of Aristotle for a gynogenic schema with a female tragic hero climaxing on top' ('Prostitute Queen', p. 94).

the possibility of an eventual ‘after-livers...report’ (2.387) and is unwilling to give up her right to create the narrative of her life. She is afraid of posterity vilifying her if she abandons Antonie: ‘Not light, inconstant, faithless should I be,/ But vile, forsworn, of treacherous cruelty’ (2.347-48). Cleopatra recognises that the power of definition lies in the hands of men when she imagines them denigrating her. By anticipating their reactions and determinedly defying them, she robs men of this power.

Cleopatra, unlike Antonie, takes full responsibility for what happens at Actium and accepts more than her share of blame. On Eras’ questioning ‘Are you therefore cause of [Antonie’s] overthrow?’ Cleopatra’s answer is firm: ‘I am sole cause. I did it, only I’ (2.211-12). It is important for Cleopatra to assert some form of agency even if it is that of a penitent woman, to grasp at the chance to enter the exclusively male discourse of martial masculinity. It is Cleopatra who first summarises the events at Actium. Save for the Argument written as a glossary by Mary Sidney, the dramatic text up to this point delivers only Antonie’s vehement suspicions and Egyptian lamentations. Cleopatra’s speech, unlike Antonie’s, provides factual details and is controlled, direct and purposeful; this motivates readers’ confidence and trust in her.

I suggest that Cleopatra through and by the act of complaint, transgresses and appropriates the masculine power of definition. Developing on James Scott’s idea of a ‘hidden transcript’, Patricia Demers recognises a ‘hidden transcript’ in ‘acts as complaints, curse and gossip’ that enables female authorship, ‘disobedience and

transgression'.⁵³ Injured at Antonie's unfounded suspicions, Cleopatra seeks to recover her merit: 'And did'st thou then suppose my royal heart/ Had hatched, thee to ensnare, a faithless love?' (1.163-64). Through playing the role of a constant yet misunderstood beloved, Cleopatra creates a space to assert her own subjectivity:

Cleopatra. My only end, my only duty is.

Eras. Your duty must upon some good be founded!

Cleopatra. On virtue it, the only good is grounded.

Eras. What is that virtue?

Cleopatra. That which us beseems. (2.406-409)

Cleopatra recognises the social trappings that curb her movements and bind her to perform a 'duty' that she 'ought' to adhere to. She negotiates between her limited options to qualify her action as that 'which [her] beseems'. As long as she is playing the stock-figure of a passive female sacrificial self she deflects censure even as she surreptitiously opens up possibilities for subversion.

There is a great tension in *Antonie* between competing and conflicting voices which work against accomplishing the tragic narrative that the title anticipates. Artistically, the characterisation of Cleopatra is a great challenge. She has to acquit herself of Antonie's accusations – and in the process undo popular perceptions – by professing her love and loyalty in unequivocal terms. This, however, will collapse the tragic structure that Antonie has built for himself, which rests on her infidelity and fraudulence, and further will transfer tragic status on to her. She must therefore create a

⁵³ Patricia Demers, *Women's Writing in English: Early Modern England* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2005), p. 26. For James Scott's theory of public versus hidden transcript see *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

tragic narrative that will simultaneously celebrate them both. This requires a cautious assertion of her subjectivity and agency which also enables her to participate in and revise the discourse of martial masculinity from which she was excluded.

Cleopatra also has to combat the accusation of her insatiable political aspirations. Antonie remarks: 'Too wise a head she wears,/ Too much inflamed with greatness, evermore/ Gaping for our great empire's government' (3.20-22). The word 'gaping' can be read as an allusion to the female anatomy. In a manner similar to sexual congress where the penis is enveloped by the vagina, Cleopatra's femininity overwhelms Antonie's masculinity. This also reveals how Antonie has conflated Cleopatra's 'frank sexuality' with her political aims.⁵⁴ Men in the play unvaryingly perceive Cleopatra's beauty as a tool to acquire political advantage and either expect or wish her to utilize it in a manner that fits their perceptions. Caesar's objections to Antonie's love for Cleopatra are grounded as much in the political disadvantage it presents to Rome as in the disdain for his sister Octavia: 'Never Rome more injuries received...than Antonie's fond love to it hath done' (4.96-99). Diomedes hopes:

[I]f her tears
She would convert into her loving charms,
To make a conquest of the conqueror...
She should us safety from these ills procure,
Her crown to her, and to her race assure. (2.499-504)

⁵⁴ Fitz, 'Egyptian Queens', p. 303. Norland notes that Sidney emphasises Cleopatra's political authority and royalty in her translation (*Neoclassical Tragedy in Elizabethan England*, pp. 209-11). Jocelyn Catty makes a similar point ('Translation and Intervention: Jane Lumley and Mary Sidney' in *Writing Rape, Writing Women in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan: 2011), pp. 134-152; 146-47).

'Conquest of the conqueror' is strikingly similar to Antonie's 'thou only triumphed hast'. Martial triumph can be very easily unsettled by deviant female sexuality. Antonie is convinced that he sees Cleopatra 'practise with Caesar, and to him transport [Antonie's] flame, her love' (3.17-18). Caesar desires to 'wholly get/ Into [his] hands her treasure and herself' (4.362-63). Cleopatra's beauty is a treasure in itself and men's desire to possess it 'wholly' indicates their agenda to control both the object and its representations.

The battle at Actium thus emerges not solely as a site for contesting or asserting martial masculinity. It is disrupted not only by the literal female presence of Cleopatra but is fought to resolve conflicting ideas of femininity. Mary Sidney in her Argument clearly recognises the cause of war as Antonie 'again falling to his former love without any regard of his virtuous wife Octavia, by whom nevertheless he had excellent children. This occasion Octavius took of taking arms against him, and preparing a mighty fleet encountered him at Actium' (p. 19). Elsewhere in the play Caesar identifies his motive for waging war against Antonie as he 'longer could not bear/ [his] sister's wrong [that Antonie] did so ill entreat' (4.35-36). Thus the battle at Actium ceases to be merely between Caesar and Antonie; it rather develops into a battle over Octavia and Cleopatra and thus recalls some of Trojan parallels discussed earlier. The peculiarities of the politics behind gender constructions emerge in a stark light here. The ostensible performance of masculinity hides a deeper agenda, which is to access exclusive rights

to lay down the norms of femininity. Caesar's desire to have Cleopatra accompany his triumphant procession at Rome thus achieves a new meaning.⁵⁵

Although the most exotic ware on display, Cleopatra is more than one of the spoils of war. She represents the force of that deviant femininity that overwhelmed Caesar's predecessor, which he has now defeated to script his version of femininity as inert, passive and contained, epitomised in the eternal suffering of Octavia. Cleopatra's resistance is powerful given her available options. In *Antonie* she forges a tragic self for both herself and Antonie while she refuses to reproduce Caesar's triumphant masculinity by not complying with his desire to mark his procession in Rome. She instead constructs her own version of idealised masculinity that rests on the incorporation rather than the exclusion of femininity. Shakespeare's Cleopatra foresees 'Some squeaking Cleopatra boy [her] greatness/ I'th' posture of a whore' (5.2.218-219). This extraordinary use of the word 'boy' as a verb suggests that Cleopatra is aware of how signifiers of gender are imposed upon the body that result in the formation of a particular 'posture'. Pierre Bourdieu names this process as the 'somatization of the relation of domination', the training the body receives through which arbitrary constructs of gender are given the appearance of the natural.⁵⁶ Cleopatra is alert to this insidious element of Caesar's project to parade her in Rome and sedulously frustrates it.

⁵⁵ Elizabeth A. Foyster notes how in Early Modern England, the 'key to male power...was thought to be sexual control over women' (*Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (London: Longman, 1999), p. 4).

⁵⁶ Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, p. 56.

This refusal to reproduce Caesar's triumphant masculinity is also reflected in Cleopatra's suicide in *Antony and Cleopatra*. With characteristic ambiguity she pledges to follow Antony 'after the high Roman fashion' (4.15.91).⁵⁷ As discussed above Antony's suicide is hardly Roman and he ends up unintentionally mocking the very pattern he seeks to validate. Cleopatra on the other hand, as I have argued, routinely challenges Rome's 'graver business' (2.1.120) with its parodic counterpart. Her resolve to follow the 'high Roman fashion' notwithstanding (4.15.91, emphasis mine), Cleopatra in her suicide elaborates on everything despicable and base about Rome, which arouses her revulsion: 'mechanic slaves' (5.2.208), 'saucy lictors' (5.2.213) and the 'shouting varletry' (5.2.55). Her manner of suicide could scarcely be less Roman for neither Juliet's 'happy dagger' nor the sword Philippian that Cleopatra 'robbed' from Antony makes its appearance. Suicide maybe a form to exhibit how 'a Roman by a Roman/ [is] valiantly vanquished' (4.15.59-60) but by performing the deed on her own terms, Cleopatra confounds the very discourse she apes. Unlike the sword 'stained with [Antony's] most noble blood' (5.1.26), Caesar never gets to see the instrument of Cleopatra's suicide. Indeed, the manner of Cleopatra's death is a source of mystery to the assembled of Roman warriors. Caesar is unable to observe a bleeding or a swollen corpse and remarks how Cleopatra 'looks like sleep' (5.2.346). He can only conjecture her manner of death: 'Most probable/ That so she died' (5.2.352-353). Yet Cleopatra's suicide – simultaneously Roman and un-Roman – levels her with Rome's purposes (5.2.335) and leads Caesar to allow her to 'catch another Antony' (5.2.346). Through pursuing 'conclusions infinite' (5.2.354), Cleopatra frustrates Caesar's victory at

⁵⁷ Stanton views Cleopatra's emulating the 'high Roman fashion' in a different manner. She writes, '[i]n choosing the male-heroic pattern for death, Cleopatra demonstrates that she has completely assumed, and is justified in being granted, full heroic status on the male model' ('Prostitute Queen', pp. 100-101).

Actium to facilitate a conclusive triumph. In having caught or rather captured the limitations of Roman martial values embodied by Antony, Cleopatra succeeds as the ‘wrangling queen’ (1.1.49) and allows Rome little joy in its victory. It is apt therefore that instead of a jubilant procession, Caesar’s victorious army ‘shall in solemn show attend [the] funeral’ (5.2.363).

Antonie dramatises how in contrast to the eponymous character, Cleopatra controls the meanings of her suicide. Notwithstanding her modest claim – ‘Nor praise, nor glory in my cares are set’ (2.404) – she rewrites male perceptions of her beauty and her political ambition to create a space and achieve validity for her narrative. She directs her handmaidens to ‘outrage [their] face[s]’ and wonders ‘why should [they] seek/ ...[her] beauties more to keep?’ (5.197-98). She resigns to herself ‘losing [her] realm, losing [her] liberty’ in prioritising her love for Antonie over her duties as a monarch (2.169). The veil of domesticity that Cleopatra adopts may be read as an attempt to pacify male anxieties over a woman’s role in the domain of politics, yet it is this retreat that allows her to create an alternate version of masculinity and thus accomplish her ‘just revenge’. Mary Ellen Lamb examines how participation in the *ars moriendi* tradition opened a space for legitimate female expression in the Renaissance where ‘authorship [is] a form of mourning’.⁵⁸ The ‘art of dying’ ‘provided a means of heroism accessible to Renaissance women through their constancy to their husbands, and second, this heroics of constancy was also able to serve as a mask for anger simultaneously elicited and

⁵⁸ Mary Ellen Lamb, ‘The Countess of Pembroke and the Art of Dying’, in *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), pp. 115-41; 116. Levine in her examination of *Antony and Cleopatra* makes a similar observation about Shakespeare’s Cleopatra. She writes, ‘in performing her death, [Cleopatra] creates a self’, *Men in Women’s Clothing*, p. 71.

denied'.⁵⁹ In the light of his marriage to Octavia, Cleopatra's passion for Antonie is rebuked for being 'scarce wifely' (2.355) yet she insists on being identified as his wife: 'Wife, kindhearted, I' (2.320). This enables Cleopatra to deny the existence of a dangerous sexuality, which will be fatal to her narrative, simultaneously allowing her to participate in a discourse of female heroism. The elegiac 'mask for anger' grants her the opportunity to voice the play's impatience with gendered behaviour. I concur with Mimi Dixon who reads this "saving stereotype of female heroism" in the following manner:

Though this "saving stereotype of female heroism" is easily dismissed, its project is a different one; it works out the woman's need to become visible as a subject, to *be* recognised, to have her sacrifices recognised *as heroic actions*, as choices, not reflexes, and brings her subjective experience and her culturally submerged knowledge to center stage.⁶⁰

Read in the light of Dixon's analysis, Cleopatra's claim, 'I am with thee', is profoundly subversive for it works against Antonie's desire to reclaim a purely masculine self premised on martial tenets. He might be the ostensible subject of the tragedy *Antonie* but he is neither going to write it himself nor realise a tragic self on his own terms. Cleopatra compounds the above claim by generating a new form of selfhood where Antonie and herself are inextricably linked: 'He is my selfe' (2.352). She uses this form of selfhood as a tool to script their tragedy.⁶¹ Antonie's desire for a 'noble death' (3.375) achieved through a final 'courageous act' (3.379) expresses his inability to

⁵⁹ Lamb, 'The Countess of Pembroke and the Art of Dying', p. 115.

⁶⁰ Dixon, 'Looking at Cleopatra', p. 85 (original italics).

⁶¹ Strangely Dixon does not apply her own theory on 'saving stereotype of female heroism' and instead reads this as: 'despite this moment of conscious control and decision making, [Cleopatra allows] her "selfe" [to] essentially dissolv[e] into Antony' ('Looking at Cleopatra', p. 78). I, on the contrary, read it as a powerful appropriation of the warrior-body and its constituent martial masculinity that allows Cleopatra to recreate them.

identify the forces at work. His botched suicide is more of a caricature than a realisation of his desire for a 'glorious death' (3.376). At one level, Antonie works against the delivery of tragic meaning and constantly undercuts the defining female tragic voice of Cleopatra.

Nor is Antonie the only textual opposition that Cleopatra faces. Directus' attempts to author a tragic narrative for Antonie are undermined by Caesar's insincere display of grief, for Caesar's real intentions are revealed just before his arrival: 'We must with blood mark this our victory,/ For just example to all memory./ Murder we must, until not one we leave' (4.152-54). Caesar interrupts Directus' narrative and frustrates the tragic impetus that it attempts to achieve, leading Directus to remark: 'What does thou more attend!' (4.242). Further, Caesar is less than sympathetic to Antonie's 'unchaste love of this Egyptian' (4.349). It is entirely appropriate, therefore, that the ultimate act of the play must unmistakably belong to Cleopatra without the presence of oppositional voices or the chorus so the title's promised tragedy can at last be delivered.

Not only does Cleopatra literally haul Antonie's body up to her tomb, she also elevates him to a tragic status through her narrative. Directus' description of Cleopatra's physical labour as she lifts Antonie into her tomb is stark:

With stooping head, and body downward bent,
Enlaced her in the cord, and with all force
This life-dead man courageously upraised.
The blood with pain into her face did flow,
Her sinews stiff, her self did breathless grow. (4.301-305)

This, arguably, is the visceral equivalent of the symbolic opposition of competing authorial voices Cleopatra resists to create a tragic self for both herself and Antonie. Moreover, in this process she creates a remarkable female sphere that revises martial masculinity as she enfolds Antonie's corpse in what is constantly identified in the play as '*her* tomb' (emphasis mine). Surrounded only by her handmaidens, Eras and Charmion, she begins to weave her narrative to compensate for her abrasive presence at Actium.

Cleopatra dismisses the conventional tragic tropes of Niobe and Phaeton's sisters as inadequate (5.95, 5.105). What is interesting in her choice of these two Greek myths is their common factor of transgression and subversion. Niobe arrogantly asserted the supremacy of her numerous progeny over Lito, mother of Apollo and Artemis, and in retribution the Gods murdered her children, driving her to inconsolable grief. Phaeton, son of the sun god Phoebus, stubbornly demanded to drive his father's chariot and unable to control it, fell into the Padus river and died. His sisters grieved over their brother's untimely demise and were transformed into poplar trees. While Niobe is a transgressive woman, Phaeton's sisters mourn a transgressive man. Cleopatra implicitly identifies herself and Antonie as transgressors and utilises love's potential for subversion – what Philostratus characterises as 'insolent, blind, lawless, orderless' (2.59) – to her advantage. Although she is playing the part of a bereaved beloved, she has seized the masculine authority to define events, represented in the play by Antonie, Caesar and Directus to assert the primacy of her own narrative; a primacy which is consolidated in the text by literally giving her the final word. Thus, Mary Sidney's

heroine is not the sobbing, guilt-stricken heroine she seems, and her plaintive lament encodes a revisionist approach.⁶²

Curiously, Cleopatra's revisionist approach is enabled by the discourse of martial masculinity itself. In *Antonie* the image of Roman worship of a female deity of war, Bellona (3.264, 4.10), anticipates the epithet that Shakespeare bestows on another tragic hero, Macbeth: 'Bellona's bridegroom' (1.2.54). This conflation of erotic and martial metaphors sits uncomfortably with martial masculinity's overall agenda of keeping the feminine at bay. In *Antony and Cleopatra* Antony's plea to his soldiers to support his military campaign against Caesar strangely interweaves martial loyalty with marital fidelity, 'Mine honest friends,/ I turn you not away, but, like a master/ Married to your good service, stay till death' (4.2.29-31). A similar exchange marks the shift of Theridamas' loyalty from Mycetes to Tamburlaine. Seduced by Tamburlaine's extravagant rhetoric, Theridamas surrenders himself and offers his services in a language that oddly mirrors marriage vows:

Won with thy words and conquered with thy looks,
I yield myself, my men, and horse to thee,
To be partaker of thy good or ill
As long as life maintains Theridamas. (1.2.228-231)

⁶² Raber interprets these lines in an interesting, albeit slightly different, manner. She too detects an appropriation of agency in Cleopatra's willingness to plead guilty and argues that '[Cleopatra] asserts a kind of agency here; the fact that it can only take the form of excessive self-blame is not a mark of the text's failure (to give us, for instance, an unapologetically powerful woman), but of the interaction of Cleopatra's roles as queen and wife. As queen, she is wholly responsible for the good of her country; as wife, she is responsible for her husband's felicity and content. The two roles conflict, ideologically and experientially. A woman can, if she wishes, be a bad queen, but a good wife, or a good queen and a bad wife. Cleopatra's insistent, "I...only I" seems, if read this way, to register the loneliness of the woman who challenges this dichotomy' ('Domestic Drama', pp. 63-64).

However, fidelity to martial vows overrides the marital ones. Indeed, the first thing that Antony says to Octavia after their marriage is solemnised is, ‘The world and my great office will sometimes/ Divide me from your bosom’ (2.3.1-2). Levine comments that Octavia is ‘a role, a function, Caesar’s sister, Antony’s wife [and is] finally no inherent thing, but simply whatever Caesar’s thoughts constitute her as’.⁶³ Caesar’s thoughts do not go beyond conceiving Octavia as ‘the cement of...love’ (3.2.30) between Antony and himself, the cement that will re-forge the homosocial bond of martial masculinity. Further, Octavia’s marriage with Antony is a travesty of the companionate vision of matrimony, which was beginning to emerge in seventeenth century England.⁶⁴ However, if martial masculinity so explicitly employs marital vocabulary to consolidate itself, it cannot deny female participation. Octavia, whose token presence was to consolidate Antony’s martial masculinity and not to expect a domestic life with him, is a victim of this inexorable gender-exclusive construction of masculinity. Antony has doubly transgressed his husbandly duties as formulated by martial discourse in forsaking both Octavia and his troops for Cleopatra. If Octavia is the ‘unslipping knot’ (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 2.2.134) that was meant to tie Antony to the tenets of martial masculinity, Cleopatra is the agent of liberation who would free him from its ‘hold’ (*Antonie*, 1.129). In addressing him as ‘husband’ (5.2.286) before dying, Shakespeare’s Cleopatra claims the marital over the martial, asserts a visible female

⁶³ Levine, *Men in Women’s Clothing*, p. 62.

⁶⁴ Studying the primacy accorded to the matrimony following the Reformation, Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster observe how ‘the *Book of Common Prayer* also gave greater priority to companionship as a reason for marrying’ (‘Childless Men in early modern England’, in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster, eds. *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) pp. 158-83; 164). Breitenberg also comments on the ‘idea of marriage as a companionate partnership characterized by mutual respect’ and its impact on gender relations (*Anxious masculinity in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge: University Press, 1996), p. 25).

presence, and thus makes her subversion of martial masculinity complete. This assertion achieves heroic stature for both herself and Antony.⁶⁵

Mary Sidney's *Cleopatra* goes even further and completely discards the martial to favour the marital.⁶⁶ She refuses Charmion's suggestions that she should commemorate a martial image of Antonie by eulogizing 'the horror of his fights' (2.372). She also dismisses the idea of 'yearly plays to his praise institute', which will declaim 'his combat and courageous acts' (2.377-78). Cleopatra recognises the discourse of martial masculinity founded on the principles of exclusion and sheer military prowess as insufficient and consequently rejects it. She furnishes a domesticated image of Antonie by highlighting their 'holy marriage, and the tender ruth/ Of [their] dear babes, knot of [their] amity' (5.155-56). This domestication of Antonie is strengthened by Cleopatra's interaction with their children, which is wholly absent in Shakespeare's account. Cleopatra does not represent Antonie as a fallen warrior with a history of conquests and martial triumphs, for that would challenge the articulacy of the female voice. She instead casts him, and in the process herself, as a tragic lover and situates their tragic selves in an undisputed female narrative that interrogates and subverts notions of masculinity authored solely by men. It is here and not in the monstrous gender-inversion envisaged by Antonie that 'Thou only Cleopatra triumph hast' (1.31).

⁶⁵ This chapter cannot fully accommodate the concept of the female tragic hero that Cleopatra gives birth to. For a full discussion on the subject see Fitz, 'Egyptian Queen', Dixon, 'Looking at Cleopatra', and Stanton, 'Prostitute Queen'.

⁶⁶ Raber argues that through her translation of Garnier's play Sidney 'attempted to claim as a source of authority and agency the domestic domain she ruled as partner in an aristocratic marriage, and which she exploited on the behalf of herself and her ambitious, politically astute, and poetically gifted family' ('Domestic Drama', p. 52).

AFTERWORD

Fashioning Masculinity was undertaken as an attempt to bridge the perplexing gulf that exists between early modern studies on masculinity wherein women writers are conspicuously absent, and feminist scholarship that often continues to celebrate women's literary endeavours within the terms of women's interests or the self-positioning of the female voice. This is despite the fact that many early modern women writers engage with questions of masculinity. In the process of asking how early modern women framed questions of manhood, this thesis has fashioned a portable critical apparatus for the study of female and male writers as they participate in and contribute to particular discourses of manhood that can be applied to investigations of masculinity in other literary periods.

The conviction that masculinities and femininities are developed, realised, expressed, and understood in conjunction has been at the heart of this thesis. At one level, therefore, *Fashioning Masculinity* is as much about early modern femininity as it is about masculinity. Further, this thesis has studied the plural and protean way in which early modern bodies were understood. The fluid interplay between the Queen's two bodies, the comic confusions of *Galatea*, and the inexorable teleology that regiments martial bodies all reflect modes of representation of the body that are distinctly early modern. Concomitantly, *Fashioning Masculinity* has highlighted the complex interaction between the categories of sex and gender and argued that the performance of gender constitutes rather than emanates from sexual difference.

This thesis started due to embarrassingly self-indulgent reasons. I had never studied the writings of Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Sidney during the course of my taught

undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. (I only discovered Jane Fitzalan during the course of my research.) Indeed, apart from Aphra Behn, no early modern women writer made it onto the reading lists. A natural curiosity augmented by a mortifying sense of ignorance about women's writings of the period determined my choice to study them. Over the four years of my research I have often come across scholars who have greeted my project with a degree of astonishment, exclaiming with incredulity that they do not know of any women writers who flourished in this period. Admittedly, most of these remarks were made by scholars whose research interests lie beyond the Renaissance. It is imperative to realise that the study of early modern women writers is not an instance of critical Quixoticism but is crucial to our appreciation of the period's literary and cultural sensibilities. One of the ways in which this can be realised is by materially changing our current pedagogical practices and ensuring that these writers are not limited to isolated and infrequent discussions but are integrated with the enduring emphasis on their canonical male counterparts.

In her introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, Laura Knoppers rejoices in the inclusion of writings by women in anthologies and their gradual emergence in undergraduate teaching.¹ Susanne Woods, however, draws attention to the relative literary value accorded to texts that underpins pedagogical decisions.² In my limited experience of teaching the early modern period I have tried to make undergraduates question the very notion of this value judgment and how it is

¹ Laura Lunger Knoppers, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 5.

² Susanne Woods, 'But Is It Any Good? The Value of Teaching Early Modern Writers', in *Structures and Subjectivities: Attending to Early Modern Women*, ed. Joan E. Hartman and Adele Seeff (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007), pp. 324-40.

pronounced. I introduce the subject of women writers by circulating a sheet with one of Salome's speeches in Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Miriam* and one of Emilia's from William Shakespeare's *Othello*. Both speeches are tempestuous and impassioned declarations of wifely unhappiness and accompanying quests for liberation and equality, articulated in provocative terms. Salome declaims:

If he to me did bear as earnest hate
As I to him, for him there were an ease:
A separating bill might free his fate
From such a yoke that did so much displease.
Why should such privilege to man be given
Or given to them, why barred from women then?
Are men, than we, in greater grace in heaven,
Or cannot women hate as well as men?
I'll be the custom-breaker, and begin
To show my sex the way to freedom's door.³

Emilia's feisty words bear a remarkable affinity to Salome's:

Let husbands know
Their wives have sense like them: they see, and smell,
And have their palates both for sweet and sour
As husbands have. What is it that they do
When they change us for others? Is it sport?
I think it is. And doth affection breed it?
I think it doth. Is't frailty that thus errs?
It is so too. And have not we affections?
Desires for sport? and frailty as men have?
Then let them use us well: else let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instructs us so.⁴

Crucially, however, I distribute these speeches without the names of the dramatists or the texts from which they have been excerpted. I let my students know that one of them has been written by a woman and the other by a man. I then invite them to vote which one is which and the reasons behind their verdict. The students are usually evenly

³ Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Miriam in Renaissance Drama by Women*, ed. S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London: Routledge, 1996), 1.301-10.

⁴ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2001), 4.3.92-102.

divided between those who have guessed it correctly and those who have not. What is interesting is the congruence of the principles that informs the decision of these two groups, despite their contrasting judgments. Among other ‘aesthetic’ components, students are inclined to detect a male propensity to exaggerate certain features of female temper – garrulousness, hyperbole, opinions formulated and delivered through bombastic rhetoric – for farcical value in these excerpts. The terms that are employed by students in these discussions are themselves gendered and stereotypical, and very revealing: ‘male representations’ and ‘female anger’. The revelation of the names of the dramatists and the accompanying texts is usually greeted with a general commotion with those who guessed it correctly feeling smug and those who did not, driven by the need to retract the firmness of their decision, exclaiming, ‘I was thinking the same initially but then I was not quite sure’.

The purpose of the exercise is to make students reflect on whether there is an essential difference between the ways in which women and men write, whether one has more literary merit than the other (or ‘value’ as Woods puts it) and whether there is a convenient formula that helps us determine this. Further, I use it to prompt the inevitable enquiry into the need and reasons behind formulating the category of ‘early modern women writers’. I complicate this discussion by bringing into focus the current practice of promoting a film as a ‘chick-flick’. The analogy may not be foolproof but it does urge the students to think whether this category, perhaps necessary for marketing purposes, animates a certain value judgment and excites a degree of bias that is independent of the film itself. I make students reflect whether sentiments as inspired by the gendered division in the film industry and other cultural loci are potentially

transplanted on to their reading experience and whether they approach a female-authored text with a certain set of expectations and beliefs. Even as I make the students question the necessity of creating a literary category on the basis of the sex of the author, I make them aware of the historical imperatives – the recovery and recognition of these texts –that led to its conception. Simultaneously, I alert the students to the undeniable differences in the social, cultural, and material conditions that set women writers of the Renaissance apart from their male coevals.

The question should not be of whether one mode of writing has more literary merit or is more worthy of being included in the canon and the curriculum than the other. An investigation fuelled by the question ‘But is it any good?’ leads to the creation of another binary that may not necessarily be articulated in gendered terms (in itself debatable as the aesthetic judgments pronounced by my students were premised on a gendered axis) but is precisely the mode of thinking that I feel the need to challenge. Curricula should be populated by a diverse range of texts, recognised as products of particular social and cultural moments and variously engaging with this historical specificity. This approach is reflected in the very manner in which I print the extracts from *Othello* and *Tragedy of Miriam* out. They are not placed on a vertical axis, with one positioned above the other, but are instead printed double-faced on the same sheet, presented as not necessarily two sides of the same coin but rather two perspectives, converging and diverging at various moments, on the same subject. We need to study and research men and women in the processes of sexed exchange even as we teach them as populating the same historical moments and processes in a diverse variety of ways.

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