

FORGING MASCULINITIES: ARMOUR AND THE
FASHIONING OF IDENTITY IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

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ABSTRACT

Prior scholarly examinations of armour have mainly been confined to discussions of provenance, technological developments and advances in design. Armour has also been largely overlooked within other disciplinary fields. There has been very little exploration of the complex social and cultural markers embedded within the fabric of these objects and the messages which the wearer may have wished to convey through them. This study seeks to demonstrate that armour should be seen as a dynamic agency rather than an inactive object.

It will contribute to existing scholarship by considering armour as a platform through which constructions of both group and individual identity were performed. It is unique in exploring the way in which armour circulated amongst different artistic practices and will use an interdisciplinary approach to question the role these objects and their painted representations played in the fashioning and display of male identity in Elizabethan England.

This thesis is original in demonstrating that a further study of these fascinating objects can greatly benefit interdisciplinary research and understanding of historical identity, human experience, material and visual culture. By exploring the ways in which armour and its representations within portraiture facilitated and also dictated representations of elite masculinity, I hope to contribute to a greater understanding of the ways in which material and visual culture were used as platforms for the projection of male identity in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as references.

INTRODUCTION

Consisting of twenty-nine exquisitely hand-coloured drawings, the *Almain Armourer's Album* contains some of the most magnificent designs for armour produced in England during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.¹ They were compiled by Jacob Halder during his position as master-workman at the Royal Workshops between 1576 and 1607. Although some of the armours featured were definitely made and indeed survive today, it is likely that this manuscript was intended as a catalogue of sorts, show-casing potential creations. The left hand side of each sheet depicts a figure with one hand on hip, a leg out-turned and head in profile, making sure that the decorative surface of the armour they are clad in is shown to the best effect (Fig.1 and Fig.2). On the pairing right-hand page are complementary pieces of exchange which were used to convert the armour for use in various types of combat.² Each armour is elaborately decorated and coloured in an assortment of shades and both the intricacy and vibrancy of these pen, ink and watercolour drawings create a striking visual impact. However, equally arresting in my opinion is the fact that these designs are all accompanied by a hand-written label bearing a name, implying that they were intended for a specific person. On closer examination, it is clear that whilst the silhouettes of the figures are almost identical, the colours and motifs which adorn the surface of each armour vary considerably. Crucially, no two decorative schemes are the same.

It is this personal relationship between the armour and wearer which will form the core discussion of this study. This thesis contributes to existing scholarship by considering armour as a platform through which constructions of both group and individual identity were performed. It is unique in exploring the way in which armour circulated amongst different artistic practices and will use an interdisciplinary approach to question the role these objects and their painted representations played in the fashioning and display of male identity in Elizabethan England. Research

¹ *The Almain Armourer's Album*, also referred to as *The Jacob Album* belongs to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Object Number: D.586-614-1894

² A brief outline of the armour exchange pieces used for different types of combat can be found in Appendix II of this thesis. A glossary of terms is provided in Appendix I.

conducted for this study has revealed that whilst there has been much valuable work undertaken in attributing certain armours as belonging to specific individuals, there has been very little exploration of the complex social and cultural markers embedded within the fabric of these objects and the messages which the wearer may have wished to convey through them.

i. The Study of Arms and Armour: Existing Research and Original Contribution

It was in the nineteenth century that the scholarly consideration of arms and armour began to flourish, seemingly a reflection of the escalating interest in scientific innovations and technological advancements brought about by the spread of industrialisation. The study of armour and arms was a field in which popular interests in metallurgy, manufacture and technical design could be applied. Equally important was the historical value of these objects, especially in the context of the curious phenomenon of the revival of the chivalric code which this period witnessed.³ Individuals began to assemble exemplary personal collections of arms and armour, travelling widely to source their material. Most notable in this period was the British antiquarian Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick (1783-1848) and the American collector William H. Riggs (1827-1924) who both devoted their lives to discovering European arms and armour from the medieval and Renaissance eras. Meyrick established a substantial armoury in his house at Goodrich Court and was influential in the re-design of the displays at the Tower of London and Windsor Castle. When Meyrick died the majority of his collection eventually passed to Sir Richard Wallace, who also installed an armoury in his home at Hertford House.⁴ In 1897 this was converted into The Wallace Collection and remains one of the principal collections of European and Asian arms and armour in the world. Similarly, Riggs' collection also eventually came into the possession of a museum; in 1913 he signed a gift of deed to the recently founded Arms and Armour Department at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

³ Mark Girouard's *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981) provides an excellent discussion of the revival of chivalry during the nineteenth century and the popularity of all its knightly associations, including the tournament.

⁴ The Wallace Collection Archives have a number of photographs, dating to around 1888, which show Sir Richard Wallace's original display of his relatively newly acquired collection of armour.

Surpassing both The Wallace Collection and, arguably, The Metropolitan Museum of Art's showcase of arms and armour was the Royal Armouries. Whilst not established as a national museum until 1935, the Tower of London branch has been a site for the display of arms and armour since the mid-fifteenth century. *The Line of Kings* exhibition which had been running in varying editions since 1688 at the White Tower showcased a selection of armours and weapons designed and used by monarchs and noblemen. Throughout the nineteenth century this eminent collection underwent several significant changes; *The Line of Kings* was moved to a purpose built gallery in 1826 and its format was altered in 1869, 1882 and 1883 to reflect new studies in the historical development of armour and arms.

Contemporary to the establishment of both private and public collections was the rise in the number of academic publications within this field. Again, Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick is considered to be the forefather of this scholarly enquiries and his *A Critical Enquiry into Antient Armour* (1824), was pioneering in advocating a systematic approach to the classification of these objects.⁵ Moving into the early twentieth century, Sir Guy Francis Laking also made substantial advances in the cataloguing of arms and armour and undertook extensive projects as a number of collections. These included *The Armoury of Windsor Castle: European Section* (1904), the *Catalogue of European Armour and Arms in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House* (1910) and *A Record of European Armour and Arms through Seven Centuries* (1920).⁶ Research into the changing nature of weaponry and defensive attire as well as the processes involved in the construction of these items also provided a topic of interest at this time. Perhaps the most substantial texts of this nature are *Armour and Weapons* (1909) and *The Armourer and his Craft from the XIth to the XVIth Century* (1912), both written by Charles ffoulkes.⁷

⁵ Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, *A Critical Enquiry into Antient Armour as it existed in Europe but particularly England from the Norman Conquest to the reign of King Charles II* (London: R. Jennings, 1824).

⁶ Sir Guy Francis Laking, *The Armoury of Windsor Castle: European Section* (London: Bradbury, Agnew & Company, 1904); *Catalogue of European Armour and Arms in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House* (1910); *A Record of European Armour and Arms through Seven Centuries* (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd. 1920).

⁷ Charles ffoulkes, *Armour and Weapons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909); *Armourer and his Craft from the XIth to the XVIth Century* (London: Methuen and Company, 1912).

The academic study of arms and armour continued along the same lines into the twentieth century, with contributions from various curators based at the collections mentioned above. Most influential were the contributions made by Claude Blair, who began his curatorial career at the Tower of London before moving to the Victoria and Albert Museum where he eventually became Keeper in the Department of Metalwork, a position he maintained until his retirement in 1982.⁸ Throughout his long career he wrote a staggering 200 articles and authored ten books on the subject of European arms, armour and funeral effigies, yet it was his 1958 publication, *European Armour: circa 1066 to circa 1700* which was considered the ground-breaking text in this field.⁹

Research within the past fifteen years has continued to build on these foundational publications, producing detailed studies of the histories of various collections and the provenance of the items they hold. Both Ian Eaves' *Catalogue of European Armour at the Fitzwilliam Museum* (2002) and Stephen Fliegel's *Arms and Armor: The Cleveland Museum of Art* (2007) include summaries of the production of armour, discoveries regarding attributions and comparisons in style and decoration with examples from other collections.¹⁰ More recently, the catalogues of the arms and armour collections belonging to the Royal Collection Trust and The Wallace Collection have presented new research on their holdings and feature detailed essays on the history of their respective collections.¹¹ These two publications are particularly important for their accompanying images; the pieces included in both catalogues have been specially photographed in high-quality for the occasion.¹² It is also worth

⁸ Two catalogues completed by Blair are worth particular mention for their meticulous approach: Claude Blair, *Arms, Armour and Base-Metalwork: The James A. de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor* (Fribourg: Office du Livre, 1974); *Studies in European Arms and Armour: The C. Otto Von Kienbusch Collection in the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1992).

⁹ Claude Blair, *European Armour: circa 1066 to circa 1700* (London: Batsford, 1958).

¹⁰ Ian Eaves *Catalogue of European Armour at the Fitzwilliam Museum* (Rochester, New York: Boydell Press, 2002); Stephen Fliegel *Arms and Armor: The Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland, Ohio: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 2007).

¹¹ A.V.D. Norman and Ian Eaves *Arms and Armour in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2016); Tobias Capwell, *Masterpieces of European Arms and Armour in the Wallace Collection* (London: The Wallace Collection, 2011).

¹² The recent digitalisation of the collections at The Royal Armouries, The Wallace Collection and the Royal Collection should also be noted. These online catalogues are incredibly important resources for current studies in arms and armour, providing high-quality images, detailed object descriptions and provenance histories.

mentioning that research on armourer's workshops and the technical processes involved in the manufacture and decoration of armour has also witnessed important new discoveries.¹³ From Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick's critical enquiries in the early 1900s to the richly illustrated catalogues of the past few years, the published studies of European arms and armour have been invaluable in outlining the historical developments in the form and construction of these objects. The texts referenced thus far are vital in providing an introduction into this complex and sometimes insular discipline. They offer comprehensive guides to the composition of armour, the advancements in arms as a result of the changing nature of warfare, the decorative techniques used, as well as exploring the workshops which were manufacturing weaponry and armour.

These publications place an emphasis on tracing the provenance of the manufacturer, the technicalities of design and placing these objects within the context of the development of armour throughout history. Thus, although studies in armour have examined the formal qualities there has not been a significant consideration of the participation of armour in visual and material culture. Armour has largely been overlooked in the canons of dress history, art history and material culture. This study will show the relevance of armour within these disciplinary fields and will highlight the historical, social and cultural value of these objects. More specifically, it will explore the intimate and individual connection between armour and the individuals who wore them. This relationship has been acknowledged to some degree through an analysis of the decorative schemes which adorn the surfaces of armour. Yet these discussions have largely been confined to descriptions of the motifs featured and suggestions of possible source materials for these designs. In most cases the purpose of these enquiries has been to aid attributions, identifying who might have own, used and worn these items as well as ascertaining the workshops in which they might have been made. This thesis differs from existing

¹³ Alan Williams *The Knight and the Blast Furnace: A History of the Metallurgy of Armour in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period* (Leiden & Boston: Brill Publishers; History of Warfare, 2003); Thom Richardson, "The Royal Armour Workshops at Greenwich," in *Henry VIII, Arms and the Man 1509-2009*, ed. Graeme Rimer, Thom Richardson and John P.D. Cooper (Leeds: Royal Armouries, 2009), 148-154; Stuart W. Phyrre and Jose A. Godoy, *Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance: Filippo Negrolì and His Contemporaries* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013).

scholarship by analysing the implications of these designs and by questioning the specific messages the wearer may have hoped to convey through them. It will approach armour as an artefact embedded within the cultural, social and political narratives of Elizabethan England and is original in demonstrating that these objects both constructed and displayed complex signifiers of identity and masculinity during this period.

An in-depth consideration of armour as an object embedded in cultural networks has only been specifically addressed in one other text published in 2010. Carolyn Springer's *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* intends to explore armour 'as artifacts that were themselves the site and residue of complicated stories.'¹⁴ Springer divides her text into two portions, the first three chapters form an object-based examination of different styles of Italian armour which were evident in the early sixteenth-century. This is related to the way in which they projected certain images of the body. Three separate case studies are then used in the second half – Guidobaldo II della Rovere (1514-1575), Charles V Hapsburg (1500-1558) and Cosimo I de' Medici (1519-1574) – to present the way in which armour was utilised in the process of self-fashioning. These chapters consider the depiction of armour in the portraiture of the period. *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* is pivotal in both encouraging a reading of armour as a three-dimensional portrait and also applying an interdisciplinary approach to these objects. It forges new research into the way in which armour functioned within cultural networks as a signifier of 'political and social identity.'¹⁵

However, both the portraiture and armour featured in this text have already received much scholarly attention, and Springer seems to draw heavily from existing interpretative readings.¹⁶ Her engagement with the physicality of the objects and their interaction with the male body are also arguably lacking in depth, this is for the most part limited to stylistic qualities and does not thoroughly engage with the

¹⁴ Carolyn Springer, *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 1.

¹⁵ Springer, *Armour and Masculinity*, 1.

¹⁶ See in particular Stuart Phyrre's discussion of the stylistic qualities of Italian Quattrocento armour in: Stuart W. Phyrre and Jose A. Godoy, *Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance: Filippo Negroli and His Contemporaries* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013).

reciprocal exchange between the armour and the body. Additionally, Springer deals with armour almost exclusively in terms of expressing male anxieties about dynasty, lineage and power. Her claim that 'armour advertises lineage and thus inscribes the individual in a system of male power relations' is one that is repeated throughout the text. Whilst the use of armour as an 'affirmation of power and an admission of vulnerability' is interesting and these categories are valid, it could be suggested that a discussion of armour in terms of such polarities can be limiting. It is also problematic in presenting armour as fulfilling the same purposes for different men, in these terms armour is shown to be effectively interchangeable between individuals rather than objects which were used in contradictory ways and for various agendas which were unique to the individual.

Thus, whilst Springer's text should be perceived as an important influence within the field of arms and armour studies, there are significant limitations to this study. These serve to highlight the ways in which my thesis will differ and make new contributions. Most importantly, this thesis seeks to highlight that armour should not only be read as a marker of patriarchal power and as presenting the body in an aggrandized form. Rather than being interpreted as the 'full-body inflation of the aggressive drama of a codpiece,' as advocated by Springer, this study will show that armour displayed complex layers of meanings particular to the individual wearer.¹⁷ Moreover it will differ significantly from Springer's deduction that the highly decorative nature of armour was a result of the modernisation of warfare in the sixteenth century. The concluding statements made in this publication suggest that armour was displaced from its 'utilitarian function of defence' and was 'retained only for symbolic uses.'¹⁸ Contrary to these claims, armour was not 'retired, recycled and discarded' but used both on the battle and tournament field. Admittedly, the tournament had become increasingly superimposed with displays of status and wealth, but they were still primarily a means for members of the nobility and gentry to display physical prowess and skill in arms. As such they were still considered dangerous events and armour had to accordingly fit for these purposes. Rather than implying armour either had to be functional or decorative, it should be considered

¹⁷ Springer, *Armour and Masculinity*, 161.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

as fulfilling both roles and its dual nature is integral to a fuller understanding of these objects. Finally, on very basic level, this thesis contrasts from Springer's work in focusing on armour in relation to modes of masculinity during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century in England rather than within context of the Italian wars, which spanned the period between 1494 and 1559. More specific ways in which this study provides additional insight to those made by Springer and its original approach to the relationship between armour and identity will be highlighted in the following chapters, where relevant.

ii. Armour and the Performance of Identity: Methodology

As outlined above, this thesis seeks to place an analysis of armour in relation to concepts of identity and masculinity during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century in England. In exploring concepts of individuality it is necessary to question what we mean by terms such as 'identity' and 'self' and to question how they were understood by early modern society in comparison to how they are rationalised today. To unpick the complex definitions of the self and identity in detail would be a far too complex discussion for this thesis, however a basic clarification of these terms is essential.¹⁹ Within this work, the term 'identity' is used to infer the characteristics which determine who or what a person is. Shearer West has explained these characteristics as those which may 'encompass the character, personality, social standing, relationships, profession, age, and gender' of the individual.²⁰ Similarly, the 'self' can be construed as a person's essential being, both physical and psychological, which distinguishes them from other people.

This perception of the self as a something which was distinctive, visible in both the outward appearance of the individual as well as their internal character, was unique to the early modern period. Although we should be circumspect in implying that an understanding of identity and the individual was a completely new perception in the

¹⁹ The precise definition of the terms 'identity' and 'self,' and the relationship between identity and self-concept are undergoing constant analysis. See: Jan. E. Stets and Peter Burke, "A Sociological Approach to Self and Identity," in *Handbook of Self and Identity*, ed. Mark R. Leary and June Price Tangney (New York: Guilford Press, 2003): 128-152; Joseph P. Forgas & Kipling D. Williams (eds.) *The Social Self: Cognitive, Interpersonal, and Intergroup Perspectives* (New York: Psychology Press, 2002); Ulrich Neisser. *The Perceived Self: Ecological and Interpersonal Sources of Self Knowledge*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

²⁰ Shearer West, *Portraiture*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), ii

sixteenth century, this period definitely witnessed a particularly heightened exploration of the concept. Helen Wilcox has suggested that although defining personal characteristics had been recognised prior to the sixteenth century, what did emerge was the innovative consideration of the self as 'an entity to possess.'²¹ Wilcox uses a quote taken from a conversation in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in which Polonius advises his son Laertes 'to thine own self be true' to support her argument; this early example of the use of the possessive 'own' as an adjective for 'self' arguably distinguishes the self as 'belonging to an individual, confirming the uniqueness of a distinct personality, or a conscience.'²² The belief that the self was something which could be owned was inextricable from another progression in the understanding of the individual during the latter half of the sixteenth century. There is strong evidence to suggest that during the Elizabethan period there was a significant development in the perception of the self as a malleable construct; something which could be consciously manipulated in order to achieve a desirable projection of identity. Writing to Sir Walter Raleigh in 1590, Edmund Spenser declared the intention of his literary work, *The Faerie Queene*, was 'to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous [sic] and gentle disposition.'²³ Although the verb 'to fashion' had been in use for quite some time, referring to the action of making or forming, it was not until the sixteenth century that it was widely used in relation to the body, to indicate the concept of constructing oneself. This study will place armour within the context of the increased understanding of the self as a something which could be fashioned and will illustrate that these objects mirrored and facilitated the awareness of individual identity.

However, many scholars have encouraged that caution should be exercised in determining just how independent this process was. Theorists such as the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, claim that identity is socially determined and an

²¹ Helen Wilcox, "'The birth day of my selfe': John Donne, Martha Moulsworth and the Emergence of Individual Identity," in *Sixteenth-Century Identities*, ed. Amanda J. Piesse (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 156

²² William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, ed. Cedric Watts (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1992), 1:3:78; Wilcox, "'The birth day of my selfe'", 156

²³ Edmund Spenser, "A Letter of Authors - Expounding His Whole Intention in the Course of the Worke: Which for That It Giveth Great Light to the Reader, for the Better Understanding is Hereunto Annexed," in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Volume 1*, (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2012), 777

individual's *gestalt* is 'certainly more constituent than constituted.'²⁴ Similarly, literature and theatre historian Clare McManus has argued that the process of self-fashioning was not entirely autonomous and should be viewed as being 'forged under the pressure of historical, social and discursive circumstance.'²⁵ In his influential text, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, Stephen Greenblatt also explores this notion that the human subject should be seen as 'the ideological product of the relations of power in a particular society.'²⁶ Greenblatt discusses self-fashioning as being restricted by and resulting from external cultural codes. The concept that identity was something which was culturally constructed has also been applied to discussions of the body. Much work conducted by theorists, sociologists and anthropologists during the 1970s, such as Erving Goffman and Michel Foucault have posited that we should move away from framing the body as a natural entity, allowing us instead to evaluate it as something shaped by the cultural practices around it.²⁷ This line of enquiry is clearly defined by the anthropologist Mary Douglas in her publication *Natural Symbols* (1973), which suggests a differentiation between two classifications of the body; the 'physical body' and the 'social body.' Douglas explains that the 'physical body' is shaped by the environment which surrounds it, resulting in the culturally constructed or 'social body.'²⁸

This demarcation between the physical and the social, as well as the role these 'two bodies' play in fabricating identity also corresponds to innovative work within the field of gender studies. Recent discussion of the gendered body has been framed by the concept that there is a significant distinction between 'sex' and 'gender.' The first being a natural, biological state and the latter denoted by a performance of an agreed set of rules, values and beliefs. The concept of gender as a contrived construct was largely pioneered by the work of Judith Butler in the early 1990s, and has continued

²⁴ Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror-Phase as Formative of the Function of the I," in *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 621.

²⁵ Clare McManus, "Identities," in *Reconceiving the Renaissance: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 211

²⁶ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 2

²⁷ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1959); Michael Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970).

²⁸ Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols* (London: Routledge, 1973), 93

to be used by gender and body historians since. In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993) Butler outlined a theory which pushed the boundaries of our definition of sex and gender, bringing into question the assumption that masculinity/femininity was natural and advocating instead that 'there is no gender identity behind the expression of gender...identity is performatively constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its results.'²⁹ John Beynon has explored this notion specifically in relation to male gender in his highly influential publication, *Masculinities and Culture*. He summarises that if 'maleness is biological, masculinity is cultural...it is the child of culture, shaped and expressed differently at different times in different circumstances in different places by individuals and groups.'³⁰

These concepts can be applied historically and the notion that gender and identity were to some extent prescribed by external codes is particularly evident within court culture during the sixteenth century where strict rules concerning behaviour, manners and appearance existed and prescribed a specific group identity. By adhering to these societal guidelines a group identity was displayed, confirming the individual's association with the upper classes which the Elizabethan court was composed of. However, I would argue that social groups also encouraged forms of individual expressions of identity and that this was particularly intensified by the competitive nature of the Elizabethan court. It is easy to imagine that courtiers were constantly vying with one another to gain the attention of the Queen. By acquiring her favour there was an increased chance of presenting suits to Elizabeth which, if successful, would serve to advance their careers and social standing. With those in attendance at the royal court during Elizabeth's reign numbering up to 2000 people, including both English courtiers and foreign visitors, to attract the particular attention of the Queen would arguably require more than an adherence to societal rules.³¹ Presumably if the majority of male courtiers were all conforming to fashionable modes of masculinity, then additional aspects of character were needed in order to display a unique personality and thus make themselves more distinct.

²⁹ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, (New York: Routledge, 1990), 25

³⁰ John Beynon, *Masculinities and Culture*, (Open University Press, 2002), 2

³¹ Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 2.

This study will propose that the Elizabethan tournament offered courtiers an exceptional opportunity to display individual expressions of identity in order to make themselves more noticeable to the royal gaze and acquire favour with the Queen. It will also argue that it was the armour worn by these individuals during the tournament which offered an exclusive platform for both prescribed and individual forms of masculinity and identity to be displayed. I will propose that these objects allowed the wearer to signify that they belonged to an elite societal group but also that through the decorative designs which often embellished armour, individuals could convey complex messages which were specific to them. Armour has not yet been discussed as a platform for this duality of identity before.

The methodologies used to conceptualise identity and masculinity mentioned thus far are situated within the fields of literary history, sociology and gender studies. This thesis seeks to use these approaches to encourage a consideration of the visual manifestations of constructions of identity and gender. By exploring the way in which masculinity was instilled and displayed through armour and the representations of these objects in portraiture, it will combine theories used in sociology and gender studies with those used by dress and art historians. This interdisciplinary approach is enabled by examining armour within a material culture framework. This study will therefore be situated in relation to recent scholarship in the field of material culture which has sought to establish that objects should not be seen as inactive but as dynamic agencies. Jules Prown has succinctly explained material culture as ‘the study through artefacts of the beliefs – values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions – of a particular community of society at a given time.’³² He continues: ‘the underlying premise is that human-made objects reflect, consciously or unconsciously...the beliefs of individuals who commissioned, fabricated, purchased, or used them and, by extension, the beliefs of the larger society to which these individuals belonged.’³³ Similarly, in their edited volume on historical approaches to material culture Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello have encouraged an interpretation of objects as ‘tools

³² Jules Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 70.

³³ *Ibid.*, 220.

through which people shape their lives.³⁴ Material culture therefore refers not only to the physical materiality of an object but, as Karen Harvey has stated, it should also be considered as encapsulating the ‘myriad and shifting contexts through which it acquires meaning.’³⁵

With regards to the early modern period, the study of material culture has flourished but it is within the field of dress history that this has been particularly prevalent.³⁶ The notion that objects should be interpreted as a means through which identity, beliefs and values could be constructed is one that has been encouraged in much recent work on early modern dress. Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass have emphasised the ‘need to understand the ability of clothes to mould and shape the wearer physically and socially.’³⁷ Likewise, Susan Vincent’s examination of the clothing worn by the upper classes in the early modern period illustrates that ‘clothing has an immense symbolic importance’ and that it ‘gives form to society’s ideas about the sacred and secular, about exclusion and inclusion, about age, beauty, sexuality and status.’³⁸ Research published by the material culture historian Ulinka Rublack has been particularly influential within this context. In *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (2010), Rublack has sought to demonstrate that within the early modern period, clothes were a ‘material expression’ of ‘how people felt about themselves and others.’³⁹ This exploration of the way in which clothes were integral to an understanding of the self is continued in Rublack most recent publication, *The First Book of Fashion: The Book of Clothes of Matthaheus and Veit Konrad*, co-authored with Maria Hayward and Jenny Tiramani. Through an analysis

³⁴ Anne Gerritsen and George Riello, ed., *Writing Material Culture History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).

³⁵ Karen Harvey, *History and Material Culture: A Student’s Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 3.

³⁶ For recent pioneering work which advocates a study of social and cultural values through objects in the early modern period, see also: Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass, ed., *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson, ed., *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2010); Paula Findlen, ed., *Early Modern Things: Objects and Their Histories, 1500-1800* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

³⁷ Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2

³⁸ Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (New York and London: Berg 2003), 2

³⁹ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), xx

of the illuminated manuscript which documents the outfits worn by Matthaeus Konrad, an Augsburg citizen and an accountant for a merchant firm, this publication advocates that 'dress was not just something external' but was 'crucial for an experience of the body.'⁴⁰ It deduces that clothes can be used as 'exceptional insights' into a range of emotional and social experiences. This thesis very much embraces the methodologies used within recent material culture and dress history studies and seeks to treat armour as a primary source material. The thesis will explore the ways in which an object-based analysis of armour can be used to reveal concepts of elite masculinity and identity in Elizabethan England and will illustrate that armour should be interpreted as carriers of 'the complexities of human interaction and intricacies of social values.'⁴¹

It is critical to engage with armour first-hand, rather than solely through reproductions and photographs and I have been conscious to incorporate both a first-hand viewing of these armours and an object-based handling into my research. Only when we are standing in front of an armour do we fully experience the impact of the impressive objects and comprehend their construction and materiality. However, representations of armour within portraiture are also crucial to our understanding of these objects. Since there are limited numbers of complete armour garnitures from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century surviving, an understanding of these objects is often reconstructed through the impressions imparted in portraiture. There are fortunately numerous visual accounts of members of the Elizabethan nobility and gentry proudly exhibiting their luxurious armour, from highly detailed miniatures to impressive full-length oil paintings.

Additionally, this thesis will consider the ways in which painted representations of armour reflected and fashioned modes of masculinity and identity. It will argue that portraiture was a means through which constructions of identity could be documented but that it also played a significant role in the actual process of fashioning the self. Stephen Greenblatt outlines his theory of self-fashioning

⁴⁰ Ulinka Rublack, "Renaissance Culture and Fashion," in *The First Book of Fashion: The Book of Clothes of Matthaeus and Veit Conrad* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 19.

⁴¹ Peta Motture and Michelle O'Malley, *Re-thinking Renaissance Objects: Design, Function and Meaning* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 1.

predominately in terms of literary works, but this practice is arguably equally evident, if not more so, in the visual representations of individuals from the Elizabethan period. This importance is shaped largely around the idea that, as Joanna Woods-Marsden has stated, the 'Renaissance audience differentiated much less than we do between art and life, and that they would read figures in images as much as they did individual demeanour in reality.'⁴² When applied to portraiture this blurs the lines between a 'true' representation and one that is idealised. Such visual representations therefore become truthful depictions *and* virtuous exemplars; the individual's likeness is recognisable and correct but it is also an idealised version of the self. Joanna Woodall's introduction to her edited volume, *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (1997) has touched upon this duality and suggests that this genre of painting 'allowed the portrayed body to function both as an absence made present and as an exemplar of virtue.'⁴³ Along with its complex visual codes, the genre of portraiture thus offered the perfect means of capturing and conveying human character as well as providing aspiring courtiers with a powerful platform for presenting idealised depictions of themselves.

This thesis will consider the way in which portraiture both recorded the constructions of masculinity which were created through the armour but also added to this display of the self in a way which was not accessible in real life. It will also apply art-historical approaches used within studies of portraiture to the armour itself to demonstrate that these objects played a similar role to portraits. Richard Brilliant has stated that portraits 'reflect social realities' and 'conventions of behaviour and appearance appropriate to members of society at a particular time.'⁴⁴ In the same way, armour is also enmeshed in the value system of its society. Furthermore, if armour represents the individual and is another form of visual projections of the fashioning of identity and gender, then the armoured portrait is a layered projection of the self. Masculinity has been constructed through armour and then again through the painted representation of the armoured individual.

⁴² Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Collective Identity/Individual Identity," in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. Mary Rogers (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 14

⁴³ Joanna Woodall, ed., *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 12

⁴⁴ Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991), 11.

Through engaging with both an object-based analysis of armour and an examination of the visual representation of the armoured body, a fuller understanding of the cultural values of these objects can be achieved. This thesis will apply conceptual approaches from sociology, gender studies, dress history and art history in order to engage with armour as a material and visual signifier of identity and masculinity. It will explore the way in which identity was constructed through and by armour, and the role it played as a platform for the fashioning of the self.

iii. Case Studies and Source Material

Within this study, I have chosen to focus primarily on the portraiture and armour worn by a select group of men who were active members of the Elizabethan court. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1533-1588); George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland (1558-1605); and Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex (1567-1601) all reached the peak of their careers at different points throughout the reign of Elizabeth I, between 1558 and 1603. As such, they serve as markers of changing social and cultural values during this period and provide examples of the variations in the fashionable mode of elite masculinity in Elizabethan England. Aspects of their biography which are pertinent to the dates at which their respective armours and portraits were commissioned and worn will be discussed within the chapters which follow within this thesis. However, it is useful to give a brief overview of who these individuals were, the positions they retained within the court and their relationship with the Queen.

Robert Dudley did not have the surest of starts as a young courtier, having been condemned to death in January 1554 following the support of his father's plot to place Lady Jane Grey on the throne in 1553. However, Dudley was pardoned eight months later and began to gradually regain favour within the court of Mary I and Philip of Spain. But it was not until Elizabeth ascended to the throne that Dudley's career dramatically progressed. Only a few days after Queen Elizabeth began her reign, Dudley was appointed with one of the most prestigious positions in the royal household as Master of the Horse, ranking just below the Lord Steward and Lord Chamberlain. In this position he was responsible for the management of the horses within the royal stables, including those ridden by the queen and was provided with

a suite of rooms at court. Other appointments followed with Dudley being assigned as constable of both Windsor and Warwick Castle in 1553; created Knight of the Garter in 1559; in 1562 he was appointed to the Privy Council; and in 1564 he was created Baron Denbigh and Earl of Leicester.

His office as Master of the Horse also gave him the special dispensation to touch the body of Elizabeth whilst she mounted her horse, physical contact with the royal body was otherwise forbidden.⁴⁵ His intimate relationship with the queen extended beyond these official gestures, and it was widely speculated at the time that the two were lovers. Writing to King Philip whilst visiting England in 1559, The Count of Feria reported that 'during the last few days Lord Robert has come so much into favour that he does what he likes with affairs and it is even said that her Majesty visits him in his chamber day and night. People talk of this so freely that they go so far as to say that his wife has a malady in one of her breasts and that the Queen is only waiting for her to die so that she can marry Lord Robert.'⁴⁶ Despite the closeness between Dudley and Elizabeth that was to last until his death in 1588, there was never any formal engagement between the two. After numerous years of proposing marriage suits to the Queen after the death of his first wife, Dudley finally admitted defeat and married Lettice Knollys in 1578. Dudley spent much of the later years of his life in the Netherlands where he had originally been sent as commander of an expeditionary force in support of the Dutch Protestants during the war with Spain. Leicester accepted the position as Governor of the United Provinces in January 1586, against Elizabeth's wishes, but returned to England later in the year. After being involved with the mustering of troops at Tilbury in preparation for the Spanish Armada, Leicester died of suspected malaria in 1588.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle*, 119.

⁴⁶ "Simancas: April 1559," in *Calendar of State Papers, Spain (Simancas), Volume 1, 1558-1567*, ed. Martin A S Hume (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1892), 46-64. *British History Online*, accessed August 16, 2016, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/simancas/vol1/pp46-64>.

⁴⁷ For more about the life of Robert Dudley, see: Alan Haynes, *The White Bear: The Elizabethan Earl of Leicester* (London: P.Owen, 1987); Simon Adams, *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); Elizabeth Goldring, *Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester and the World of Elizabethan Art: Painting and Patronage at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

Contemporary with the last few years of the Earl of Leicester's life, George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland was actively trying to establish an adventurous career as a sailor. Born in 1558, Cumberland was of extremely high birth; his mother was Lady Eleanor Brandon, daughter from the marriage between Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk and Mary Tudor, the sister of Henry VIII. Little is known about Clifford's life and much material derives from George Charles Williamson's biographical text published in 1920, although unfortunately most citations made have not been footnoted making it extremely difficult to piece the facts together.⁴⁸ It is known however, that Cumberland devoted much of his life to launching voyages to Spain and Portugal, organising ten privateering fleets between 1586 and 1598 alone. Cumberland was also involved in a number of naval battles resulting from his expeditions and commanded the *Elizabeth Bonaventure* in Sir Francis Drake's attack against the Spanish Armada. Most notably, in 1598, he achieved much acclaim for his capture of Fort San Felipe del Morro, the defensive outpost of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

It seems that Clifford was just as comfortable on horseback as he was at sea and he enjoyed great success at the tournament. Much of the jousts he competed in were done so in his role as the Queen's Champion, a position he was allotted on the retirement of Sir Henry Lee in 1590. This office dates back to the eleventh century and the holder was to stand as substitute for the monarch in the event that their accession to the throne was challenged during the coronation. Since the monarch was not permitted to engage in a single combat or duel, the Champion would accept the challenge of their behalf. Within the Elizabethan period, the Queen's Champion also competed in lieu of Elizabeth during the tournament and was her representative in combat. Clifford was also made Knight of the Garter in 1592 after serving two years in his role as Champion. Some years after his death his daughter, Lady Anne Clifford, remembered her father as 'one of the bravest, noblest men in his time. He was endu'd with many perfections of Nature befitting so noble a personage as an excellent quicknesse of wit and apprehension, an active strong body and an affable disposition and behaviour.'⁴⁹ More importantly, for this period, Lady Anne notes that

⁴⁸ George Charles Williamson, *George, Third Earl of Cumberland (1558-1605): His Life and His Voyages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920). See also: Richard T. Spence, *The Privateering Earl* (Stroud: A. Sutton Publishing, 1995).

⁴⁹ Lady Anne Clifford quoted in Williamson, *George, Third Earl of Cumberland*, 276

'in exercises of Tilting, Turning and course of the field, he did excel all the Nobility of his time.'⁵⁰

Although Clifford enjoyed great success on the tournament field, he was arguably eclipsed by Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex who had a penchant for making elaborate entries onto the tournament field. Devereux was the son of Lettice Knollys and after her second marriage, became the step-son of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. It was perhaps this connection that accounted for the affection and leniency which the queen showed Devereux for much of his life. Indeed, it was Dudley who had presented his step-son to the court in 1584 and brought him into the presence of Elizabeth. After this introduction, Essex spent time in the Netherlands where he served under the command of Dudley and was created knight-banneret for his heroic actions at the battle of Zutphen in 1586. Once he had returned back to England, Devereux was awarded the position of Master of the Horse and in 1588 was made Knight of the Garter.

For several years after he first appeared at court, the young Devereux and Elizabeth spent much time in each other's company and he enjoyed her continued favour. However, their relationship soon began to grow volatile and there are a number of heated quarrels recorded between the two, resulting from Essex's headstrong decisions which were made without Elizabeth's permission. For instance, in 1589 Essex embarked upon an expedition to Spain with Sir Francis Drake and stayed on the voyage despite a flurry of letters sent from the queen demanding his return to England. In 1590, Essex married in secret which again invoked Elizabeth's anger and resulted in him being exiled from court. For the next several years, Robert Devereux worked hard at his military career and succeeded in gaining commendation for a number of his victories. However, a series of mistakes and decisions made without royal approval during his campaign in Ireland marked Essex's downfall from which he would, this time, not regain favour. He deserted the army, returned to England and was arrested on a number of charges included insubordination and disloyalty. Essex was eventually tried and executed on the 25th February 1601.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Ibid., 17

⁵¹ For more on Essex's career within the Elizabethan court, see: Alexandra Gajda, *The Earl of Essex and Late Elizabethan Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Annaliese Connolly

Robert Dudley, George Clifford and Robert Devereux were all key individuals within the court of Elizabeth I and were all exemplary models of the male Elizabethan courtier. The term courtier, as Susan Doran explains, simply refers 'to those people in attendance at the royal court.'⁵² Dudley, Clifford and Devereux's status went beyond being a courtier; all shared prestige as favourites of the queen, meaning that they were considered as intimate companions of Elizabeth and enjoyed the benefits of their friendship with the monarch. With this status, they were granted access to rooms beyond the public ceremonial spaces where the remainder of the courtiers would have gathered. Again, to reference Doran, this permission to enter the private spaces of the royal household and to gain 'regular near access to the queen was highly prized as a mark of royal favour.'⁵³ This shared status allows for a consideration of group identity as well as the individual expressions within this social circle. Although abiding by ideals prescribed by wider societal values, each had their own personal agenda and different ambitions; Dudley as a suitor to the Queen, Clifford as a naval explorer and Devereux first as a soldier and later as a statesman. This study will explore the way in which these aspirations were displayed through armour and portraits of these individuals in armour. Although the lives and careers of these individuals have been discussed in length, the armour and portraits commissioned by them have not been placed in relation to their personal and political agendas at any great length. In addition, this thesis will uniquely contribute to existing scholarship by discussing these men, their armour and their portraits in dialogue with one another.

As favourites, Dudley, Clifford and Devereux were all granted permission from the queen to commission armour from the Royal Workshops at Greenwich. In addition to focusing on three case studies, this thesis will also establish a boundary by concentrating on examples of armour from the Greenwich Workshops only. To try to encompass other European examples being produced from Dutch, Italian and German workshops which were popular during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century would be too wide for the scope of this study. Also known as

and Lisa Hopkins, eds., *Essex: The Cultural Impact of an Elizabethan Courtier* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

⁵² Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle*, 2.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3.

the Royal Workshops, the armoury was established under the reign of Henry VIII in around 1514 and was intended to manufacture armour for the king which would rival those being produced for his contemporaries in Germany and Italy.⁵⁴ During this period the armoury was for the almost exclusive use of Henry VIII, it was not until Elizabeth I came to the throne that commissions were accepted from other members of the court. However, the combination of the requirement of a royal licence and the fact that these objects cost an extortionate amount meant that only those at the apex of Elizabethan society would have owned them. The annotated labels attached to each design in *The Almain Armourer's Album* attests to the elite clientele of the workshops. Those named include Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; Sir Christopher Hatton, member of the Privy Council and later Lord Chancellor; Sir Henry Lee, Master of the Royal Armoury from 1578-1611 and the Queen's Champion; and his successor, George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland.⁵⁵ These individuals were all key figures in the latter half of the sixteenth century and, as Angus Patterson has aptly remarked, the album reads like a directory of the Elizabethan court.⁵⁶

My decision to limit discussions within this thesis to Greenwich armours specifically from the Elizabethan period is also due to the fact that this was when the workshops witnessed a peak in production, quality and technical innovation. Under the leadership of Jacob Halder, author of *The Almain Armourer's Album*, some of the most elaborately decorated and sophisticatedly shaped armours were manufactured. This was due in part to the rising demand for increasingly ornate armour during this period. Elizabeth I actively encouraged her courtiers to compete with one another and, without a king to outshine, the men of Elizabeth's court were free to commission armour which was lavish in design and extravagant in colour.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ The history of the Royal Workshops at Greenwich has been extensively studied and is a subject of much contention amongst leading scholars in the field of arms and armour. As such, I have decided not to include a discussion of the formation of the workshops and the operation of centres of armour production within this study. For work on this particular subject see: Alan Williams and Anthony de Reuck, *The Royal Armoury at Greenwich, 1515-1649: A History of its Technology* (London: Trustees of the Royal Armouries, 1995).

⁵⁵ A full list of the annotated names featured in *The Almain Armourer's Album* can be found in Appendix III of this thesis.

⁵⁶ Angus Patterson, *Fashion and Armour in Renaissance Europe: Proud Looks and Brave Attire* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2013), 112. Angus Patterson is the Senior Curator in the Department of Sculpture, Metalwork, Glass and Ceramics at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

⁵⁷ Patterson, *Fashion and Armour in Renaissance Europe*, 114.

Overall, examples of armour from this period are scarce and, arguably due to their luxurious nature and value, it is these Elizabethan Greenwich armours which have survived in their complete form the most. In addition, these highly decorative armours are more regularly depicted in the portraiture of the period. It is reasonable to suggest that more than plain training armour, a commemoration of these elaborate objects was desirable for aesthetic purposes as well as a means of establishing wealth and status. As such, the availability of source material has also shaped my decisions in which case studies to select.

iv. Structure

I have chosen to organise this thesis thematically with the first chapter providing a contextual discussion, followed by three chapters grouped by material; pigment, textile; steel and skin. Each chapter will be underpinned by a comparative discussion of the three case studies: Robert Dudley, George Clifford and Robert Devereux.

Chapter One will explore the process of the construction of identity and masculinity in relation to children during the early modern period. It will explore at what point in the elite male's life an awareness of ideals of masculinity was instigated; at what point did he begin learning the skills and virtues outlined in courtesy literature and advice manuals; and at what age did the process of fashioning gender and identity begin? I hope to highlight that the education of the sixteenth-century gentleman in the art of becoming the ideal courtier began at a very early age. This chapter will address the perception of children during the sixteenth century and will argue that the blurred distinction between childhood and adulthood at this period can be discussed in relation to materiality, as a boundary between these two stages. It will consider the breeching ritual as a marker of the liminal stage between childhood and adulthood, proposing that this item of clothing signified that the boy had begun his formal training to become a gentleman. Chapter One will also explore childhood arms and armour - both the objects themselves and their depiction in portraiture - in relation to these discussions. It will explore whether arms and armour were a unique signifier of masculinity as distinct from femininity during childhood.

Chapter Two will analyse a group of miniature portraits of armoured courtiers produced by Nicholas Hilliard between the mid-1580s to mid-1590s which all

conformed to the same mode of painterly depiction. It will argue that these images marked a seminal shift in existing miniature painting and the visual representation of the male body. It seeks to suggest that Hilliard was responding to new representational requirements of the social elite and that this new composition allowed for a more complex symbolic scheme to be depicted. A discussion of the miniature portrait as a form of *impresa* will explore the Elizabethan fascination with the emblematic device. It will also be argued that these cabinet miniatures should be interpreted as visual records of the devices used by tournament participants. The chapter will also consider the fact that the physical characteristics of Hilliard's portrait miniatures encourage an obscuration of the definition of these images as a decorative or fine art. I will argue that the portrait miniature should be studied as a painted image *and* a valuable decorative object. This combined definition brings with it connotations of portability and the private viewing of a personal effect, encouraging a condensed and concentrated reflection which lends itself perfectly to the cult of the coded, personal emblem enjoyed by the Elizabethan elite.

Chapter Three will focus on armour and its interrelationship with dress. Early modern clothing has been established as an expression of early modern culture and as influential in constructing identity but these ideas have not been applied to the study of armour. It will consider armour as a platform for personal symbolic schemes and designs and acting as a distinct marker of identification. It will explore the similarities between dress and armour, how they overlap and share decorative patterns and forms and will discuss the interchangeable nature of dress and armour which is particularly evident within Elizabethan male portraiture. This chapter will also demonstrate that courtiers were constantly engaged in the act of self-creation and that this manifested itself on the tournament field as the idealised chivalric knight. Armour offered a unique means to express the personality of the individual, through control of design and symbolism, which was not so easily achieved through everyday dress.

Chapter Four will propose that armour should not be discussed in isolation from the body which once inhibited it and that an engagement with the relationship between armour and the body is key to unravelling the role these objects played in

the fashioning of a specific mode of masculinity during the Elizabethan period. Through engaging with the reciprocal exchange between the body and armour and the tensions that arise from the interaction between skin and metal, I intend to address the lived experience of these objects. It is by putting the body back in armour and exploring the ways in which these two sites interacted, manipulated and connected with one another that a better understanding of the cultural value and symbolic language of these objects can be attained. Through studying the armoured body as a site of visual consumption, this chapter will demonstrate that the Elizabethan male body was brought into focus through the construction and fabrication of the armour.

This thesis also includes a set of appendices. The first is a comprehensive glossary of terms for armour and dress, in using an object-based approach the terminology for different elements of armour must be used and as a specialised vocabulary I decided that a glossary would prove useful. The second appendix will explain the different forms of armour which are mentioned within the main text and the types of combat they were used for.

v. Final Statement

Armour has often been overlooked within academia and the wider public. Considered as unappealing and uninteresting, outside of specialised spaces they are consigned to the dusty corners of stately homes and tucked-away in the quiet, side rooms of many galleries and museums. Indeed, throughout my research and in writing this thesis, I have often been questioned why I have chosen this seemingly uninspiring topic. This thesis, therefore, hopes to demonstrate that armour should be seen as a dynamic agency, visually impressive, aesthetically appealing and technically innovative. It also demonstrates that a further study of these fascinating objects can greatly benefit interdisciplinary research and understanding of historical identity, human experience and material culture. By exploring the ways in which armour facilitated and also dictated representations of elite masculinity, I hope to contribute to a greater understanding of the ways in which material and visual culture were used as platforms for the projection of identity in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England.

CHAPTER ONE

MATERIALITY AND MASCULINITY

Buried within the extensive Lansdowne Manuscripts collection at the British Library in London is a short, seven folio tract dating to 1570 and outlining an innovative scheme for the education of young boys belonging to the Elizabethan social elite.¹ Its author, Sir Humphrey Gilbert (1539-1583) calls for the 'erection of an Achademy in London' to be named after Queen Elizabeth and designated for 'her Maiesties Wardes' as well as 'the youth of nobility and gentleman.'² This establishment was intended to equip its young students with the essential knowledge, skills and experience which would enable them to become exemplary individuals and achieve accomplishments for the benefit of the realm.³ A stream of young men would be produced, who would bring the country 'into such everlasting honnour that all the nations of the World shall knowe and say, when the face of an English gentleman appeareth, that he is eyther a Sowldiour, a philosopher, or a gallant Courtier.'⁴ In order for the pupils at the academy to achieve these ideals Gilbert proposes an educational reform; he claims that curriculums used by other institutions at the time focused too much on the theoretical learning and did not include any teaching of how to apply these studies. In contrast to the universities where 'men onely schole learninges,' *Queene Elizabethes Achademy* would instead ensure that pupils also

¹ Sir Humphrey Gilbert, *Queene Elizabethes Achademy*, 1570. Lansdowne Manuscript Collection 98/1, fols.1r-7r, The British Library, London.

The document is located in the Burghley Papers bundle which form part of the Lansdowne Manuscript Collection (Lansdowne MSS 1-122). These consist of various charters, correspondence and documents which belonged to William Cecil, Lord Burghley (1520-1598). Cecil held three significant offices of state during the forty years that he was part of Elizabeth's court: Principal Secretary of State from 1558 to 1572, Master of the Court of Wards from 1561 to 1598 and Lord Treasurer from 1572-1598. It was his role as Master of the Court of Wards which would account for the inclusion of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's proposal within the Burghley Papers.

² Gilbert, *Queene Elizabethes Achademy*, fol.2r.

³ Gilbert himself was an exemplary Elizabethan gentleman; educated first at Eton before attending university at Oxford. On leaving university, he became attached to the household of Princess Elizabeth and went on to enjoy a career as an acclaimed soldier, explorer and courtier until his death in 1583. His military experience included service in Normandy in 1562-63 under Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick; Ireland in 1566 with Sir Henry Sidney; and the Netherlands in 1572. Much of his later life was spent pursuing his dream to found a colony in North America, but after a number of attempts the venture unfortunately failed. Gilbert therefore had both an experience of the mid sixteenth-century educational system as well as an understanding of what attributes were needed for the male English gentleman to distinguish himself within elite society.

⁴ *Ibid.* fol.7r.

studied 'matters of accion meet for present practize, both of peace and warre.'⁵ The main body of the document is devoted to outlining how this principle would be implemented. For example, oration on the subjects of 'politique and militare' would be taught and on leaving the academy this could be applied 'in preaching, in parliament, in Cownsell, in Commyssion, and other offices of Common Weale.'⁶ Further debating and public speaking skills would be practiced 'on certen dayes therefore apoineted' when the 'schollers' would 'dispute and exercize' both Logic and Rhetoric.⁷ There would be two mathematicians appointed to teach arithmetic and geometry which 'shalbe onely employed to...matters of warre, with the practiz of Artillery.'⁸ These classroom-based lessons would be supplemented with physical education, although far removed from our concepts of the subject today. Rather than football or athletics, boys at Gilbert's academy would be taught 'to ride, make, and handle a ready horse' and to 'runne at Ringe, Tilte, Towney.'⁹ Foot combat would also be mastered, with 'all kindes of Skirmishinges' being covered with the use of a range of weapons including the dagger, battle-axe, pike and rapier.¹⁰ By following this carefully considered syllabus with its combination of theoretical and practical disciplines, boys attending this educational establishment would have emerged as young men adept as both soldiers and scholars. These individuals would have been just as comfortable debating philosophical ideas and conversing in Spanish on current affairs as they were undertaking naval expeditions or fighting on horseback in battles.

Although this institution was never actually built and *Queene Elizabethes Achademy* was to remain a hypothetical idea, this document should not be overlooked as a useful source material. Sir Humphrey Gilbert's plan serves as a revealing insight into the skills and qualities which were considered essential for a certain model of masculinity. This ideal was specific to a time, place and social class. Written in 1570, Gilbert's document is placed twelve years after Elizabeth I ascended the throne and although there was some fluidity in standards of masculinity, the characteristics

⁵ Ibid. fol.6v.

⁶ Ibid. fol.2v.

⁷ Ibid. fol.2r.

⁸ Ibid. fol.3r.

⁹ Ibid. fol.3v.

¹⁰ Ibid. fol.3v, fol.5r.

advocated are reflective of the core values which remained in practice throughout Elizabeth's reign. The virtues which would be taught are also particular in regards to showing an English notion of masculinity and one which was exclusive to the upper classes of Elizabethan society. Gilbert intended his academy to be attended by boys associated with the royal court, the nobility and gentry; pupils would have therefore been from a distinct social background and the standards taught would have been reflective of this. As well as demonstrating the qualities and attributes deemed desirable for the English gentleman, Gilbert's proposal is also significant in showing the age at which these ideals were being introduced. Students in attendance at *Queene Elizabethes Achademy* would have consisted of those who were 'wardes' of Queen Elizabeth as well as the 'youth' of the nobility and gentry.¹¹ In the sixteenth century many orphaned children of titled parentage were placed under the care of the court or noble households until they were legally of age to inherit.¹² Whilst subject to this guardianship, they were referred to as 'wards' and the term could therefore be used to refer to a range of ages from infants to twenty-one year olds, at which point boys were legally permitted to accede their estates. Crucially, this term was always equivalent with those who had not yet reached what was considered the adult stage of their life. The meaning of the term 'youth' in the early modern period is harder to determine and will be unpacked in greater depth within this chapter, but it too tends to denote a pre-adult phase. Thus Gilbert's document is important in indicating that ideals of masculinity were introduced and learnt at an early stage in a man's life, also suggesting that the process of constructing masculinity and fashioning identity began at a young age.

This thesis is based on the contention that masculinity and identity are concepts which can be fashioned and shaped, both by an individual person's principles as well as larger cultural standards. As outlined in the introduction to this study, the

¹¹ Ibid. fol.2r.

¹² A good example of this situation was within the household of William Cecil, Lord Burghley who was Master of the Court of Wards and responsible for the care of many parentless children of the upper classes. Cecil's household functioned very much in the manner of a boarding school with sundry young noblemen living here for varying lengths of time. Amongst these were Edward Manners, later the Third Earl of Rutland living here in 1563 and in 1576; and Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex who joined the household when he was nine years old. See: *Historical Manuscript Commission, Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury, K.G. Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, vol.10 (London, 1883-1976), 84.

arguments presented are grounded in the notion that whilst sex is something which is biologically prescribed, gender is constructed.¹³ This theory was applied specifically to masculinity by John Beynon in his pioneering social studies publication, *Masculinities and Culture* (2002). Beynon succinctly explains the distinct difference between masculinity and maleness in his introductory remarks, stating that: 'men are not born with masculinity as part of their genetic make-up; rather it is something into which they are acculturated and which is composed of social codes of behaviour which they learn to reproduce in culturally appropriate ways.'¹⁴ Of significance to this chapter is the fact that Beynon explains that masculinity should be *learnt*. Men must acquire masculinity, observing and studying the traits which contributed to the composition of this gender. This chapter seeks to highlight the importance of identifying when this educational process began and will illustrate that amongst elite Elizabethan society, core ideals of masculinity were introduced and absorbed at an early age. It will explore concepts of gender during childhood as well as ascertaining what core attributes were correlated with masculinity amongst elite Elizabethan society. A true account of childhood is difficult to trace as there are very few textual sources remaining which provide a clear account of children's experience in the late sixteenth century. However, I hope to demonstrate that an analysis of both childhood material and visual culture can reveal an understanding of the treatment of children as well as the stage at which ideals of masculinity were instilled. Whilst portraiture and clothing provide an instructive insight into perceptions of children and gender, this chapter proposes that arms and armour were the most important signifiers of Elizabethan gentlemanly masculinity during childhood. With the exception of one publication, *An Introduction to Princely Armours and Weapons of Childhood* written by Bridget Clifford and Karen Watts, there has been no literature which exclusively deals with childhood armour and constructions of gender.¹⁵ This chapter will therefore be original in highlighting the importance of research in this area.

¹³ John Beynon, *Masculinities and Culture* (Open University Press, 2002); Judith Butler *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Judith Butler *Bodies That Matter* (New York: Psychology Press, 1993).

¹⁴ Beynon, *Masculinities and Culture*, 2.

¹⁵ Bridget Clifford and Karen Watts, *An Introduction to Princely Armours and Weapons of Childhood* (Leeds: Royal Armouries, 2003).

Despite the fact that much has been written on early modern ideals of masculinity and comprehensions of childhood, there has been little scholarly research which links these two topics together. In addition, studies which have explored how gender is performed during childhood and adolescence are to a large extent dominated by literary historians and lack a thorough consideration of visual or material culture. This is evident within Naomi Miller and Naomi Yavneh's edited volume *Gender and Early Modern Constructions of Childhood* (2011), perhaps the most substantial publication on this subject. In their introduction Miller and Yavneh clearly acknowledge the importance of gender in relation to children, declaring that the essays featured in their text validate that:

Gender matters to early modern childhood, both explicitly and implicitly; thinking about gender advances work on early modern childhood, even as approaching gender within this historical frame offers an illuminating opportunity to contribute original material and perspectives to gender studies itself.¹⁶

Grouped thematically into sections on the loss and celebration of children, education or social training and the process of growing up, the essays collated within this volume do much to encourage a closer analysis of how gender was formative during these premature life stages. Miller and Yavneh also state that their volume provides an interdisciplinary perspective of the subject and the essays included do represent a range of approaches. However, an overwhelming majority of the contributors are literary historians and, with the exception of Julia Marciari-Alexander's essay on the portraiture of the Caroline monarchy, where visual source material has been included it serves as an illustrative tool.¹⁷ Furthermore, there is arguably too strong a focus on experiences of female children as well as observations of childhood through a maternal view, resulting in constructions of masculinity not being fully addressed. This may be partly reflective of the editors own background, as both are firmly situated in the field of early women's studies. The research conducted by Kate

¹⁶ Naomi J Miller & Naomi Yavneh eds., *Gender and Early Modern Constructions of Childhood* (Farnham, Surrey & Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 2.

¹⁷ Julia Marciari-Alexander, "Portraiture and Royal Family Ties: Kings, Queens, Princes, and Princesses in Caroline England," in Naomi J Miller & Naomi Yavneh eds., *Gender and Early Modern Constructions of Childhood* (Farnham, Surrey & Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 209-222.

Chedgzoy on the depiction of children within Shakespeare's plays does however deal with masculinity and the experience of boyhood in late sixteenth century England. In her introduction to the edited volume *Shakespeare and Children*, Chedgzoy raises the importance of 'the questions of what being a child might have meant, both to children, and to adult other, and of how these meanings were reflected, constructed and negotiated by children.'¹⁸ This is applied specifically to boyhood in her essay "Shakespeare in the Company of Boys" in which Chedgzoy argues for a closer consideration of the intersection between gender and childhood in early modern culture and demonstrates how various aspects of masculinity were performed by boys on stage.¹⁹ Again being placed within the field of literary history, Chedgzoy's essay does not attempt to examine early modern boyhood in relation to visual or material culture.

Where early modern childhood and material culture has been addressed, it has a tendency to be in the form of providing an insight of developments in historical dress in relation to social and cultural changes. For example, Anna Buck's *Clothes and the Child: A Handbook of Children's Dress in England, 1500-1900* and Anna Reynolds' *In Fine Style: The Art of Tudor and Stuart Fashion* (2013) include a chapter dedicated to childhood dress in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²⁰ Both Buck and Reynolds' consideration of children's clothing and accessories within this period are placed within their broader discussions. Buck's publication focuses on childhood dress over the course of four centuries and Reynolds' text provides an examination of Tudor and Stuart fashion in general, with an emphasis on adult male and female clothing. Similarly, Jane Ashelford has also included a brief analysis of clothes worn by boys and girls during this period within a larger chapter on childhood dress from the early sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries.²¹ A more precise study can be

¹⁸ Kate Chedgzoy, "What Are They Children?" in *Shakespeare and Childhood* ed. Kate Chedgzoy, Susanne Greenhalgh and Robert Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 6.

¹⁹ Kate Chedgzoy, "Shakespeare in the Company of Boys," in *Shakespeare and Childhood* ed. Kate Chedgzoy, Susanne Greenhalgh and Robert Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 184-200. Also see: Kate Chedgzoy, "Playing with Cupid: Gender, Sexuality and Adolescence," in *Alternative Shakespeares 3*, ed. Diana E. Henderson (London: Routledge, 2008), 138-57.

²⁰ Anna Buck, *Clothes and the Child: A Handbook of Children's Dress in England, 1500-1900* (Bedford: Ruth Bean, 1996); Anna Reynolds, *In Fine Style: The Art of Tudor and Stuart Fashion* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2013), 120-133.

²¹ Jane Ashelford, "Swaddling to Sailor's Suits: Children's Clothes," in Jane Ashelford, *The Art of Dress: Clothes and Society, 1500-1914* (London: The National Trust, 1996), 273-288.

found within *The Tudor Child: Clothing and Culture 1485-1625* written by Jane Huggett, a costume historian specialising in the early modern period.²² This particular text begins with an overview of the clothing worn by infants – both boys and girls – up to the age of twelve and takes into account the social-historical context for these items. This is followed by a selection of patterns based on the items mentioned in the first section. All these publications are extremely valuable for their extensive archival and collections-based research on historical children's dress and are indispensable for showing transformations in style over both wider timeframes, as well as within more specific periods. This chapter will differ from these publications by developing a stronger link between elements of children's dress, perceptions of children and the cultural construction of gender rather than providing an outline of changing fashions in children's dress. In addition, though this chapter will focus on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and in this way is similar to both Reynolds and Huggett's work, it will diverge in exclusively dealing with English examples from this period. It will also focus specifically on the clothing worn in England by late sixteenth and early seventeenth century boys belonging to the nobility and gentry.

It is impossible to discuss concepts of historical childhood without mentioning Philippe Ariès' foundational work, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*.²³ First published in 1962 and reprinted several times since, it remains one of the most prominent studies on the changing nature of family life. Ariès' uses the child as a pivotal figure for his comprehensive examination of the structure and relationships of the historical family, from the Middle Ages to the modern day. His core conclusion, which is identified as the main point of contention for many scholars, is that childhood as an idea did not come into existence until the seventeenth century. According to Ariès, before this point there was no recognised distinction between child and adult in Western European society. It is argued that the acknowledgment of childhood as a definite stage in life was due to developments in education, the decreasing percentage of infant mortality and changes in the way the upper classes

²² Jane Huggett, *The Tudor Child: Clothing and Culture 1485-1625* (Los Angeles: Costume & Fashion Press/Quite Specific Media, 2013).

²³ Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Translated by Robert Baldick. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962.

socialised. These all affected the way in which young boys and girls were treated and resulted in steady increase in the appreciation of childhood within the family nucleus. The observations made in *Centuries of Childhood* are supported by the use of a number of portraits, as well as the dress represented within these images and despite the fact that the same combination of material and visual culture will be used within this chapter, the conclusions made will differ. Furthermore, whilst Ariès' concern is essentially with issues of age, this chapter will also incorporate distinctions and formations of gender in relation to childhood.

The first section of this chapter will question what core values boys from the elite classes of Elizabethan society were encouraged to absorb and perform. Using advice literature which was published and circulated during the sixteenth century, it will outline the qualities and skills deemed desirable for an exemplary model of gentlemanly masculinity. Following this, the second section will discuss Ariès' theory at a greater length and will argue that childhood and adolescence were in fact recognised phases in an early modern individual's life but that boundaries between these phases were not distinct. It will propose that childhood and adolescence was a transitional phase in which boys had left infancy but not yet become adult men. Rather than being discernible by set age boundaries, this stage was marked by the introduction of notions of gender and was a period when boys were trained in ideals of masculinity. The final section of this chapter will establish that armour and arms are integral to the fashioning of elite Elizabethan male identity and, as such, these objects were key in establishing ideas of gender and status from a very early age. Through an analysis of childhood arms and armour as well as their representations in portraiture, I will propose that these objects were unique as a visible, material signifier of a specific mode of masculinity during the later sixteenth century. The remainder of the chapters in this thesis explore how both gender and identity were constructed and performed through armour and its artistic representations during the Elizabethan period. However, it is vital to consider when these processes began and what core aspects of masculinity were being learnt by boys at this point. Through addressing these topics, this chapter will provide a contextual framework for the key research questions which are delivered throughout this thesis.

i. 'The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword': Concepts of the Ideal Gentleman in Elizabethan England

Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!—
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword,
Th' expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form.²⁴

Spoken by Ophelia in Act Three of William Shakespeare's play *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, these words lament the decline of Hamlet's mental health and the deterioration of his character. Ophelia mourns the loss of those qualities which had led to Hamlet being regarded as the 'rose' of the state of Denmark; his courtly refinement, his military prowess and his scholarly wit. In distinguishing these attributes, Shakespeare highlights the three categories which were regarded as key for the ideal gentleman in Elizabethan England; the courtier, the soldier and the scholar.²⁵ The precise ratio of these aspects which were needed to achieve a perfect mode of elite masculinity was a subject of much debate in the later sixteenth century and resulted in a considerable outpouring of literature dedicated to this topic. Throughout this period the comparative advantages of arms or letters often appeared in the form of advice manuals, intended to be read and deliberated by the aspiring courtier. This genre of works tended to have two different areas of focus; those written on the correct manners and behaviour of the ideal gentleman, and those which discussed the virtues and skills he ought to possess. This first category contains publications such as Giovanni della Casa's *Il Galateo* (1558) published as *The Book of Manners* in the English translation, Hugh Rhodes' *The Book of Nurture for Men, Servantes and Chyldren* (1577) and James Yates' *The Castell of Courtesie, whereunto is Adjoynd the Holde of Humilitie* (1582).²⁶ These works provided comprehensive guidelines on a range of protocols including table manners, personal

²⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, ed. Cedric Watts (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1992) 3:1:151-154. Originally written between 1599 and 1602.

²⁵ Sir Humphrey Gilbert also identifies these three categories. He states that his proposed academy would provide an education which allowed its pupils to achieve distinction as 'eyther a Sowldiour, a philopsher, or a gallant Cowrtier.' Gilbert, *Queene Elizabethes Achademy*, fol.7r.

²⁶ Giovanni della Casa, *Il Galateo or The Book of Manners*, translated by R.S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin Books, 1958); Hugh Rhodes *The Book of Nurture for Men, Servantes and Chyldren, with Stans Puer and Mensaw*. (London, c.1555); James Yates, *The Castell of Courtesie, whereunto is Adjoynd the Holde of Humilitie* (London, 1582).

hygiene and bodily gestures which were to be observed by gentlemen. While etiquette and courtly behaviour was fundamental in fashioning elite masculinity, for the purposes of this chapter I will be focusing on the other variety of advice manuals, those which drew more attention to the abilities which the gentleman-courtier should show competency in.²⁷ Humfrey Braham's *The Institucion of a Gentleman* (1555), the anonymously written *The English courtier, and the country-gentleman: a pleasaunt and learnded disputation, betweene them both and Cyvile and uncyvile life: a discourse very profitable, pleasant, and fit to bee read of all nobilities and gentlemen* (1579), also by an unknown author, were all English works dedicated to this subject.²⁸ These works were not only read as theoretical discussions of the characteristics which were regarded as necessary for the model gentleman, but were also considered as instruction manuals for aspiring courtiers. Through offering the Elizabethan nobility and gentry an outline of the essential qualities and skills he should acquire, these publications played a highly significant role in the cultural construction of gender.

The fact that texts written on this subject were so proliferate during the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century could be interpreted as a reaction to the changing perceptions of class structure during this period. Throughout the majority of the Middle Ages, society was essentially divided between the nobility and the ignoble. Entitlement to the status of this first category was very much denoted by ancestral ties. Works such as the popular *Libre de l'orde de cavalleria*, originally authored by Ramon Llull between 1274 and 1276 and published in English as the *The Book of the Order of Chivalry or Knyghthode* by William Caxton in 1484, maintain that nobility was inherited through blood.²⁹ In her *The Doctrine of the English Gentleman*

²⁷ It should be noted that considerations of correct manners were often subsumed into this second category of advice literature, with passages dedicated to discussions of the correct etiquette in different social situations.

²⁸ Humfrey Braham, *The Institucion of a Gentleman* (London: Thomas Marsh, 1555); Anon. "The English courtier, and the country-gentleman: a pleasaunt and learnded disputation, betweene them both," *Inedited Tracts: illustrating the manners, opinion and occupations of Englishmen during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, ed. W.C. Hazlitt (London: Roxburghe Library, 1868; repr. New York: Burt Franklin, 1964); Anon. *Cyville and vncyvile life: a discourse very profitable, pleasant, and fit to bee read of all nobilitie and gentlemen* (London: Richard Jones, 1579).

²⁹ Ramon Llull, *The Book of the Order of Chivalry or Knighthood*, trans. William Caxton, ed. Alfred T.P. Byles (Westminster: William Caxton, 1484; London: Kegan Paul, 2004). See also: Anon. *The Boke of Saint Albans...Containing Treatise on Hawking, Hunting and Cote Armour* (St Albans Press, 1486).

in the Sixteenth Century, Ruth Kelso suggests this class system and definition remained intact in the early 1500s but gradually altered and from the middle of the century there was an evident change.³⁰ From being used as a generalised term to denote those who were distinct from the labouring classes nobility now applied to a very small group of individuals at the upper level of society, namely the peerage. In addition, the 'gentry' had now become a distinct category. Primary sources imply that the gentry of the later sixteenth century were demarcated by their right to bear heraldic arms. For instance, *The Blazon of Gentry* which was published in 1586 by Sir John Fearn, who was himself a member of this social class, states that the 'bearing of Armes' was 'the signe and outward badge' of this status 'differing them from the churles.'³¹ Typically the gentry referred to those who ranked just below the title of baron and, again, they were confined to a relatively small strata of society. Neil Cuddy has estimated that in the late sixteenth century, out of a population of around 2.5 million only approximately 300 families belonged to the gentry.³²

Both the nobility and gentry combined to form the upper classes of Elizabethan society with the term 'gentleman' seemingly referring to men belonging to either sub-section.³³ Sir Thomas Smith, again another author with a knighthood, described the Elizabethan gentleman as being an individual 'who can live idly and without manuell labour, and will beare the port, charge and countenance of a gentleman, he shall be called master...and shall be taken for a gentleman.'³⁴ This idle lifestyle, consisting of independent wealth and few work commitments, was significant to this gentlemanly status as it allowed men the luxury to acquire the various

³⁰ Kelso, *The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century* (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1964), 9.

³¹ Sir John Fearn, *The Blazon of Gentry: Devided into Two Parts. The First Named the Glorie of Generositie. The Second, Lacey's Nobilitie Comprehending Discourses of Armes and of Gentry. Wherein is Treated of the Beginning, Parts, and Degrees of Gentlenesse, with Her Lawes: of the Bearing, and Blazon of Cote-Armors: of the Lawes of Armes, and of Combats* (London, 1586), 86-87.

³² Neil Cuddy, "Dynasty and Display: Politics and Painting in England, 1530-1630," in *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*, ed. Karen Hearn (London: Tate Publishing, 1995), 11.

³³ Maurice Keen, *The Origins of the English Gentleman: Heraldry, Chivalry and Gentility in Medieval England, 1300-1500*, (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2002), 9

³⁴ Sir Thomas Smith, *De Republica Anglorum: the Maner of Gouvernement or Policie of the Realme of England*, ed. Leonard Alston (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 30. Originally written between 1562 and 1565 and published in 1583.

accomplishments listed in the advice literature discussed within this chapter.³⁵ This marked the other change in perceptions of the upper classes during the sixteenth century. In contrast to the emphasis placed on ancestral claims throughout the Middle Ages, equal significance was placed on behaviour, virtues and recreations which inferred this social class. As Marcia Vale has deduced, these accomplishments acted as pervasive 'badges of social and physical superiority over the lower orders.'³⁶

This did not mean, however, that the association of particular virtues with social class was completely unrecognised in the Middle Ages but these attributes were largely confined to being military in nature. Much literature in this field which was circulating during the Middle Ages placed a strong emphasis on the skills needed for battle. Ramon Llull's *Libre de l'orde de cavalleria*, previously mentioned, requires the thirteenth-century knight to be physically fit, skilled in arms and brave in battle. Llull advises that they 'undertake such sports as to make themselves strong in prowess...Knights ought to take coursers to jousts and to go to tourneys...to hunt harts, bears and other wild beasts, for in doing these things the knights exercise themselves to arms and this maintain the order of knighthood.'³⁷ Another French text translated and published by William Caxton similarly stresses the importance of military prowess. Christine de Pizan's 1410 *Fais d'armes et de chevalrie*, which was published in the English rendition in 1489 encouraged knights to demonstrate:

the tourne of swiftnes to caste & fyghte with bothe theyre armes/ and the manere how they shall glaunche or with drathe them self from the strokes that in travers or sydlyng may come/to leapen over trenchis or dyches/ to lance or cast

³⁵ The combination of the right to bear heraldic arms and a specific behaviour as defining both nobility and gentry is discussed in a number of publications published throughout the latter half of the sixteenth century. These include, but are not limited to: John Larke, *The Boke of Noblenes: That Sheweth How Many Sorted [and] Kyndes There is...translated out of laten into frenche, and now into English by me John Larke* (London: R. Wyer, 1550?); Jerónimo Osorio, *The Five Bookes of the Famous, Learned, and Eloquent Man, Hieronimus Osorius, Contayninge a Discourse of Civill, and Christian Nobilitie: A Worke no Lesse Pleasaunt than Profitable for All, but Especiallye the Noble Gentlemen of England, to view Their Lives, Their Estates, and Conditions*, trans. William Blandie (London, 1576); Sir William Segar, *The Booke of Honor and Armes* (London, 1590); Nenna, G.B. *Nennio; or A Treatise of Nobility: Wherein is Discoursed What True Nobilitie Is, with Such Qualities as Are required in a Perfect Gentleman*, trans. William Jones (London, 1595).

³⁶ Marcia Vale, *The Gentleman's Recreations: Accomplishments and Pastimes of the English Gentleman 1580-1630* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1977), 2.

³⁷ Ramon Llull, *The Book of the Order of Chivalry*, 30.

sperys & dartes and the way to covere & save hem self with theyre sheldes/ and to doo al other semblable thyngis.³⁸

The importance of the martial nature of the knight and the physical capabilities they should aspire to was also expressed in literature outside the field of conduct and courtesy advice. Many prose, poetry and lyrical tales of chivalric knights which were popular from the Middle Ages through to the later fifteenth century were full of heroic figures carrying out noble feats and engaging in valiant battles. Thomas Malory's *The History of the Most Noble and Valyant Knight, Arthur of Little Britaine* (1466), the anonymously authored *The Myrroure of Knighthood* (1299) and *The Boke of Saint Albans: Containing Treatises on Hawking, Hunting and Cote Armour* (1486) all contained examples of this behaviour.³⁹

Although Ramon Llull did argue that academic learning should be incorporated into the skill-set of the thirteenth-century knight, this view did not receive much practical application until much later.⁴⁰ It was not until the sixteenth century that scholarly attributes which were once associated with the cleric were judged as desirable for the military knight. Yet this did not necessarily mean that aptitude in arms was irrelevant, rather that there was no longer such a singular significance placed upon this specific ability. Instead, competence in fighting, jousting and the like was considered alongside a wide range of other talents, both intellectual and physical.⁴¹ The combination of soldier and scholar as an ideal mode of gentlemanly masculinity seems to have first been presented in Italian publications and one treatise in

³⁸ Christine de Pizan. *The Book of Deeds and Arms of Chivalry*, translated by William Caxton (Westminster: William Caxton, 1489), sig. Biiijr.

³⁹ Thomas Malory, *The History of the Most Noble and Valyant Knight, Arthur of Little Britaine* (London, 1466); Anonymous, *The Myrroure of Knighthood: in which is Prosecuted the Illustrious Deedes of the Knight of the Sunne, and His Brother Rosicleer, Sonnes unto the Emperour Trebatio of Greece: with the Valiant Deeds of the Armes of Sundry Worthie Knights* (London, 1299); Anonymous, *The Boke of Saint Albans: Containing Treatises on Hawking, Hunting and Cote Armour* (St Albans Press, 1486).

⁴⁰ Sydney Anglo, "The Courtier: The Renaissance and Changing Ideals," in *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage and Royalty*, ed. Arthur Geoffrey Dickens (New York: Greenwich House, 1984), 38

⁴¹ For discussion on works written on civility and courtesy and the changes notions of correct behaviour underwent, the following secondary sources are indispensable: Ruth Kelso, *The Doctrine of the English Gentleman* (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1964); Diane Bornstein, *Mirrors of Courtesy* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1975); Marcia Vale, *The Gentleman's Recreations: Accomplishments and Pastimes of the English Gentleman 1580-1630* (Cambridge, 1977); Aldo Scaglione, *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry and Courtesy From Ottonian Germany to Italian Renaissance* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1991); Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

particular was greatly influential in the latter half of the sixteenth century. This foundational text was of course Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano* which when first published in 1528 received much acclaim and greatly increased in popularity after being translated into English later in the sixteenth century. This version was released by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561 complete with an Anglicised title, *The Book of the Courtier*. Hoby's edition was reprinted a further three times during the reign of Elizabeth in 1577, 1588 and 1603 and was widely disseminated amongst members of the Elizabethan social elite.⁴² Indeed, Queen Elizabeth sent the King of Sweden a copy of this book, along with a pair of black gloves and an English mastiff dog during her suit to him.⁴³

Castiglione's work was divided into four sections, each taking the form of an imaginary conversation held amongst a group of major members from the court of Urbino. In the opening book, the character Federico Fregoso suggests a topic for debate which becomes the central theme of the entire text. He states: 'I would like our game this evening to be this: that one of us should be chosen and given the task of depicting in words a perfect courtier, explaining the character and the particular qualities needed by anyone who deserves this title.'⁴⁴ After first discussing whether noble birth was a negotiable requirement or not, the group move to assessing the advantages and disadvantages of arms over letters. Count Lodovico takes up this discussion and suggests that the courtier should 'know how to handle expertly every kind of weapon, either on foot or mounted,' 'know how to wrestle since this often accompanies combat on foot' and have 'a knowledge of horses and all the matters to do with riding.'⁴⁵ In addition to these physical skills, Lodovico also declares that the perfect courtier to be 'more than an average scholar...[in] the humanities; and he should have a knowledge of Greek as well as Latin...he should be very well acquainted with the poets, and no less with the orators and historians, and also skilled at writing

⁴² For a full list of those who read or owned a copy of *The Book of The Courtier* see Peter Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano* (Cambridge and Maldon, Massachusetts: Polity Press, 1995).

⁴³ Anna Whitlock, *Elizabeth's Bedfellows: An Intimate History of the Queen's Court* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 63.

⁴⁴ Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby. (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 51

⁴⁵ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 61-62

both verse and prose.⁴⁶ The conclusion drawn by Castiglione, through his characters, is that an ideal can be reached by ‘these two accomplishments, the one helping the other, as is most fitting, [being] joined together in our courtier.’⁴⁷

The Book of the Courtier seems to have affected English notions of ideal masculine qualities and many publications outline very similar values and talents as Castiglione. Indeed, the curriculum proposed by Sir Humphrey Gilbert for his academy outlined at the beginning of this chapter consisted of a comparable opinions on what the elite male should be accomplished in. Additionally, the anonymously written *The English Courtier, and The Country-Gentleman: A Pleasaunt and Learnded Disputation, Betweene Them Both* which also takes the form of a conversational debate, encourages a similar amalgamation. Here, the character named Valentine explains that the courtier was expected to:

handle all sorts of armes, both on horseback and foote, leape, daunce, runne, ride, and (if he so like) play all sortes of games...It will also stand wel with his condition to entertaine Ladyes...One other thing also I wish hee used: I meane that at the least one howre of every day hee should read, either in some notable History, or excellent discourse: For that will much exercise the minde, & encrease the knowledge.⁴⁸

Likewise, Roger Ascham who was a writer on educational policy and held a number of positions within the royal court, suggests that the English gentleman should be equipped for both war and peace time. Ascham’s gentleman ought to be able to:

vault lustily: to runne: to leape: to wrestle: to swimme: To daunce cumlie: to sing, and playe of instruments cunningly: to Hawke: to hunte: to playe at tennes, & all pastimes generally...and on the day light, conteining either some fitte exercise for warre, or some pleasant pastime for peace, be not onelie cumlie and decent, but also verie necessarie, for a Courtlie gentleman to use.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 90

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 93

⁴⁸ Anon., “The English courtier, and the country-gentleman: a pleasaunt and learnded disputation, betweene them both, in *Inedited Tracts: illustrating the manners, opinion and occupations of Englishmen during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, ed. W.C. Hazlitt (London: Roxburghe Library, 1868; repr. New York: Burt Franklin, 1964), 74.

⁴⁹ Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster* (London: John Daye, 1570), fol.19v-20r.

This passage from Ascham's *The Scholemaster* indicates that not only must the ideal gentleman acquire this rather extensive compilation of skills, but he must also show an advanced level of proficiency in them. He must be able to take part in 'all pastimes,' to be able to not only dance but to do this in a 'cumlie' manner and play not one but multiple instruments. When listing the necessary expertise his ideal courtier ought to show, Castiglione also describes the high standard to which they ought to be performed. The profession of arms must be 'pursued vigorously,' he must be both 'accomplished and versatile' on horseback, a 'more than average' intellectual and should be able to both 'read music' as well as playing 'several instruments.'⁵⁰ In summary, he should 'should outstrip all others...in regard to the things they know well.'⁵¹

The essential qualities and skills that these publications encouraged male members of the Elizabethan elite to acquire were intended to be displayed and performed by the individual. In this way they functioned as outward, visual signifiers of a specific social status, affirming the individual's association and place within elite society. These numerous attributes were also carefully choreographed in order to produce a cohesive ideal of masculinity; the pastimes, manners, demeanour and abilities which provided the framework of gentlemanly masculinity were all assembled together to the best effect. Indeed Castiglione advises that not only must the courtier acquire the necessary qualities discussed in *The Book of the Courtier* but that he should also become adept in setting them 'in contrast or opposition to another in order to draw more attention' to them.⁵² I would suggest that the advice literature mentioned in this section were crucial to the cultural construction of masculinity and identity, but the process of arranging and displaying attributes was indicative of unique individuality. The virtues prescribed in these late sixteenth and early seventeenth century instruction manuals provided a set of core qualities which the gentleman ought to acquire, these he had in common with his contemporaries and they formed a group identity. In contrast the way in which these characteristics were arranged, the emphasis given to one skill over another and the specific details of these

⁵⁰ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 57, 62, 90, 94.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 114.

attributes – which instruments were learnt, which sports were played and what books were read – would presumably differed to some degree from one person to the next. The composition of qualities and skills therefore intimated individual identity.

Crucially, it was the body of the Elizabethan gentleman which was the site through which both the core values recommended by advice literature and the individual interpretations of these were played out. It was as a result of this performance that gender and identity were constructed. The way in which the body can serve as the platform for visible indicators of the self is the central consideration of this thesis. As such, it is essential to question when these outward signifiers of masculinity and identity began to be displayed. Through a consideration of different types of prescriptive literature intended for children as well as an analysis of childhood portraits, the next section will demonstrate these processes were introduced at an early stage in the Elizabethan male's life.

ii. Separating the Boys from the Men: Representations of Childhood in Late Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century English Portraiture

The importance of introducing ideals of masculinity to children and thus encouraging the shaping of identity to begin at a young age was not only confined to Sir Humphrey Gilbert's proposal for *Queene Elizabethes Achademy*, but was a belief widely shared amongst sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English society. Various other textual sources published during this period show a significant consideration of the principles children should be made aware of, as well as stating the importance of an early start to this education. These instructions take a variety of forms including guidebooks for parenting, educational manuals for children and compendiums of counsel from fathers to sons. Publications such as Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster* written in 1570 and Edmund Coote's *The English Schoolmaster* which was printed in 1596, were intended for those responsible for a child's schooling and outline skills and assets which the authors regarded as indispensable for a boy's education.⁵³ Other educational literature such as Francis Segar's *The Schoole of Vertue, and Book*

⁵³ Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster*, (London: John Daye, 1570); Edmund Coote *The English Schoolmaster* (London, 1596).

of good Nourture for Chyldren (ca. 1550) and Desiridus Erasmus' *De Civilitate Morum Puerilium*, translated by Robert Whytyngton as *A Lytell Booke of Good Maners for Chyldren*, were instead intended for a pre-adult reader, as noted in their titles.⁵⁴ Interestingly, Erasmus' text clearly address the importance of an early education, stating the need for 'these prescripts and rules [to be] brought up at the begynnyng of an enfant amonge courtiers.'⁵⁵ Comparable to this format and also intended for a young audience, was a specific genre of advice literature referred to as 'mirrors of princes' which were meant to be read by future kings and contained a great deal of information on how to rule successfully.⁵⁶ Although intended for the monarchy, these manuals circulated amongst a wider audience who were keen to attain the same characteristics as the great European rulers.⁵⁷ There are also examples of works which were written by fathers to their sons and these are often more general in content, offering guidance on a range of life situations and drawing on their own professional and private experiences. For instance, Lord Burghley's *Certain Precepts for the Well Ordering of a Man's Life* (1584) contained 'such rules and advertisements for the squaring of thy life...to the end that entering into this exorbitant age, thou mayest be the better prepared to shun those scandalous courses whereunto the world, and lack of experience, may easily draw thee.'⁵⁸ Intended for his son Robert Cecil, later Earl of Salisbury, Burghley's work advices to be careful in choosing a wife, to be 'rather plentiful than sparing, but not costly' in the running of his estate, to

⁵⁴ Francis Segar, *The Schoole of Vertue, and Book of good Nourture for Chyldren, and youth to learne theyer dutie by. Newly persued, corrected, and augmented by the first auctour. F.S. with a briefe declaration of the dutie of eche degree* (London: Wyllyam Seares, 1557); Desiridus Erasmus, *A Lytell Booke of Good Maners for Chyldren*, trans. Robert Whytyngton (London, 1532).

⁵⁵ Erasmus, *A Lytell Booke of Good Maners for Chyldren*, fol.A2.

⁵⁶ Examples of this category of advice literature include: Desiridus Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani* or *Education of the Christian Prince* first published in 1516 and intended for Charles V; John Skelton, *Speculum principis* for the future Henry VIII; and James VI of Scotland's *Basilikon Doron* written for his son Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales.

⁵⁷ Nicholas Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: the Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy 1066-1530* (London and New York: Routledge, 1984), 80; Bridget Clifford and Karen Watts, *An Introduction to Princely Armours and Weapons of Childhood* (Leeds: Royal Armouries Museum, 2003), 4.

⁵⁸ William Cecil, Lord Burghley, *Certain Precepts for the Well Ordering of a Man's Life* (London, 1584). References will be to: William Cecil, "Ten Precepts Given by William Lord Burghley, Lord High Treasurer of England, To His Second Son, Robert Cecil. Afterwards the Earl of Salisbury," in *The Young Gentleman's parental monitor, containing I. Lord Chesterfield's advice to his son on men and manners: on the Principles of politeness; and on the art of acquiring a knowledge of the world. II. Marchioness de Lambert's Advice to her son. III. Lord Burghley's Ten precepts to His son* (Hartford: Nathaniel Patten, 1792), 143-144.

'bring thy children up in learning and obedience, yet with outward austerity,' and 'to be not scurrilous in conversation, nor satirical in thy jests.'⁵⁹ Similarly, Sir Walter Raleigh's *Instructions to His Son and to Posterity*, probably written in around 1609 and first published in 1632, offers recommendations on a range of topics.⁶⁰ Raleigh provides suggestions on the choice of friends, marriage, taking 'care of thy Estate' as well as a summary on how one ought to behave on a day to day basis, which included avoiding 'malice and revenge.'⁶¹

Of consequence is the fact that these publications were clearly distinct from those intended for an adult audience. Although to a large extent the content promoted the same gentlemanly qualities and attributes, the works mentioned above all specify that they were meant for a young, pre-adult reader. The advice imparted shows an intention to prepare boys for their roles as English gentleman, but imply that they have not yet reached this stage in life. Quite a wide range of ages seems to be encompassed in this definition of a pre-adult reader, from toddlers through to teenagers and those which would be classed by a twenty-first century reader as an adult. For example, Erasmus mentions encouraging infants to adopt the behavioural requirements laid out in his book whereas Sir Walter Raleigh's manual was likely intended for his eldest son, also called Walter but known as Wat, who would have been sixteen at the time *Instructions to His Son and Posterity* was written.⁶² Lord Burghley's son Robert Cecil, later Earl of Salisbury would have been even older than this when his father's counsel was published and, at the age of twenty-one, by modern-day standards would have already been considered an adult. This would therefore suggest that the stage before adulthood could refer to quite a large age-group and that the boundary between the end of childhood and the commencement of adulthood was negotiable during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 144, 145 and 148.

⁶⁰ Sir Walter Raleigh, *Instructions to His Son and to Posterity* (London, 1632). References will be to: Sir Walter Raleigh, "Advice to His Son," *Remains of Sir Walter Raleigh: viz. Maxims of State. Advice to His Son. &c* (London: Henry Mortlock, 1681), 60-80.

⁶¹ Raleigh, "Advice to His Son," 69, 72.

⁶² Erasmus, *A Lytell Booke of Good Maners for Chyldren*, fol.A2; Walter (Wat) Raleigh was born in 1593. This work could have also been read at a later date by Raleigh's second son, Carew, who was born in 1605 and would have therefore been around the age of four when his father's manual was written.

There is other evidence to suggest that the number of stages between birth and death, the terminology used for these phases and the duration of time each lasted were all subject to much disagreement during this period. Sir Thomas Elyot's *The Castel of Helth*, first published in 1541 and reprinted throughout the century, lists four ages in a person's life-cycle and states that adolescence lasted up to the age of twenty-one.⁶³ Written in 1576, Thomas Fortescue similarly placed those aged between fourteen and twenty-two as adolescents, followed by youth which extended from twenty-two to forty-two years of age.⁶⁴ However, in the following decade, Richard Mulcaster defined this age as beginning at seven and finishing at twenty-one.⁶⁵ Towards the end of the sixteenth century, William Bullein identifies youth as extending a few years longer, until the age of twenty-five but stipulates that childhood preceded this, ending when the individual was fifteen years old.⁶⁶ In *The Ages of Man: A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought* (1986), the English historian John Burrow has suggested this discrepancy was due to the multitude of theories 'on which Englishmen could draw on for their discussion of human life.'⁶⁷ These included traditions which varied in dividing an individual's life into three, four, six, seven and eleven stages, each with different age categories. Likewise, Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos has attributed these disparities in definitions to the fact that authors were presenting ideas on age-cycles within different fields of literature, including educational writings, scientific discoveries and religious tracts.⁶⁸ Though there was some inconsistency in agreement of what ages constituted each life-stage, these sources nonetheless show that childhood and adolescence were definitely recognised as separate phases in an individual's life. These were not only distinct from adulthood, but also from each other as clearly stated by George Gascoigne writing in 1575: 'there is a great difference between children and young men.'⁶⁹ For the purposes of this chapter, the terms infancy, childhood, adolescence and youth

⁶³ Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Castel of Helth*, (London, 1541).

⁶⁴ Thomas Fortescue, *The Forest, Or Collection of Historyes* (London, 1576), 37.

⁶⁵ Richard Mulcaster, *Positions Wherein Those Primitive Circumstances be Examined Which are Necessarie for the Training Up of Children* (London, 1581).

⁶⁶ William Bullein, *The Government of Health* (London, 1595).

⁶⁷ John Anthony Burrow, *The Ages of Man: A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 10.

⁶⁸ Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (New Haven & London: YUP, 1994), 11.

⁶⁹ George Gascoigne, *The Glass of Government* (New York: Tudor Facsimile Texts, 1970), fol.G3r.

will all be used to indicate consecutive ages in the pre-adult stage in life. Infancy will refer to the phase from birth to when the individual was no longer dressed in skirts, on adopting 'adult' dress they entered childhood. This was followed by adolescence, spanning from the early to mid-teens and then youth, which extends to the mid-twenties.⁷⁰

The deduction that there were recognised phases between infancy and adulthood is in direct disagreement with the theory first justified by Philippe Ariès in *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (1962). As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Ariès' publication is centred on the proposition that until later in the seventeenth century 'the idea of childhood did not exist.'⁷¹ He states that this was due to a lack of:

awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult...That is why, as soon as the child could live without the constant solicitude of his mother, his nanny or his cradle-rocker, he belonged to an adult society.⁷²

Centuries of Childhood argues that the negation of a distinction between child and adult as well as the non-existence of an adolescent stage was both the cause and effect of the lack of emotional bond between parent and child. Ariès argues that although it should be noted that children were not 'neglected, forsaken or despised,' this should 'not be confused with affection for children.'⁷³ The absence of a transitional phase between infancy and adulthood was also a view advocated by other scholars writing in the decade following the publication of *Centuries of Childhood*.⁷⁴ For example, social historians, Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt also assert the insignificance of infancy during this period. Their study, *Children in English Society: From Tudor Times to the Eighteenth Century* presents early-modern

⁷⁰ The definitions of adolescence and youth used in this chapter correspond with those used by Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos who states that they conform 'broadly to modern sociological terminology and covers what early modern Englishmen referred to, for the most part, as youth and young adulthood.' Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England*, 9.

⁷¹ Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 128.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ See: Llyod deMause, *The History of Childhood* (New York: Psychohistory Press, 1974); Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York: Basic Books, 1975); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

childhood as 'a biologically necessary prelude to the sociologically all important business of the adult world' and professes that children were 'looked upon as little adults.'⁷⁵

Much recent scholarship on historical childhood has been in response to the contentious observations made by Ariès and seeks to establish that childhood and adolescence did exist before the seventeenth century.⁷⁶ Authors such as Linda Pollock have criticised the work undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s by Ariès, Llyod deMause, Lawrence Stone and others as being an inaccurate depiction of the understanding and experience of historical childhood. In her preface to *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relationships from 1500 to 1900*, Pollock described these works as being 'full of errors, distortion and misinterpretation' which has resulted in this field of studies being an 'area dominated by myths.'⁷⁷ It is crucial to prove not only that a pre-adult stage did exist but that this was of a fairly lengthy duration. Ariès asserts that after the age of seven 'the child was immediately absorbed into the world of adults,' but I would argue that rather than jumping from infancy to adulthood there were arguably a series of stages that an individual passed through before attaining recognition as a mature adult.⁷⁸ This period of time between birth and maturity allowed for the process of constructing gender to begin. The core values of elite Elizabethan masculinity could be learnt and displayed throughout childhood and youth and, once these basics had been acquired, adulthood was reached. This may also go some way in explaining the blurred boundaries between different stages in the life cycle, it was not about reaching a set age which denoted adulthood but instead progressing through a succession of rituals and milestones. Masculinity was therefore a rite of passage which began during childhood.

⁷⁵ Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt, *Children In English Society: From Tudor Times to the Eighteenth Century*, vol.1 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969) 8, 348.

⁷⁶ For additional work on the perceptions and experiences of childhood and youth in the early modern period see also: Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500* (London and New York: Longman, 1995); Barbara Hanawalt, "Medievalists and the Study of Childhood," *Speculum* 77, no.2 (2002): 440-460; Andrea Immel and Michael Witmore, ed., *Childhood and Children's Books in Early Modern Europe, 1550-1800* (London: Routledge, 2009); Sandra Cavallo, Silvia Evangelisti, ed., *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family in the Early Modern Age* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

⁷⁷ Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relationships from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), viii.

⁷⁸ Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 329.

The majority of responses to claims that the concept of childhood did not exist tend to concentrate on dismissing assumptions made by Ariès and others that there was no parental and familial love towards children during the early modern period. For example, Linda Pollock encourages the assumption that affectionate emotion did exist in familial relationships and that 'parents throughout the centuries have obviously wished their children well, enjoyed the latter's companionship and for the most part delighted in their childishness.'⁷⁹ Ben-Amos has also utilised a range of primary sources including correspondence and diaries from the early modern period to demonstrate that 'children were a precious commodity, and that their arrival, especially in the upper-class families, were usually celebrated.'⁸⁰ However, Ariès' use of dress to support his statements that an appreciation of childhood was absent and has not fully been considered in recent literature. *Centuries of Childhood* deduces that early modern visual culture represent children as adults, 'reduced to a smaller scale' and 'without any other difference in expression or features.'⁸¹ Dress is presented as the central evidence to this suggestion, with Ariès stating that 'as soon as the child abandoned his swaddling-band, he was dressed just like other men and women of his class' and thus treated as an adult.⁸² However, I would argue that this statement is not accurate and that there was a clear graduation in dress worn by children which, although not as well-defined as child's clothing from the later seventeenth century onwards and worn for a much shorter time, is still distinct from items intended for adults.

These advancing degrees in childhood dress can clearly be seen in portraiture of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. At this time, newly-born babies were usually clothed in swaddling bands, which were made of plain strips of cloth, often linen, and bound around the baby's torso and legs. These served a protective function and were meant to restrict movement in order to keep the baby protected from accidents, as well as providing warmth.⁸³ Swaddling was practiced across the social classes, but wealthier families may have added a final layer of bands which

⁷⁹ Pollock, *Forgotten Children*, 211.

⁸⁰ Ben-Amos *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England*, 4.

⁸¹ Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 33.

⁸² Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 48.

⁸³ Ashelford, *The Art of Dress*, 274.

were decorated with lacework, woven edging or embroidery work. Due to the fact that these fabrics were used daily and were very likely to have been discarded once worn-through, there are very few examples surviving today from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. One sample dating from the early seventeenth century can however be found in the Victoria and Albert Museum's collection and is usually displayed in the British Galleries (Fig.3).⁸⁴ Made of white linen, this swaddling band consists of five sections stitched together, with two pieces embroidered along the edge in both a satin and eye stitch creating a geometric pattern and a pair of tying strings stitched onto two of the other sections. This custom can clearly be seen in the well-known portrait of *The Cholmondeley Ladies* painted between 1600 and 1610 and now in Tate Britain's collection (Fig.4). The two women shown in identical poses and seated upright in bed, each hold a baby which has been bound in white embroidered swaddling bands and an outer red christening robe.

After the first few months, swaddling bands were exchanged for an item of dress referred to as 'skirts,' arguably differentiating between new-born baby and infancy.⁸⁵ This next stage in childhood dress can clearly be seen in Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger's portrait of *Barbara Garnage, Lady Sidney, later Countess of Leicester with Six Children* (Fig.5). Grouped to the left of this painting are the youngest four of Lady Sidney's children all dressed in skirts and, to the right, her two eldest daughters already wearing the bodice and farthingale favoured by elite adult women in the 1590s. Both Lady Sidney's sons, Robert who is seated on the far left and William who is placed centrally reflecting his position as heir, are dressed in skirts which are not too dissimilar from those worn by their sisters. This portrait is particularly interesting in also showing what seems to be a further sub-section in children's clothing. On closer observation, Robert Sidney who would not have been older than one at the time this was painted is shown wearing an apron over his skirts and also dons a cap. Contrastingly, his older brother William Sidney who was six years old clearly wears bifurcated garments consisting of a doublet, possibly worn over a long-sleeved shirt, and skirts.⁸⁶ Skirts worn with aprons and caps are evident in a number of other

⁸⁴ At the time of writing, this example of a swaddling band is displayed in Room 58c, Case 2 of the British Galleries, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

⁸⁵ Please refer to Appendix I of this chapter for a glossary of dress terminology.

⁸⁶ Robert Sidney was born in 1595 and his brother William in 1590.

contemporary paintings including the c.1600 portrait of *Thomas Smythe Esq* (Fig.6) and William Larkin's slightly later c.1615 portrait of a baby which has been attributed in the past as being Lady Waugh (Fig.7). These may well be christening outfits and show strong similarities with the seventeenth-century white linen christening set in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig.8). However, it could also be suggested that this clear definition between skirts worn with aprons and caps to uncovered skirts showed a recognition between infants and toddlers which largely corresponds to modern definitions of these terms. It is reasonable to propose that from around two months old when babies no longer wore swaddling bands they were considered as infants, then when the apron was removed from the outfit they became regarded as toddlers.

Another portrait by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger painted around 1608, showing a boy aged two wearing uncovered skirts suggests that by this age the apron and bib had been removed (Fig.9). Bifurcated skirts and doublets continued to be worn over the next few years, as seen on the two young sons of Lettice Cressy, Lady Tasburgh of Bodney in a portrait referred to as *The Tasburgh Group* (Fig.10, c.1605) and also in the portrait of the five year old Charles I (Fig.11). In a further Gheeraerts the Younger mother and children portrait, this one of Lady Pope, the five year old Thomas and his younger brother Henry are wearing long, sleeveless robes over shirts rather than two separate garments for torso and legs (Fig.12, 1596). However, this still gives the impression that the boys were skirted, perhaps with the robes worn over the usual full skirts. All the male children which have been mentioned in these portraits are not over five years old and are on the cusp of the next stage in children's clothing.

A valuable insight into what this apparel may have involved can be found in a short passage contained within an advice manual dating to 1571 and written by Claude de Sainliens, a French native who moved to England and established a school for the sons of London merchants.⁸⁷ It takes the form of a dialogue between a boy named Francis and his maid, Margaret and describes the daily routine of getting dressed before school:

⁸⁷ On moving to England, Sainliens adopted the English surname 'Hollyband' which he published under.

Margaret: Ho Fraunces, rise and get you to schoole: you shal be beatem, for it is past seven...

Francis: Margerite, geeve me my hosen: dispatche I pray you: where is my doublet? Brying my garters, and my shooes: geeve m that shooing horne.

Margaret: Take first a cleane shirte, for yours is fowle...

Francis:...where have you layde my girdle and my inckhorne? Where is my gyrkin of Spanish leather of Bouffe? Where be my sockes of linen, of woollen, of clothe? Where is my cap, my hat, my coate, my cloake, my kaipe, my gowne, my gloves, my mittayns, my pumpes, my moyles, my slippers, my handkerchief, my sachell, my penknife and my bookes? Where is all my geare? I have nothing ready: I will tell my father.⁸⁸

This segment is useful in showing that, compared to infancy, the Elizabethan boy's wardrobe was now extensive. It also indicates that by the time boys were attending school, they had adopted the clothes of their adult counterparts. Francis has abandoned the skirts of his infancy and is now dressed in the 'hosen' and 'doublet' worn by the majority of men belonging to the Elizabethan upper and middle classes at this time. Again, portraits from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century evidently show this development in the dress worn by children. As mentioned, the portrait of Charles I painted by Robert Peake the Elder (Fig.11.) shows the future king as a five year old in skirts.⁸⁹ A second portrait, also by Peake the Elder shows Charles now aged about ten and wearing voluminous breeches gathered at the knee which gained in popularity during the Jacobean period (Fig.13). In an earlier portrait, his father, James I, is shown aged eight and wearing the earlier fashion of Venetian breeches, made of a green velvet and closed just below the knee with a pickadil edge (Fig.14). Baggy knee-length breeches were also worn by the nine year old Wat in the portrait with his father, Sir Walter Raleigh, who would later write the advice manual mentioned earlier in this chapter (Fig.15). Interestingly, Wat's deep blue matching breeches, stockings and doublet are distinctively more modern in cut and fit than the shorter hose, canions and stockings worn by his father. Wat also wears the falling

⁸⁸ Claude Hollyband, *The French Schoolemaister*, Dialogue 1: 'Getting Up in the Morning,' in ed. Muriel St Clare Byrne, *The Elizabethan Home Discovered in Two Dialogues* (London: Frederick Etchells & Hugh MacDonald, 1925), 1-2

⁸⁹ Charles I was born in 1600.

lace band which was popular in the early seventeenth century, in contrast to the standing ruff sported by his father. These images show the graduation from skirts to hose or breeches and indicates that this usually occurred when the boy was between six and eight years old.⁹⁰

It cannot be denied that children during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century were dressed in adult clothing from a relatively early age and that there is less distinct category of children's clothing than that found from the late seventeenth century onwards. However, Ariès' conclusion that upon leaving swaddling bands children were immediately dressed as adults is evidently incorrect. Furthermore, I would argue that the fact children wore the clothing styles favoured by adults during this period, this does not necessarily mean that they were treated as adults. This has been a theory forged by Ariès and favoured by a number of scholars working in the field of childhood studies. For example the social historian John Demos has stated that 'the fact that children were dressed as adults does seem to imply a whole attitude of mind.'⁹¹ Instead, on leaving behind the skirts of infancy, I would suggest that boys entered a liminal phase where they began to learn and absorb the ideals of masculinity but were not yet regarded as adults. In this context, the point at which boys were 'breeched' is more important in terms of gender construction than as a boundary between childhood and adulthood. Before this moment the basic style of dress worn by boys and girls were very similar with almost identical silhouettes and as a result could be labelled as gender-neutral. The move to doublet and breeches for boys or bodice and farthingales for girls was therefore an indicator of masculinity and femininity, as distinct from one another.

The fashioning of gender during childhood can also be seen in the postures and gestures used within visual representations of children during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Gestures which were fashionable in portraits of adult men during this period are clearly replicated in those of children. The most obvious example of this is the use of the 'Renaissance elbow,' a term coined by the Northern

⁹⁰ Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2003), 59; Ashelford, *The Art of Dress*, 276-277.

⁹¹ John Demos, "Developmental Perspectives on the History of Childhood," in *The Family in History*, ed. Theodore K. Rabb and Robert Rotberg (New York and London: Harper & Row, 1973), 139.

Renaissance art historian Joaneath Spicer and used to refer to the thrusting elbow created by resting the hand on the hip. This particular pose was prevalent in the portraits of men from the upper and middle classes during the early modern period and became synonymous with assertion and power but it also developed into a visual shorthand for masculinity. Spicer classifies this gesture as ‘indicative of boldness or control and therefore of a self-defined masculine role, at once protective and controlling, in contemporary society and in the microcosm of the family.’⁹² Thus when duplicated in the portraits of young boys, such as those of Charles I (Fig.13) and James I (Fig.14) it can be interpreted as a signifier that these specific traits of elite masculinity were being absorbed and displayed and is indicative of their education in the art of manliness.

This recognition of the point at which gender began to be constructed is also reflected in the terminology used to describe children during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. As part of his research presented in *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England, 1560-1640*, Paul Griffiths has tabulated a selection of descriptors used across 249 judicial records which mention the age of those involved in the court case.⁹³ These records are used by Griffiths to show the different stages of childhood and to clarify what names were given to them, such as ‘infant,’ ‘boy’ and ‘girl.’ Susan Vincent’s interpretation of this data is of interest to this chapter; she highlights the fact that these illustrate that up until the age of eight the term ‘child’ was used to refer to both male and female children and after this point the label ‘boy’ was applied.⁹⁴ This shows a differentiation between the genderless first few years of an individual’s life and the juncture at which gender was recognised and began to be fashioned. Furthermore, the point at which children were breeched and regarded as ‘boys’ also corresponds to when there was a change in how male and female children were educated. Initially brothers and sisters would have been raised together until about the age of seven or eight, when boys often left the family household in order to begin their formal instruction, either within another household

⁹² Joaneath Spicer, “The Renaissance Elbow,” in *A Cultural History of Gesture: From Antiquity to the Present Day*, ed. Jann Bremmer and Hermann Rodenburg (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 85

⁹³ Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England, 1560-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), Table 1.1 “The ‘Vocabulary of Age’ in Early Modern England,” 25

⁹⁴ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, 60.

or by attending a school such as Humphrey Gilbert's academy.⁹⁵ This step marked a move from the female-orientated domain of the nursery to more masculine environs, where they would study the necessary attributes and qualities of an elite English mode of masculinity.

Once commencing this education, boys would have begun to learn the necessary skills and characteristics which denoted their position in society and their future status as English gentlemen. Therefore, the portraiture of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century which depicts boys in miniature versions of adult dress could be seen to be a marker of the fact that these children had begun this training. Full manhood had not yet been attained but the process of culturally constructing gender had been initiated, thus rather than showing boys *as* men, these paintings represented boys in the process of *becoming* men. In addition, the nature of these child portraits as artistic representations should not be overlooked. They are much more complex than simple reproductions of reality and carry a number of layered messages and implications. Portraits often served the purpose of projecting desired images of the individual, creating an image of the person which was based on realism and likeness but also allowing for some manipulation or artistic licence. This use of visual representations as a platform to display desirable virtues and abilities and as a means for self-fashioning will be explored throughout the rest of this thesis. As children however, it is unlikely that the sitters of the portraits mentioned in this chapter would have had much, if any, involvement in the way they were represented. As a result, the influence of those commissioning these paintings, presumably the parents of the children shown or perhaps other family members, should also be taken into account. How far did these representations project their desires and hopes for their children to become exemplary examples of English gentleman or gentlewomen? With this in mind perhaps these portraits should also be considered as aspirational depictions of children, showing what or who these children may become in their future lives as adult men and women.

⁹⁵ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, 57-59.

iii. Arms and the Man: Maleness, Masculinity and Childhood Armour

The previous section of this chapter has outlined the importance of breeching in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century as a signifier that concepts of masculinity were introduced during childhood. However, this was not the only outward marker of the process of fashioning gender during this period. Children's armour and arms were also highly significant as an indicator that boys from the nobility and gentry had embarked upon their training to become future ideal gentlemen. Yet these fascinating objects are often overlooked, even more so than their adult counterparts, and have not been extensively studied before. In addition, the role armour played in constructing signifiers of gender during infancy, childhood and adolescence has only ever received a cursory reference.

One publication which does specifically focus on childhood armour, and is innovative in doing so, is *An Introduction to Princely Armours and Weapons of Childhood*, written by Bridget Clifford and Karen Watts.⁹⁶ Published in 2003, this short text was instigated by an exhibition titled *The Knight is Young: Princely Armours and Weapons of Childhood* which had run the previous year.⁹⁷ This showcase was presented in turn across the three sites belonging to the Royal Armouries and featured over forty examples of European and Oriental arms and armour made specifically for children and adolescents. Clifford and Watts' book provides a valuable narrative of historical childhood arms and armour, spanning from the Middle Ages through to the Victorian era and drawing from the extensive resources at the Royal Armouries for examples. A helpful summary of the military aspects of a boy's education is also included, mapping out the development in arms throughout each historical period. However, as acknowledged by the authors themselves, this was only ever intended as basic overview of the subject and formed one of a series of 'introductory guides to a range of subjects relating to the Royal Armouries' collection.'⁹⁸ Although extremely informative, it is not envisioned for a scholarly

⁹⁶ Bridget Clifford and Karen Watts, *An Introduction to Princely Armours and Weapons of Childhood* (Leeds: Royal Armouries Museum, 2003), foreword.

⁹⁷ The exhibition opened in September 2002 at the Leeds site before moving to Fort Nelson in Spring 2003 and The Tower of London in 2003 where it remained until closing in Winter 2004. The exhibition was co-curated by Bridget Clifford and Karen Watts.

⁹⁸ Clifford and Watts, *An Introduction to Princely Armours*, back cover.

audience and instead aims to be an 'easy-to-read' handbook for a diverse museum-visitor readership.⁹⁹ As such, it does not attempt to provide a detailed analysis of the cultural and social values of these objects, nor does it engage with armour in association with formative performances of gender during childhood. The discussion which follows in this final section of the chapter is therefore unique in highlighting the significant role armour played in constructing a specific mode of masculinity during childhood.

Notions of elite masculinity have always been strongly tied to military aspects and, as such, arms and armour as a site through which gender could be displayed seems inevitable. The significance of the association between warfare and gentlemanly masculinity is very much reflected in the advice literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. As outlined in the first section of this chapter, there were definite changes in the way in which the upper classes were defined as well as a shift in perceptions of which virtues denoted upper class masculinity. Interestingly though other qualities were introduced during the sixteenth century, military prowess which was the core attribute of medieval knight, was carried through from the Middle Ages to the early modern period. Amongst a range of intellectual and moral virtues, an aptitude in military skills was still retained as an essential requirement and remained synonymous with gentlemanly masculinity. This is apparent in a statement made by Sir William Segar, officer of arms to the court of Elizabeth I and Garter King of Arms under James I, in his publication *Honor Military, and Civill*. Segar argues that 'the Actions of Armes (chiefly on horseback) are, and ever have been used of Noble personages, and Gentleman of the best qualitie.'¹⁰⁰ Likewise Sir Thomas Elyot claims in *The Boke Named the Governour* encourages competence in equestrian disciplines. He says that a gentleman ought to be able 'to ryde suerly and clene, on a great horse' as this 'importeth a majestie and drede to inferior persones, beholding him above the common course of other men.'¹⁰¹ Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* also highlights the importance of a proficiency in arms, declaring that the courtier has a duty 'to know how to handle expertly every kind of weapon, either on foot or

⁹⁹ Ibid., back cover.

¹⁰⁰ Sir William Segar, *Honor Military, and Civill* (London, 1602), 2:49

¹⁰¹ Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Governour* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1537), fol.68v.

mounted, to understand all their finer points, and to be especially well informed about all those weapons commonly used amongst gentlemen.’¹⁰²

An aspect of the military qualities advocated as necessary for the Elizabethan gentleman was the introduction of technical as well as physical skills. Men from the nobility and gentry were now expected to understand and discuss warfare from a theoretical standpoint, in addition to being equipped to enter the battlefield. This adjustment was largely due to the transformation in the nature of warfare during the early modern period. By the late sixteenth century, the scale of warfare had dramatically increased with a move from smaller, isolated combats to more large-scale battles fought by organised armies consisting of great numbers of men.¹⁰³ This meant that military commanders had to be capable of controlling and manoeuvring their forces in multiple locations as well as making tactical decisions for both individual conflicts and wider wars. David R. Lawrence, an early modern historian of warfare and military performance, has described this development as fostering a ‘new aristocratic military ethos, an ethos that was an intermediary step between agonistic warfare of the medieval period and the more formalised, professionalism of the state-commission armies of the eighteenth century.’¹⁰⁴ The requirement for the Elizabethan gentleman to acquire a strategical understanding of warfare is clearly indicated by the rising number of publications on the theory and policy of war. Texts such as Peter Whitehorne’s *Certain waies for the order yng of Souldiers in battelray* first published in 1560 and reprinted in 1573 and 1588; Thomas Proctor *Of the knowledge and conducte of warres*, 1578; and William Garrard’s *The arte of warre* all offered instructions on the manoeuvre of troops, sieges, fortifications and strategms.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 61

¹⁰³ For more on the changing nature of warfare during the early modern period see: J. R. Hale, *The Art of War and Renaissance England* (Washington D.C.: Folger Library Press, 1961); Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Frank Tallet, *War and Society in Early Modern Europe, 1495-1715* (London: Routledge, 1992); M.C.Fissel, *English Warfare 1511-1642* (London: Routledge, 2001).

¹⁰⁴ David. R. Lawrence, *The Complete Soldier: Military Books and Military Culture in Early Stuart England 1603-1645* (Leiden & Boston: Brill Publishers, 2009), 20-21.

¹⁰⁵ Peter Whitehorne, ‘Certain waies for the order yng of Souldiers in battelray,’ in *The arte of warre, written first in Italia[n] by Nicholas Machiavell, and set forthe in Englishe by Peter Whitehorne, student at Graies Inne: with an addicio[n] of other marcialle feates and experimenes, an in a able in the ende of the booke maie appere* (London: John Kingston for Nicholas England, 1562); Thomas

These military skills, both practical and theoretical, were echoed in the advice literature written for children and adolescents in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Roger Ascham encouraged the young noble- and gentry-born boys to learn how to 'ride cumlie: to run faire at the tilte or ring: to plaie at all weapons: to shoot faire in the bow, or surelie in gon.'¹⁰⁶ Sir Humphrey Gilbert's proposal for his training academy also clearly emphasises the importance of a military education, although this may be to some degree reflective of his own background as a soldier in the 1560s and early 1570s. Gilbert's curriculum would have included the teaching of 'Martiall pollicy,' 'the distinct disciplines and kindes of arming, training and maintaining, of their soldiars,' mathematics pertaining to 'Imbattelinges, fortificacions, and matters of warre.'¹⁰⁷ Regarding more physical attributes, students would learn 'to skirmish on horseback with pistolles,' to rehearse 'søndrey kindes of marchinges,' exercise with 'the Rapier and dagger, the Sworde and tergat...the battaile axe and the pike' and 'shall once every moneth practize Canonrie.'¹⁰⁸ The Elizabethan upper-class boy was clearly encouraged to begin studying the necessary skills he would require once reaching adulthood and thus a military mode of masculinity was evidently being fashioned during childhood and adolescence.

This guidance was contained within literature but we know that there was definitely a practical application of this advice. Arms and armour made for children as well as visual representations of children wearing armour provide irrefutable evidence that military skills were being absorbed and performed by young boys belonging to the Elizabethan elite. Whilst these material sources are relatively scarce, it can be concluded from the European examples which do survive that there were three different forms of armour made for children during the sixteenth century. These were armours for the field, worn on the battlefield; for foot combat, used during tournaments; and for parade or ceremonial use, thus demonstrating that various styles of fighting were practised by children during this period. Interestingly, with one

Proctor, *Of the Knowledge and conducte of warres* (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum; New York: De Capo Press, 1970); William Garrard, *The arte of warre: beeing the onely rare book of myllitarie profession* (London: John Charlewood and William Howe for Roger Warde, 1591).

¹⁰⁶ Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, fol.19v-20r

¹⁰⁷ Gilbert, *Queen Elizabethes Achademy*, fol.2v, 3r,

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, fol.3v, 5r, 3r.

exception, my research has not uncovered any other proven English examples from the sixteenth century. This anomaly is the armour from Cotehele House, Cornwall which was discovered to have been a product of the Royal Workshops in Greenwich, under the direction of Erasmus Kyrkenar, and is thought to date to around 1550 (Fig.16).¹⁰⁹ It consists of a cuirass, gorget, tassets, poleyn, pauldron, couters and vambraces, fauld and culet of two lames each. Bridget Clifford and Karen Watts have linked this armour to Edward VI who would have been twelve or thirteen at the time this armour is thought to have been made and therefore would fit the dimensions.¹¹⁰ This conclusion is also based on the fact that at this date only the king would have been able to have an armour made from the Royal Workshops at Greenwich. The shortage of other examples of armour dating from this period, both English and from other workshops, may indicate that these objects were used on a regular basis. It is probable that they became damaged, re-used or outgrown and passed down to younger siblings, much like clothes and toys. This is significant in showing that armour was actively being used by children and that the military skills encouraged by advice literature were being applied rather than just read about.

Furthermore, examples of European childhood armour which do survive from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century seems to have been commissioned for and worn by those connected to the royal family only. These objects were extremely expensive and to have an armour made for a child who would grow out of it reasonably quickly, thus rendering it useless, would have been a huge investment and one that was probably only affordable for royalty. With this in mind, the shortage of armour made for English children from the sixteenth century and the seemingly complete absence of any from Queen Elizabeth's reign could be explained by the fact that there were no English princes at this time. It is not until Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales (1594-1612) and the future Charles I (1600-1649) were active that armour made for English children seems to reappear again. From surviving material, we know that both these princes had at least one armour each which was manufactured in England. Dating to 1608, the armour for field, tourney, tilt and barriers in the Royal

¹⁰⁹ The discovery that this armour was made in the Greenwich Workshops is outlined in: John Hayward, "A newly discovered Greenwich armour," *The Connoisseur* (April, 1958): 140-143.

¹¹⁰ Clifford and Watts, *Introduction to Princely Armours*, 13.

Collection would have been worn by Henry Frederick when he was fourteen (Fig.17). This blued armour was likely designed by Jacob Halder and is a product of the Greenwich Workshops. It is lavishly embellished with etched and gilt strapwork running across the entirety of the armour's surface and alternating with the blued steel ground. The decorative bands feature the 'HP' monogram under the coronet of the Prince of Wales, fleur-de-lis, Tudor roses and thistles, all symbolic of Henry's lineage and position as a future English monarch. A later example is the boys armour which dates to 1610 in the Royal Armouries collection and, although subject to many alterations, is English in origin (Fig. 18). The helmet has been embossed with an effective scaled pattern with the peak being shaped into a dragon's head. This particular armour has tentatively been suggested to have belonged to Charles I who would have been ten at the time this object was manufactured in 1610. It is particularly diminutive in size, measuring only 37.5 inches tall, and was unlikely to have fit an average ten year old boy. However, it is known that Charles suffered from fragile health at a very young age, the nature of which has led some scholars to suggest that he may have had rickets.¹¹¹ It is thought that this inhibited his growth and as an adult Charles was only five foot four in height, which suggests that the armour was indeed tailored to his small stature.

There is a similar lack of English paintings depicting children in armour from the sixteenth century but, again, there are some portraits from the early seventeenth century. Most notably, there are numerous visual representations of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales ranging from full-length oil painting, miniatures and prints. One of the earliest painted representation is the exquisite watercolour miniature attributed to Nicholas Hilliard and depicting the prince at the age of thirteen (Fig.19). In this three-quarter length portrait Henry wears an armour of French manufacture decorated with bands of gilt scrollwork in varying widths, his helmet topped with a sumptuous ostrich-feather plume sits on the table beside him. This armour still exists and also dates to 1607, it can be seen on display at the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle (object number: RCIN 72832). Also depicting the Prince of Wales in armour is

¹¹¹ Ibid., 21; J.J. Keevil, 'The Illness of Charles, Duke of Albany (Charles I), from 1600 to 1612: An Historical Case of Rickets', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, IX no. 4 (1954): 407-19.

the spectacular equestrian portrait by Robert Peake the Elder which forms part of the collection at Parham, Sussex (Fig.20). Here, Henry is mounted on an impressive white stallion and is wearing an ornately decorated armour for the tilt. His helmet, topped with an extravagant plumage that is dyed in the prince's colours, along with his jousting lance are carried by the allegorical figure striding beside him, who represents Father Time.¹¹²

Research on this latter portrait has attributed it to varying dates. In the National Portrait Gallery's 2012 exhibition on Henry Frederick, *The Lost Prince: The Life and Death of Henry Stuart*, the Parham portrait had been dated between 1606 and 1608.¹¹³ In contrast, Timothy Wilkes has claimed that this painting emerged from the workshop of Robert Peake between 1610 and 1611.¹¹⁴ I would argue that this portrait should be considered as dating to the later end of these suggestions, probably around 1608 which would make Henry fourteen years old. This is based on the fact that, as stated by Clifford and Watts, during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century boys would typically have not begun training with a tilting lance whilst mounted until they were fourteen years old.¹¹⁵ Becoming proficient in wielding a lance whilst on horseback was an extremely difficult skill to master. These instruments were usually around four metres in length and although hollow would have still seemed to weigh a considerable amount for a young boy.¹¹⁶ As a result boys gradually progressed up to this point in their arms training. They would have begun by running at each other with long wooden windmill-tipped poles, mimicking the action of tilting with the full lance. Following this boys would have rehearsed 'running at the ring,' and this required catching hoops on the edge of lances with sharpened tips. Also aimed to acquire the precision needed for tilting was an exercise involved using blunted lances to hit rotating targets called quintains. These three routines

¹¹² For a discussion of the emblematic devices within this portrait, see: Gail Capitol Weigl, "And When slow Time hat made you fit for warre," in *Prince Henry Revived: Image and Exemplarity in Early Modern England* ed. Timothy Wilkes (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2007) 146-165.

¹¹³ Catharine MacLeod et al., *The Lost Prince: The Life and Death of Henry Stuart* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2012) exhibition catalogue, 18 October 2012 – 13 January 2013.

¹¹⁴ Timothy Wilkes, "The Equestrian Portrait," in *Prince Henry Revived: Image and Exemplarity in Early Modern England* ed. Timothy Wilkes (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2007), 176

¹¹⁵ Clifford and Watts, *An Introduction to Princely Armours*, 6

¹¹⁶ Examples of sixteenth-century lances can be found in the Royal Armouries Collection. See the following object numbers for lances: VII.634; VII.1823; VII.550. For lance heads: VII.1543; VII.631.

were completed on foot and once they were mastered, boys would graduate to using lances on horseback. As stated, this would have usually been around the age of fourteen and, as the Parham portrait clearly shows the young prince mounted, dressed for the tilt and with a jousting lance, it is likely that Henry would have been this age or older at this point. However, there is an interesting early seventeenth-century child's armour in the Royal Armouries Collection, consisting of a helmet and cuirass, which suggests that some boys may have progressed to this level at an earlier age.¹¹⁷ The breastplate has two holes drilled into the side indicating that a lance-rest, now lost, would have originally been attached. Remarkably, the dimensions of the cuirass suggest it was made to fit a child of about eight years old meaning that the boy was at a very advanced level of training for this age.

Moving from practicing with scaled-down lances on foot, to using full-length tilting lances whilst mounted could be indicative of the graduation from childhood to adolescence. Of particular interest within this context is the portrait of Charles I by Robert Peake the Elder, mentioned in the previous section (Fig.11). Here, the five year old Charles is skirted but wears a single piece of plate armour around his neck, the gorget. Other garniture elements, an ostrich-plumed helmet and a pair of gauntlets are placed on the table besides him. The fact these pieces are placed beside him with only one item on the body of Charles is highly significant, showing that he is on the cusp of entering the next stage in his life cycle. At five years old, he would soon undertake the breeching ritual, begin wearing full armour and commence his education in becoming an adult male. As such, the two portraits of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales wearing full armour show that the prince has already entered this stage and had progressed from fighting on foot, to using a tilting lance whilst mounted (Fig.19 and Fig. 20). In addition, the fact that the Parham portrait shows Henry dressed for the tournament rather than the battlefield could be representative of the prince being on the threshold between adolescence and adulthood. The tournament in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century provided gentlemen with the opportunity of practising the combat skills required for battle. Therefore, this equestrian portrait shows that Henry may have still been within the training

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 19; the armour in question is the Royal Armouries collection, object number: II:124.

stage of his military career and had not yet applied his newly acquired skills in battle. This final stage would signify that Henry had reached an adult age and attained full manhood.

Armour clearly played a crucial role in signalling that boys had begun absorbing concepts of elite masculinity in the form of military skills, and acted as a platform for these constructions to be displayed. It was a visual symbol of the luxurious lifestyle regarded as necessary for the nobility or gentility, indicating that they had the time and wealth to invest in becoming proficient in the gentlemanly pursuits of jousting, riding and fighting with various weapons. These visual codes were not just confined to armour, but extended to the use of arms and other military material objects. Whilst there are few portraits of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century which show children in full armour, there are several which depict boys wearing military sashes and swords. For instance, the painting of Lady Sidney's children, shows William Sidney aged six adorned with an ivory military sash across his chest and a rapier encased within a red leather scabbard and hanging from an embroidered girdle (Fig.5). Lady Pope's eldest son is also shown with a rapier in the Gheeraerts the Younger portrait dating from 1596, his younger brother holds a bow in one hand and a fletched arrow in another (Fig.12). Although depicted without weapons, the two sons in *The Tasburgh Group* portrait are both shown wearing matching red sashes with lace trimmings (Fig.10).¹¹⁸

Like armour, these were indicative of an upper class status within late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century society. As a dress sword, rapiers were very much symbolic in function rather than being used in combat. In his publication *The Noble Art of the Sword: Fashion and Fencing in Renaissance Europe, 1520-1630*, Tobias Capwell explains that for gentlemen, these weapons were 'a reminder of the antiquity of their supremacy, of their ancient feudal rights, while also being suggestive of the contemporary ideals of courtly refinement and educated gentility.'¹¹⁹ The fact these

¹¹⁸ The use of arms within portraits of children was not just a painterly tool. Several examples of arms dating to the sixteenth and seventeenth century have been discovered. The Royal Armouries has an extensive collection of these objects including a German crossbow (object no.: XI.18), two English toy pistols (object no.: IX.5235; IVIII.125) and an English toy matchlock musket (object no.: XIII.10701).

¹¹⁹ Tobias Capwell, *The Noble Art of the Sword: Fashion and Fencing in Renaissance Europe, 1520-1630* (London: The Wallace Collection, 2012) exh cat. 17 May 2012-16 September 2012, 83.

objects were used in portraits of children who are still skirted and had therefore yet to begin their formal training is especially significant. As well as referring to the child's elite status it could also be argued that rapier, military sashes and other weapons were an indicator of not just masculinity, but also of maleness. They served the function of marking out the sex of the male child as distinct from female and were often the only distinct indicator in family portraits where both boys and girl are dressed in the skirts of infancy. These items were exclusively male and not associated with girls who, although could participate in the aristocratic pastimes of hunting and hawking, would have not undertaken training in arms, participated in fighting or jousted at the tournament. As such, arms and armour are unique in indicating both maleness and masculinity, sex and gender.

The chapter has highlighted that late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century concepts of masculinity were instilled, learnt and performed at an early stage in the elite male's life. Thus the process of culturally constructing gender began at young age. Whilst the advice literature of this period was crucial in introducing the qualities and skills necessary for the English gentleman to acquire in order to affirm his status, this chapter has sought to demonstrate that it was through material objects that this particular mode of masculinity was fashioned and displayed. These material signifiers – breeches, armour, rapiers – are crucial to our understanding of gender performativity during childhood and adolescence. At such a young age, these objects would have undoubtedly been formative in establishing an understanding of gentlemanly masculinity, which was then transferred to adult life.

CHAPTER TWO

PIGMENT

Painted towards the end of the sixteenth century, Nicholas Hilliard's exquisite full-length miniature of Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex (Fig.21) depicts the young favourite of Elizabeth I as ideal courtier, heroic military commander, chivalrous knight and, above all, devoted servant of the Queen. Thought to have been commissioned to celebrate his appearance at the Accession Day Tilt in 1595, the elegant figure of the Earl is dressed in extravagant gilt and etched armour, confidently looking out at the viewer. In the far distance of the background, just discernible, are a line of tents surrounded by soldiers and interspersed with artillery. Essex's left hand rests on the cloth covered table on which his elaborately plumed helmet is placed whilst his right hand, on his hip, draws our gaze towards the large cloth-of-silver bow, highlighted against the dark blued metal of the armour. Secured to the centre of the bow is a dainty velvet glove, edged in gold, which would have most likely been given to Essex as a favour for the tilt. Behind the luxurious white and gold embroidered tent a squire, dressed in the white and black colours of the queen, leads the Earl's stallion also armoured and wearing an exuberant large white-feathered plume.

The image of the Earl of Essex in his gilded armour belongs to a succession of full-length portraits, referred to as cabinet miniatures, which were painted by the English artist Nicholas Hilliard. There are only six known examples of this unique format surviving, a decidedly small percentage of Hilliard's prolific output of miniature portraits, and these were produced over a short period of time; the earliest being dated from around 1587 and the latest in around 1595. The first of these portraits is known as the *Young Man Among Roses* (Fig.22), painted around 1587 and widely accepted as being of Robert Devereux. Here, the Earl is depicted without his elaborate armour and is instead dressed in a fashionable doublet and hose. He leans cross-legged against a tree, entwined in the briars of a rose and looking out directly at the viewer with his hand over his heart. Although this miniature retained the oval shape favoured by Hilliard prior to this date, the other five examples which followed

are rectangular; *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (c.1590, Fig.23), *George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland* (c.1590, Fig.24), *Sir Robert Dudley, Styled Duke of Northumberland* (c.1591-1593, Fig.25), *Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex* (Fig.21) and finally, *Henry Percy, Ninth Earl of Northumberland* (c.1595, Fig.26). The individuals in these portraits are all influential members of the Elizabethan aristocracy and the court of Queen Elizabeth and, despite being in direct competition with each other, they have chosen to conform to the same mode of painterly depiction unique to these particular images. Departing from more traditional miniature compositions, this series of full-length portraits marks both a seminal shift in existing miniature painting and the visual representation of the male body. Using the miniatures of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex painted by Hilliard this chapter seeks to explore how we might interpret this pivotal moment in the painterly representation of the Elizabethan courtier.

To understand the significance of this change, it is important to place Hilliard's cabinet miniatures in relation to the perception and function of portraiture during this period and, more specifically, within the context of miniature painting in the English court. For courtiers such as Essex and his peers, constantly striving to present themselves as the ideal courtier in order to gain and retain the favour of the Queen, these painted portraits enabled them an opportunity to present a desirable and fashionable image of their self. Prior to the Elizabethan period, portraiture had been recognised as a powerful means of disseminating carefully fabricated images of the state and the monarchy. Images such as Hans Holbein the Younger's portrait of Henry VIII with his family (Fig.27), known as the Whitehall Mural, have been composed to project strong propagandistic connotations. Henry VIII stands below his father and the two male figures are mirrored by their female counterparts, Jane Seymour and Elizabeth of York. These figures can therefore be seen to represent a continuation of the Tudor family through two generations; the inscription on the stone plinth, revering the House of Tudor, further emphasises the dynastic purpose of the portrait.¹ The strength of the Tudor family is also embodied in the figure of Henry VIII

¹ Shearer West, *Portraiture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 109. The Latin inscription on the central plinth begins with: 'If it pleases you to see the illustrious images of heroes, look on these: no picture ever bore greater. The great debate, competition and great question is whether father or son is the victor. For both, indeed, were supreme.'

himself; he stands with legs firmly planted, his improbably broad shoulders turned towards the viewer in an almost confrontational stance, forming an image of masculine strength and dominance. This portrait has thus been commissioned to create an explicit message of the power and status of the Tudor reign.

However, it was during the latter half of the sixteenth century that this medium began to be exploited by those other than members of the royal family and individuals adapted portraits for their own personal agendas.² The increasing awareness of the opportunities portraiture provided has been closely linked to the development in the understanding of the individual self during this period. Portraiture exists as a genre which concerns itself with ideas of identity and, as Richard Brilliant has discussed, it can be viewed as a product of the human 'tendency to think about oneself in relation to others and of others in apparent relation to themselves and to others.'³ The realisation of a relationship between the external, physical appearance of an individual and the internal, psychological nature of the individual also developed during this period and was projected in the portraiture of this time. In her introduction to *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, Joanna Woodall argues that this concept transpired as a belief that a faithful recording of the sitter's likeness (sitter as object) assured an accurate depiction of the internal qualities of the individual (sitter as subject); the sitter in the early modern portrait was thus an external appearance showing an inward truth.⁴ Rather than limiting an understanding and appraisal of success to the mimetic likeness of the portrait in terms of visual resemblance between the portrait and the sitter, the 'perceived link between the image and the sitter's 'inner identity' was also appreciated within portraiture.⁵

The early modern English elite's fascination with documenting and recording their identity through the medium of portraiture manifested itself particularly in the commission and production of portrait miniatures. During the sixteenth century, this

² Tarnya Cooper, *Elizabeth I and Her People*, (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2013), 12

³ Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991), 14

⁴ Joanna Woodall, *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 13; David Summers, *The Judgement of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 11

⁵ Woodall, *Portraiture*, 10

category of images were labelled as limnings and the term 'miniature,' in the form of the Italian *miniatura*, did not appear in reference to this mode of portraiture until around 1627 when it was used in the title of Edward Norgate's treatise, *Miniatura or The Arte of Limning*. Deriving from the Latin *luminare* which means 'to give light,' the word 'limning' was used to refer collectively to a group of artistic practices including manuscript and book decoration or illumination, the design and manufacture of jewels and the design of schemes for stained glass.⁶ Limnings later developed into singular, independent images intended as objects used for private contemplation or simply as luxury decorative objects. Evolving from this initial style, portrait miniatures began to appear in the English and French courts throughout the 1520s and remained particularly popular throughout the sixteenth century. In the course of the reign of Henry VIII, three successive artists were appointed to create these delicate objects beginning with Lucas Hornebolte who was appointed to primarily oversee the production of illuminated manuscripts and, perhaps initially as a side line, to also paint portrait miniatures.⁷ Working alongside Hornebolte from about 1536 was Hans Holbein, who came to England accomplished in working in oil on panel but soon adapted to the new trend of watercolour miniatures and produced a number of limnings portraying various members of the royal family. Following the death of Hornebolte in 1543 and Holbein in 1544, Henry VIII engaged a female miniaturist, Levina Teerlinc, who arrived from the Netherlands in 1546. Later, when Elizabeth I took the throne, Teerlinc maintained her position in the English court both as a miniaturist and as a gentlewoman to the Queen, producing both single and group portraits as well as ceremonial court scenes.

Until the Elizabethan period portrait miniatures had remained very much the prerogative of the monarch; Hornebolte, Holbein and Teerlinc's paintings were, for the majority, limited to depictions of their sovereign and members of the royal family. It was not until Nicholas Hilliard (c.1547-1619) came into prominence during the 1570s that portrait miniatures began to be commissioned by a wider spectrum

⁶ For more discussion on the etymology of the word 'miniature' see: Katherine Coombs, "English Limning: The Portrait Miniature in Tudor and Early Stuart England," in *Treasures of the Royal Courts: Tudors, Stuarts and The Russian Tsars*, ed. Ol'ga Dmitrieva and T.V. Murdoch, (London: Victoria & Albert Museum Publishing, 2013): 45-55

⁷ Roy Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), 8.

of society. This was due to the fact that early on in his artistic career Hilliard, unlike his predecessors, was not officially a salaried artist of the crown and was thus able to accept commissions from individuals outside of the royal family.⁸ Even though this art form was now available to a larger number of people, portrait miniatures were still very much associated with the upper classes. The regal prestige associated with miniatures and their costly nature meant that these artworks were in high demand amongst the aristocracy and gentry during the Elizabethan period clamouring to assert their wealth and fashionable tastes. Thus, despite the fact that portrait miniatures now depicted a broader range of people, they still retained their appeal as rarefied, luxurious items. The exclusive nature of miniatures and their appropriateness as a medium through which to capture the likeness of the elite was advocated by Nicholas Hilliard himself in his writings on his artistic practice. A *Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning*, was never published and the original manuscript is thought to have been lost but there is a surviving transcript in the University of Edinburgh's library. Although not in Hilliard's hand, the ascription is widely accepted as belonging to the artist due a number of details mentioned by the author which correlate to known facts about Hilliard's career.⁹ The treatise is thought to be dated between 1598 and 1601 and is most likely to have been composed in response to Richard Haydocke's translation of Giovanni Paolo Lornazzo's *Trattato dell'ate delle pittura, scoltyra, ed architecture*, first published in Milan in 1584 and in the English edition, as *A tracte containing the Artes of curious Paintinge Carvinge and Buildinge*, in 1598. In this work, Haydocke praises the 'ingenuous illuminating or Limming' and states that 'when I devised with my selfe the best argument to set it forth, I found none better, then to perswade him to doe it him selfe, to the viewe of all men by his pen; as hee had before vnto very many, by his learned pencell which in the ende hee assented vnto; and by his promiseth you a treatise of his owne Practise that may, with all convenient speede.'¹⁰

⁸ Roy Strong, *Artists of the Tudor Court: The Portrait Miniature Rediscovered 1520-1620*, (London: Victoria and Albert Publishing, 1983), 12

⁹ Nicholas Hilliard, *A Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning*, ed. R.K.R. Thornton and T.G.S. Cain (Ashington: Mid Northumberland Arts Group, 1981).

¹⁰ Richard Haydocke, *A tracte containing the artes of curious paintinge carving buildinge written first in Italian by Io: Paul Lomatius painter of Milan and Englishes by R.H. student in physic* (By Joseph Barnes for R[ichard] H[aydocke], 1598), fol.5r.

In his thirty-two page reply to this request, Hilliard agrees with Haydocke's praise of limning and also asserts the prestigious status of this genre by claiming 'it excelleth all other Painting what soeuer in sondry points...beining fittest for the decking of princes books...and for the imitation of the purest flowers and most beautiful creaturs in the finest and purest coullers.'¹¹ Furthermore, Hilliard refers to limning as 'a kind of gentle painting,' denoting that this medium was suited to the gentleman and this could also infer that Hilliard was promoting his portraiture as being specifically suited to capturing and displaying gentlemanly attributes. Hilliard was arguably well-placed to understand the desired image of masculinity during this time and to appreciate the qualities and characteristics the Elizabethan male sitter wished to project in their painted images. Hilliard enjoyed the patronage and, in some cases friendship, of key players in the Elizabethan court such as Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex and through the conversation and company with these men, Hilliard would have presumably developed a comprehension of the particular mode of masculinity and messages these individuals wished to display.

Despite not being on the permanent payroll of the court, we know that Hilliard had a direct relationship with the Elizabethan court during the first stages of his career and this affiliation would have surely been an additional attraction to potential customers. Hilliard was initially associated with the court of Elizabeth I at a young age when he was carrying out his apprenticeship to Robert Brandon, the Queen's Jeweller. The earliest portraiture work of Hilliard's connected to the monarch, is the c.1570 painting of Queen Elizabeth often referred to as the *Coronation Miniature*, the original is now lost but there is a copy belonging to The Portland Collection, Nottinghamshire. Following this, in 1572, he produced another miniature portrait of the Queen as well as two larger oil panel paintings, known as the 'Pelican' and 'Phoenix' portraits. There are also additional records of payments to Hilliard from the Crown, including a reward in January 1573 for his 'good, true and loyal service' and later that year in October he received a £100 payment warranted by the Privy Seal.¹²

¹¹ Hilliard, *Treatise*, 62-64

¹² Chancery and Supreme Court of Judicature: Patent Rolls. Part 3. 17 November 1572 – 16 November 1573. C66/1096, National Archives, Kew.

In spite of these formative signs of patronage and an output of a number of portrait miniatures during these years, Hilliard departed for France where he spent some time serving the court of the Duke of Anjou, Elizabeth's future suitor and brother to King Henri III. There is little documentation to suggest why Hilliard embarked upon this particular venture, though Sir Amyas Paulet, Elizabeth's ambassador based at the French court, suggested that this trip was made 'with no other intent than to increase his knowledge by this voyage, and upon hope to get a piece of money of the lords and ladies here for his better maintenance in England at his return.'¹³ Perhaps we could suggest that these few years spent in France added to Hilliard's résumé and therefore his appeal as a portraitist. He could now boast of having worked as an artist for two royal courts and this continental experience may have enhanced his reputation, especially at a time when foreign artistic representation was somewhat uncommon.

i. The Miniature Portrait: Reality and Abstraction

Technically, Hilliard's miniatures follow the tradition first witnessed in the work of Lucas Hornebolte and used by both Holbein and Teerlinc. The portraits were painted predominately in opaque watercolours with fine brushes referred to as 'pencils' upon small sections of very fine parchment, or vellum. Using a starch paste, these pieces of vellum were stuck onto a backing usually made from playing cards which were cut into rounds, ovals or rectangles and carefully burnished on one side. These layers were then weighted until the paste had dried, sealing the two sections together, before being burnished again to ensure a smooth amalgamation between the vellum and card.¹⁴ It was not just the technical aspect of miniature-making that Hilliard had adopted, he also linked himself stylistically to his predecessors, stating that 'Holbein's manner of limning I have ever imitated and hold it for the best.'¹⁵ A comparison of Holbein's portrait of *William Roper* (c.1536, Fig.28), Sir Thomas More's biographer and Hilliard's oval miniature of *Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex* (1588, Fig.29) immediately ascertains that both artists certainly have a preference for a three-

¹³ Letter from Sir Amyas Paulet to Queen Elizabeth I, 8 December 1576 quoted in: Erna Auerbach, *Nicholas Hilliard* (London: Routledge, 1961), 11

¹⁴ John Murdoch, *The English Miniature*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 2; Carl Winter, *Elizabethan Miniatures* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1943), 6

¹⁵ Hilliard, *Treatise*, 69

quarter profile, including the head and shoulders and set against a bice or ultramarine background. There is also a strong linear handling of the sitter's faces in both examples; the definitive contours of William Roper's features are similar to the handling of Essex's facial characteristics and there is a noticeable almost solid outline to both faces.¹⁶ In his treatise, Hilliard advises that 'hatching with the pen, in imitation of some fine, well engraven portraiture...is first to be practiced and used before one begins to limn;' and this use of fine layers of hatching to build up individual facial features was evidently favoured by both painters.¹⁷ Looking closely at the oval miniature of Essex (Fig.29), this painterly practice can be observed; Hilliard has first applied a 'carnation' base in order to achieve the initial skin colour. 'Carnation' is not a colour in its own right but refers instead to the foundation flesh tones used in miniature painting, often created from a mixture of ceruse and red lead and to which massicot or ochre de rouse are sometimes added.¹⁸ On top of this, Hilliard has imitated Holbein and hatched in other transparent watercolours to build up the facial characteristics of Devereux. Blue-grey colours have been applied from the top of the forehead, down the side of the face, gently blending in the hairline. This starts to take on flecks of brown below the ear and moving under the chin, creating a shadow which may well be a close-cut beard and is certainly the same tone as the sitter's moustache and eyebrows. Essex's eyes and nose have been shaped by a layering of peachy highlights and light brown shadowing whilst red-pink tints pick out the form of his mouth.

Although their portraits share much in their modes of representation and are at first glance stylistically similar, I would agree with other scholars that on closer inspection Hilliard's work is in fact quite distinct from Holbein's approach. Hilliard's miniatures achieve an almost abstracted form of mimesis, an effect which is arguably a deliberate and considerable shift from the effects achieved by any antecedent. Jim Murrell, conservator and art historian, has described this abstract effect as being

¹⁶ **Bice:** blue, but sometimes green or tending to green. As minerals, blue bice (azurite) and green bice (malachite) are often found in close proximity and this can cause variations in the colour; **Ultramarine:** blue made of lapis lazuli, the costliest of pigments. (Definitions taken from: R.K.R. Thornton and T.G.S. Cain, ed. *A Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning*, 42-45).

¹⁷ Hilliard, *Treatise*, 101

¹⁸ **Ceruse:** white, non-metallic colouring; **Massicot:** yellow of various tones, made from lead and tin; **Ochre de rouse:** a dark yellow-brown iron oxide. (Definitions taken from: R.K.R. Thornton and T.G.S. Cain, *Treatise*, 42-45)

achieved by creating a two-dimensional aspect to the image.¹⁹ This is further emphasised by both a freer mode of brushwork which 'brings a flickering effect to his portraits,' distantly echoing that of Teerlinc's, and the use of a lighter, paler carnation.²⁰ However, it is the lack of shadowing that is most effective in creating the non-figurative and two-dimensional aspect which defines Hilliard's miniatures. Unlike 'great pictures [which are] placed high ore farr of' and 'requier hard shadows,' Hilliard advises that the painting of miniatures should avoid 'impeachment or reflections,' as 'noe wisse man longer remaine in error of praying much shadowes in pictures after the life, especially small pictures which ar to be wiued in hand.'²¹ Due to a lack of documentation, it is hard to determine how and why Hilliard developed this certain technique although he does provide an interesting account within *The Arte of Limning* which may provide an insight. When recounting the first time he 'came in her highnes presence to drawe' the Queen's portrait, Hilliard relates that Elizabeth showed him:

...howe shee notied great difference of the shadowing in the works, and diuersity of Drawers of sundry nations, and that the Italians had the name to be the cunningest, and to drawe best, shadowed not, Requiring of me the reason of it, seeing that best to showe ones selfe, nedeth no shadow of place but rather the open light.²²

This could be interpreted as an early influence of Hilliard's stylistic tendency to avoid the use of heavy shadows, favouring instead pale, smooth profiles appearing almost detached and silhouetted against darker, solid backgrounds. On the other hand, Hilliard could be cleverly bestowing royal favour on his chosen techniques, implying that he painted in a style preferred and supported by the queen.

The composition of Nicholas Hilliard's portrait miniatures should also be taken into consideration when discussing the idea of an abstracted mode of representation. As previously mentioned, in his smaller head and shoulders miniatures Hilliard favours a three-quarter profile and this is also applied to the larger cabinet miniatures he produced later on in his career. The individuals depicted in these full-length miniatures have almost identical stances (Figs. 23, 24 and 25). These men rest on

¹⁹ Murdoch, *The English Miniature*, 6

²⁰ Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*, 68

²¹ Hilliard, *Treatise*, 86 & 72

²² *Ibid.*, 84

their left leg, in the frontal position, with the bent right leg in profile. Their left arms are sharply bent at the elbow with the hand resting on the hip, whereas the right arm is outstretched and held away from the body with the hand grasping a lance or resting on a nearby surface.²³ With the exception of the portrait of *Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex* (Fig.21) which forms a mirror image to the other examples, these courtiers are turned towards their right and all have their gaze fixed on the viewer. In addition, there is a striking physical resemblance between Hilliard's male portrait sitters and it is arguably difficult to actually distinguish between each individual based on their facial features. Each have tightly curled, dark hair pushed backwards from their pale oval faces, only the styles of their facial hair offer any real differentiation. These physical similarities between Hilliard's courtiers together with the repeated poses and gestures create a pattern to the artist's portraits; a template which is repeated with minor variations in both the small and full-length likenesses, further accentuating the abstract nature of Hilliard's miniatures. These duplications are somewhat problematic in arguing that these images are proponent of a presentation of the self and subvert the purpose of the painted portrait as an act of recording identity through physical likeness. However, I would suggest that the identity of the sitters is conveyed instead through the emblematic schemes integrated within Hilliard's miniatures during the 1580s and 1590s.

The increasing popularity of the cult of the emblem during the Elizabethan period was indisputably of extreme importance and widely impacted both verbal and visual arts. During the 1580s this fascination had reached a particular peak and society witnessed a momentous outpouring of various modes of emblematic devices, evident in a variety of visual and verbal arts, from painting and poetry to clothing and architecture. In *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture*, Michael Bath asserts that by the end of the seventeenth century there were at least fifty emblem books published in England alone, in over 130 editions.²⁴ In addition to this, there were at least a thousand published on the continent during the same period which would have also been circulated amongst English Elizabethan readers.²⁵

²³ Auerbach, *Nicholas Hilliard*, 112

²⁴ Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and the Renaissance Culture*, (London and New York: Longman, 1994), 7.

²⁵ Peter. M. Daly, *The English Emblem and the Continental Tradition* (New York: AMS Press, 1988), 2

It is generally agreed that the first English emblem book was actually unpublished and unprinted, remaining in manuscript form. Thomas Palmer's *Two Hundred Poosies* (BL MS Sloane 3794) was written in 1565 or 1566 and comprises around 200 emblems dedicated to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. The first printed English example was Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems, and Other Devises, For the moste parte gathered out of sudrie writers, Englished and Moralized and Diver Newly Devised*, published in 1586. This too was dedicated to the Earl of Leicester and contains 248 emblems which are a combination of devices sourced from other authors and Whitney's own inventions. Of equal prominence was Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britanna* although this book wasn't published until 1612 it contains many of the designs which were associated with notable courtiers and the Accession Day tournaments during the Elizabethan period.

According to some contemporary definitions, emblems have been identified primarily as pictorial symbols; for example in the 1587 *Dictionarium Linguarium Linguae Latinae et Anglicanae* they are defined as 'picture worke of wood, stone, or metal, finelie set or painted in divers colours, as in chess-bourdes and tables: small images, flowers, or like ornaments set on plate, or other thing by a vice, to take off, and put on when we will.'²⁶ However, it is generally agreed that within the emblem book the emblem is defined as a combination of image and text. The use of an accompanying text was of equal importance and allowed the reader to be certain of the intended meaning of the image. Both Whitney and Peacham's emblems have a clear tripartite structure, consisting of the *inscriptio*, the *pictura* and the *subscriptio*, which was the standard composition of the Elizabethan emblem (Fig.30). The *inscriptio* takes the form of a short motto or quotation and is customarily positioned above the *picture*, the image section of the emblem. Below this follows a longer text, the *subscriptio*, which is usually a verse or prose piece either composed by the emblemist or quoted from another author and explains the meaning of the emblem as a whole.²⁷

²⁶ Thomas Thomas, *Dictionarium Linguarium Linguae Latinae et Anglicanae* (London: Richard Boyle, 1587).

²⁷ Alan Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments* (London: George Philip, 1987), 123

Although Hilliard's style was already recognisably different at an early stage in his career, the first incorporation of symbolic imagery within his miniatures marked a definite departure from the representational modes used by his predecessors. Emblems had been incorporated into portraiture throughout the Elizabethan period, but Hilliard developed a new approach for incorporating these symbols into the painted image of the sitter rather than placing them in isolation on the surface of the image. Armour, along with the accoutrements of the tournament was a crucial platform for this. The first known departure from the pattern Hilliard had hitherto adhered to is the portrait of an unknown man painted in 1585. The sitter is placed against the usual blue background, in three-quarter profile and the portrait is of the head and shoulders. However, a gold-lettered motto has been placed around the edge of the miniature, above the sitter's head, which reads 'free from all filthie fraude' and the man is shown with a small pansy either in front of, or pinned to his doublet. This is the first example within the portraiture of Hilliard of the use of symbols and mottos, to further embellish the depiction of the sitter; alluding to thoughts, ideals and emotions of the individual. In this particular example, although we are now unfortunately unable to ascertain the identity of the man, we are able to reasonably assume that the sitter is assuring the recipient of the portrait of the purity of his love. The pansy, also referred to as love-in-idleness, was used by Queen Elizabeth as a symbol of her chastity and the fact that this flower is placed over the sitter's heart tells us that it is the virtuousness and integrity of his love which he is referring to. The motto serves to complement this symbolic device.²⁸ In the following year Hilliard produced a portrait of *George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland* (Fig.31) which further departed from the more conventional portrait miniature format. Here, Hilliard has maintained the oval shape of the miniature but has removed his customary blue background and replaced it with a stormy sky, complete with sheets of rain and a lightning bolt shaped as a caduceus. Above Cumberland's head is another motto picked out in gold lettering which reads in Latin '*Fulmen aquasque fero*', translating as 'I bear lightning and water.' In this example, Hilliard has devoted the usually plain background of the miniature entirely to symbolic devices; the sky-

²⁸ Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*, 96

scene is not simply a naturalistic backdrop for the figure of George Clifford but serves to project coded meanings to the intended viewer.

Although this portrait of *George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland* marks a pivotal moment in Hilliard's career and a significant development of the emblematic portrait miniature, it is the series of full-length cabinet miniatures mentioned at the beginning of this chapter which are most formative. Like the oval-shaped portrait of George Clifford (Fig.31), these cabinet miniatures also completely abandon the conventional blue background previously favoured by both Hilliard and his predecessors. Instead, these courtiers are depicted in either a romanticised, Arcadian landscape or within the luxurious interior surroundings of tents. However, it is the departure from the conventional head and shoulders, their larger size and rectangular outline which are key to their singularity in terms of Hilliard's prior work and the genre of portrait miniatures thus far. There is no documentation which explicitly explains the reason for this drastic and temporary stylistic change. It is reasonable to suggest that Hilliard may have drawn inspiration from the larger canvas portraits being produced by other artists associated with the court of Elizabeth I at this particular time. Portraits such as Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger's depictions of *Captain Thomas Lee* (1594, Fig.32) and another of *Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex* (1596, Fig.33) were contemporary with Hilliard's cabinet miniatures and show the subject standing against a fictionalised rural backdrop, their figure filling and dominating the composition. Gheeraerts was among several other painters at the Elizabethan court such as Hans Eworth, Cornelius Keel and George Gower who had begun to revive the full-length standing portrait which had achieved popularity during the later years of Henry VIII's reign and therefore it is not unfeasible that Hilliard may well have been influenced by the work of his peers.²⁹ The Essex miniature also shows a close similarity with the pose seen in the Federico Zuccaro portrait of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (Fig.34); with one hand on his hip and the other resting on a table, Essex's gestures are the mirror image of Dudley's. This is significant due to the fact that Essex was seen to be establishing himself as heir to Dudley, his stepfather, in terms of court position and favour with the Queen.

²⁹ Auerbach, *Nicholas Hilliard*, 110, 112

However, I would suggest that the decision to move away from the small portable shape of his earlier limnings and to allow these cabinet miniatures to become independent images in their own right was more developed than this. It is possible to interpret this change as Hilliard responding to new representational requirements of the social group portrayed within these images. Mere reproduction of the likeness of the sitter no longer met the needs of the male Elizabethan courtier; instead this new gentleman who possessed a developed understanding of his own unique identity coveted a more complex portrayal of his character. Hilliard's innovative format allowed for a far more intricate and multifaceted symbolic scheme to be depicted than would have been possible in the confines of the more traditional head and shoulder format.

ii. The Portrait Miniature as Impresa

Hilliard's rectangular cabinet miniature of Robert Devereux (Fig.21) shows the Earl clad in gilt armour and positioned just outside his white, green and gold embroidered tent. Nearby his squire tends to the Earl's stallion, also armoured, and in the far distance amongst the fields additional tents can be seen surrounded by other knights completing military manoeuvres. This portrait is thus set within a military context, a framework which is shared by the other cabinet miniatures with the exception of *Young Man Among Roses* (Fig.22) and *Henry Percy, Ninth Earl of Northumberland* (Fig.26). *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (Fig.23), *Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex* (Fig.21), *George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland* (Fig.24) and *Sir Robert Dudley* (Fig.25) are all portrayed in their sumptuous armour and their surroundings can evidently be associated with the tournament. Sir Anthony Mildmay is standing either just within or at the edge of his blue and white decked tent and the luxurious fabric backdrop for Sir Robert Dudley's portrait can also be assumed to be the interior of a tent. George Clifford has instead been portrayed entirely within a rural landscape but, like the other individuals, he is also surrounded by accoutrements of the tilt. The contextual setting of the tournament for the majority of these cabinet miniatures must be deliberate and retain significance beyond a merely commemorative purpose.

Essential to the understanding of these images in relation to the Elizabethan tournament and the function of the symbolic schemes which they employ, is a consideration of the use of *imprese* during this period. Many of the devices which featured in the emblem books mentioned earlier in this chapter derived from the *imprese* shields used by the participants of the Accession Day tournaments. The presentation of these shields to the Queen was a new requirement introduced during the reign of Elizabeth I and was central to the rituals preceding the tournament.³⁰ Each knight competing in the tournament was obliged to compose an *impresa*, which was then painted upon a small pasteboard shield and presented by his page to the Queen on his entry to the tournament. Unlike the tripartite structure of the emblem, with motto, image and text, the *impresa* omits the accompanying verse or prose extract. In addition, according to William Drummond's *A Short Discourse upon Impresa's and Anagrams*, rather than the text explaining the image, as is the case with the emblem, the written words can articulate a different aspect of the intended meaning. Drummond states:

Though emblems and *impresa's* sometimes seem like each other, what is perfection in an emblem, is a great fault in an *impresa*. The words of the emblem are only placed to declare the figures of the emblem; whereas, in an *impresa*, the figure expresses and illustrates the one part of the author's intention, and the word the other.³¹

Furthermore, the *impresa* differs from the emblem in that it expressed a personal characteristic and was a 'manifestation of some notable and excellent thought of him that conceived it' and 'it only belongs to him,' rather than serving as a 'demonstration of some general thing.'³² This perception that the *impresa* 'only belongs' to one individual is of considerable importance to our interpretation of Hilliard's cabinet miniatures; just as the 'self' was understood as something to own, making it a unique belonging of the individual, the *impresa* also becomes exclusive through its possession. The unique ownership of the *impresa* is also highlighted in a

³⁰ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 123

³¹ William Drummond, "A short Discourse upon Impresa's and Anagrams," in *William Drummond of Hawthornden: The Works. Consisting of Those Which Were Formerly Printed, and Those Which Were Design'd for the Press. Now Published from the Author's Original Copies* (Edinburgh: James Watson, 1711), 228-9.

³² Drummond, "A short Discourse," 228-9

quote from William Camden, author and herald who was present at many of the Accession Day tilts. In his 1605 publication, *Remaines Concerning Britaine*, Camden supports Drummond's definition and adds that 'an *Impresa* (as the Italians call it) is a device in Picture with his Motto, or Word, borne by Noble and Learned Parsonages, to notifie some particular conceit of their own, as Emblems...do Propound some general instruction to all.'³³ Again, the exclusivity of the *impresa* in comparison to the emblem is underlined here; the *impresa* articulates a 'particular' notion, personal about or to the author and has been devised with a single self in mind, whereas the emblem expresses only a generalised notion which could be applied to any individual. In addition, both Camden and Drummond's definitions draw attention to the fact that the *impresa* is both devised and used by the one individual; in other words, it is implied that the *impresa* should not be the product of another person. With this in mind, we can reasonably assume that the courtiers depicted in Hilliard's cabinet miniatures actually formulated their own symbolic schemes and are therefore actively fashioning their selves within the portrait.

Unfortunately no *impresa* shields from the sixteenth century survive, consequently our understanding of them is dependent entirely on the versions found in emblem books and the representations of them within paintings and drawings. An early example of one such visual representation is a pencil drawing from the College of Arms collection showing pairs of knights jousting and intended to demonstrate how points can be scored during the tournament (Fig.35). Above each knight is a shield with the individual's *impresa* depicted upon it. The detail shown is of a knight with the Dudley ragged staff upon the horse's bard and, on the shield, an ostrich with a key in its beak below the motto *Spiritus durissima coquit* ('a noble mind digests even the most painful injuries'). He rides against his opponent who bears an image of water crashing against a rock beneath the motto *Conantia frangere frangunt* ('they break those who are trying to break them.'). Based on the knights shown competing, Alan Young has dated this drawing to 1559-1560 verifying that *impresas* were used during tournaments from the very beginning of the reign

³³ William Camden, *Remaines Concerning Britaine* (London, 1870), 336-337

of Elizabeth I.³⁴ The portrait miniatures of Nicholas Hilliard also allow us an insight into the use of impresas within the environ of the Elizabethan tournament.

The full-length cabinet miniature of George Clifford painted by Hilliard in about 1590 (Fig.24) shows the Earl of Cumberland in his sumptuous gilded armour, decorated with gold eight-pointed stars. Behind the impressive figure of Cumberland, hanging from a branch of a tree, is a pasteboard shield bearing an impresa made up of an image of the sun, the moon and the earth aligned under the motto *Hasta Quando*, roughly translating as ‘a lance at any time.’ This portrait was most likely commissioned to celebrate the Accession Day tournament of 1590 when Cumberland succeeded Sir Henry Lee as the Queen’s Champion. The motto could therefore imply Cumberland’s readiness to act on the Queen’s behalf and defend her honour. The image, of the planets all aligned, suggests a simultaneous solar and lunar eclipse. Such an event would never occur, suggesting that Cumberland is expressing his willingness to defend the Queen indefinitely.

In this painting, Hilliard has directly referenced the impresa used by Cumberland on this particular occasion. However, he also makes more subtle allusions to emblematic devices and the use of imprese within the context of the Elizabethan tournament. In his full-length cabinet miniature of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex (Fig.21), Hilliard has again depicted the knight in his lavishly decorated armour but instead of including a pasteboard shield the impresa is incorporated into the Earl’s armour. Although somewhat damaged, it is possible to identify a sequence of diamonds enclosed within a circle embroidered onto either side of his bases.³⁵ Above this, on both sides and written in a scroll, are the words *DUM FORMAS MINUIS* which has been translated by Alan Young as ‘while you shape, you diminish’ and, more recently, by Tarnya Cooper as ‘while you form me, you deform me.’³⁶ Writing in 1602, the diarist John Manningham documents that he saw a shield fitting this description hanging in the Shield Gallery at Whitehall and refers to this as

³⁴ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 126-127.

³⁵ This can be seen more clearly on the right side of Essex’s bases, just below his hand resting on his hip. The left hand repeat of this device is placed on the point the bases circle round the back of the Earl and his gold rapier belt crosses through the middle of it.

³⁶ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 140; Cooper, *Elizabeth I and Her People*, 99.

belonging to Essex.³⁷ In addition, the diamond motif and accompanying motto are also recorded as belonging to Essex in William Camden's *Remaines Concerning Britaine* (1605). Camden notes that 'the late Earl of Essex took a Diamond only amidst his shield, with this about it, '*Dum Formas Minuis.*' Diamonds, as we all know, are impaired while they are fashioned and pointed.'³⁸ Camden thus suggests that the impresa should be read as a reminder that diamonds are always diminished when they are cut and Essex could perhaps be alluding to idea that he could 'not be fashioned without an element of his nature being lost.'³⁹ The fact that the miniature strongly features the Queen's colours, black and white, and that the Earl is wearing Elizabeth's glove as a favour on his arm also add to the reading of this impresa; Essex is directing his message towards the Queen and is perhaps suggesting that his flaws should be accepted alongside any virtues in his behaviour.⁴⁰

The intention of this impresa is perhaps more fully understood when we take into account the context of this particular miniature in terms of events which were occurring in Essex's life. It is widely acknowledged that the full-length armoured miniature of the Earl of Essex (Fig.21) was painted to commemorate Essex's participation in the Accession Day Tilt of 1595; it is significant that prior to this particular event, the Earl had recently gone through a period of friction with Queen Elizabeth. In 1590, Essex had considerably angered the Queen by secretly marrying Frances Walsingham, Sir Philip Sidney's widow and his subsequent attempt to regain royal favour was an evident struggle. For two years before the 1595 Accession Day Tilt, Essex had sought 'by every means in his power' to have his close acquaintance Francis Bacon appointed as both Attorney-General and then Solicitor-General.⁴¹ However, Essex significantly failed in these aspirations and also in his plans concerning the role of State Secretary; Elizabeth appointed Robert Cecil, Lord Burghley's son, to the Privy Council in 1591 indicating that both the Queen and Burghley were setting Cecil up for this prestigious role, much to Essex's infuriation.⁴²

³⁷ John Manningham, *The Diary of John Manningham of the Middle Temple, and of Bradbourne, Kent, barrister-at-law, 1602-1603.* (Westminster: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1868), 4

³⁸ Camden, *Remaines Concerning Britaine*, 384-85

³⁹ Cooper, *Elizabeth I and Her People*, 99

⁴⁰ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 140

⁴¹ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 174

⁴² *Ibid.*

The thwarted political ambitions of Essex feature heavily in the content of the series of dramatic speeches the Earl delivered during the 1595 Accession Day Tilt;⁴³ Cecil and Burghley are alluded to in the use of the characters of the 'melancholy dreaming Hermit' and the 'busie, tedious Secretary' who Essex is 'tormented' by.⁴⁴ Although the speeches contained political satirical comments at the expense of Burghley and Cecil it was ultimately concerned with Essex's devotion to Elizabeth. The failure to instate Francis Bacon to a major position within the court and Robert Cecil's recent promotion caused much tension and hostility between Essex and Elizabeth; and thus the symbolic devices used for this particular tournament can be interpreted as an attempt by the Earl to regain his favour with the Queen. As Alan Young has commented, 'Elizabeth's courtiers quickly learned an appearance at a tournament, when they had been out of favour, together with a suitable impresa, might well turn the tables again.'⁴⁵ In the final section of Essex's speech of 1585, which was performed after the tournament, Essex proclaims that for Elizabeth's 'defence and honour, he will sacrifice his life in the warres, hoping to be embalmed in the weete odours of her remembrance. To her seruice will he consecrate all his watchful endeuors.'⁴⁶ Furthermore, contemporary records referring to these dramatic presentations comment on the performance as a 'darling piece of love, and self-love' rather than a political satire, with Essex playing the role of Erophilus (Lover of Amorousness).⁴⁷ Essex proclaims that he will renounce his personal ambition, his self-love and will direct his attentions to the service of his true love, Queen Elizabeth. In partnership with the use of the diamond impresa, Essex is evidently attempting to regain the Queen's support and his position as favourite courtier.

⁴³ Unfortunately only fragments of these speeches exist, written in various hands and obscuring a definite determination of the author. In his edited *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon* (1858), James Spedding collates various excerpts pertaining to the speeches from manuscripts held at Lambeth Palace.

⁴⁴ Francis Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon: Volumen VIII* ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis and Douglas Denon Heath (London: Longman, 1858) i:378.

⁴⁵ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 136

⁴⁶ Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, viii:i:

⁴⁷ Sir Henry Wotton, "The parrallell between Rob[ert] Devoreux, late Earle of Essex and George Villiers, late Duke of Buckingham: with certain worthie observations in the times of their estates and favoures in court worthie of noate and readinge: manuscript [ca.1641]," in *Reliquiae Wottonianae. Or, A Collection of lives, letters, poems; with characters of sundry personages: and other incomparable pieces of language and art. By the curious pensil of the ever memorable Sir Henry Wotton Kt, late, provost of Eton Colledg.* (London: Thomas Maxey, 1651), 21

The representational system of Essex's miniature thus far concerns itself with the romanticised notion of a pure devotional love, a concept imbued in the chivalric cult of the Elizabethan period. However, it can be argued that this image of Robert Devereux is also imbued with explicit sexual connotations. This is clearly evident in the representation of Essex's mount which is clearly ungelded; it seems that the composition here has been carefully considered and is not coincidental. It can be conjectured that the impresa is in fact in line with the stallion's testicles; the emblematic device on the Earl's bases are centrally placed within the image and our gaze is drawn horizontally to the genital area of the horse on the left and if this line was continued to the right, it would pass through the Earl's counterpart. We can suggest that the stallion has been used by Hilliard to reflect characteristics of the Earl, the horse acts as Essex's alter-ego, untamed and imbued with masculine virility. This reading could also provide another level of interpretation to the emblematic device used by the Earl; the diamond could instead allude to the Earl's crude and unrefined sexuality being tamed, 'shaped' and 'diminished' into a veneer of the polished, cultured courtier we initially see portrayed in the miniature.

Within this context, the colour of Essex's horse can be seen as contributing to the overall symbolic scheme. In the 1590s, white was associated with attribute of innocence, virginity and youth and would thus represent a virtuous type of love. However, this is destabilised by the fact that Essex's mount is a stallion, clearly emphasised within the miniature's composition, which usually infers connotations of virility, masculine strength and sexuality. Again, Robert Devereux could be highlighting that he is capable of a romanticised version of love, expected of and practised by courtiers, and is devoted to his Queen in this respect, but that he is also a young, macho soldier. An additional dual characteristic is brought into play by the use of black within the miniature, seen in the costume of the groom and on both the Earl's and his horse's armour, which often implied gravity and responsibility. Significantly, Elizabeth I strongly favoured this specific colour combination and wore them on a regular basis in order to project the joint message that she was virginal but powerful, young but wise. The use of black and white and their united meaning would have been recognised and understood both on a private level, by the Queen herself and by a wider audience of the court and public. Much like the use of the

pose from the Zuccarro portrait of Robert Dudley in order to invoke specific connotations, Essex is again channelling an established representational scheme in order to project his own messages. Here, the Earl can be seen to be conveying that although he is youthful and energetic, he is also capable of seriousness and therefore an ideal candidate for a distinguished position, politically or within the military.

The Essex miniature therefore contains various meanings and emblematic devices intended to project complex layers of meaning rather than a single, static interpretation. It is innovative by using both established symbolic and pictorial schemes but also, more significantly, in pioneering an entirely new form of portraiture. The first full-length miniature produced by Hilliard was of Essex and it is fair to suggest that this may have been more at sitter's request rather than being singly attributed to ascertain status and stand out from peers and predecessors. His lineage was important and thus his links to Robert Dudley were apparent, but he also needed to distinguish himself on his own merit. The new form of miniature was a means of achieving this and showed that he was brave, pioneering and innovative. Furthermore, it was use of armour within this image and the placement of the portrait within the environment of the tournament that allowed for a full symbolic scheme to be conveyed, in a way that a more conventional civilian portrait of the sitter in everyday dress would not allow.

iii. Material Presentation and Painterly Representation

The physical characteristics of Hilliard's portrait miniatures encourage close observation and allow for the artist to depict complex codes to be deciphered. Unlike large-scale portraits the miniature is not dominated by the physical presence of the sitter, allowing the viewer to consider the painting as a combination of small details and pictorial devices contributing to a whole. When viewing full-length grand portraits, the individual is often required to look at the painting from a distance in order to appreciate the sitter and their surrounding accessories. In addition, this style of portraiture is often displayed in public spaces for the benefit of multiple viewers. The miniature, in comparison, was commonly viewed by the Elizabethan aristocracy

in the most private rooms of the house and only amongst intimate friends, the closeness of the gaze formed an 'essential aspect of the viewer's experience.'⁴⁸ In an account from a meeting with Elizabeth I in 1564, Sir James Melville, ambassador to Mary, Queen of Scots, provides an illuminating account regarding the private contemplation of the miniature. He recounts that the Queen took him:

...to her bedchamber, and opened a little cabinet, wherein were divers little pictures wrapped within paper, and their names written with her own hand upon the papers. Upon the first that she took up was written, *My Lord's picture*. I held the candle, and pressed to see the picture so named. She seemed loath to let me see it; yet my importunity prevailed for a sight thereof, and found it to be the *Earl of Leicester's* picture. I desired that I might have it to carry home to my Queen; which she refused, alleging that she had but that one picture of his. I said, your Majesty hath here the original; for I perceived him at the farthest part of the chamber, speaking with Secretary Cecil.⁴⁹

This anecdote reveals that Elizabeth kept her miniatures out of sight in a cabinet, wrapped in paper and away from the gaze of others, unlike the more traditional display of larger portraits upon the walls of houses and other interiors. These objects were then taken out, uncovered and looked at in the hands of the viewer. This tactile handling of the miniature is far removed from the distanced observation of larger portraits and creates an intimacy which is significantly distinct from other portrait genres. Smaller miniatures such as the oval portrait of *George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland* (Fig.31) painted between 1586 and 1587 or the earlier painting of the *Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex* (Fig.29) were created to be worn on the person. Miniature portraits were often enclosed within a locket which was enamelled and jewelled and could be worn in a number of ways including around the neck, pinned as a brooch or suspended from a chain at the waist. This practice was tied up with the popular function of the portrait miniature as a love token and appealed to the cult of chivalric romance within the Elizabethan court. Whether worn as jewellery

⁴⁸ Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt, *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 96; Ellen Chirelstein, "Lady Elizabeth Pope: The Heraldic Body," in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture. C1540-1660*, ed. Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), 45

⁴⁹ James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill 1535-1617*, ed. Francis Steuart (New York: Dutton, 1930), 94.

or simply held in the hand, a sense of ownership was generated, a possession of not only the object but of the sitter as well. As David Piper has indicated, 'they are the indeed the most personally intimate form of portraiture: their littleness...providing an ambiguous sense of ownership of the subject.'⁵⁰ Owing to the fact that portrait miniatures were not displayed as paintings in the conventional sense and also served a different purpose as an accessory, the distinction between the status of the miniature as an object or artwork is evidently blurred. Indeed, there are some examples of contemporary references to portrait miniatures as jewels, including the scene in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* where Viola presents Olivia with a trinket saying 'Here wear this jewel for me, 'tis my picture.'⁵¹

The techniques and media used in the production of Hilliard's miniatures further encouraged these portraits to be considered as jewellery. As mentioned previously, Hilliard's work has some definite stylistic differences from his predecessors and this is particularly noticeable in his unique approach to the representation of different textiles, metals and other materials. Using his initial training as a goldsmith, Hilliard was able to make technical developments in the use of metallic pigments, allowing him to realistically mimic various jewels and materials.⁵² Previously miniaturists had used a powdered pigment to represent gold whereas Hilliard used a liquid form, which must 'be the finest and purest gold', mixed with a minimum amount of gum for the inscriptions and outlining borders of his miniatures. This was then burnished with small animal teeth to bind the particles and create a polished surface which 'must be sparkling and pleasant'.⁵³ For the gold mounts of the jewels a yellow ochre base was first painted and built up into layers to create a slight relief; this was followed by a layer of gold or silver paint. Hilliard suggested that this should be burnished as 'neede requireth...then drawne vppon with black in Squares lyke the diamond cut, other stones must be glased vppon the Silver with their proper cullors

⁵⁰ David Piper, *The Genius of English Painting* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1975), 78

⁵¹ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, ed. R S White (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), 3:4:10

⁵² Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*, 68

⁵³ V.J. Murrell, "The Art of Limning," in *Artists of the Tudor Court: The Portrait Miniature Rediscovered, 1520-1620*, ed. Roy Strong (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1981) 6-7; Edward Norgate, "A More Compendious Discourse Concerning the Arte of Limning, the Nature and Properties of the Colours," in *A Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning*, Nicholas Hilliard, edited by R.K.R. Thornton and T.G.S. Cain (Ashington: Mid Northumberland Arts Group, 1981), 124

with some varnish etc.⁵⁴ The splendid armour depicted in Hilliard's portraits was created in a similar way with liquid silver which was:

dryed and burnished with a small Wessells tooth handsomely fitted into a pensill stick then tempr the shadow for yor Armour with silver Littmus and A littell umber, an worke Yor shadows vpon and ouer the silver according to the observations in the Liffe the burnish silver to be Left for the heightnings, the deepnings, must be ye deepest of yor shadows, the thinner parte whearof with some store of silver, must bee sweetly and neatly wrought.⁵⁵

Other precious and semi-precious stones were created using a combinations of pigments and a meticulous and extremely skilled use of highlights and shadowing. In *The Arte of Limning*, Hilliard records his process of painting pearls within his miniatures. These were first:

layed with a whit mixed with a littel black, a littel Indy blewe, and a littel masticot, but very littel in comparison with the whit...That being dry, give the light of yr Pearle with silver some what more to the light side than the shadowe side, and as Round and full as yo can then take good whit delayed with a littel Masticot, and underneath at the shadowe side give it a Compassing stroke which shows the reflection that a Pearle hath then without that a smale Shadowe of Seacole undemost of all.⁵⁶

Contemporary accounts of the Accession Day tournaments provide vivid descriptions of the armour 'glittering like the moon's bright rays' and the sun-like appearance of knights such as Sir Henry Lee in his 'glistring Mazor' all 'Glittering in golden coats, like images;/ As full of spirit as the month of May,/ And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer.'⁵⁷ Unfortunately, the original glittering effects of Hilliard's armour and jewellery worn by his aristocratic sitters has somewhat been diminished due to the oxidisation of the silver, which has eventually turned black, and the

⁵⁴ Hilliard, *Treatise*, 98

⁵⁵ Norgate, *A More Compendious Discussion*, 124

⁵⁶ Hilliard, *Treatise*, 98

⁵⁷ George Peele, *Polyhymnia: Describing the honourable Triumph at Tylt, before her Maiestie, on the 17. Nouember, last past, being the first day of the three and thirtith yeare of her highnesse raigne. With Sir Henrie Lea, his resignation of honour at Tylt, to her Maiestie, and receiued by the right honourable, the Earl of Cumberland* (London, 1590),17-18 ; Joshua Sylvester, *Bartas his Devine Weekes and Workes* (London, Humfrey Lownes, 1605), 135; Shakespeare, *King Henry IV: Part 1*, ed. David Scott Kastan (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2002) 1:4:1

deterioration of the other metallic pigments.⁵⁸ However, Hilliard's depiction undoubtedly captured the dazzling polished metal of armour and the sparkling precious stones adorning the lords and ladies of the Elizabethan court.

This realistic simulation of metal and jewels arguably further obscures the definition of the miniature as a decorative or fine art, but conceivably this enhances our understanding of these portraits. Roy Strong is amongst those who encourage this lack of distinction, arguing that we should put aside our relatively modern definitions and instead analyse these items from a sixteenth-century viewpoint. He states that 'there was no such thing as only a miniaturist or a limner' but instead artists were practitioners of various arts and crafts, from panel painting and jewellery making to tapestry design and engraving, and that 'our failure to recognise or face up to the consequences of this has led to a total distortion of the limning story' and the interpretation of the miniature.⁵⁹ With this in mind, perhaps the portrait miniature should be studied as a painted image *and* a valuable decorative object. This combined definition brings with it connotations of portability and the private viewing of a personal effect, encouraging a condensed and concentrated reflection which lends itself perfectly to the cult of the coded, personal emblem enjoyed by the Elizabethan elite.

In conclusion, the emblematic schemes used within Hilliard's portrait miniatures, both small and large, were entirely dependent on the ability of the viewer to decode them. The Elizabethan elite were uniquely equipped to comprehend the complex symbolic programmes used within these visual representations. Members of the aristocracy would have had the 'social competence' acquired through interaction with other Elizabethan visual and verbal culture. For example, knowledge of numerous literary publications on the subject of courtly romance, such as Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590), went some way in cultivating the readers and provided the opportunity for the reader to familiarise themselves with certain symbolic devices used within the context of the contemporary cult of chivalry. There are also speculative notions that some form of publication, outlining the speeches

⁵⁸ Murrell, "The Art of Limning," 7

⁵⁹ Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*, 8.

and the emblematic devices used by the participants, was circulated during the course of the tournament. Indeed there is a degree of evidence to suggest that these texts did in fact exist but it is impossible to ascertain in what format they were published and how exclusive they were. The Revels Accounts for 1588 records a payment 'for the fair writing of all the devices on the 17 day of November...in two copies for the Queen' but it is highly likely that this was intended as a gift to Elizabeth, for her own personal use and perhaps lent to a few privileged spectators.⁶⁰ No examples of these books have been known to survive to this day and their temporary nature seems to have been acknowledged by contemporaries; William Segar comments in *The Booke of Honour and Armes* (1590) that 'all the Speeches, Emblems, Devices, Posies, and other Complements' are now lost 'for want of observation, or lack of some sufficient man to have set them presently down.'⁶¹ If the transiency of this material was recognised by contemporaries, could Nicholas Hilliard's armoured portrait miniatures be viewed as deliberate visual records of the imprese and 'other Complements' of the Elizabethan tournament? The design of each competitor's tournament entry required a great deal of thought and money and may well have been used only once; these paintings enable individuals to preserve their elaborate armour, costume and complex imprese and to commemorate the event as a whole. These portraits exist as the only remaining evidence of the complete tournament devices used by participants. The textiles, armour, speeches, and other trappings are all dismantled and separated in the aftermath of the event; it is only the painted representation which remains as material evidence of the symbolic schemes as a whole. In turn, it could also be further suggested that these portrait miniatures can themselves be interpreted as imprese, as images to be decoded and read as a narrative. Michael Bath has argued that, as such, they can be regarded as 'exercises in Renaissance self-fashioning where emblematic details are included in the portrait in order to project a public image of the subject' and express 'particular political or ideological message[s] in which the aspiration or moral intention of the sitter is defined.'⁶² Additionally, if we

⁶⁰ Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (London: Thames and Hudson), 145

⁶¹ William Segar, *The Book of Honour and Armes* (London: Thomas Orwin, 1590), 102

⁶² Bath, *Speaking Pictures*, 10

can truly comprehend Hilliard's cabinet portrait miniatures as more than a simple documentation of the impresa then the figure has moved beyond mere mimetic representation and has become fully abstracted.

However, it is interesting also to explore the notion that the comprehension of these portraits did not solely depend on the 'reader's recognition of the conventional attributes or associations of the images used.'⁶³ In order for the true and entire understanding of the symbolic narrative contained within these images to be realised, the viewer would have arguably required a close, personal relationship with the sitter. The unique nature of the impresa used within Hilliard's portrait miniatures arguably meant that there must be a high level of familiarity between viewer and sitter in order for the viewer to fully appreciate the symbolic language used; an intimate knowledge of the subject's personal ambitions and their private desires. Perhaps we could suggest that the one individual who was exceptionally well-placed to interpret the multifaceted meanings within all of these paintings was Queen Elizabeth herself.

⁶³ Ibid.,73

CHAPTER THREE

TEXTILE

Written in the decade following the queen's death, William Camden's historical account of the reign of Elizabeth I observed that 'these days' were typified by 'a wondrous Excess in Apparel [which] had spread itself all over England.'¹ The full-length cabinet miniature of George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland (Fig.24) stands as a testament to this statement. It is a visual record of the unprecedented extravagance and luxuriousness in appearance which would come to characterise this period. Painted in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, Nicholas Hilliard's portrait shows the Earl in his role as the Queen's Champion, clad in an outfit devised for his tournament entry. His parade armour is of blued-steel and embellished with gold, eight-pointed stars which cover the entirety of the metal surface. Each section of armour is also edged with a further decorative band of gilded strapwork. Over the top of this, Cumberland wears an equally ornate surcoat held together at the waist by a gold girdle.² The rich sky-blue garment is trimmed by a wide band of cloth of gold which is studded by large clusters of various gemstones set in gold. The blue exterior of the surcoat is offset by a white pearlescent lining, embroidered around the inside of the cuffs with armillary spheres and leafy branches as well as being trimmed with gold braiding (Fig.36). These colours and gold-threaded motifs are again repeated in the coordinating high-crowned hat worn by Cumberland, which is also festooned by a large plume of costly ostrich feathers protruding from the base. A single dark-coloured glove, presumably a token from the queen, is secured to the upturned wide-brim of the headwear by another large jewel, again consisting of gemstones set in gold and a large drop pearl hanging from the bottom. Adding the finishing flourishing touches to the impressive outfit are the Earl's gilded rapier, tournament lance and impresa shield; the latter accoutrements painted in blue and gold, complementary to the colour scheme.

¹ William Camden, "The History of Queen Elizabeth." In *A Complete History of England with the Lives of all the Kings and Queens Thereof; From The Earliest Account of Time, to the Death of His late Majesty King William III Containing a Faithful Relation of all Affairs of State Ecclesiastical and Civil*. Vol.II. (London, 1706), 452.

² See Appendix I for glossary of dress and armour terms.

With its mixture of lavish materials, colours and accessories, the initial impression of this image is one of ostentation and immoderation. Each element of Cumberland's outfit has been carefully designed and produced to exude a luxuriousness and richness that was so well favoured amongst the courtiers in the orbit of Queen Elizabeth at this time. The Elizabethan enthusiasm for vivid colour-schemes, embroidery and other decorative flourishes typified the clothing of this period. It marked a clear distinction from the more reserved and subtle tastes favoured earlier in the sixteenth century and which still lingered on in the initial years of Elizabeth I's reign. The sombre and dignified fashions which were preferred during these years, as seen in the c.1565 portrait of the English merchant Sir Thomas Gresham (Fig.37), are clearly distinct from the vivid ensembles popular from the 1570s onwards. Although a variety of techniques such as embroidery, braiding and slashing have been used to decorate Gresham's clothing, the impact is somewhat muted in comparison to outfits such as those worn by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester in portraits painted just ten years later (Fig.38 and Fig.39). The distinguishable vibrancy of clothing at the Elizabethan court was made possible by the unparalleled variety in fabrics, colour, ornamentation and styles which were available to those who could afford them. The selection of cloaks alone, 'one of the most prized items in the fashionable man's wardrobe,' was remarkable.³ These garments were obtainable in:

Diverse and sundry colors, white, red, tawnie, black , greene, yellowe, russet, prurple, violet, and infinite other colours: some of cloth, silk, velvet, taffetie and such like, whereof some be of the Spanish, French and Dutch fashion. These cloakes must be...laced and thorowly faced; and sometimes so lined as the inner side standeth almost in a smuch as the outer dies; some have sleeves, other some have none; some have hoodes to pull over the head, some have none; some are hanged with points and tassels of gold, silver or silk, some without al this.⁴

This overwhelming diversity was due, in part, to the fact that during the sixteenth century each garment had begun to gain an independent status, resulting in each element of the individual's outfit becoming a distinct entity, available in an assortment of fabrics, clothes and shapes. This development rapidly gained

³ Jane Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I* (London: B.T. Batsford,1988),49

⁴ Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London: R Ward for William Wright,1583), fol.28v-29r

momentum and arguably reached a peak during the later decades of Elizabeth's reign. In her exploration of dress amongst the early modern elite Susan Vincent has suggested that prior to this period, articles of clothing had been 'subordinate to the effect of the total assemblage.' She states that this had dramatically altered by the end of the century and that each wardrobe item 'had an independent and striking visual existence.'⁵ Whilst the clothing of the earlier sixteenth century was by no means meagre, it was unmatched by the increasing demand for ornate decoration, brighter colours, luxurious fabrics and precious jewels which marked the Elizabethan taste for striking effects in dress.

However, the 'gaudy' nature of Elizabethan apparel was not to everyone's taste and these fashions soon instigated an outpouring of moralist literature and social commentary condemning their excess.⁶ Writers such as George Gascoigne (c. 1535 – 1577), Elizabethan poet and soldier, denounced the 'proude man' with his 'delycat garments and precious ornaments' and the great Elizabethan playwright Thomas Nashe (1567-1601) satirised the Elizabethan courtiers who showed 'the swellings of their mind, in the swellings and plumpings out of theyr apparrayle.'⁷ Perhaps the most well-known and widely read of these tracts inspired by puritan ideals and principles is *The Anatomie of Abuses*. Written by Philip Stubbes and first published in 1583. Stubbes attacks numerous aspects of contemporary customs, pastimes and behaviour but it is the 'execrable sinne of pride, and excesse in apparell' which he views as the 'greatest abuse.'⁸ A lengthy portion of his text is, rather ironically, dedicated to extensive descriptions of the garments which were worn by the men and women of Elizabethan society. The variety and luxuriousness of the clothing available is derided by Stubbes as showing 'defiance to virtue' and he believed that through indulging in this excess, the 'soules' of people were 'thereby deformed.'⁹ Furthermore, *The Anatomie of Abuses* also cautions that 'niceness in apparell' makes

⁵ Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2003), 29

⁶ Camden, "The History of Queen Elizabeth," 452

⁷ George Gascoigne, *The droomme of Doomes day VVherein the frailties and miseries of mans life are liuely portrayed and learnedly set forth* (London: 1576), 45; Thomas Nashe, "Christ's Tears Over Jerusalem," in *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, edited by R.B. McKerrow, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), ii:151

⁸ Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, fol.4v

⁹ Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, fol.22v, fol.31r

the wearer 'weake, tender and infirme' and is reflective of a 'corruption of the heart.'¹⁰ In making such observations, these indignant critics reveal a key insight into the understanding of dress during the late-sixteenth century. By claiming that an indulgence in ostentatious adornment of the body was a sure sign of a corrupt inner nature, Stubbes and his contemporaries imply that apparel could affect and also reflect the moral character of the wearer. The temperament and values of an Elizabethan man could seemingly be revealed through an examination of the cut, colour and fabric of their doublet, hose and hat.

The notion that the outward appearance of an individual could be seen to correlate to their internal character was not only perceptible in moralist and religious instruction. Throughout Elizabeth's reign the practice of evaluating a person's disposition by their appearance was debated passionately and at length by various philosophers, theorists, poets and pamphleteers. This societal topic was also regularly addressed by the authors of advice manuals and court etiquette guides which circulated amongst the aristocracy at the time. Placed alongside deliberations regarding the sporting abilities, musical accomplishments, military prowess and other skills deemed necessary for the ideal courtier, the 'clothes our courtier ought to wear' were considered with equal assiduousness.¹¹ Baldassare Castiglione's hugely popular manual for the Renaissance gentleman, published in 1561 as *The Courtier* in the English translation, advocated that the importance of selecting an outfit should not be overlooked. Duke Federico and Gaspare Pallavicino, characters within Castiglione's book, deliberate whether 'a man's attire is also no small evidence for what kind of personality he has' and suggest that 'he should decide for himself what appearance he wants to have and what sort of man he wants to seem, and then dress accordingly, so that his clothes help him to be taken for such.'¹² Castiglione encourages the male courtier to be selective in his choice of attire as it would be read by his peers as an indicator of the sort of man he was. Here, dress is understood to be crucial in fashioning a desirable appearance; to become regarded as an exemplary courtier, one had to look the part. These contemporary examples of the ways in

¹⁰ Ibid., fol.24r,fol.45r

¹¹ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (London: Penguin Books, 1976),135

¹² Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 136

which Elizabethan society viewed dress as a reflection of personality determine that items of clothing were not simply functional. Thus, although the excessive nature of dress during this period can evidently not be negated, extravagant displays such as George Clifford's (Fig.24) should be understood as being more than just a foolish pride in appearance. We should instead interpret dress and accessories as playing an essential role in the cultivation and expression of markers of social identity.

The analysis of the cultural value of dress has been the subject of more recent interdisciplinary research and scholarly discussion within the wider field of material culture.¹³ The study of everyday objects, alongside textual and visual sources, has been demonstrated to reveal a 'rich evidence of social life embedded in their fabric.'¹⁴ Items ranging from shoes and hairpins, to spoons and chairs have been explored as a means of retrieving a more comprehensive understanding of aspects such as gender, age, religion, domesticity and status throughout different historical periods.¹⁵ Due to its intimate relationship with the body, dress in particular has been analysed as 'exemplary biographical objects' and 'a particularly rich vein for material culture studies.'¹⁶ In her extensive account of Elizabethan dress, Jane Ashelford has highlighted the importance of using clothing as 'an invaluable index to society's changing attitudes.'¹⁷ She argues that items of men's and women's apparel should be regarded as a 'visual expression of the sensibility, preoccupations and pressures of society.'¹⁸ Similarly, historian Ulinka Rublack has discussed 'dress displays and their visual presentations' and questions these as 'part of cultural arguments about display and identity.'¹⁹ Using this approach in relation to specific garments, David Kutcha has explored clothing as a 'form of power, enacting the articulation, negotiation and

¹³ See such publications such as: Bella Mirabella, ed. *Ornamentalism: The Art of Renaissance Accessories* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011); Peta Motture and Michelle O'Malley, *Re-thinking Renaissance Objects: Design, Function and Meaning* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011); Ulinka Rublack, "Matter in the Material Renaissance," *Past and Present*, 219, 1 (May 2013): 41-84.

¹⁴ Peta Motture and Michelle O'Malley, *Re-thinking Renaissance Objects*, 8

¹⁵ Motture and O'Malley, *Re-thinking Renaissance Objects*, 2

¹⁶ Victoria Kelley "Time, Wear and Maintenance: The Afterlife of Things," in *Writing Material Culture History*, ed. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 191; St George, 1988:30

¹⁷ Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 7

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 25

personalisation of power.²⁰ Kutcha traces the evolution of the three-piece suit from the sixteenth- to the nineteenth century and claims these garments were reflective of the 'political culture' and 'political ideals of masculinity' at the time they were being worn.²¹ Likewise, Will Fisher has discussed the social significance of objects such as handkerchiefs and codpieces and has emphasised the way in which gender is materialised through these objects.²² His study of the codpiece in the sixteenth-century seeks to encourage an understanding of these articles of clothing as sites 'through which male bodies and masculinity were culturally constructed.'²³ Through their research both Kutcha and Fisher establish that dress can provide a key insight into aspects of early-modern group identity such as social status and gender.

Although shared sartorial trends, such as the peascod doublet or the codpiece are crucial in revealing common cultural values and group identities, the deviations in these popular styles are also essential in showing the beliefs and qualities which were unique to the individual. When we consider the clothing worn by someone, it is apparent that there are always divergences from the standard fashion; selections in colours, cuts, materials and embellishments are made to suit their personal tastes. Anne Hollander has addressed these layers of identity which are reflected in dress and states that whereas similarities in style 'reflected common self-awareness,' a 'difference in individual psychological flavour was also given scope.'²⁴ She continues by explaining:

You could choose your own colours for ribbons and the petticoats, and embroider your stomacher with fanciful variety, so people could judge your taste; but you always wore the correct number of skirts and the right form of headdress, so people would know your

²⁰ David Kutcha, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550-1850*. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002), 7

²¹ David Kutcha, *Three-Piece Suit*, 7; David Kutcha, "The Semiotics of Masculinity in Renaissance England," in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Images*, ed. James Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 233.

²² Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Will Fisher, "'Had it a codpiece, 'twere a man indeed': The Codpiece as Constitutive Accessory in Early Modern English Culture," in *Ornamentalism*, ed. Bella Mirabella, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 102-129

²³ Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 68.

²⁴ Anne Hollander, *Sex and Suits: The Evolution of Modern Dress* (New York: Knopf, 1994), 19

village, whether you were married, and whether you were dressed for work or church.²⁵

Dress should therefore be understood as indicative of both the individual and group aspects of a person's identity. Furthermore, these deliberate personal preferences were also a means through which individuals could express traits which they found desirable and to conceal those which were more disagreeable. In her publication *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (2010), Ulinka Rublack also addresses this concept; she advocates that early-modern clothing should be considered as part of a complex 'symbolic toolkit through which people could acquire and communicate attitudes towards life and construct realities in relation to others.'²⁶ More importantly, Rublack brings attention to the fact that people were 'able to manipulate these symbolic toolkits for their own purposes.'²⁷ These conscious choices to adopt certain vogues and to tailor their finer points to suit individual tastes demonstrates that dress serves as a fundamental visual presentation of identity and is a crucial element in the process of self-fashioning.

The methodologies used in dress history and material culture studies to discern the values and beliefs of past societies have not been comprehensively applied to the study of armour. This chapter will show that the approach of determining dress as a means of constructing representations of the self can be effectively extended to armour. It will argue that armour is equally imbued with social and cultural signifiers and that a more thorough understanding of these objects, and the individuals who wore them, can be achieved through analysing them within this context. Although correlations between armour and dress have been made by several scholars, armour is rarely treated *as* dress and has therefore not been discussed within the same methodological framework. Spanning from the 1920s to the early-1960s, Stephen Grancsay, former Curator of Arms and Armour at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, wrote numerous articles on armour, both from the museum's collection and beyond. Yet relatively few of these concern the associations between armour and dress and, when dealt with, these discussions are largely limited to outlines of the similarities in

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Rublack, *Dressing Up*, 25

²⁷ Ibid.

shape and design.²⁸ Echoing Grancsay, Angus Patterson's *Fashion and Armour in Renaissance Europe: Proud Looks and Brave Attire* (2009) also draws attention to the 'stylistic links' between armour and dress which 'worked both ways' and maintains that the interaction between the two was 'close and complex.'²⁹ Neither Grancsay nor Patterson considerably explore the meaning of the decorative patterns evident on the surface or their relation to the formation and display of identity. These symbolic schemes are addressed by Roy Strong in his numerous publications on Elizabethan portrait painting, but the emphasis here is on a reading of the armoured portraits as a visualisation of the tournaments which took place during Elizabeth's reign.³⁰ The physicality of the armour and the way it constructed gender and identity is not discussed at any length. The exception to this tendency is Carolyn Springer's *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance*, which does explicitly recognize the importance of armour in the process of self-fashioning. Springer describes armour as 'texts to be read: overdetermined objects traversed by multiple formal and figurative codes' and as a 'portrait of the self.'³¹ This recognition of the relationship between armour and identity is innovative and marks a seminal change in direction within the field of armour studies. However, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Springer limits her exploration to readings of 'patriarchal succession' and 'the nature of aristocratic privilege.'³² Although armour can indeed be analysed as a platform for 'genealogical vaunting,' this chapter seeks to highlight that the markers of identity which these objects hold are much more complex.³³ It will stress the importance that our interpretations of the visual vocabulary embedded in armour should not be singular but multifaceted, just as the composition of a person's identity is multi-layered. Additionally, I will propose that armour was an

²⁸ See, for example: Stephen V. Grancsay, "The Mutual Influence of Costume and Armour: A Study of Specimens in the Metropolitan Museum of Art," *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 3 No.2 (June 1931): 194-208; Stephen V. Grancsay, "The Interrelationships of Costume and Armor," in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol.8 No.6 (February 1950):176-188

²⁹ Angus Patterson, *Fashion and Armour in Renaissance Europe: Proud Looks and Brave Attire* (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 2009), 24,29

³⁰ See, for example: Roy Strong, R. *The English Icon: Elizabethan and Jacobean Portraiture* (London and New York: Paul Mellon Foundation for British Art, 1969); Roy Strong *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977); Roy Strong *The English Renaissance Miniature* (London, Thames and Hudson, 1983).

³¹ Springer, *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* (Toronto: the University of Toronto Press, 2010), 3,13

³² *Ibid.*, 13

³³ Springer, *Armour and Masculinity*,162.

unparalleled agency for the construction of the self and provided the Elizabethan male courtier with a unique platform to convey markers of individuality. It will cross disciplinary boundaries by bringing dress history into dialogue with more technical discussions of the fabric and construction of armour, and is unique in doing so.

The first section of this chapter will show the striking correlations in fit, form and embellishment of armour and dress throughout the Elizabethan period. By tracking the developments in the male silhouette through dress and armour, I will propose that these two items which adorn the Elizabethan male body should be seen in dialogue with one another. It will highlight the way in which these items were worn alongside one another and in interaction with each other to create complete outfits. The second section of the chapter will discuss the ways in which armour was utilised to project an individual's social status as well as their position within the court and, consequently, their relationship with the queen. Using the cabinet-miniature of George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland (Fig.24) the final section of this chapter will demonstrate the ways in which tournament ensembles were used to convey complex symbolic schemes intended to communicate specific messages about the wearer.

i. Common Threads: Similarities in Fit, Form and Flourishes

Thought to have been authored in the late 1560s or early 1570s, Lucas de Heere's (1531-84) *Théâtre de tous les peuples et nations de la terre, avec leurs habits et ornements divers, tant anciens que modernes, diligemment dépeints au naturel par Luc Dheere, peintre et sculpteur gantois* is a fascinating and illuminating catalogue of sartorial styles prevalent in the later sixteenth century.³⁴ Each page of the book is illustrated with a vivid watercolour image depicting singular or pairs of individuals outfitted in an example of the characteristic dress worn by their representative nations (Fig.40). De Heere includes both men and women in his costume book, carefully labelling each with the fashion they are wearing; for example the script above the illustration of the man in Fig.40 signposts that this is a 'Gentilhomme Suyse' and his companion, 'Damoiselle de Suyse et d'alentour.' The final image in

³⁴ Lucas de Heere, *Théâtre de tous les peuples et nations de la terre, avec leurs habits et ornements divers, tant anciens que modernes, diligemment dépeints au naturel par Luc Dheere, peintre et sculpteur gantois*, 1560-1580. MS BHS.L.HS.2466, University Library, Ghent.

de Heere's publication stands out in intriguing contrast to the remainder of the pages (Fig.41). It depicts a bearded man, naked except for the white cloth tied around his waist. In his right hand he holds a large pair of scissors and a length of golden-yellow fabric is draped over his outstretched left arm. Unlike the other illustrations, there is no accompanying written label providing information about his nationality. However, there is a description of an image produced by de Heere and recorded by his pupil Karel van Mander in *Het Schilderboeck* (1604) which seems to correlate. The image mentioned is of an 'Englishman' which featured in a commission de Heere received from the Admiral in London whilst he was in England; van Mander recalled that the task was 'to paint all the costumes or clothing of the nations' and explains that:

When all but the Englishman were done, he [de Heere] painted him naked and set beside him all manner of cloth and silk material, and next to them tailor's scissors and chalk. When the Admiral saw this figure he asked Lucas what he meant by it. He answered that he had done that with the Englishmen because he did not know what appearance or kind of clothing he should give him because they varied so much from day to day; for if he had done it one way today the next day it would have to be another – be it French or Italian, Spanish or Dutch – and I have therefore painted the material and tools to hand so that one can always make of it what one wishes.³⁵

De Heere's image of the unclothed Englishman is therefore a comment that the characteristic fashion of this nation in the late-sixteenth century was not a particular sleeve-length or skirt-shape but its ever-changing nature. The excessive frequency with which clothing styles altered was especially evident during the reign of Elizabeth I. Both male and female apparel altered in appearance from decade to decade, a considerable contrast to the gradual changes apparent earlier in the century.³⁶

This constant shift in the favoured styles of Elizabethan dress was not only limited to textile examples, but can also be unquestionably traced in the changing designs of armour throughout the Elizabethan period. The armoured silhouette changed

³⁵ Karel Van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters*, trans. Pennial-Boerand, and C. Ford, ed., H Miedema (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), 281.

³⁶ Elizabethan women's clothing was subject to as frequent transformation as their male counterparts but, for the purposes of this thesis, I will be focusing the developments in men's clothing.

dramatically throughout the sixteenth century. During the rule of Henry VIII, armour was identified by its powerful, physical bulk and outlines which exaggerated the shoulders, broadened the chest and narrowed the hips gave focus to the powerful upper body (Fig.42). This robust, strong mode of masculinity was still apparent in armour produced during the 1560s, but soon gave way to a masculine form which Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass have described as becoming 'progressively more and more unbalanced and distorted' during the Elizabethan period (Fig.43).³⁷ Most importantly, the shifting styles of armour were equivalent to the fluctuations in the cut and shape of the courtier's clothing. This unmistakable correlation is essential to the argument that armour should be considered as dress and discussed with the same methodological approaches.

Due to their fragile nature, preserved examples of textiles from the sixteenth century are extremely rare and, similarly, surviving complete armour garnitures are also scarce. However, the study of changing trends in armour and dress can be aided by analysing portraiture from the same period. Clothing was given close consideration within Elizabethan portrait painting, their decorative designs and fashionable shapes were carefully transferred from textile to canvas. In their text, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (2000), Jones and Stallybrass have argued that rather than the focus being on the face of the sitter, the prominence of Elizabethan portraits is placed instead on the clothes and accessories. These paintings should be considered as 'mnemonics to commemorate a particularly extravagant suit, a dazzling new fashion in ruffs, a costly necklace or jewel.'³⁸ Not only does this serve to highlight the importance that Elizabethan society placed on their apparel, but it also means we are able to use these visual representations as fairly reliable source material, where examples of the objects themselves are fragmentary or do not remain at all. The portraits and armour of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1532/3–1588) and those of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex (1565-1601) are particularly useful examples in outlining the parallel developments of dress and armour. As key figures of the court and leading favourites of the queen, Leicester at the start of Elizabeth's reign and

³⁷ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, 29

³⁸ Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 35

Essex towards the end, both these individuals had sartorial statuses which were reflective of both their financial means and prestigious societal positions.

Robert Dudley in particular was known for his 'intense love of finery' which 'earned him a respected position as arbiter of taste' at court.³⁹ The portrait which originally hung on the walls of Dudley's Warwickshire seat, Kenilworth Castle and is now displayed at the National Portrait Gallery in London is certainly a testament to this enthusiasm for fashionable clothing (Fig.38).⁴⁰ It is likely that this portrait was painted to commemorate the 1575 entertainments held at Kenilworth by Leicester in honour of the queen. These festivities were held over a course of three weeks in July of 1575. In her article on the Earl's inventory at Kenilworth, Elizabeth Goldring has stated that this event was the 'longest and most ambitious attempted in the course of the Elizabethan progresses.'⁴¹ As such, the Earl would have undoubtedly desired to have been depicted in an outfit of the latest fashion, matching the extravagance of the entertainments and intending to impress the queen. He is painted in a striking russet-red doublet with matching sleeves, both slashed and pinked all over their surfaces to create an intricate decorative effect. The doublet and sleeves are also lined with gold-edged pickadils, gold braiding and matched with twenty gold buttons running down the centre of the chest. Leicester's hose, also cut out of the plush russet material, have richly embroidered panes which have been spaced to reveal the brocaded lining underneath. His outfit is completed with carefully selected accessories; the Lesser George of the Garter worn on a fine gold chain around the neck, a bonnet crowned with a red feather and encircled by a jewelled hatband, and an elegant rapier worn suspended from a velvet sword-belt.

With its tight fit, constricted waistline and protruding stomach, the style of doublet worn by Dudley in this portrait was fundamental in creating the distinctive form of the Elizabethan male body. The distended profile of the 'peascod' doublet is perhaps its most recognisable feature and was created by stiffening the front of the garment

³⁹ Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth*, 58

⁴⁰ It is very likely that this painting is the one referred to in the c.1578 inventory of 'howesseholde stufe at Kenilworth' (British Library Add MS 78.176) as the 'greate picture' of the Earl dressed 'in sute of russet satten and velvet welted.' (Add MS 78.176: fo.41v)

⁴¹ Elizabeth Goldring, "The Earl of Leicester's Inventory of Kenilworth Castle, c.1578," *English Heritage Review*, 2 (2007), 37

with pasteboard or busks before padding with materials such as horsehair, rags, cotton and even bran.⁴² The amount of filling used increased throughout the years and the shape of the peascod became progressively sharper and deeper. This gradual enlargement can be seen by comparing the 1575 Kenilworth portrait of Dudley (Fig.38) with one painted eleven years previously in 1564 (Fig.44). In this earlier portrait the Earl wears a stunning silvery-white outfit and although his doublet is padded around the stomach, the protrusion is definitely slighter than that seen in the 1575 painting. In both these portraits, the decorative girdles around the Earl's waistline are still visible below the point of the peascod, but in later years this became obscured. By the late 1580s, the peascod had become so exaggerated that it overhung the waistline and stretched down towards the groin. This can clearly be seen in a full-length miniature painted by Nicholas Hilliard, widely accepted to be of Robert Devereux, Third Earl of Essex (Fig.22). Painted in around 1588, at the peak of this sartorial trend, this portrait shows the young Earl in a doublet with a curved point extending far below the waistline. Not only did this result in the severe remoulding of the male body but the excessive padding meant these doublets were incredibly impractical. Writing just a few years before Hilliard's portrait of Essex was painted, Philip Stubbes ridiculed these 'dublettes' as 'noe lesse monstrous' than other fashionable attire and comments that;

now the fashion is to have them hang downe to the middest of their thighs, or at least to their privie members, being so harde-quilted, and stuffed, bombasted and fewed, as they can verie hardly eyther stoupe downe, or decline them selves to the grounde, soe styffe and sturd they stand about them.⁴³

A fuller sense of the 'styffe and sturd' nature of the peascod doublet is perhaps more evident when studying an example of this item of clothing first-hand. The Metropolitan Museum of Art holds a prime example of this style of doublet in its collection, dating from 1580 (Fig.45 MET 29.158.175). Due to the ribs, back, sleeves and chest being slightly thicker than average, this garment was thought to have been for protective purposes rather than everyday wear.⁴⁴ Yet despite this, it provides a

⁴² Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 47

⁴³ Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses* fol.25r

⁴⁴ It is worth noting that this doublet would have likely been used for fencing or other sporting pursuits and therefore ease of movement would have been advantageous. Despite this the doublet

perfect example of the rigidity of the peascod shape and the denseness of the padded stomach which is not so easily conveyed through painted representations.

The vogue for the exaggerated peascod shape of doublet is clearly mirrored in the design of Elizabethan armour. When viewed alongside one another, unmistakeable similarities in design can be seen between the cuirass of Robert Dudley's armour (Fig.43) and the russet-red doublet worn by the Earl in his Kenilworth portrait (Fig.38). An analysis of the association between this particular portrait and armour is especially pertinent as both date to the same year, 1575, and are thought to have been made to celebrate the same occasion, the Kenilworth entertainments. Dudley's armour, made in the Royal Workshops at Greenwich and now in the Royal Armouries collection in Leeds, clearly illustrates the adoption of the peascod shape into the armoured form. This is in stark contrast to the even and proportionate upper body shape favoured in the earlier sixteenth century, as demonstrated in the armour which once belonged to Henry VIII, dating from 1527 (Fig42). The breastplate creates a broad chest and the pauldrons somewhat exaggerate the shoulders, as was fashionable in apparel at the time, but the overall outline is uniform and follows the lines of the body relatively closely. In comparison, the cuirass of Dudley's armour distorts the natural shape of the body; the cuirass extends into an acute point at the front, creating an inverted triangular outline and imitating the favoured shape of the doublet at this time.⁴⁵ The upper body shape has rapidly altered from the smooth, cylindrical broadness of the Henrican period to the constrictive sharpness favoured by the Elizabethans.

Furthermore, the development of the peascod can also be traced; as the point of this style of doublet became more pronounced, so too did the shape of the Elizabethan armours. The Greenwich Workshop armours of Robert Dudley (Fig.43) and of George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland (1586, Fig.46 and Fig.47) both mimic the distinctive deep-belly of the peascod doublet in their breastplates. However, their points do not dip far below the waistline and are arguably more understated than

still conforms to the stylish peascod shape which considerably restricted action, implying that fashion was of more importance than comfort.

⁴⁵ Francis Michae Kelly and Randolphe Schwabe, *A Short History of Costume and Armour* (Newton Abbot, David Charles, 1931),73

the elongated examples worn by Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex in two portraits from the 1590s (Fig.48 and Fig.21). The first portrait (Fig.48) shows Essex clad in black armour and although this is largely concealed by a remarkable pearl-encrusted surcoat, the peascod-shape of the breastplate is patent. It overhangs well below the waistline and is identical in shape to the breastplate worn by the Earl in the second armoured portrait, painted five years later (Fig.21). Both these portraits show a striking correlation with the doublet worn by the Earl in the Hilliard miniature mentioned previously (Fig.22). Unfortunately, unlike in the case of Robert Dudley, it is not possible to compare these portraits with their actual armour counterparts as no examples belonging to the Robert Devereux have survived. However, the Greenwich armour of Sir James Scudamore (Fig.49) made in 1595-96, dates from the same decade and can be used in lieu to demonstrate that the continued exaggeration of the peascod shape was carried over into the design of armour.

A comparative study of the Earl of Leicester armour and his portrait from the same year shows not only identical upper body forms but also close similarities in the outline of the lower body. The items of clothing which covered the Elizabethan male's legs were usually made of two sections, the upper hose and the lower or nether hose, and both elements were available in an assortment of styles. Again, Stubbes' *The Anatomie of Abuses* provides a good source of a description of this variety. He remarks that the upper hose 'be of divers fashions, so are they of sundry names. Some be called French-hose, some makings gally-hose and some Venitians.'⁴⁶ Stubbes continues;

Then have they nether-stocks to these gay hosen, not of cloth (though never so fine) for that is thought o base, but of Iarnfey worsted, silk, thred, and such like, or els at the least of the finest yarn that can be, and so curioslye knit with open seam down the leg, with quirks and clocks about the ancles, and sometime interlaced with gold or silver threads, as is wonderful to behold.⁴⁷

In both the 1575 portrait of Dudley in his russet red attire (Fig.38) and another portrait from the same year in which he wears white, gold and black (Fig.39), Dudley

⁴⁶ Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, 52

⁴⁷ Ibid.

wears the most fashionable form of upper hose, the trunk hose. The favoured shape was for the trunk hose to swell out over the hips from the nipped in waist creating a full, squared base reaching the mid-thigh and then tucking slightly back under against the leg.⁴⁸ This rounded, bulging shape was created by extensive padding and multiple linings, much like the peascod doublet, and was so exaggerated that a sumptuary law was passed to control their size. A proclamation dated 6 May 1562 addresses the 'use of the monstrous and outrageous greatness of hosen, which has crept a late into the Realme' and states that:

No tailor, hosier, or other person...shall put any more cloth in any one pair of hose for the outside than one yard and a half, or at the most one yard and three-quarters of a yard of kersey or of any kind of cloth, leather, or any other kind of stuff above the quantity; and in the same hose to be put only one kind of lining besides linen cloth next to the leg if any shall be disposed.⁴⁹

Dudley's armour also reproduces this bulbous outline (Fig. 43) and this is especially apparent if we again contrast this example with the 1527 armour of Henry VIII (Fig. 42); the tassets for the upper thighs have moved away from the body in the Earl of Leicester's armour, extending outwards from the waist before coming downwards to accommodate or duplicate the inflated trunk hose.⁵⁰ Furthermore, as well as copying the silhouette of the trunk hose the construction of this garment has also been carefully replicated in the design of Dudley's armour. The trunk hose in both the 1575 portraits of the Earl are paned, meaning they are constructed from vertical bands of material which are parted slightly to reveal the plush lining beneath.⁵¹ In the red velvet outfit (Fig.38), the underlining is made from a fabric of the same colour but which has been richly brocaded in gold to provide a contrast. The trunk hose in the other portrait of Dudley (Fig.39) consists of a cream facing material with a gold silk lining. This technique is mimicked by the vertical bands of etched decoration on the tassets of the Earl's armour. The alternating pattern of the etching alludes to the

⁴⁸ Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 47-49; Kelly and Schwabe, *A Short History of Costume and Armour*, 18

⁴⁹ *Articles for the execution of the Statutes of Apparel, and for the reformation of the outrageous excess thereof grown of late time within the realm, devised upon the Queen's Majesty's commandment, by advice of her Council, 6 May 1562* (London, R.Jugge and J.Cawood, 1562).

⁵⁰ Patterson, *Fashion and Armour*, 45

⁵¹ Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 49

contrasting fabrics of Dudley's panned trunk hose; the densely etched sections resemble brocade and are presumably imitating the inner lining of the hose, thus the sections with the ragged staff emblem emulate the outer fabric.

The shape of the upper hose was subject to further changes during the Elizabethan period. By the 1580s, the full voluminous trunk hose had been replaced in favour of a 'mere pad round the hips.'⁵² The length of the trunk hose had gradually shrunk, until they had withdrawn so far up the leg that they barely covered the groin. This style usually included attached extensions which covered the thighs, known as canions, and these could be made from a fabric which either matched or contrasted with the trunk hose. Dating from circa 1596, the portrait of the Earl of Essex which has been attributed to Marcus Gheeraerts clearly shows this fashionable trend (Fig.33). Essex's trunk hose are firmly padded and are remarkably short in length, reaching only to the top of his thighs which are sheathed in close-fitting canions in a matching ivory material. From the knees below, the Earl's legs are covered with stockings separate to the canions. The diminutive trunk hose favoured during this decade can again be seen in the Hilliard miniature of Essex, referred to earlier (Fig.22). Here the upper hose are almost in line with the point of the peascod and their shortness is exaggerated by the elongated, stockinged legs of the Earl.

Neither portraits of the Earl of Essex in armour can be used to demonstrate the way in which armour reflected this sartorial trend as they do not distinctly show the tassets. In the full-length cabinet miniature (Fig.21), Essex's bases obscure the lower sections of armour and these are also covered in the three-quarter length portrait by the pearl-encrusted surcoat (Fig.48). However, both George Clifford's and Sir James Scudamore's armour clearly show that the shorter length of trunk hose was taken into consideration during this later period of Elizabeth's reign (Fig.49 and Fig.46). When compared with Dudley's armour, we can see that the tassets of Clifford's and Scudamore's armour have retreated further up the leg, are composed of less lames and are now almost half the length. These later designs are unmistakably analogous with the briefer trunk hose favoured by Essex and his peers at the Elizabethan court.

⁵² Ibid.

Furthermore, the cuisses and greaves show resemblances to the canions and stockings worn by Elizabethan courtiers. Both the cuisses and greaves of Clifford's and Scudamore's armour are tight-fitting, closely following the shape of the thighs and calves and imitating the tight-fitting styles of nether-hose fashionable at the time.

In addition to these likenesses in shape, there are also comparative elements between the methods of making armour and clothing. Obviously, the nature of the materials used to make armour necessitated far different techniques from those required with fabric garments, but the initial stages of construction may have been quite similar. Although no English examples of sixteenth-century pattern books survive, there are various source materials from which we can gain an insight into the tailoring process.⁵³ Dress historian Janet Arnold has used the existing documentation of two tailors, William Fyshe and William Jones, who both made clothes for Queen Elizabeth to piece together the way in which early modern clothes were commissioned and constructed.⁵⁴ Arnold informs us that the tailor would have first taken basic body measurements on a strip of parchment before drawing out the patterns on linen sheets, or another inexpensive material. These sections were then cut out and tacked together to produce a test garment, or a toile. The toile would then be fitted to the individual, with any adjustments being made before being unpicked again and laid out for tracing onto brown paper. Finally, these paper patterns would be used to cut out the design on the chosen fabric and stitched together to create the desired garment.⁵⁵

Although there is little remaining evidence documenting the way in which armour was commissioned during the sixteenth century there are surviving references implying a similar use of patterns, as with tailoring. In a letter from Thomas Parry to

⁵³ There are a number of Western European publications which have been preserved and can also be used to glean an insight into the tailoring process. These include the anonymous Milanese book of designs belonging to the Biblioteca Querini-Stampalia in Venice, *Libro de Geometria practica y traça* written by Juan de Alcega and first published in 1580 and *Geometria, y traça para el oficio de los sastres* written by Diego de Freyle and dating to 1588.

⁵⁴ See Janet Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd* (Leeds: Maney, 1988) and *Patterns of Fashion 3: The Cut and Construction of Clothes for Men and Women c1560-1620* (Hollywood, Quite Specific Media Group, 1985).

⁵⁵ Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 3*, 4

the Earl of Essex written in 1599, Parry states that he 'has brought the patterns of the armour, coats, doublets, and hose according to his Lordship's pleasure signified upon his petition, and will undertake that the soldiers shall be armed and apparelled in far better sort than any others that heretofore have been sent for in Ireland.'⁵⁶ In another letter dating from 1577, Thomas Randolph asks William Davison to 'cause this pattern for an armour to be sent to Captain Gaynesworthe as soon as you conveniently may.'⁵⁷ Whilst with fabrics, the patterns were traced into fabric before being cut out, with armour the metal would have been cut into flat shapes before being heated and hammered into the required form. These plates would have then been fitted together using fasteners, straps and rivets; the equivalent of the stitching and lacing used in order to assemble the different elements of an item of clothing.

The striking similarities between armour and clothing are not only apparent in their shape but also in their decorative embellishments. Etched and engraved ornamentation found on examples of Elizabethan armours often imitated designs which were woven into and embroidered onto textiles. It is not unlikely that armourers may have used embroidery pattern books to directly copy motifs or to use as inspiration for their own designs.⁵⁸ As mentioned, the armour of Robert Dudley features ornate etched designs which are comparable with those found on fabrics. The denser areas of pattern found on the tassets and running in a parallel band down the front of the breastplate, are alike to brocaded materials and it should be noted that these areas of etching would have been originally gilded, further enhancing their comparison to the gold or silver threading found in brocade. In addition, the ragged-staff pattern found on the remainder of the armour, taken from the Dudley family device, is comparable to repeat motifs which are often found on fabrics. This shared use of decorative design is interchangeable and there are instances where the cloth used for garments is reminiscent of gilded patterns on the surface of armour. For example, in a portrait painted of the Earl of Leicester's son, also named Robert Dudley but titled Duke of Northumberland (1591-3, Fig. 25), the Duke's canions

⁵⁶ "Cecil Papers, 1599," in *Calendar of the Cecil Papers in Hatfield House*, ed. E. Salisbury (London, 1923), 14.

⁵⁷ "December 7 1577 (Canterbury)," in *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, Elizabeth, 1577-78*, 12:362.

⁵⁸ Grancsay, "The Interrelationships of Costume and Armor," 181

closely imitate the elaborate decoration found on cuisses from this period. With their black matte background and metallic gold repeat motif, the colour and design of the Duke's canions simulate the gilt etching found on cuisses of the period such as those belonging to the Earl of Cumberland's armour (Fig.46). These transferable designs blur the distinction between cloth and metal, with each mimicking the other, and this is further exaggerated when armour and clothing are worn together. In the portrait of the Duke of Northumberland (Fig.25), the young Sir Dudley is wearing a black matte peascod-shaped breastplate, matching his helmet, gauntlets and stockings. His fashionably short trunk hose and canions are both black and gold, co-ordinating with the gold girdle around the Duke's waist, the hilt of his rapier and off-setting the gilded bands at the edges of the lower cannons. Here textiles and metals alike correspond to an overall colour-scheme and complement one another; armour and clothing have been combined to produce a matching outfit. This can also be seen in the portrait of Lucio Foppa, painted by Giovanni Ambrogio Figini (c.1590, Fig.50). Although not English in origin, this painting is worth mentioning as it clearly shows the interrelationship between clothing and armour. The decorative motif covering Foppa's hose matches the etching of the breastplate, vambraces, pauldrons and helmet, and is in inverted colours, black on gold in the armour and the gold on black in the trunk hose. Such examples encourage the argument that, in some cases, armour and clothing may have been commissioned and made in order to match one another and to be worn together.⁵⁹ If this was indeed the case, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that the production of co-ordinating breastplates and hose created an extended garniture, where pieces of armour could be interchanged with items of everyday dress to complete an outfit.

There are numerous portraits of male courtiers produced during the Elizabethan period which show this trend of wearing ensembles consisting of both armour and clothing. These combinations could take various forms including the wearing of surcoats on top of the armour as in the portraits of George Clifford (Fig.24) and Robert Devereux (Fig.21); a cuirass worn with upper and lower hose as exhibited by the Duke of Northumberland and Sir Anthony Mildmay (c.1590, Fig.23); or textile

⁵⁹ Patterson, *Fashion and Armour*, 47

bases worn over armour as in the portraits of Sir James Scudamore (c.1595-1600, Fig.51) and the Earl of Essex (Fig.21). A closer examination of two portraits of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex will demonstrate the different ways in which armour and clothing could take on different roles or focus within an outfit.

The first example is the full-length cabinet miniature of the Earl of Essex painted by Nicholas Hilliard (Fig.21). It portrays the Earl in an extravagant armour, its surface entirely covered in gilded decorative pattern-work, and his plumed helmet and gauntlets lie on a table next to him. The skirt-like garment worn by Devereux which falls to mid-thigh length has been referred to as a tonlet, but I would argue that these are in fact bases.⁶⁰ The tonlet is a piece of plate armour, worn for foot combat, which protected the hips and thighs and was a complete skirt with no breaks. Bases could refer to fabric or metal skirts and, when made of the latter, they were cut away at the front to allow the wearer to mount a horse. Although the item worn by Devereux in this portrait seems to be a full skirt, with no break which would suggest a tonlet, there are a number of details which could be used to claim otherwise. Firstly, the Earl's stallion can be seen in the background of the portrait implying that he is prepared for mounted combat, rather than foot and would therefore not be wearing a tonlet. Clearly these are not metal bases as there is no cut-away section to allow for sitting on horseback and, if we look closely at this garment (Fig.52), it is evident that although matching in colour-scheme the decorative pattern on this item is different from the rest of the armour and the background has a slightly different finish. Surely if this were a garniture piece, it would be ornamented with the same gilded pattern as the other elements of the Earl's armour. Furthermore, it is possible to see that the brushstrokes along the gold edging of the garment give the effect of fringing and therefore are cloth of gold rather than gilding.

These fabric bases were popular additions to the tournament outfits worn by sixteenth-century courtiers. An example of this garment appears in an illustration from Lucas de Heere's costume book as representative of what the 'Tournoieur d'Europe' wore, showing that they were typical of the period (Fig.53). The bases worn by the Earl carefully co-ordinate with the black and gold colour scheme of the armour

⁶⁰ Tarnya Cooper, *Elizabeth I and Her People* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2014).

and are luxuriously decorated in a scrolling vine and rose motif, with bands of cloth of gold running horizontally and vertically along its surface. Other subtle textile touches can be seen in the portrait; the gold-trimmed favour tied around the Earl's right arm, matching the silvery-white and gold encrusted plumage of his helmet and horse's shaffron; the delicate lace band, or collar, around the neck; the white cuffs protruding from his lower canons; and the silver-white and gold embroidered outer covering of the tent behind Devereux. These matte fabrics all offset the gleaming surface of the armour and the metallic gold and silver highlights serve to accentuate the extensive gilt decoration. In this portrait of the Earl of Essex, it is the armour which takes centre-stage and other items of clothing present within the portrait are arguably worn as an accessory to the armour; they serve as flourishing finishes but do not obscure the armour to any great extent. Alan Young, in his publication on *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments* (1987) has also argued that the element of the tournament outfit which created the most dramatic effect was the armour. He states that 'no single aspect of a knight's appearance...could more enhance his prestige than a finely crafted, beautifully decorated suit of plate armour.'⁶¹ In agreement with this view, Gloria Kury has written that the tendency for armour to be the focal point of an individual's tournament outfit and its ability to uniquely capture the viewer's attention is a result of armour's 'glancing surfaces.'⁶² Kury argues that the 'visual spectacle' created by armour is due to the object's ability to 'showcase itself.'⁶³

This can again be seen in the portrait of Sir James Scudamore (Fig.51), painted by an unknown artist and showing the Elizabethan courtier in his magnificent Greenwich armour, now in Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection (Fig.49). Over the top of his armour Scudamore also wears fringed fabric bases which are decorated with silvered diagonal lines against a blue-grey background. The other fabric elements of his outfit are a wide falling band trimmed with lace and a silver silk scarf, most likely a lady's favour given to him for the tournament, worn diagonally across his chest. Again, these fabric elements of Scudamore's ensemble do not detract from the splendour

⁶¹ Alan Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, (London, George Philip), 58

⁶² Gloria Kury, "'Glancing Surfaces': Hilliard, Armour and the Italian Model," in *Albion's Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550-1660*, ed. Lucy Gent (Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, New Haven & London, 1995), 396.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 409-410

of the etched and gilded Greenwich armour, but instead add the final embellishments to complete the outfit. The arrangement of fabric against armour within this portrait also creates some interesting contrasts in terms of colour and material. Scudamore's white falling band and silvery-grey scarf and bases all stand out against the dark colour of the steel, adding lighter accents to the outfit and further exaggerating the metallic shine of the armour. Furthermore, the delicate lace edging of the soft linen band and the sheer fabric of the scarf, which is so light that it is blown away from Scudamore's body in a breeze both provide a stark contrast to the armour. Thus, the hardness and impenetrability of the armour is enhanced by the lightness of the other materials.

However, the use of armour as a focal point was not always the case and another portrait of the Earl of Essex clearly demonstrates this (Fig.48). Painted by William Segar in 1590, this impressive image depicts this key figure of the Elizabethan court clad in armour which is entirely black, with seemingly no etched, engraved or gilded decoration. In his poem *Polyhymnia*, which describes the events of the 1590 Accession Day Tilt, George Peele describes the Earl of Essex's entry '...all in sable sad,/Drawn on with coal-black steeds of dusky hue,/In stately chariot full of deep device.'⁶⁴ This seems to match the depiction of Essex in the Segar portrait and is thought to have been in reference to the fact that Devereux had recently married without the queen's consent, enraging Elizabeth. The Earl, dressed not only in mourning-black but also the queen's colours (black and white), can thus be seen to be reconciling himself with the queen by showing his remorse at angering her. The humble, unornamented surface of the armour provides a plain background for the extravagant surcoat. The entire body of this garment is encrusted with an elaborate tracework of various-sized pearls creating a remarkably arresting impression.⁶⁵ In this case, the armour is almost completely covered and it is evident that the central focus of this ensemble is the surcoat.

⁶⁴ George Peele, *Polyhymnia: Describing the honourable Triumph at Tylt, before her Maiestie, on the 17. Nouember, last past, being the first day of the three and thirtith yeare of her highnesse raigne. With Sir Henrie Lea, his resignation of honour at Tylt, to her Maiestie, and receiued by the right honourable, the Earl of Cumberland* (London, 1590) 1:235

⁶⁵ Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 137

Thus, the distinction between armour and dress was not only blurred by outline and by decorative patterns, but also by the way in which armour and clothing were worn under, over and alongside one another. There seems to be little delineation between armour and clothing, instead they are both elements of an entire outfit and work together to produce a cohesive impact. Furthermore, the similarities in form and decoration as outlined above should not be read as a one-way dialogue but rather as a mutual exchange. Dress and armour altered simultaneously with one another as changes in the fashionable male form occurred. It could be suggested that these arguments help establish that armour and clothing were viewed much in the same way by Elizabethan society. This would certainly validate the proposal that the same frameworks of exploration used recently in dress history can also be applied to armour. Would it be more accurate therefore to refer to armour *as* dress?

ii. 'For The Apparel Oft Proclaims The Man': Dress as Status Symbol.⁶⁶

As indicated earlier, the characterising features of Elizabethan dress were its variation in shape and style as well as its ostentatious appearance. The luxurious dyes and textiles used, the elaborate embroidered designs, the jewelled embellishments and the constant updates made to ensure the latest trends were observed all amounted to an extremely costly venture. The historian Lawrence Stone has shown that the increase in expenditure during the Elizabethan period was due to the 'spreading taste' for 'conspicuous consumption' and that clothing was 'the most obvious and perhaps the most important form' of this expenditure.⁶⁷ Courtiers such as Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex spent enormous amounts of money on their appearance. An idea of the costs involved for the purchase of fabrics alone can be found in a letter dating from 1579 from Robert Dudley to William Davison, who was the English representative at the court of the Prince of Orange in the Netherlands. Dudley writes:

Touching the silks I wrote you about, I wish you to take up and stay
for me 4,000 crowns worth of crimson and black velvet, and satins

⁶⁶ 'Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,/But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy,/For the apparel oft proclaims the man.' Polonius' advice to his son Laertes in Shakespeare's, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* ed., Cedric Watts (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1992), 51.

⁶⁷ Lawrence Stone, "The Anatomy of the Elizabethan Aristocracy," *Economic History Review*, 18. no. 1/2 (1948)3,5

and silks of other colours; and if there be any good cloth of tissue, or of gold, or such other pretty stuff, to stay for me to the value of £300 or £400, whatever the charge shall be.⁶⁸

Furthermore, the account of 'money receiv'd by the hands of William Chancye to the use of the right honourable the Lord Robert Duddleley' shows that between December 1558 and December 1559 the Earl's various household expenditures total to over £2000, more than £800 of this was spent on apparel.⁶⁹ These were substantial sums and the immensity of the expense involved in furnishing the Elizabethan courtier's wardrobe is realised when it is noted that several entire changes of outfit were expected per week. The number of outfits required was in itself a great cost, but in addition to this the courtier was also compelled to make sure that each ensemble was of equal splendour and finished with the necessary accessories. Much like the celebrity culture of today where stars are criticised for recycling outfits, any 'lessening of quality or repetition would soon be noticed and commented on' within the Elizabethan court and individuals took great care to avoid this.⁷⁰ As a result, courtiers often accumulated vast debts in order to keep up with the most up-to-date sartorial trends and maintain their fashionable appearance.

Even more costly than the garments worn by the Elizabethan elite were the armour and weapons commissioned and worn by the male courtiers during the Elizabethan tournaments. Detailed accounts of the process of commissioning armour in the early modern period and the costs involved are scarce but there are a few descriptions we can use as a reference. For example, in the *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* there is a document listing the cost of three armour garnitures, thirteen crinets and three shaffrons at £50 in 1518.⁷¹ This increased considerably and a Greenwich armour made for Prince Henry in the early seventeenth century was valued at £340.⁷² Amounts recorded in the disbursement

⁶⁸ Letter from Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester to William Davison: 25 April 1579 in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic: Elizabeth I 1566-1579*, XXVL:9

⁶⁹ *The Account of William Chancy, 1558-59*. Dudley Papers, XIV, Longleat. fol.32v.

⁷⁰ Ashelford *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 44

⁷¹ *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-47*, vols.2-21, ed. J.S. Brewer, J.S.; J. Gairdner, J. and R.H. Brodie (London, 1862-1910), II, ii:1479. Crinets are plate armour protecting the neck of the horse and shaffrons are the plate armour protecting the horse's head.

⁷² *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic: James I, 1603-1610*, 27, IV:29

books for the Earl of Leicester's household significantly reveal the relative value of armour to other items of clothing. For example, in the accounts for the years 1558-1559 are listed 'Item for ij Spanishe skynnes to make your lordship's jerkin trymyd with sylver lace' costing 22 shillings; 'Item for a peir of Gernsey hose for your lordship' costing 3 shillings and 4d; 'Item for ij peir of knit hose' costing 5 shillings and 4d.⁷³ In comparison, ten plate locks from the 'Smythe at Grenwich' cost Dudley 100 shillings; the money spent on these armour fastenings far exceeds the expense for any other clothing item in the accounts.⁷⁴

The expensive nature of armour, particularly those produced in the Royal Workshops at Greenwich during this period such as Robert Dudley's (Fig.43), George Clifford's (Fig.46) and Sir James Scudamore's (Fig.49), was in part due to their manufacture being incredibly labour intensive. The production of armour required several different stages, each time-consuming and involving different skillsets from various craftsmen. Firstly, the armourer or smith would temper the steel to make it more pliable and less fragile to work with before hammering the metal out into flat sheets. A rough outline for the various garniture elements would then be cut out and these were then worked into the desired shapes. Once the plates were forged a provisional fit took place, confirming that the wearer had flexibility of movement and that the plates correctly overlapped one another with no gaps to guarantee protection. Following this, the armour would then be passed on to the millman or polisher who would smooth the surface of the plates, removing any indentations from the hammering or blackening that was a result of the forging process. The next stage was the assembly of the garniture elements which was usually carried out by the finisher or in some cases, the master armourer. This involved making certain that each individual plate and lames were properly put together using a variety of attachments including rivets, straps, staples and hooks. At this point, the lining and padding would also be added to the necessary pieces such as the helmet and breastplate, ensuring maximum comfort for the wearer where possible. Finally a decorator or goldsmith would add the desired embellishments to the surface of the armour; this could consist of several different techniques such as etching, engraving

⁷³ *The Account of William Chancy, 1558-59*, fol.23r,

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, fol.12v.

and gilding and was a particularly demanding skill.⁷⁵ In addition, supplementary garniture pieces which were also decorated were needed for the different forms of mounted and foot combat, adding to the overall expense. The fact that the Greenwich Workshops armours were tailor-made to the body, produced by a large team of highly-skilled craftsmen and constructed using the finest-quality metals possible as well as the most advanced technical processes meant that the cost of these luxury items was exceptionally high.

The huge amounts of money which Elizabethan society spent on upholding their appearance was a subject of ridicule and criticism at the time. The priest William Harrison was among such critics and his *Description of Elizabethan England* (1577) of the 'costliness and the curiosity, the excess and the vanity...in attire.'⁷⁶ Some years later, Ben Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour* satirically commented on the foolish excess in clothing; 'First, to be an accomplished gentleman, that is, a gentleman of the time...twere good you turned four or five hundred acres of your best land into two or three trunk of apparel.'⁷⁷ These commentaries on the ludicrous costs of clothing and the willingness of courtiers to invest so much into their appearance shows that there was strong awareness of the monetary value of clothes in Elizabethan society. The prices of the luxurious fabrics, embroidered details and jewelled embellishments which made up these ostentatious outfits would have presumably been recognized by the public. As such, in wearing these expensive items of clothing, individuals were publishing clear visual statements of their wealth which were easily interpreted by both their peers and subordinates. This use of apparel as a signifier of wealth was particularly exaggerated within the environment of the Elizabethan tournament. Not only did participants invest in the expense of etched and gilded armour, with all the necessary exchangeable garniture elements, but they also wore other exorbitant items of dress when entering the tournament. For example, in the cabinet miniature portrait of George Clifford (Fig.24) the Earl's ornate embroidered and jewelled surcoat, matching headwear, ostrich-feathered

⁷⁵ Stephen Fliegel. *Arms and Armor: The Cleveland Museum of Art*. (Cleveland, Ohio: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2007), 85-9.

⁷⁶ William Harrison, *A Description of Elizabethan England* (London 1577), Chapter VII

⁷⁷ Ben Jonson, "Every Man Out of His Humour," in *The Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. C.H. Herford, Percy Simpson and E.M. Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-1952), 3:ii:40-42

plumes for both hat and helmet, rapier, painted and gilded lance and impresa shield were all additional, expensive and essential costs. Also, as evident in the portrait miniature of the Earl of Essex (Fig.21), there was also the cost the various pieces of plate armour for the participant's horse, the horse itself and the livery worn by the retinue to take into consideration. Alongside other accoutrements such as heralds, speech-writers, musicians, chariots, lance-bearers and grooms, the tournament provided an unequivocal means of exhibiting personal wealth through sartorial displays.

Moreover, as only a small proportion of society could afford the expensive involved in creating and maintaining these excessive outfits, although often to the detriment of their financial situations, civilian and tournament dress also denoted social rank. David Kuchta has discussed this correlation in his article *The Semiotics of Masculinity in Renaissance England*, in which he acknowledges the 'hierarchical resemblance between clothing and status' during the sixteenth century.⁷⁸ Kuchta states that during this period 'rich clothing proclaimed gentility, represented it, and made it conspicuous.'⁷⁹ This relation between dress and status was further enforced by the sumptuary legislations which were declared throughout the reign of Elizabeth I and attempted to 'define the proper and fitting way in which clothing should demarcate social status.'⁸⁰ Although sumptuary laws existed prior to the reign of Elizabeth, this period marked an exceptional increase in the endeavour to regulate the consumption of dress. The ten proclamations relating to apparel made between 1559 and 1597 were a direct reaction to the aristocracy's increasing concern that the class boundaries were becoming blurred. The growing wealth of the urban merchant class and the increasing rise of the 'new gentry' during the sixteenth century had created significant disorder to the social divisions and was 'threatening the cultural superiority of an older aristocracy.'⁸¹

This confusion between the upper-middle classes and the aristocracy materialised itself in clothing. With their new wealth, the new gentry could afford to buy the silks,

⁷⁸ Kuchta, "The Semiotics of Masculinity," 236

⁷⁹ Ibid., 237

⁸⁰ Catherine Richardson, *Clothing Culture, 1350-1650* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate,2004), 1

⁸¹ Kuchta, *The Three Piece Suit*, 17

taffetas, satins and velvets previously only worn by the elite which, according to Stubbes, led to;

such a confused mingle mangle of apparel and such preposterous excess thereof, as every one is permitted to flaunt it out, in what apparel he lust himself... So that it is very hard to know who is noble, who is worshipful, who is gentleman, who is not: for you shall have those, which are neither of the nobility, gentility, nor yeomanry, no, not yet any magistrate or officer in the commonwealth, go daily in silks, velvets, satins, damasks, taffetas, and such like, notwithstanding that they both base by birth, mean by estate, and servile by calling.⁸²

The sumptuary legislations intended to protect the old social order by prescribing how much could be spent on fabrics and what items of clothing individuals were permitted to wear according to their social status. For example, a proclamation from 1562 declared that 'neither any man under the degree of a baron to wear within his hose any velvet, satin, or other stuff above the estimation or sarcenet or taffeta.'⁸³ Another from 1574 stated that no individual was permitted to wear 'cloth of gold, silver, tinsel satin, silk, or cloth mixed or embroidered with any gold or silver: except all degrees above viscounts, and viscounts, barons, and other persons of like degree, in doublets, jerkins, linings of cloaks, gowns, and hose.'⁸⁴ These laws were implemented, although not very effectively, through the dispensation of hefty fines and the 'Justices of Assize and of the peace, sheriffs, stewards..., head officers of towns corporate, shall inquire and determine the offenses, and commit the offender to prison till he have paid the forfeiture.'⁸⁵ The re-introduction of these laws during the Elizabethan period meant that it was not just independent wealth which allowed access to rich clothing but also social rank; the social status of the elite was therefore legally confirmed through their dress.

The exclusivity of armour made in the Greenwich Workshops was even more pronounced than that of clothing and arguably a surer sign of wealth and high status than the rich fabrics and accessories worn by Elizabethan courtiers. This was due to

⁸² Stubbes, *Anatomie of Absues*, 10r

⁸³ *Articles for the execution of the Statutes of Apparel*: Westminster 6 May 1562

⁸⁴ *Articles for the execution of the Statutes of Apparel*: Greenwich, 15 June 1574, 16 Elizabeth I

⁸⁵ *Articles for the execution of the Statutes of Apparel*: Westminster, 7 May 1562, 4 Elizabeth I

the fact that commissions for a Greenwich armour was strictly controlled by the crown; orders could not be placed privately by individuals and instead were permitted by a royal warrant. Permits entered in the *Calendar of State Papers (Domestic)* show that requests for armour were made directly by Queen Elizabeth. On the 30 June 1564, Elizabeth sent Sir George Howard, Master of the Armoury a 'warrant to make a complete suit for Christopher Hatton, Gentleman Pensioner, to be delivered to him on his paying the just value thereof.'⁸⁶ There is also a record from 'The Queen to [The Master of Ordnance]. You are to cause our Almain armourer to make a suit of good armour for our servant Rich. Browne, complete for the tilt, as for the field, at our price for the making, he paying for the stuff thereof.'⁸⁷ It should be noted that these warrants also highlight that although the orders were placed by the Queen, these weren't gifts and the individuals for whom the armours were intended were still expected to pay the required amounts. Therefore, whereas there were difficulties in luxurious fabrics and clothing being purchased and worn by those with the financial means but who were not necessarily titled, the commissioning process of Greenwich armour meant there was no chance of this occurring with these items. As such, these armours were unique as signifiers of elite status and marked out the individuals who wore them as belonging to a very select social group.

Despite the status that these armours conferred, it interesting to observe that there still seems to be a conscious concern about the changing nature of the upper classes and a desire amongst the aristocracy to ascertain their lineage. This was arguably visualised in the decorative designs found on some examples of the armour worn by Elizabethan nobles such as Henry Herbert, Second Earl of Pembroke (1534-1601). His Greenwich armour, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection is covered in coats of arms which trace Herbert's lineage. These total to twenty-two quarterings, found on the surface of every element of the armour, as well as the complete arms on the cheeks of the helmet (Fig.54). Another example is Robert Dudley's 1575 Greenwich armour (Fig.43) which repeatedly features elements from

⁸⁶ June 30 Richmond 1564, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, 1547-80*, ed. R. Lemon (London, 1856), 34:241-242

⁸⁷ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Elizabeth I, 1601-03 with Addenda 1547-65*, ed. M.A. Everett Green (London, 1870), 287:305

the Dudley family badge that is comprised of a muzzled bear holding a ragged staff.⁸⁸ Each piece of the armour is covered with the ragged staff motif which includes a crescent cadence, differentiating Robert Dudley's badge from his elder brother's. The muzzled bear, surrounded by the collar of the French Order of St Michael, which Dudley received in 1566 can be seen on the breastplate, backplate and left pauldron. The full family badge is embossed on the centre of the matching shaffron, which would have protected the head of the Earl's horse, and this also has the sunken ragged staff present on its surface. In addition, the central band of engraved decoration which runs vertically down the breastplate also features the badge of the lesser George of the Order of the Garter, complete with chain, which Dudley was awarded with in 1559. These decorative designs are a clear pictorial statement of the Earl of Leicester's established lineage and his prestigious titles.

There is evidence elsewhere that Dudley was keen to verify his social position and identify himself as belonging to the 'old' nobility including a fascinating and detailed manuscript, now in the University of Pennsylvania's library, outlining the genealogical history of the Earls of Leicester and Warwick.⁸⁹ The contents of the manuscript are described within the extensive title, which reads:

The Genelogies of the Erles of Lecestre & Chester wherein is briefly shewed som part of their deedes and actes with the tyme of their raignes in their Erldoms, and in what order the saide Erldoms did rightfully descend to the crowne, and in the same is also conteyned a lineall descent shewing how the right honorable Robert Erle Lecestre and Baron of Denbigh knight of [th]e Garter and Chamberlen of Chester is trewly descended of Margaret second sister and one of the heires of Robert fitz Pernell the first Erle of Lecestre and of Maude and Agnes the first and third daughters to hugh keuelock the fifte Erle of Chester, sisters and coheirs to Randolf Blondeuile the sixt Erle of Chester.⁹⁰

This document has been dated to 1572-73, just a few years before the Kenilworth entertainments and the date Dudley's armour was produced. Furthermore, the

⁸⁸ Fig. 55 shows the Dudley family badge taken from the title page to the second part of Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes, and Other Devises, For the moste parte gathered out of fundrie writers, Englished and Moralized and Divers Newly Devised* (1586), which is dedicated to the Earl of Leicester.

⁸⁹ UPenn Ms. Codex 1070

⁹⁰ This manuscript has been digitalised by the University of Pennsylvania and can be viewed at: <http://openn.library.upenn.edu/Data/PennManuscripts/html/mscodex1070.html>

Kenilworth inventory from around 1578 (British Library Add MS 78,176) mentions numerous household items from bed linen and cushions to chairs and chessboards are listed as being embellished with the Earl's initials, coat of arms, family badge or family motto, *Droit et Loyal* (Just and Loyal). For example, 'Item a long quishin of crimson velvet embrothered with the ragged staffe in a wrethe of clothe of silver with my Lordes worde droit et loyall written in the same', 'Item a chaire of purple velvet embrothered with my Lord's armes in the garter & lettres' and a 'longe tableclothe of fine damaske with sundry scutcheons of your Lordship's armes in it.'⁹¹ Many of these objects would have been in place and on display at Kenilworth Castle when the Queen visited for the elaborate entertainments that the Earl of Leicester held there in her honour.

The Earl's penchant for endorsing his heredity could have been a reaction to the fact that the Dudley family had only recently come back into royal favour. Robert Dudley had actually been condemned to death as a result of his father's plot to place Lady Jane Grey on the throne following the end of Edward VI's reign. Following eight months imprisonment, he received a pardon and his family was further rehabilitated when Elizabeth took the throne as part of her 'general policy of restoring offices and titles to loyal families who had lost out under Queen Mary I.'⁹² Elizabeth ensured that Dudley was immediately given the prestigious royal household office as Master of the Horse but it was not until 1564 that he was enobled. His keen desire to verify his social standing may have also been in anticipation of his marriage proposal to the Queen, which was announced through the complex themes of the Kenilworth entertainments.⁹³ By establishing these aspects of his identity, Dudley was confirming that he was an acceptable suitor for the Queen and qualified to assume the position as the King of England. The Earl's armour, with its etched and gilded heraldic motifs, would have played a significant role in making these claims, transforming Leicester's body into a visible announcement of his genealogy and rank.

⁹¹ British Library, Add MS 78, 176: fol. 32r, 37v,

⁹² Anna Whitelock, *Elizabeth's Bedfellows: An Intimate History of the Queen's Court* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 34; Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 119

⁹³ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 153

The ostentatious dress favoured by the Elizabethan elite was undoubtedly a means of establishing identity in terms of wealth and social but who were the aristocracy advertising their elite status to? Presumably their peers and members of the court were intended to be suitably impressed but these excessive sartorial displays were arguably primarily for the benefit of Queen Elizabeth. Many members of the court were preoccupied with further enhancing their prestige and the key to this in many cases was to gain the favour of the monarch. As such, considerable effort was put into maintaining a fashionable appearance at court as a means of catching the attention of the Queen; in order to pursue their political and personal gains, they first had to be noticed by the monarch. This had long been an occurrence within the royal courts, with individuals vying for attention in order to climb further up the social ladder. Yet, the sartorial rivalry amongst the male courtiers during Elizabeth's reign was arguably unprecedented and this was largely a reaction to the fact that Elizabeth occupied the position of an unmarried monarch. As evident with Leicester's armour and the Kenilworth entertainments, by promoting personal financial means and social prestige Elizabeth's courtiers were often advertising themselves as potential suitors. This was maintained even after Elizabeth had advanced in years and had in effect removed herself from the marriage market.⁹⁴ In fact, some scholars have suggested that this only encouraged the extravagance of the male elite and the Queen's court became 'even more like a male, but platonic, harem; now that the wooing of her was but a play, her courtiers had to play with all the greater concentration to maintain the suspension of disbelief.'⁹⁵

The Elizabethan court had become a sartorial battlefield amongst the established and aspiring queen's favourites and, whether for social and political gain or to publicize their suitability as a husband, this rivalry was particularly intense during the Accession Day Tilts. According to William Segar's *Honor Military and Civill* 'these annual exercises in Arms, solemnized the 17. day of November, were first begun and

⁹⁴ In 1559 Elizabeth stated, in response to encouragement that she should marry, that she had 'already ioyned my selfe in marriage to an husbnde, namely, the Kingdome of England. And beholde the pledge of this wedlocke and marriage with my Kingdome.' In William Camden, *Annals Rerum Anglicarum, et Hibernicarum, Regnante Elizabetha* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 29-30. With breakdown of marriage arrangements to Duke of Anjou in 1580s, this pledge seemed to be fulfilled.

⁹⁵ David Piper, *The English Face* (London, National Portrait Gallery, 1978), 54

occasioned by the right vertuous and honourable Sir Henry Lee' and marked the anniversary of Elizabeth I's accession to the throne.⁹⁶ These tournaments were highlights of the aristocratic social calendar, eagerly awaited by courtiers as they offered opportunities for conspicuous displays of wealth and status unmatched by other court events. Taking part in these celebrations, enabled courtiers to attempt to achieve notoriety and ultimately to gain the favour of the queen in a way which contrasted to often tedious hours spent waiting within the court.⁹⁷ As such, these chances were not taken lightly and, as mentioned, leading figures of the tournament would spend considerable lengths of time and vast amounts of money on their appearance in order to ensure they were noticed.

iii. 'Impresa's and Devices Rare'⁹⁸: Symbolism in Tournament Dress

Although the armour and dress of the Elizabethan male aristocracy can certainly be interpreted as markers of wealth and consequential social status, the meanings they contained were much more complex than this. Elizabethans conveyed coded messages through the use of allegory and the fascination with this practice was such that it was an 'all-pervasive and accepted part of everyday life.'⁹⁹ Emblem books such as Richard Robinson's *A Rare True and Proper Blazon of Coloures and Ensignes Military with theyr Peculiar Signification* (1583) and Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britanna* (1612) were widely published and read. Although the symbolism used in allegorical images was often incredibly intricate, the emblem books 'could be set in such a variety of contexts with so little alteration and that while a courtly Euphues was poring over one emblem book to find witty ideas with which to enliven his conversation, his wife was embroidering his coat from another.'¹⁰⁰ Therefore the symbols, colours, mottos and other coded devices used across a range of everyday objects during the Elizabethan period would have likely been instantly recognized by the educated observer.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ William Segar, *Honor Military and Civill*, (London: Robert Barker, 1602), 197

⁹⁷ Paul E. J. Hammer, "Upstaging the Queen: The Earl of Essex, Francis Bacon and the Accession Day Celebrations of 1595," in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. David M. Bevington and Peter Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 43

⁹⁸ Henry Peacham *Minerva Brianna* (London, 1612).

⁹⁹ Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 90

¹⁰⁰ R. Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1948), 99

¹⁰¹ Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 9

The use of emblematic devices was extremely popular in the decoration of the outfits worn by the participants in Elizabethan tournaments in order to project sophisticated and complex messages unique to the wearer. A particularly comprehensive example of this is found within the portrait of George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland by Nicholas Hilliard (c.1590, Fig.24). Now belonging to the National Maritime Museum, it seems very likely that it was commissioned to celebrate Cumberland's new prestigious position as the Queen's Champion, a role he was given on Sir Henry Lee's retirement at the Accession Day Tilt of 1590. The date of this event is confirmed in George Peele's poetic work entitled *Polyhymnia*, printed in London in 1590, 'describing the honourable Triumph at Tylt, before her Maiestie, on the 17. Of Nouember, last past, being the first day of the three and thirtith yeare of her Highnesse raigne.'¹⁰² Peele describes the moment when 'Sir Henry Lea resignes his place of Honour at Tylt to the Earle of Cumberland':

...with that he singled foorth
The flower of English Knightes, the valiant Earle
Of Cumberland, and him (before them all)
He humbly prayes her Highnesse to accept,
And him install in place of those desigues,
And to him giues his armour and his lance...¹⁰³

This full-length miniature shows Cumberland standing under an oak tree in his highly decorative blued-steel armour and a spectacular jewelled and embroidered surcoat. Whilst the same motif is not repeated on both Cumberland's armour and dress, the iconology of the ornamentation of his garments provides the link between armour and surcoat and, once interpreted, this outfit becomes complete. Both the turn-up cuffs of Clifford's sumptuous surcoat and the brim of his hat share the same decorative design of armillary spheres, gold caducei and leafy branches. Armillary spheres are astronomical instruments widely used in the medieval and early modern period. Made up of circular bands of metal, they showed the principle circles or rings used by astronomers to describe the night sky and show the planets orbital

¹⁰² From the full title of George Peele's poem given on the frontispiece: *Polyhymnia: Describing the honourable Triumph at Tylt, before her Maiestie, on the 17. of Nouember, last past, being the first day of the three and thirtith yeare of her Highnesse raigne. With Sir Henrie Lee, his resignation of honout at Tylt, to her Maiestie, and receiued by the right honourable, the Earle of Cumberland.*

¹⁰³ Peele, *Polyhymnia*, 17-18

systems.¹⁰⁴ These objects are frequently found within English early modern portraits, appearing as part of the paraphernalia surrounding the sitter or embedded within the design of their clothes and accessories. In the portrait of Sir Henry Lee, Cumberland's predecessor as the Queen's Champion, painted by Anthonis Mor in 1568 (Fig.56), the sleeves of his shirt are embroidered with armillary spheres picked out in gold thread. Armillary spheres often appear in portraits of Queen Elizabeth I, such as *The Ditchley Portrait* by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, painted in about 1592 where the Queen's earring in her left ear is shaped as one of these spheres. During the sixteenth century this astronomical object was used to represent the height of wisdom and knowledge.¹⁰⁵ Another emblem figuring in the design of Cumberland's surcoat and hat, the caduceus, is also used to symbolise wisdom. The caduceus or *kerykeion*, seen most clearly on the brim of the Earl's hat, takes the form of a rod entwined with two snakes and is usually tipped with a pair of wings. Myth tells how the messenger god, Hermes (Greek) or Mercury (Roman) threw down his staff at two fighting snakes and whilst separating them they became fixed to the rod, which became recognised as the distinctive emblem of the god.¹⁰⁶ Since Hermes was the teacher of Cupid, the caduceus is sometimes symbolic of the attributes of eloquence or reason. The Royal Museums Greenwich, which this painting belongs to, explain that this decorative scheme represents the general theme of knowledge.¹⁰⁷ The armillary spheres thus symbolising heavenly wisdom and the caducei standing for hidden understanding.

Although this explanation is understandable, Clifford is showing he is not only skilled in arms but is a learned man of the court, it is also somewhat unsatisfactory. Although the eight-pointed gold stars which cover the Earl's striking armour and the planetary images on his shield link to the armillary spheres through their astronomical nature, and thus are also read as signifying heavenly wisdom, they have little to do with Hermes. I believe a more specific and unifying reading of this iconography can be offered if the caducei are understood as referring not to Hermes

¹⁰⁴ Mosley, 'Armillary spheres and teaching astronomy', *Explore Whipple Collections*, Whipple Museum of the History of Science, University of Cambridge, 2006
[<http://www.hps.cam.ac.uk/whipple/explore/astronomy/armillaryspheres/>, accessed 6 March 2014]

¹⁰⁵ James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art* (London: J. Murray, 1974), 288

¹⁰⁶ Hall, *Dictionary*, 55

¹⁰⁷ <http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/42140.html> [accessed 6 March 2014].

as messenger god, but Hermes Trismegistus. Hermes Trismegistus was the alleged author of the *Hermetic Corpus*, a series of texts referring to alchemy, astrology and magic and forming the basis of Hermeticism, a religious and philosophical tradition.¹⁰⁸ This individual was considered to be an amalgamation of Hermes/Mercury and the Egyptian god Thoth, linked to the arts of magic, writing and the development of science. During the Renaissance, Trismegistus was believed to be a contemporary of Moses and his writings were widely popular with medieval and early modern alchemists. Images of Hermes Trismegistus nearly always show him accompanied by an armillary sphere and a caduceus, as can be seen in the illustration featured in *De Divinatione et Magicis Praestigiis* written by Jean-Jacques Boissard in 1605 (Fig. 57). Here, Hermes is depicted holding and contemplating an armillary sphere and the caduceus is leant at arms-reach against a pillar at his side. Thus, Trismegistus is directly linked to both the armillary sphere and the caducei which feature in the iconography of Clifford's outfit. Interestingly, these objects are also evident in some of the popular emblem books which were circulated amongst the English Elizabethan nobility and were often used as inspiration for courtiers' tournament schemes. For example, an illustration from Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems* (1586) shows Mercury holding a caduceus (Fig.58) and in R.B's *Choice of Emblems* 'Emblem II' shows a caduceus at the feet of the figure on the left of the scene, 'Emblem III' and 'Emblem XXV' both include an armillary sphere.

Through association with astronomy, the stars decorating the Earl's armour also fit into this reading as do the celestial bodies painted onto his pasteboard shield. Hanging in the nearby tree, Cumberland's shield, used only for display at tilts before being exhibited in the Whitehall 'Shield Gallery', is composed of a blue field with an impresa of a planetary globe between a gold sunburst and a moon. Not only does this imagery relate to Hermes through basic links of astronomy but it could also be a visual reference to the Hermetic concept of the 'three parts of wisdom of the universe' which forms part of Trismegistus' writings. These three parts consisted of

¹⁰⁸ For a detailed exploration of Hermeticism see: Florian, Ebeling. *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus: Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001)

alchemy, the operation of the sun; astrology, the operation of the moon and theurgy, the operation of the stars. As a planet, the globe on the shield can technically be considered a star and therefore the sun, moon and globe correspond to these three arts. Furthermore the 'three parts of wisdom of the universe' is thought to have been the reason behind Hermes' name; Trismegistus is widely accepted to mean 'Thrice Great'. Interestingly, in George Peele's account of the Accession Day Tilt in 1590, the poet refers to George Clifford as 'Thrice noble Earle' and is reasonable to propose this is an acknowledgement of the Hermetic nature of Cumberland's appearance.¹⁰⁹ As a result, it can be debated that the symbols which appear on the Earl's hat, surcoat, armour and shield combine to form a single image and that Cumberland has fashioned himself as Hermes Trismegistus. Participants in Renaissance tournaments regularly appeared in the guise of various literary and mythological figures, fashioning themselves through complex sartorial motifs into various idealised personas.

These accoutrements of astronomy which adorn the Earl of Cumberland can arguably also be associated with the personal imagery of Queen Elizabeth I, particularly within her role as Astraea, the celestial virgin. According to Ovid, Astraea was the last of the immortals to live with humans; during the Fourth or Iron Age when evil was let loose she fled the earth and ascended to heaven where she transformed into the constellation Virgo.¹¹⁰ It was believed that Astraea would return during the Golden Age of mankind and, parallels were drawn between this goddess and Elizabeth I.¹¹¹ The astronomical iconology of the Hilliard portrait can therefore be interpreted as references to the Queen in the character of the cosmic Astraea. Furthermore the motto which is painted between the globe and the moon on the Earl's shield also addresses the Queen. The phrase used is *Hasta Quando*, roughly translating as 'a lance at any time' and implying Cumberland's readiness to act on the Queen's behalf and defend her honour in his role as the Queen's Champion. Together with the representations of the sun, earth and moon, the motto forms an impresa

¹⁰⁹ Peele, *Polyhymnia*, 4 (line 28)

¹¹⁰ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ed. Frank Justus Miller (London: William Heinemann, 1916), 6

¹¹¹ Francis Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1993), 38

and thus images and words should be read together. Writing in 1605, William Camden defines the *impresa* as:

a device in Picture with his Motto, or Word, borne by Noble and Learned Parsonages, to notifie some particular conceit of their own, as Emblems...do Propound some general instruction to all...There is required in an *Impress*...a correspondency of the picture, which is as the body; and the Motto, which as the soul giveth it life. That is the body must be of fair representation, and the word in some different language, witty, short and answerable thereunto; neither too obscure, nor too plain...¹¹²

According to Samuel Daniel, author of *The worthy Tract of Paulus louius containing a Discourse of rare intentions both Militarie and Amorous called Imprese* (1585), *impresse* could 'bee embrodred in garments, grauen in stone, enchased in golde [or] wraught in Arras.' They should only be worn by 'armed men or maskers' at 'Justs, Turneis, Maskes, or at such like extravagant shewes' and should be 'worne in such places as they best like about their persons: albeit the helmet, the shielde, the Bardes, the borders of the garment, or the brest.'¹¹³ As part of the tournament tradition during the sixteenth century, participants were expected to create these devices which communicated intentions, aspirations or state of mind unique to the individual, and present them to their Queen before competing.¹¹⁴ The sun, earth and moon on Cumberland's shield are shown one beneath the other in a vertical line, this alignment suggests both a solar and lunar eclipse at the same time. Such an event could never occur, and together with the motto 'a lance at any time' Cumberland could be stating that he will defend the Queen until the end of time. Cumberland's *impresa* therefore expresses his status as the Queen's Champion.

Another unmistakable symbol of Elizabeth I is manifested by the glove worn in the Earl of Cumberland's hat, which occurs both in the full-length Hilliard miniature (Fig.24) and another larger bust portrait painted in the same year (Fig.59). We can only assume that this was a token given to the Earl by the Queen, an act which has precedence, and could have been given to him either after one of tournament Cumberland took part in or granted upon the conclusion of the one of the Earl's

¹¹² William Camden, *Remaines Concerning Britaine* (London, 1870), 366-7

¹¹³ Samuel Daniel, *The Worthy Tract of Paulus louius containing a Discourse of rare intentions both Militarie and Amorous called Imprese* (London, 1896), 4:1-27

¹¹⁴ Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, 123

several naval expeditions. The viewer's eye is drawn to this single dark glove which is the only exception to Cumberland's carefully coordinated outfit. In their article, *Fetishizing the Glove in Renaissance Europe*, Peter Stallybrass and Anne Rosalind Jones explore the notion that Elizabeth exists within this portrait of Cumberland 'not as an abstract presence but as a giver of a specific glove', a glove which now separated from its original wearer transforms the Earl into the Queen's favourite.¹¹⁵

The awareness of individuality and the self was, as has been discussed, a rising concern during the Renaissance which reached a peak during the reign of Elizabeth I. Courtiers were constantly engaged in the act of self-creation, striving to demonstrate their good qualities and improve other abilities in an attempt to unify and arrange them all to gain maximum effect.¹¹⁶ Arguably, armour offered an exceptional opportunity to express the unique personality of the individual; courtiers specially commissioned armour for tournaments and this allowed them to control and create iconographical schemes exclusive to themselves. Elaborate and complex visual codes could be produced on the surface of the armour and were supported by other accessories of the tournament ensemble, such as the shield, surcoat and hat within the Cumberland miniature. Such schemes were not so easily achieved to such an extent within everyday dress. Although day-to-day clothes were infused with their own meanings and decoration, they did not allow the courtier to take on a symbolic role however, the tournament provided a context in which the courtier could use armour to embody the persona of literary and mythological figures or to act the part of other idealised characters. Thus tournament costume, a combination of armour *and* dress, provided the ideal means of the self-fashioning of the Elizabethan male courtier.

¹¹⁵ Stallybrass, Peter and Ann Rosalind Jones, "Fetishizing the Glove in Renaissance Europe," *Critical Enquiry*, 23,1 (Autumn, 2001), 124

¹¹⁶ Sydney Anglo, "The Courtier: The Renaissance and Changing Ideals," in *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage and Royalty*, ed. Arthur Geoffrey Dickens (New York: Greenwich House, 1984), 42

CHAPTER FOUR

STEEL AND SKIN

The *Almain Armourer's Album*, compiled by between 1557 and 1587, includes a number of impressive designs for armour garnitures but perhaps one of the most striking was that intended for George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland (Fig.2). The ink and watercolour drawing spreads over a double page and is annotated with a handwritten note which reads 'The Earle of Cumberland.' The left-hand page shows a figure standing on a patch of grass wearing heavy cavalry armour, appropriate for the battlefield whilst the right-hand page features several exchangeable pieces which could be added to transform the armour for suitable use in the tournament.¹ These garniture pieces include a close helmet, a grandguard, a pasguard, a field gauntlet, a reinforcing breastplate, a pauldron, a locking gauntlet and four vamplates. There are also two saddle steels, a pommel plate and a cantle, as well as a shaffron and a pair of stirrups which would have all been used for the Earl's horse. The majority of this armour garniture exists beyond the two-dimensional pages of the *Almain Armourer's Album* and can be viewed in the Department of Arms and Armour at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Fig. 46 and Fig.47). It remains as the only surviving armour worn by George Clifford and is often referred to as an exemplary specimen of the high-quality craftsmanship of the Greenwich Workshop armourers. The entirety of the armour, like its counterpart drawing, is covered in elaborate surface decoration. Against the blued ground of this armour, run intricate bands of sunken etched and gilded ornamentation; cinquefoil roses and fleur-de-lis, linked by lover's knots, alternate with broad bands of arabesques which incorporate the double-cipher of Queen Elizabeth I (Fig 47). Many elements of this garniture, including the pauldrons, gauntlets, poleyns and couters are also edged with a further slender embellished band of etched and gilded roses enclosed in adjacent rings.²

¹ The supplementary garniture pieces could be used to make the armour suitable for a number of different types of combat. For foot combat the helmet (without face-guard), cuirass and gauntlets were worn. Pauldrons, tassets, cuisses and vambraces were added for light mounted combat. To this, a lance-rest, buffe, greaves and sabatons were added for heavy mounted combat. See Appendix II for more details.

² It should be noted that there is one disparity in garniture displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The left-hand gauntlet originally belonging to this ensemble, now lost, has been replaced with a gauntlet belonging to an armour worn by Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales now in

With such abundant consideration to decorative details, this sumptuous object is irrefutably visually captivating. It is designed to be noticed, to be conspicuous and, when it was originally worn, it would have invited the body of George Clifford to also be observed. The visual impact of Cumberland's armour was of particular importance within the context of the tournament entry, an aspect of this Elizabethan event which had become increasingly extravagant throughout Queen Elizabeth's reign and was intended to have the utmost dramatic effect. George Peele's verse account of the Accession Day Tilt held in 1595, *Anglorum Ferae* describes the spectacular entry of the Earl of Cumberland into the lists:

Among this stirring company of knights,
That at the tilt in fair habiliments
Gan shew themselves, renowned Cumberland,
Knight of the crown, in gilded armour dight,
Mounted at Queen Elizabeth's approach,
Inflam'd with honour's fire, and left his hold
Kept by a dragon, laden with fair spoils.³

Allowing for some poetical licence, Peele's narrative provides an edifying insight into the details of the Elizabethan tournament and the splendour of this popular court event. Particularly revealing is that he seems unconcerned with the progress or outcome of the tilt itself, but focuses instead on carefully and evocatively describing the various elements of each participant's tournament device. Heralded by a musical accompaniment, Cumberland in his favoured guise of The Knight of Pendragon Castle appeared in a structure lavishly decorated as his fictional stronghold, complete with a mock dragon guarding a mound of treasure. It is likely that creation was the Earl's carriage, decorated to appear as a castle. Another contemporary account of the tournament made by the German travel writer Lupold von Wedel during his journey through England and Scotland in the years 1584 and 1585 records the 'very odd appearance' of the carriages used by participants.⁴ Von Wedel notes that not only

the Royal Collection (Fig.17). The gauntlets are very similar in design and both feature the exact same Tudor rose and lover's knot design. However, the gauntlet from the Prince of Wales' armour differs in incorporating a thistle motif and the monogram 'HP' (Fig.60).

³ George Peele, "Anglorum Ferae," in *The Works of George Peele: Collected and Edited, With Some Account of His Life and Writings*, ed. Alexander Dyce (London:W.Pickering, 1839), 181.

⁴ Lupold Von Wedel, "Journey through England and Scotland Made by Lupold von Wedel in the Years 1584 and 1585," trans. G. von Bülow, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, no.9 (London, 1895), 258

were these vehicles embellished but that the means by which they were pulled along were also theatrical; 'the horses being equipped like elephants, some carriages were drawn by men, others appeared to move by themselves.'⁵

At the arrival of the Queen the Earl exited this castle and mounted his horse, signalling that his 'large device' should be 'made by his page known to her Majesty.'⁶ At this point the page embarked on a lengthy speech specially conceived for the occasion, explaining the narrative of the entry theme and alluding to the feats which Cumberland had accomplished as well as the endeavours he wished to gain royal favour for.⁷ Like all the addresses made on behalf of the participants at the Accession Day Tilt, Cumberland's emphasised his loyalty to Elizabeth I and was devoted to his 'princely mistress, whose worthiness/That day's device.../Right humbly were and purely dedicate.'⁸ In addition to his page, Cumberland would have likely been escorted by an entourage of servants, grooms, lance-bearers and possibly additional hired actors and musicians all outfitted in intricate costumes corresponding to their employer's chosen theme. Again, von Wedel records that the combatants at the 1585 Accession Day Tilt he attended, 'had their servants clad in different colours, they, however, did not enter the barrier, but arranged themselves on both sides. Some of the servants were disguised like savages, or like Irish-men, with the hair hanging down to the girdle like women, others had horse manes on their heads.'⁹ Although the costumes of the retinue of servants who often accompanied the knights were extravagant in their design and fabric, the decorative surface of the armour was likely not surpassed. A variety of complex techniques including etching, embossing and mercury-gilding were all used to create intricate patterns on the surface of the armour. Garniture elements could also be further augmented during the manufacturing process by being heated to specific temperatures, causing the steel to oxidise and alter in colour. A range of hues could be produced by maintaining the

⁵ Von Wedel, "Journey Through England and Scotland), 258

⁶ Peele, "Anglorum Faerie," 181

⁷ For tournament speeches attributed to Cumberland as The Knight of Pendragon Castle, see those quoted in: George Charles Williamson, *George, Third Earl of Cumberland (1558-1605): His Life and His Voyages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920). Williamson references that these speeches were uncovered in manuscript form at Appleby Castle, Cumberland's residence, but they now seem to be lost.

⁸ Peele, "Anglorum Faerie," 181-182

⁹ Von Wedel, "Journey Through England and Scotland", 258

heat at different temperatures and for varying times, these included peacock-blue, purple and even black.¹⁰ George Peele, provides vivid descriptions of the ‘shining arms’ and armour which seemed to be ‘glittering like the moon’s bright rays;’ the jewel-like colours, alongside the gilt decoration and reflectivity of the metal would have certainly produced a striking effect, in stark contrast to the softer textiles worn by the spectators.¹¹ Armour was arguably intended to stand out within context of tournament entry, to ensure that the participant could be identified within the mass of spectacular theatrics which the entry was composed of. Thus, amongst these extravagant displays of triumphal chariots, scenery, costumed servants, theatrical speeches, impresa shield designs and other tournament paraphernalia, it was the exceptionally crafted and highly decorative armour which took centre stage.

As well as being the centre visually, the participant’s armour provided the central pivot for the tournament entry in terms of the thematic narrative. Although there is no concrete evidence that George Clifford wore the armour now displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig.46 and Fig.47), the symbolic motifs covering its surface do correspond to Cumberland’s guise as Knight of Pendragon Castle. In addition, there is a Nicholas Hilliard oval miniature depicting the Earl wearing this specific armour and dating from the same year, 1595 (Fig.31).¹² At the tilts in 1590, 1593 and 1595, Cumberland presented himself as The Knight of Pendragon Castle, a character inspired by events in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s account of the erection of King Vortigern’s fortress. In Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Merlin prophesies that the castle could not be completed until the two dragons, one red and one white, which fought beneath it ended their combat.¹³ The image of the red

¹⁰ Tobias Capwell, *The Real Fighting Stuff: Arms and Armour at Glasgow Museums* (Glasgow: Glasgow City Council, 2007), 45

¹¹ Peele, “Anglorum Faerie,” 181; George Peele, *Polyhymnia: Describing the honourable Triumph at Tylt, before her Maiestie, on the 17. Nouember, last past, being the first day of the three and thirtith yeare of her highnesse raigne. With Sir Henrie Lea, his resignation of honour at Tylt, to her Maiestie, and receiued by the right honourable, the Earl of Cumberland* (London, 1590), fol.2v

¹² Although the production of this armour has been dated to 1587, there are a number of portraits of George Clifford which could suggest that he wore this particular armour on a number of occasions. As well as the oval Hilliard miniature mentioned above (c.1595, Fig.31), there is a further Hilliard portrait miniature now in a private collection in which we can see the distinctive rose motif on the Earl’s gorget (Fig.61). An additional posthumous half-length oil painting can be found at Abbot Hall Gallery, Kendal in which the Earl wears a falling band over his armour (Fig.62).

¹³ Cumberland also appropriates both the prophecy and the image of the ‘Red Dragon’ to refer to his own deeds in service of the Queen. For example, in Cumberland’s 1590 speech it’s stated that

dragon was embedded in court culture by the reign of Queen Elizabeth, having been used repeatedly by her forebearers Henry VII and Henry VIII in a number of Arthurian-themed court entertainments.¹⁴ Cumberland's armour makes further reference to these Tudor motifs which infuse the speeches; the decorative designs which cover the surface of the armour feature the Tudor rose and the fleur-de-lis, both used in the heraldic badges of the Tudor monarchs. In addition, the lover's knots which bind together the roses and fleur-de-lis as well as the double-E monogram which can be found in the central band of the cuirass (Fig.47) and again on the crest of the Earl's helm (Fig. 63) serve to illustrate Cumberland's devotion and loyalty to his monarch. With its corresponding themes, Cumberland's armour provided the visual counterpart to the verbal motifs found within his speeches and would have united the narrative of his tournament device.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that armour should not be discussed in isolation from the body which once inhabited it and that an engagement with the relationship between armour and the body is key to unravelling the role these objects played in the fashioning of a specific mode of masculinity during the Elizabethan period. Some recent work undertaken within the context of material culture and sociology has highlighted that although 'dress and the body exist in dialectic relationship to one another,' this methodological approach has been largely overlooked to date. This forms the main frame of Joanna Entwistle's seminal article, 'The Dressed Body,' in which Entwistle endorses an examination of dress as 'a very crucial aspect of our everyday experience of embodiment,' whilst the body should be considered as 'a dynamic field, which gives life and fullness to dress.'¹⁵ She continues by arguing that there is a surprising 'absence of the dressed body' within sociology, cultural studies, fashion theory and dress history; 'the *dressed body* as a discursive and phenomenological field vanishes and dress is disembodied. Either the body is thought to be self-evidently dressed (and therefore beyond discussion) or the clothes

Merlin did 'foretell that, till a red Draggon did fly into ye Sea, to encounter ye black Eagle, the castle should not be fortunate, oftentimes with great courage, but with noe lookd for successe, hath this Draggon pulled some feathers, but not seized on ye Bodie of this displayed Eagle.' This is likely a reference to the Earl's naval expeditions against the Spanish (the black Eagle being Spain's heraldic emblem) and his participation in the battle against the Spanish Armada in 1586.

¹⁴ Alan Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments* (London, George Philip, 1987), 165-168

¹⁵ Joanna Entwistle, "The Dressed Body," in *The Fashion Reader*, ed. Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun (New York and Oxford: Berg, 2011), 139

are assumed to stand up on their own, possibly even speaking for themselves without the aid of the body.¹⁶ Similarly, by drawing attention to ‘the relative closeness of such clothes to the skin’ historian Ulinka Rublack has emphasised that ‘dress was obviously experienced in dialogue with the body.’¹⁷ Furthermore, in *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Culture* Rublack advocates that through this approach it is possible to begin to understand ‘about what this lived, and for us increasingly removed, reality of wearing hose, tight bodices, or even exotic bright feathers might have been like.’¹⁸

Within the field of armour studies this methodological approach has not been substantially applied, and the body remains somewhat detached from the armour which once adorned it. The majority of discussions seem to be one-sided with focus being placed on an examination of the surface features of armour itself, such as technical development and decorative techniques, rather than addressing these aspects in conversation with the body.¹⁹ Carolyn Springer’s *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* (2010) does to some extent make an exception to this tendency. The first half of her publication, ‘Armoured Bodies,’ makes significant progress in incorporating an exploration of the physical representation of the body and the ways in which armour shaped such depictions. Springer divides her chapters according to the contrasting categories employed by Mikhail Bakhtin in *Rabelais and His World* (1984), the ‘classical body’ and the ‘grotesque body,’ in addition to a third type of her own manufacture, the ‘sacred body.’ These correspond accordingly to case studies of the muscle cuirass and thorax of the Cinquecento which projected ‘an idealised nude torso’ and signified ‘the perfection and completion of the body’; apotropaic imagery used in armour to distort or mutilate the body; and armour ‘whose iconography establishes an identification with Christ’ and thus acknowledges

¹⁶ Ibid. 139-140

¹⁷ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 17,31

¹⁸ Ibid., 31

¹⁹ See: Braden K. Frieder *Chivalry & The Perfect Prince: Tournaments, Art And Armour at the Spanish Hapsburg Court* (Kirksville, Truman State University Press, 2008); Stephen V. Grancsay, *Arms and Armour: Essays by Stephen V. Grancsay From the Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 1920-1964* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,1986); Claude Blair. *European Armour circa 1066 to circa 1700* (London: Batsford, 1958); Stuart W. Phyrre and Jose A. Godoy, *Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance: Filippo Negroli and His Contemporaries* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013).

the 'transcendence of the body'.²⁰ Although this analysis is innovative in introducing a consideration of the dynamic exchange between armour and the body, as well as including a discussion of the role armour played in the performativity of masculinity, such inquiries could be developed more substantially. By her own admission, Springer's focus is limited to an examination of 'armour based on the manner in which it stylises the body,' and does not extend to include an exploration of the multi-sensory interaction of the body with its exterior covering.²¹

Furthermore, this sense of corporeal detachment is also sustained through our interactions with these objects within the museum space. Display of armour is often uniformly static; they are usually exhibited in a fixed, impassive state and are physically detached from the bodies of the courtiers, princes and kings which once occupied them. Through engaging with the reciprocal exchange between the body and armour and the tensions that arise from the interaction between skin and metal, I intend to address the lived experience of these objects. It is by putting the body back in armour and exploring the ways in which these two sites interacted, manipulated and connected with one another that a better understanding of the cultural value and symbolic language of these objects can be attained.

i. 'Let Him Say and Do Everything with Grace': The Performance of *Grazia* and the Armoured Body.²²

Within the Elizabethan court, the body was a constant site of visual consumption. The expressions, adornment, language and deportment of the courtier's body were ceaselessly scrutinized as indicators of the individual's prestige, principles and taste. These 'insignificant details of dress, bearing, physical and verbal manners' symbolised a myriad of complex social codes and contained 'the arbitrary content' of Elizabethan culture.²³ Such habits were at the core of the increasing output of courtesy literature and manuals of behaviour during the sixteenth century which

²⁰ Carolyn Springer, *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* (Toronto, The University of Toronto Press, 2010), 21

²¹ *Ibid.*, 21

²² Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (London, Penguin Books, 1976), 64

²³ Pierre Bourdieu. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. R. Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 94

showed an 'elaborate concern with the body as a site of inscription and enactment of values and status.'²⁴ Popular authors within this field such as Castiglione, della Casa and Erasmus created a 'written code' which placed the body's 'social performance within a system of values and the identification of a distinct 'taste.'²⁵ Central to many of these behavioural lessons was the belief that corporeal gesticulations and poses were a means of reading the character and values of the individual; the body was considered as the 'habyte and apparayle of the inward mynde.'²⁶ Through careful self-control whilst 'walking, laughing, looking and so forth' the courtier was able to provide crucial 'information about what [was] within.'²⁷ Thus, the visual presentation of the body had to be continually monitored by the individual in order to assure that he/she was correctly projecting the desired and acceptable social values and behaviours. Just as the performance of the body was constantly regulated by the courtier, the court audience unceasingly observed, interpreted and evaluated these movements, adornment and language.

The control and regulation of bodily functions as a mark of character was not strictly a new concept by the Elizabethan period and much earlier behavioural guides acknowledge the relation between the exterior and interior self. Examples from the fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries outline simple rules on personal hygiene and etiquette that should be followed on a daily basis in order to display status. However, this developed into a more sophisticated and detailed form by the mid-sixteenth century with an increasing emphasis being placed on the precision of movement and the visual display of the body during this period. The precedents for Elizabethan courtesy literature contained directions for various social occasions and quotidian rituals, but those published during the late sixteenth century directed their attention to the 'social aesthetic governing both body and speech' and outlined the 'idealised social persona to be visualised.'²⁸ Furthermore, these later publications also

²⁴ Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 142

²⁵ Eugenia Paulicelli, "From the Sacred to the Secular: The Gendered Geography of Veils in Italian Cinquecento Fashion," *Ornamentalism: The Art of Renaissance Accessories*, ed. Bella Mirabella (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 42-3

²⁶ Desiridus Erasmus, *A Lytell Booke of Good Maners for Chyldren*. 1530. Translated by Robert Whytyngton (London: n.p., 1532), A2v-B2v.

²⁷ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 137

²⁸ Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, 142

introduced the significant concept that corporeal gesticulations and poses were stylizations which could 'be cultivated rather than simply observed.'²⁹ In the opening book of Castiglione's *The Courtier*, widely read by Elizabethan society, the characters Count Lodovico da Canossa and Cesare Gonzaga debate the necessity of the ideal courtier's noble birth. The Count insists that those born into an aristocratic family are inherently bestowed with virtuous gifts as 'Nature has implanted in everything a hidden seed' which passes on 'its own essential characteristics to all that grows from it, making it similar to itself.'³⁰ However, he makes the crucial admission that 'through care and effort' these gifts can be also be acquired by 'those who are not perfectly endowed by Nature.'³¹ This is again re-stated when Cesare provides a précis of da Canossa's preceding speech regarding the acquirement of grace, stating; '[y]ou have said that this is very often a natural, God-given gift, and that even if it is not quite perfect it can be greatly enhanced by application and effort.'³² Similarly, della Casa's *Galateo* states that 'however great the power of our natural inclinations may be, they are very often overcome and corrected by the rules of behaviour.'³³ These manuals therefore established the notion that the natural form and actions of the body could be controlled and managed. The various characteristics the courtier was required to express could be learnt and the aptitude he must demonstrate in a wide-range of pursuits could be acquired through practice. By following the societal rules catalogued in these manuals the courtier could fashion themselves, thereby creating a culturally constructed body.

As outlined in the first chapter of this thesis, the idealised version of the self was achieved by projecting an adeptness in numerous qualities and skills, each carefully choreographed to achieve the best effect. The aspiring male courtier was encouraged to become someone who:

who must ride, fence, dance, swim, hunt, and shoot; who must
have knowledge of drawing, mathematics, letters, poetry,

²⁹ Sharon Farmor, "Movement and Gender in Sixteenth Century Italian Painting," in *The Body Imaged: The Human Form and Visual Culture Since the Renaissance*, ed. Kathleen Adler and Marcia Pointon, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 131

³⁰ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 54

³¹ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 55.

³² Ibid.65

³³ Giovanni Della Casa, *Il Galateo or The Book of Manners*, trans. R.S.Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin Books, 1958), 87

theatre, music, and history; who is given lessons in the joust, in running at the ring, and in every other equine exercise including horse ballet; and whose principal concerns appear to be excellence in participating in, and organising, spectacles and masques.³⁴

Yet above all it is significantly emphasised that he should cultivate the ability to 'imbue with grace his movements, his gestures, his way of doing things and in short, every action' in order to 'earn that universal regard which everyone covets.'³⁵ Castiglione advocated that *grazia* was required 'in everything as the seasoning without which all other attributes and good qualities would be worthless.'³⁶ Likewise, della Casa asserts that 'a man must therefore not be content to do things well, but must also aim to do them gracefully,' and continues that grace is 'like a light which shines in things which are fit and proper for their purpose because they are well ordered and as a whole.'³⁷ The practice of this dignified deportment would have extended beyond the court room and onto the tournament field and, despite the material necessitated by the rigours of the tournament ground, the fabrication of armour enabled a continuation of this poise. Rather than the misguided assumption that armour was cumbersome and ungainly, the examples worn by Elizabethan courtiers exhibit a composed grace, allowing their wearer to be 'as elegant and attractive in the exercise of arms as he is competent.'³⁸

The fit and form of George Clifford's Greenwich armour (Fig.46 and 47) denotes a sense of grace through its proportion, decorum and uprightness. In alignment with advice outlined in courtesy literature which warned against the slouching and slumping of the body and contending instead that 'everyone should stand erect,' armour encouraged a straight posture.³⁹ Much like the corseting introduced into female dress during the sixteenth century, the tightly-fitted and padded doublet worn by the Elizabethan male moulded the back, chest and stomach into a prescribed, fashionable shape. Rising in popularity throughout the latter half of the

³⁴ Sydney Anglo, "The Courtier: The Renaissance and Changing Ideals." In *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage and Royalty*, ed. Arthur Geoffrey Dickens (New York: Greenwich House, 1984), 41

³⁵ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 65, 63

³⁶ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 65

³⁷ della Casa, *Il Galateo*, 93

³⁸ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 116

³⁹ della Casa, *Il Galateo*, 32

sixteenth century, the peascod doublet especially encouraged a 'styffe and sturdy' silhouette.⁴⁰ The front of these garments formed a firm curve over the stomach, fitting closely at the waistline and developing into a sharper and deeper point which, by the 1570s, extended to hang over the girdle.⁴¹ The use of pasteboard, busks and heavy padding of horsehair, cotton or other materials in the front section created a stiff protrusion, whilst the back of these doublets sloped in parallel from the shoulder-blades down to the base of the spine (Fig.38). This pull of material down to the waistline gave the midriff sharp, straight edges and accentuated the impression of uprightness. Once put on, this garment would have restricted movement of the torso, preventing collapse of the upper body and producing an erect silhouette. The unyielding nature of Cumberland's steel cuirass both imitates and exaggerates this effect, forcing the body into an upright position and solidifying the Earl's figure. Here, both the material used and the shape of the armour mutually fashion the body. Although upright, this rigidity was predominantly limited to the torso and, whilst obliging the back and chest to remain straight, there was a relative ease of movement enabled elsewhere. The progressive design of articulated joints and overlapping plates evident in the Elizabethan Greenwich Workshop armours allowed the wearer to flex at certain intersections of the body. This is particularly noticeable in the numerous overlying lames of the pauldrons (Fig.47) and thigh defences which would have allowed Cumberland a great degree of tractability in these areas. An avoidance of the obstruction of certain movements was essential for the armoured knight during the various activities of the tournament, not just in terms of successfully displaying a graceful demeanour but also in order to carry out the necessary actions during both mounted and foot combat.

In addition, the even distribution of weight across the armour also facilitated an ease of movement. This design element was not only practical but also visually appealing; Clifford's armour does not appear heavy or disproportionately weighted but instead projects a certain lightness through its compact, balanced form. When compared to the Greenwich armour made for Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester just ten years prior (Fig.43), the exceptional poise and graceful composure of

⁴⁰ Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London: R.Ward for William Wright,1882), 55.

⁴¹ Jane Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I* (London: B.T. Batsford), 46

Cumberland's armour is striking. Unlike the Dudley armour, this example belonging to Clifford avoids being top-heavy and the slim legs look proportionate to the rest of the figure. This graceful silhouette is further created by the inferred lengthening of the body. Mimicking the outline of the Elizabethan male torso created by the peascod doublet and nipped waist, the breastplate appears elongated and slim and these effects are also mirrored in the slender leg defences. By the 1580s, men's hose had 'shrunk to a mere pad round the hips' with the upper thighs covered in tight canions and lower legs sheathed in skin-tight stockings.⁴² The remarkable diminutive measurement of the trunk hose in the miniature portrait of *The Young Man Among Roses*, thought to be Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex (c.1587, Fig.22) demonstrates this fashion at its most exaggerated point. Clad in snug white canions and stockings, Essex's legs are entirely visible and our attention is drawn the length and desirable slimness of his lower limbs. The courtier's legs 'often appeared improbably smooth and unrealistically elongated' and were inextricably associated with elegance and the 'courtly acts of salutation and bowing, of dancing, of riding and of martial display.'⁴³ The close-fitting form of the poleyns, greaves and sabatons likewise draw attention to the Cumberland's well-defined and graceful legs, flawlessly mapping the muscular arch and dip of the calf, the protuberance of the kneecap and the contours of the strong thighs. This idealised extension of the legs is also demonstrated in a miniature portrait of Cumberland wearing another Greenwich Workshops armour (c.1590, Fig.24). In this painting by Nicholas Hilliard much of the Earl's figure is covered in an elaborately decorated surcoat but significantly, his legs from the knees downwards remain exposed with one foot out-turned to fully display the elegant curvature of the courtly calf sheathed in its body-hugging armour. We almost overlook the fact that the Earl's legs are covered in steel and not fabric, so far-removed are they from the rigid connotations of the material used.

It is not just the shape and fit of Cumberland's armour which imbue this object with such a graceful appearance, but also the decorative embellishments which adorn its surface. Beyond the artistic flair and skill which is evident in these impressive

⁴² Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I*, 49

⁴³ Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion: Dressing the Body from the Renaissance to Today* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2009), 98

examples of metalwork decoration, there seems to have also been careful consideration of the placement of the belts of gilded motifs. These bands course dynamically along the entirety of the armour, channelling our gaze across the surface of the metal and by this means enhancing the graceful appearance created by the elongated shape of the armour. We are encouraged to follow the line of pattern work along the side of the gorget before tracking an arc through the curve of the pauldron, down the length of the upper and lower canons and reaching through the gauntlet, spreading right to the tips of the fingers. Repeated on the left and right, these arcs frame the central column of the armour. Here, our gaze is guided vertically down the breastplate to the point of the peascod before extending outwards over the curve of the tassets and continuing down the length of the cuisses, greaves and through to the toe of the sabatons. The exquisite pen, ink and watercolour drawings of armour which feature in the *The Almain Armourer's Album* also exhibit these flowing lines which swathe the surface of each design (Fig.1 and Fig.2). The equivalent drawing for Cumberland's armour in the Album seems to further enhance the visual impact of the decorative bands of cinquefoil roses, fleur-de-lis and arabesques; the stripes of etched and gilded motifs seamlessly connect to one another, coursing over the surface of the armour in an uninterrupted motion (Fig.2). Similarly, in another design by Jacob Halder for Robert Dudley featured in the *Album*, the kinesis of the bands of elaborate strapwork is further heightened by the chevron motifs which surge up the amour, guiding our gaze up the surface of the legs, waist, chest and head in a continuous flow (Fig1). A sense of fluidity is created by the way these bands of ornamentation channel energy across the surface of the armour which could be interpreted as extensions of the movements of the body, each enhancing and adding grace to one another.

This sinuous, elegant impact of Cumberland's armour is also generated by the fact that the decorative bands do not run in straight lines but are instead slightly curved. The entirety of the armour projects a curvilinear form with each element being moulded and shaped to avoid any flattened surfaces or sharp lines, mimicking the contours of the body which lies beneath. This is perhaps particularly noticeable on the surface of the Earl's helmet (Fig.63), where each alternating band emerges from and disappears into the neckline, following the curve of the crown produced by the

physical shape of the helmet. The exception to the supple contours are those bands which run vertically down the breastplate, which do seem to have straight edges; however, the stripes themselves are softened by following the protruding curve of the slight peascod-shape. Referring again to the drawing of the Cumberland armour in the *Almain Album* Halder has, as Gloria Kury acknowledges, 'greatly exaggerated' the arcs and bends of the armoured body.⁴⁴ The sweep of the line of the helmet over the top of the head and cinching in at the base of the neck is greatly inflated. Alongside the amplified curvature of the pauldrons and tassets, the armour is infused with a roundness and dynamicity and the only acute angles apparent within these designs are the well-defined projection of the elbows. The pen and ink knights each stand in a repeated pose, with right hand on hip and left arm outstretched (Fig. 1 and 2), a gesture which also indicated certain coded values. This established gesture has been mentioned within Chapter One, and is seen in a vast number of male portraiture of the sixteenth century. It carries with it symbols of power, assertion and is inherently masculine. From a more technical perspective, Susan Vincent has argued that the Renaissance elbow was largely brought about by the fit and construction of sleeves during the period. Sleeves were cut with pre-shaped elbows which would have forced the straightening of the arm, moving against the cut and resulting in a tightening and puckering of the material. Thus, significantly impeding movement and enforcing a 'stance with slightly bent arms.'⁴⁵ Here, the boundaries of the origins of the bodily gesture are obscured and the material construction of dress is in mutual exchange with cultural values; the fit and form of dress is shown to enhance existing behavioural codes but it also dictates the movement of the body.

It should also be noted that the decorative bands, in addition to the outline of Cumberland's armour, add a further elegance in their symmetry. The repetition of the pattern supplements the balance of the armour and creates a unity in drawing together the separate garniture elements, producing the impression of a seamless whole. With regards to shape, the only elements which show an irregularity are the pauldrons, the left being larger than the right, but this has carefully been made so

⁴⁴ Gloria Kury, "'Glancing Surfaces': Hilliard, Armour and the Italian Model," in *Albion's Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550-1660*, ed. Lucy Gent, (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1995), 410

⁴⁵ Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford and New York; Berg, 2003), 29

slight that on first glance it is hardly noticeable (Fig.46). It serves a defensive purpose, protecting the left hand side of the wearer's body from the blows of his opponent's lance during the joust.⁴⁶ Interestingly, in the miniature portrait of George Clifford painted by Nicholas Hilliard in the early 1590s, the decorative bands have been modified to appear even (Fig.31). The cinquefoil rose on the right pauldron has been replaced by a fleur-de-lis to match the left side and restore equilibrium. Furthermore, the corresponding drawing for Cumberland's armour in the *Almain Armourer's Album* (Fig.2) also features matching fleur-de-lis on the pauldrons. Perhaps these alterations were executed by both artists simply due to compositional reasons and for visual effect, but it is striking that this evenness is in alliance with the encouragement for proportion, symmetry and decorum outlined in contemporary courtesy literature.

Through these carefully crafted shapes and decoration, an appearance of gracefulness is instilled by the very construction and fabrication of the armour. These aspects fashion how we perceive the body of Cumberland and allow the Earl to achieve the poise and dignified deportment of the ideal courtier which was so desirable during the period. Furthermore, I would argue that armour allowed a unique means for the individual to accomplish that ultimate behavioural characteristic of the Elizabethan courtier, *sprezzatura*. Much of the courtesy literature mentioned above emphasised that each graceful movement, gesture and speech was meant to be performed without affectation and a sense of natural ease. The courtier was encouraged 'to practice in all things a certain nonchalance which concealed all artistry and makes whatever one says or does seem uncontrived and effortless.'⁴⁷ *Sprezzatura* was essentially the 'art of suggestion' and hinged on the concept that 'the courtier's audience will be induced by the images it confronts to imagine a greater reality existing behind them.' This enabled the courtier 'to make himself into a much more enticing and compelling figure than he might otherwise be.'⁴⁸ The gracefulness imbued by armour was subtle and insinuating, due to the connotations of the materials used and their role as a protective defence, the

⁴⁶ See Appendix II.

⁴⁷ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 67

⁴⁸ Wayne A. Rebhorn, *Courtly Performances: Masking and Festivity in Castiglione's 'Book of the Courtier'* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), 38

elegance of these objects was perhaps not initially perceived. The ease and elegance of the armoured knight appears artless and unassuming, it is only through a close analysis that we begin to appreciate the complex ways in which the fabrication of these objects manipulate our perception and consumption of the armoured body.

ii. The Fragmented and the Cohesive in the Armoured Body

In a chapter titled 'The Courtier: The Renaissance and changing ideals,' Sidney Anglo evocatively described the ideal courtier as being 'pieced together from the choicest parts of divers chivalric and humanistic cadavers.'⁴⁹ Much like the human body the Elizabethan male courtier was composed of an assortment intertwining and overlapping parts, each fulfilling a different function but working together to create a cohesive ideal of masculinity. The format of many of the courtesy manuals which attained popularity during the late-sixteenth century encouraged this fragmentation of the courtier's body. The 'habits and manners, as well as actions and words,' were separated into individual categories, each with its own set of rules of behaviour which provided 'clues to the quality of the man.'⁵⁰ Every recreation, ritual and activity necessitated specific bodily movements encouraging a further division of the body. The stylistic tendency to discuss the body in fragments was arguably reflective of the rising fascination with anatomy which emphasised a segmentation of the body into separate parts for discussion. Parallel with the rise of the educational humanism movement, which encouraged a deeper and more analytical consideration of corporeality, was an increasing scientific investigation of the human body. In 1540, the Royal College of Surgeons was founded in London alongside the College of Physicians and anatomical studies of the body became progressively more established. Studies exploring the science of anatomy were published widely and often included detailed diagrams which served to illustrate the dissection process. A particularly vivid example is a volume of tables and drawings which were thought to have been commissioned by John Banister, an anatomist, surgeon and teacher who spent many years in the service of the Dudley family.⁵¹ This manuscript features double-pages showing diagrams of the human skeleton, the muscular system and the

⁴⁹ Anglo, "The Courtier," 42

⁵⁰ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 136

⁵¹ MS Hunter 364 (V.1.1), 1581. University of Glasgow Library.

nervous system as well as including drawings of anatomical instruments. The frontispiece depicts John Banister himself delivering an anatomy lecture to a group of men at the Barber-Surgeon's Hall in 1581 (Fig.64). The growing fascination in this particular branch of science meant that significant developments were made in the understanding of the body, the way it could be divided into sections and systems and how these layers could be placed together again to make a whole. This movement also propelled the human form into focus across a wide range of disciplines. As Jonathan Sawday, in his publication *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture*, has stated; 'the body was produced (in a theatrical sense) as the flimsy vehicle for a complex ideological structure which stretched into every area of artistic and scientific endeavour in the early-modern period.'⁵² This is certainly evident in the widespread use of the term 'anatomy' which was soon transported from the scientific realm and began to be used in numerous arts and humanities publications. Texts such as John Lyly's *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wyt* (1578), Phillip Stubbes' *Anatomy of Abuses* (1538) and Thomas Nashe's *Anatomie of Absurditie* (1589) reflected a captivation with these scientific explorations.

Developments in the tailoring of clothes throughout the sixteenth century slowly brought the physicality of the human form into a new focus and, through its fit and form, could be seen to mirror this cultural dissection of the body. The apparel of the Elizabethan male courtier was composed of various layers of separated garments, each drawing attention to an independent section of the body. The first layer was the shirt which was followed by the collar, ruff or band around the neck depending on fashionable preference. The doublet was worn on top of the shirt and, over this, the jerkin whose shape was dictated by the doublet. A man's upper or trunk hose were available in a variety of styles, colours and fabrics and would have been worn with canions or stockings and footwear would have completed the dressing of the legs. There were also a plethora of cloaks, coats, cassocks, mandilions and other outer garments available to the sixteenth-century courtier. In addition to the use of individual garments for individual parts of the body, further awareness of the physicality of the body was created by the fit of each of these items of clothing. Dress

⁵² Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 4

was concurrently tightly sewn and exaggerated to extremes; doublets were constrictive in the sleeves and chest but also had inflated stomachs whilst the trunk hose which enlarged the hips and upper thighs were counterbalanced by the stockings and canions that closely sheathed the lower legs. Both the fitted and magnified forms served to fragment the figure of the courtier into anatomised parts, and as Ulinka Rublack has commented, this brought 'different parts of the body separately into view for the first time.'⁵³

Due to its similar construction of various interlocking parts, armour also emulated this partitioning of the human form. By again observing the armour of George Clifford (Fig.46 and 47) we can see that each separate garniture element was devised to fit and protect individual sections of the body. The cuirass defends Cumberland's chest and back, the couters guard his elbows, the tassets, greaves and poleyns all shield the legs whilst his arms are covered by the vambraces and couters. These steel pieces are deftly moulded to mimic the curvilinear forms of the figure beneath it; the imitation of the arc of the shoulder in the pauldrons, the cinch of the waistline created in the cuirass, and the duplication of the athletic curve of the calf in the greaves. Furthermore, the kinesis of the decorative bands which cover the surface of Clifford's armour force us to pay attention to the shape and form of this object. We are impelled to follow the lines of gilt and etched ornamentation and, by travelling across the surface of the armour, our gaze is also tracing the contours and undulations of the body which lies beneath it. These straps of embellishment, also serve to further accentuate the different sections of the body by generating delineations between each garniture element. Almost every piece of this elaborate Greenwich Workshop armour is edged by a band of gilt roses in conjoined annulets and this stripe of decoration creates partitions across the façade of the armour. By simply looking at the arm of Cumberland's armour we can perceive that the pauldron, upper vambrace, couter, lower vambrace and gauntlet are all divided from one another by the gilt decorative borders. Moreover, the Earl's waistline is also clearly demarcated by a flattened edge of steel which draws attention both to the fashionable peascod shape of the breastplate and also the boundary between the

⁵³ Rublack, *Dressing Up*, 17

waist and hips, or cuirass and tassets. The very fact that armour is constructed from various parts draws attention to the fragmentary nature of the body but, at the same time, these objects also presented a cohesive and solid façade. Dress 'was an aesthetic of parts not a blended whole,' but armour arguably encompasses both these qualities.⁵⁴ The daily apparel of the courtier was composed of a mixture of different textiles, colours and embellishments often deliberately contrasting with one another in order to highlight the luxuriousness and fashionability of each garment. Conversely, although armour was equally opulent, its unity in material, decoration and colour fused together the separate elements and drew attention to the body in its entirety. When worn on the tournament field and viewed from a distance, Cumberland's armour would have produced an impression of a singular, uninterrupted whole in a way which was not achievable through the fabric of everyday dress.

This simultaneous cohesive and fragmentary nature of armour can therefore also be considered in terms of vulnerability and power. Through uniting the body in a continuous whole, armour displays an incomparable ability to alter its wearer's body, transforming the soft, fragile human form into a robust, almost impenetrable entity. The armoured body of the Elizabethan male courtier presented an almost super-human physique, exaggerating the appearance of the body to make it appear more impressive. Once donned, the all-encompassing metal carapace of George Clifford's armour would have entirely encased his body; with the helmet attached and visor closed, the Earl would have been completely concealed within this exterior shell. Again, in imitation of the body, armour acts as a defensive layer over the skin just as the skin itself forms a protective covering for the muscle, nerves and organs of the body. Once the armour is put on, layers of protection against the outside world are built up. Here, the armour can be analysed as a both a psychological and physical boundary, creating a barrier between the self and the environment in which it performed.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Vincent, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, 103

⁵⁵ The concept of body generating boundaries has featured in much fashion theory discourse. For examples Elizabeth Wilson's *Adorned in Dreams* explores dress as marking 'an unclear boundary ambiguously, and unclear boundaries disturb us. Symbolic systems and rituals have been created in many different cultures in order to strengthen and reinforce boundaries, since these safeguard

The all-encompassing, robust, metal façade offered the armoured knight a necessary protective layer, defending him from physical harm during the tournament. Furthermore, the shielding nature of the armour could arguably be interpreted as acting as a psychological barrier from the all-too-possible dangers of mounted and foot combat which took place during the Elizabethan tournament. Wearing these embellished and reinforced objects could surely not fail to incite some feeling of formidable, herculean resilience amongst the participants. However, this transformation into a powerful, idealised version of the body could also be seen as a simultaneous acknowledgment of corporeal insufficiency and fragility. In *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance*, Carolyn Springer argues that ‘armour is simultaneously an affirmation of power and an admission of vulnerability. In presenting an idealised double to the world, the armoured knight admits his own insufficiency.’⁵⁶ In this respect, the prosthetic and supplementary nature of armour can be seen as an expression of the need for protection. The very composition of armour admits this defencelessness of the body; its segmented construction means that it can be dismantled and broken down and, once disassembled, the body beneath is exposed and rendered vulnerable.

With reference to the ability of armour to simultaneously draw attention to the body and conceal it, it is perhaps interesting to consider what happens to the body and the identity of the courtier when his armour is removed at the conclusion of the tournament? By returning again to a description of one of the Accession Day Tilts, this time in 1590, it is possible to gain an insight into the contrasting perception and symbolism of the armoured and unarmoured Elizabethan male body. This particular occasion marked the retirement of Sir Henry Lee from the tournament field and the withdrawal of his position as the Queen’s Champion, a role which he passed to George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland. According to George Peele’s thirty-four line dedication to the retirement ceremony, Lee entered the tilt ‘in rich embroidery’ and ‘costly caparisons charged with crowns/O’ershadowed with a withered running

purity. It is at the margins between one thing and another that pollution may leak out. Dress is the frontier between the self and the non-self.’ Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 2-3; See also Dani Cavallaro and Alexandra Warwick, in *Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and Body* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1998), also discuss dress as a ‘boundary,’ ‘frontier’ and ‘margin.’

⁵⁶ Springer, *Armour and Masculinity*, 5

vine.⁵⁷ After tilting, Lee addressed Queen Elizabeth through a song performed by the royal lutenist, which lengthily conveyed the fact that Lee's youth and vigour for the tilt was behind him; 'My golden locks time hath to siluer turnd,/(Oh time too swift and swiftnes neuer ceasing)/My youth gainst age, and age at youth hath spurnd.'⁵⁸ He finally asks of the Queen to 'vouchsafe this aged man his right,/To be your Beadsman now, that was your Knight!'.⁵⁹ At this point, Lee removes his armour and dons a black velvet cloak along with a 'buttoned cap of country fashion.' This change in apparel, and more significantly the move from armour to dress, marks the transformation in Lee's position as he transforms from 'Knight of the Crown' to Hermit. Here, the armoured body is exclusively associated with the persona of the Queen's Champion and on 'having unarm'd his body, head and all,' he becomes simply a courtier and returns to his daily life. Furthermore, upon the relinquishment of Lee's position his 'armour and his lance' are then passed on to 'the valiant Earle/Of Cumberland' signifying the new possessor of this title.⁶⁰

The armoured body is therefore inextricably tied up with the persona the courtier takes on within the tournament field; the armoured body represents the idealised version of the self whereas the unarmoured body is an indicator of the quotidian self. Armour was unique in allowing the courtier to conceal his natural body and identity, and the fabrication and construction of armour allows him to piece it back again in order to produce a body which is both an idealised and culturally constructed version of the self. In visually consuming the armoured knight on the tournament field, it is the social rather than the physical body which we perceive.

⁵⁷ Peele, *Polyhymnia*, 17-18

⁵⁸ John Dowland, *The First Booke of Songs or Ayres* (London, 1597): no.xviii

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Peele, *Polyhymnia*, 17-18

CONCLUSION

Part way through the discussion of the seemingly endless list of qualities and skills where were required of Castiglione's courtier, one of the debaters makes an interesting additional stipulation. In the second part of *The Book of the Courtier*, Federico Fregoso states that not only should the courtier acquire these characteristics, but he should also learn to understand how best to display them. Fregoso demands that the 'courtier must know how to avail himself of the virtues, and sometime set one in contrast or opposition to another in order to draw more attention to it.'¹ He likens this to the process of painting, stating it is:

what a good painter does when by the use of shadow he distinguishes clearly the lights on his reliefs, and similarly by the use of light deepens the shadows of plane surfaces and brings different colours together in such a way that each is brought out more sharply through the contrast.²

As such, Fregoso highlights the importance of the display of these qualities. The courtier should not only spend time studying great histories, mastering new fencing skills or learning a new instrument, but he should also become accomplished in displaying his virtues to the best effect. Fregoso continues by applying the importance of the display of gentlemanly qualities to the tournament or battlefield, suggesting that:

When the courtier finds himself involved in a skirmish or pitched battle, or something of that nature, he should arrange to withdraw discretely from the main body and accomplish the bold and notable exploits he has to perform in as small a company as possible and in view of all the noblest and the most eminent men of the army, and, above all, in the presence, or if possible under the very eyes, of the prince he is serving.³

Crucially then, the carefully arrangement and display of courtly masculine qualities must also be witnessed. Being visible is central within much of the courtesy literature

¹ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 114.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 115.

produced during the late-sixteenth century. Each gesture, pose and speech was intended to be heard and seen and through the witnessing of these performances, gentlemanly identity could be confirmed. It could be argued that the tournament field was a particularly unique situation in which communal focus was forced on singular action; the spectator's gaze is concentrated on the individuals partaking in single combat against one another. Furthermore, as illustrated in the previous chapter, armour enabled the individual to attract particular attention, moving him to the centre of the spectator's vision.

Through an examination of the objects themselves and their painterly representations within portraits, this thesis has sought to bring armour back into view. In doing so, the cultural codes which are embedded within armour can again be read and used to gain a deeper understanding of experiences of masculinity and concepts of identity during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. My research has attempted to engage with the materiality of armour as a key approach to gaining a better understanding of these objects and the way in which they were experienced in relation to the self, both physically and culturally. Throughout this project, I have been conscious to make sure to incorporate a tactile approach as well as visually analysing armour. I have spent much time handling and observing how these fascinating objects were designed and put together in order to acquire a closer insight into the way they interacted with the body. This has included questioning how armour moved on the body, and how the body moved within armour when stationary and when mounted for combat. Through examining the way in which lames were articulated, the decisions behind where to place rivets and the process of various metallurgical techniques, a better understanding of the way in which these armours were experienced by the wearer and how they physically shaped the body can be achieved.

However, there are limitations to this approach and a thorough understanding of the way in which these objects participated within the parameters of the Elizabethan court is difficult to attain. Within the museum and without the body of the wearer, it is hard to fully appreciate the impact these armours would have once had when enmeshed in the court theatrics of the tournament. Yet, the visual depictions of

armour provide a valuable insight into this environment. Recording the accoutrements of the tournament in all their glory, these images provided a platform for the symbolic devices used by courtiers to be assembled in one place, recorded and circulated amongst others. Through a close examination of these armoured portraits, complex constructions of masculinity and identity can be identified.

Within this thesis, I have attempted to bridge the more traditional technical approach to the study of arms and armour with a more conceptual methodologies borrowed from art history and dress history. The thesis has attempted to argue that through this interdisciplinary approach, a greater understanding of the way in which these objects socially and culturally shaped the body can be gained. In turn, this contributes to a wider understanding of the ways in which the self was fashioned and the specific modes of masculinity which were fashionable amongst the Elizabethan elite. This research has been conducted in the hope that armour will once again return to centre stage, not as a static object but a dynamic agency.

APPENDIX I

SELECTED GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR DRESS AND ARMOUR

Backplate – piece of plate armour protecting the back.

Band – collar of linen worn around the neck, usually white.

Bases – Usually made of fabric, but examples made of metal plate exist. Took shape of deep skirts starting from the waist and ending at the knee. Differs from the tonlet by being cut away in the front, to accommodate the saddle when the wearer is mounted.

Bluing – This refers to the process which creates the iridescent peacock-blue colour found in sixteenth century armour. Produced by heating the metal which changed the colour of the armour from yellow to purple to deep blue as the temperature rises.

Breastplate – piece of plate armour worn over the torso, protecting chest and abdomen. Usually strengthened by a single central ridge running down the front.

Breeches – garment worn as an alternative to trunk-hose from about 1570. Stopping just below the knee and worn with stockings. Various forms.

Bufte – piece of plate armour worn to protect neck and face.

Busk – central strip made of wood, whalebone or metal inserted in the casing of the doublet or bodice to stiffen it.

Canions – tubular pieces of material worn closely fitted to the thighs, ending at the knee-cap.

Caparisons – textile covering for the horse, often richly decorated.

Close helmet – Head defence. Comprised of skull, bevor and visor, all pivoting from same points placed either side of the skull.

Couter – elbow defence.

Cuirass – combination of breastplate and backplate often with articulating lower lames, protecting the torso.

Cuisses – piece of plate armour protecting the thigh.

Culet – see *Fauld*

Doublet – fitted jacket with short, upright collar. Detachable sleeves often used in conjunction.

Etching – a two-dimensional decorative technique found on sixteenth-century armour. Created by coating the surface of armour in a substance such as wax which was acid-resistant, cutting the desired pattern into the wax and then coating the surface with acid. The exposed areas will be eroded, creating a pattern on the surface of the metal.

Fauld – Plate defence for abdomen, waist and hips consisting of horizontal lames. Rear section referred to as the ‘culet’ whilst front section referred to as the ‘fauld’.

Garniture – various pieces of plate armour which could be arranged in different formations for varying types of combat.

Gauntlet – armoured glove.

Gilding – ‘mercury gilding’ was more commonly used on arms and armour as it was more durable. This involved applying an amalgam of mercury and powdered gold to the surface and heating it to volatilize the mercury, leaving the gold on the surface.

Girdle – a belt worn around the waist and fastened at the front. Often made of silk, ribbon or goldsmith’s work for women and velvet, embossed leather, embroidered silks, gold or silver for men.

Gorget – piece of plate armour worn protecting the throat.

Grandguard – piece of reinforcing plate armour protecting the left shoulder and neck during the joust.

Greave – lower leg defence.

Hose – Consisted of two parts which covered the leg; the upper or ‘trunk’ hose and the lower, which could also be in the form of long hose, nether stocks or ‘canons’.

Jerkin – A type of short coat, usually worn over the doublet. Often indistinguishable with doublet, differed by the fact that the sleeves of the jerkin (if it had them) were sewn onto the body, whereas the doublet sleeves were often detachable.

Lame – narrow strip of steel plate.

Lance – A horseman's spear. Usually made of wood and tapered in shape, with the thicker end being nearer the hand. From the fifteenth century, lances were usually fitted with a vamplate for the hand. Features a thick leather or wooden edge just behind the grip called a 'grapper' which would engage with the lance-rest and prevent the lance from being dislodged.

Lance-rest – A small rest or arm attached to the right-side of the breastplate of field armours. Designed to engage with the grapper in order to prevent the lance from being dislodged on impact.

Lower Cannons – plate defence protecting the forearm. Part of vambrace.

Manifer – plate defence for left hand, which would hold the horse's reins, worn during the joust.

Pasguard – piece of reinforcing plate armour which could be worn with grandguard to protect left arm and elbow.

Pauldron – shoulder defence.

Peascod – refers to shape of doublet with protruding and exaggerated stomach, created by padding. Popular in the late sixteenth century.

Pickadil – small tabs of material, rounded or squared used to edge items of dress. Often placed on the base of the doublet or bodice and at the armholes, cuffs and around the neckline to support ruffs. Used in armour to reduce friction of plate on plate, most notably seen on pauldrons.

Plackart – lower reinforcing portion of the breastplate.

Poleyn – knee defence.

Rapier – hilted sword with long straight blade. Worn as a dress sword.

Ruffs – originally the frill that edged the collar of a shirt but by the 1570s this had become a separate piece of clothing. Could be made of lace, holland, cambric or lawn and could be decorative or plain. Made of many layers and starched to produce a stiff shape.

Sabatons – foot armour.

Shaffron – plate defence for horse's head.

Skirts – gown, robe or dress worn by infants, both male and female.

Stockings – worn on the lower leg, extending from the foot to slightly above the knee. Could be made of silk, wool or were knitted.

Surcoat – loose, usually sleeveless over-garment.

Swaddling-bands – strips of cloth used to bind babies, to keep them warm but also to restrict movement of limbs as a safety precaution. Often made of linen.

Tassets – taking the form of separate plates which hang in layers from the lower edge of the breastplate, these pieces of armour protect the upper legs.

Tonlet – metal skirt worn with a particular kind of tournament *armour*, especially designed for fighting on foot. Differs from bases by being a complete skirt.

Upper Cannons – plate armour for protection of upper arm. Part of vambrace.

Vambrace – arm defence consisting of lower cannons, upper cannons and separated by the couter.

Vamplate – circular plate fitted to the lance in order to protect the hand.

APPENDIX II

TYPES OF ENGLISH SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ARMOUR AND THEIR USES

i. Armour for the Field

This armour would have been used predominately on the battlefield for mounted combat but also within tournaments for the joust of war.

In its simplest form it consisted of: helmet, gorget, pauldrons, couters, vambraces, gauntlets, cuirass (formed from the breastplate and backplate), tassets, cuisses, poleyns, greaves and sabatons.

Pieces of exchange could be added to the base armour or taken away in order to adapt for various types of combat. By adding extra garniture elements, this would have increased the defensive structure of the armour, providing greater protection in isolated areas for the wearer when needed. By taking away sections of armour, greater flexibility and movement was enabled, which was particularly useful in types of combat which necessitated speed and agility.

For infantry or foot combat only a helmet without a face-guard, the cuirass and gauntlets would usually be worn.

For light and medium cavalry, which meant mounted combat with the use of firearms, sword or/and a light spear, the pauldrons and tassets would be added and also sometimes vambraces and cuisses.

For heavy cavalry, again mounted combat but this time with the lance, all pieces of the field armour would be worn, plus plackart, lance-rest, buffe, greaves and sabatons.

ii. Armour for the Tilt

This would have been within the tournament for the joust of peace. It consisted of the base structure of the field armour but with additional pieces of exchange which were intended to protect specific areas of the wearer's body. The chosen areas of defence reflected the nature of the type of combat. The joust was carried out with each individual holding the lance in the right hand and reaching across the neck of the horse, impact would have therefore been left hand side of the body. As such, the left hand side of the body was additionally protected with pieces of exchange.

The armour for the tilt consisted of the same elements as field armour with the addition of the grandguard and passguard, protecting the left arm, shoulder and face as well as the use of vamplates and a manifer, also protecting the left hand.

iii. Armour for Foot Combat

This would have been worn within the tournament for the foot combat contest and would have been used alongside a number of weapons. There could be two variations of armour worn for this sort of combat and, unlike those worn for the tournament, they were symmetrical in appearance. This can be best seen in a comparison between the pauldrons. For the tilt, the left pauldron is slightly larger than the right pauldron for added protection where the lance was likely to strike. In armour used for foot combat, the right and left pauldrons are identical.

When the contest took place over the barriers, the armour worn would have been relatively simple. As the barriers acted as a protective covering between the two contestants, guarding the legs and only leaving the upper half of the body exposing to strikes from weapons. For this form of combat, the armour would have consisted of the elements of the field armour which were used for torso and arms. An addition of a close helmet was usual, which had a detachable visor and no plate defence for the legs would have been worn. This would have made fast, agile movement much easier for the contestant.

When foot combat took place without the barriers, full protection was needed and the body was enclosed in plate defence. This would have included a helmet, gorget, pauldrons, couters, vambraces, gauntlets, cuirass (formed from the breastplate and backplate), full tassets enclosing the thigh, cuisses, poleyns, greaves and sabatons. From the fifteenth century, tonlets were also often worn. The angled surface of these pieces of plate defence would have served to deflect blows from the opposing contestant's weapons, as well as providing additional protection for the upper legs.

iv. Armour for the Horse

An individual's horse would also be armoured for battle and for the tilt or tourney. The plate defences worn by them are often features in the list of garniture elements for each design in *The Almain Armorer's Album*. Complete armour for the horse was referred to as barding. It was composed of the shaffron, which protected the horse's head and ears; the crinet, articulated lames which protected the neck; the peytral, designed to protect the chest and shoulders; the crupper, which protected the hindquarters; and the flanchards which were attached to the saddle and protected the flanks.

Steel saddle plates were also often used, placed in front of and behind the rider and acted as protection for them rather than the horse.

APPENDIX III

LIST OF DESIGNS IN *THE ALMAIN ARMOURER'S ALBUM*

The *Almain Armourer's Album* also referred to as *The Jacob Album* contains twenty-nine hand-drawn designs by Jacob Halder. Each design has been annotated by Halder, showing that these designs were intended for specific individuals. They are as follows (numbers are for sequential designs rather than folios):

1. The Earle of Rutland
2. The Earle of Bedforde
3. The Earle of Leiseter
4. The Earle of Sussex
5. Duke, John of ffineland, Prince of Sweden.
6. Ser William Sentlo
7. My Lorde Skrope
8. The Earle of Leiseter
9. My Lorde of Hunsdon
10. Ser George Howarde
11. My Lorde Northe
12. My Duke of Norfocke
13. The Earle of Woster
14. Ser Henry Lee
15. Sur Cristofer Hattone
16. The Earle of Penbroucke
17. Ser Cristofer Hattone
18. Ser John Smithe
19. Sr Henry Lee, Mr of tharmerie
20. The Earle of Cumberland
21. Sr Cristopher Hatton
22. Mr Macke Williams
23. My L Chancellor
24. My L Cobbom
25. Sr Henry Lea, Mr of the Armore
26. My Lorde Cumpton
27. Mr Skidmur
28. My Lorde Bucarte
29. Sr Bale Desena

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