

Early Modern Women

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**“Thy Righteousness is but a menstrual clout”:
Sanitary Practices and Prejudice in
Early Modern England**

SARA READ

Growing interest in the historiography of the female body has resulted in a number of studies of the ways that menstruation was represented in early modern England.¹ These studies concur that, within the prevailing humoral system of bodily economy, regular menstruation was seen as a physiological function, essential to a woman’s overall health. However, examining early modern manuals on women’s health reveals a key paradox: although normal menstruation was considered a disease, a monthly sickness or illness, failure to menstruate regularly was also considered a disease, which physicians went to great lengths to cure.² Such was the prevalence of the belief that the key to a woman’s health was sited in her uterus that Lazare Rivière stated in the section of his anatomy guide devoted to women’s health in the mid-seventeenth century that the womb was the source of “six hundred miseries and innumerable calamities.”³ Like humoral theory itself, most ideas about the cause and effects of menstruation were based on the ancient ideas of Hippocrates and Galen, which explained that, because of a woman’s more sedentary lifestyle, her body was less efficient than a man’s at utilizing the blood that she produced. The resultant build-up of blood and other waste in the female body (described as a “plethora”) must be eliminated through menstruation for the sake of her health. In the mid-seventeenth century, a rival theory was proposed: menstruation was caused by a chemical ferment in the female body, which reached critical mass once a month and broke forth from the uterus, the naturally weak

point in female physiology.⁴ Also in this period, some accounts of the nature of menstrual blood transmitted from Pliny via Isidore of Seville in Latin to the thirteenth-century pseudo-Albert's *Women's Secrets*,⁵ still represented myths postulated by Pliny in the first century BCE, which claimed that menstrual blood was poisonous and could perform alarming magical feats, such as causing wine to sour, trees and crops to die, mirrors to cloud, swords to blunt, and dogs to go mad should they chance to taste it. A new English translation of Pliny in 1601 by the physician Philemon Holland disseminated these well-known ideas even further.⁶

As well as the physical threat that menstrual blood could pose, it might also pose a psychological one: according to an extreme example, a man's seeing of a woman's menstrual blood could be enough to cure him of love sickness or infatuation. The classical story of Hypatia taps into this ancient myth of menstrual blood as a cure for love sickness.⁷ According to the story, Hypatia cures a would-be lover of his infatuation for her by showing him her used menstrual rags. This gesture apparently repulses the lover by bringing him face-to-face with the realities of the female body. In his chapter on the prevention of love sickness or "erotique melancholy," physician Jacques Ferrand relates this story:

It so fortun'd, that a scholler of hers was so surpriz'd with the beauty both of her body, & mind, that he grew almost mad for love. But at one day this young *Inamorato* was very earnest in his suit to this faire Damosell, & importuning her to cure him of his disease by satisfying his desires: she (being, as it seemes, not ignorant of the Precepts of Physicke in this case,) *Panno menstruos indidem prolato; ecce, inquit, adolescentule quod tantopere adamas, ubi nil nisi Immundicies habetur.* Which the young man had no sooner seen, but his heat was presently allay'd, and himselfe cured of his Love-Melancholy.⁸

As Mary Frances Wack has noted, the preferred cure for lovesickness in a man was intercourse,⁹ and it is only when Hypatia refuses to comply with the young man's desire for sex that she is described as extinguishing his unwanted interest with the sight of her used sanitary protection. In this story, in what Wack calls "Neoplatonic strain," the constant search for perfection in beauty is undermined by the realities of female physiology.

This tendency is seen in Gideon Harvey's account of this incident when he claims that the cure worked by demonstrating "*Quod est superius, est sicut inferius*. That is, whatever is above is like to what is below."¹⁰ The story reinforces the notion that menstrual blood is noxious, psychologically damaging, and highly indecorous. The story of Hypatia may have been disseminated for salacious or misogynistic reasons, rather than for its curative value; Ferrand, at least, is skeptical of its effectiveness, commenting that he will look for more sound remedies for lovesickness in the "three Fountaines of Physicke, namely: Dieticall, Chirurgicall, and Pharmaceuticall."¹¹

The story of Hypatia draws attention to the paucity of research within early modern studies on one aspect of menstruation: how the early modern woman managed her menstrual flow on a practical, daily basis. This essay addresses that issue. Part of the reason that there is little extant evidence is located in the dual nature of sanitary protection. This subject is both taboo and mundane, leading to an apparent lack of contemporary early modern sources. Menstruation is a commonplace experience for women the world over, yet it is often considered a subject to be left unspoken. Just as, when writing in English, medics would often use Latin to discuss things which might appear sexual, so too we see the use of Latin to discuss sanitary protection in the previous quotations, reinforcing the idea of menstrual blood as an unfit subject for open discourse. In the early modern period, cultural and social taboos, prejudices, and religious doctrinal taboos all contributed to this lack of explicit discussion. One phrase which is repeated often in anti-Catholic and other proselytizing texts is the instruction to cast out sin like one would a "menstrual rag." Similarly, the insufficiency of mere human righteousness is figured by comparing it to a bloodied rag in the sight of God. In the light of these contrasting characteristics of taboo and everydayness, this article will examine early modern texts to analyze how women might have used sanitary protection, and how the Biblical imputations linking sin to cloths which were "defiled" with menstrual blood might have contributed to a culture of silence on this subject.

For the purposes of this article, I refer to anything which is used specifically to absorb the menstrual flow as "sanitary protection" because this is the normal modern terminology. I do, however, think that this usage indicates deeply problematic assumptions about the nature of these

objects: does the term “sanitary” imply that failure to use these objects is “unsanitary”? And, what does the term “protection” imply? Edward Shorter prefaces a question about the nature of early modern sanitary protection with the claim that “women’s premodern sense of cleanliness shows itself most vividly in the area of menstrual hygiene.”¹² This is a key facet of the early modern context: early modern understandings of cleanliness are not the same as modern ones. This is not to say that early modern women were not clean; it is just that cleanliness is culturally determined and, at different points in history and location, different norms apply.¹³ It is therefore important to try to recover this aspect of women’s lives in the early modern era without imposing twenty-first century ideas about cleanliness upon a society for which modern ideas had no equivalence or relevance.

Previous studies that have discussed the issue of sanitary protection in historical accounts usually claim that women used linen pads or cloths to absorb their menstrual flow. Such claims are often based on practices that were used until the twentieth century, extrapolated back into the early modern era, usually with no early modern sources to back these assumptions. The important 1970s study of the cultural history of menstruation, *The Curse*, comments that “[t]hrough the ages, women have used either tampons, or bandages as sanitary protection.”¹⁴ Patricia Crawford’s seminal article, “Attitudes to Menstruation in Seventeenth-Century England,” takes it for granted that women wore “cloth pads.”¹⁵ Of the later seventeenth century, Liza Picard writes, “sanitary towels were made of linen that had reached the end of the line; they were washed and reused, as they were well into the twentieth century.”¹⁶ Of course, these claims are not implausible and probably are the ways that some women managed their menstrual flow. Similarly, in “Civil Cleanliness,” her chapter about personal hygiene in the eighteenth century, Virginia Smith comments, “The normal method of dealing with the menstrual flow was to cut out and sew a pad of rag, which was then pinned onto the underpetticoat and washed daily, a method which persisted well into the early twentieth century.”¹⁷ Conversely, Edward Shorter poses and answers his own question: “What did peasant women use when they menstruated? The answer seems to be basically that women from the popular classes menstruated onto their clothes.”¹⁸

Since there is a plethora of early modern medical books which discuss the importance of managing menstruation, and a similar number of conduct books explaining how to keep clean and tidy, yet neither seems to refer to sanitary protection, should one assume with Shorter that, in fact, women did not feel the need to wear or use any form of protection? It is interesting that Shorter makes his comments with regard to women "of the popular" classes, but does not say why he perceives a class division. Class, as we know it, of course, had no currency in the period under consideration, in which a person's rank in society was the acknowledged distinction; however, this sort of rank distinction does appear pertinent to this enquiry. For example, Alexandra Lord has found evidence from the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary suggesting that during the eighteenth century, poorly nourished, lower ranking Scottish women "not only missed their menses during the winter months when food resources were stretched tight, but also that these women *expected* to miss their menses during this season."¹⁹ So, clearly, women of different lifestyles would have different experiences of menstruation, and perhaps different menstrual practices as well.

The evidence I have recovered suggests that an early modern English woman who used folded cloths to absorb her menstrual flow would have known them as "clouts" or "rags." Pieces of cloth used in a variety of household ways were generally referred to as clouts. These clouts were usually made from old cloth, often linen, cut down to size, sometimes hemmed, and then given a variety of uses around the home (dishcloths, bandages, sanitary uses such as wiping after using the toilet).²⁰ The early modern term of "clout" and its variants means, according to the *OED*, "a piece of cloth, esp. one put to squalid uses."²¹ It is possible that the choice of linen as the material for medical and sanitary uses resulted from the belief that clean linen could draw off moisture from the body.²² In 1682, A. Marsh drolly commented regarding childbirth practices that a midwife might offer "warmed beds and other Clouts, the number and names where of are without end."²³ These cloths could also be used to absorb menstrual blood, but there is no contemporary evidence that I have been able to recover that they were sewn into pads at all, although the cloth was undoubtedly folded over to make it more absorbent. It is possible that clouts were pinned or tucked into the girdle, which was a belt-like garment that sat just below the waist, worn by both men and women.

Lady Anne Clifford records in her diary that on December 13, 1619, "My Lord gave me three shirts to make Clouts of."²⁴ Even though Lady Anne was a wealthy aristocrat, it would appear that one of her housewifely duties was to run the house as frugally as possible, and it is interesting that this exchange was considered noteworthy in her diary as the only entry for that date. This diary entry confirms that household economy led to second-hand linen being made into cloths. However, at some level, it also reinforces the seventeenth-century stereotype that higher-ranking women spent their days sitting and sewing. This stereotype appears in an account of why women are considered colder and moister than men, and is ultimately thought to be the reason women menstruate; Crooke's *Mikrokosmographia* cites Hippocratic authority:

*Men doe live a more laborious life, and eat more solide meates then women, that they may gather heate and become dryer, woemens foode is more moyste; and beside, they liue an idle and sedentarie life, pricking for the most part uppon a clout.*²⁵

There is a caveat, though, explicated in a 1705 translation of Bernardino Ramazzini's *The Diseases of Tradesmen*, which suggests that, while a man's old shirt could be put to any use, because of the supposedly venomous nature of menstrual blood mentioned earlier, many "celebrated Surgeons" believed that "Lint" for dressing wounds should not be made from "Women's Linnen or Shifts, notwithstanding they are frequently wash'd; and that by reason of the Virulency of the menstrual Blood."²⁶

Other primary evidence further suggests that only women of a certain rank would take the precaution of wearing clouts to absorb their menstrual flow. A seventeenth-century joke attributed to Nicholas Le Strange describes how a "mad knave" at a masque fails to recognize "a certain thing . . . which monstrous [i.e. menstrous] women used to wear," which has fallen on the floor. He waves it around asking where this "surcingle" comes from.²⁷ A "surcingle" is a girdle placed around a horse's girth when it is being trained, and so further supports the idea that a woman of higher rank might tuck or pin a clout onto a belt while menstruating. Not only are the dangers of wearing folds of linen in a pre-underwear era all too apparent, but this also corroborates the idea that it was women of a

certain rank—those who might dance at a masked ball—who wore sanitary protection. Given the common belief that exertion such as dancing could make the menstrual flow heavier or, as John Freind suggests, break out unexpectedly, it could be the case that women chose to wear sanitary protection on special occasions, such as a ball.²⁸

Mary Carleton's disputed autobiography also shows her to have been living in the rank of women who would use clouts as sanitary protection. Carleton's account of her marriage and its breakdown tacitly implies that she was menstruating at the time that her goods were seized by her marital family, which happened after they had found evidence that she was not the German princess she had claimed to be. Carleton writes that a gang of women, at her marital family's request, came into her rooms and took away all her clothing. Perhaps salaciously rather than factually, this account lists that "my jewels and my money, my very bodice and a pair of silk stockings being also pulled from me," but, when she reiterates this scene later, she adds details designed to demonstrate both the intruders' mercilessness, and the shocking intrusion of the raid: "In fine, they left me not a rag, rinsing every wet cloth out of the water, and carrying them away."²⁹ To have her property taken to the extent that even her soaking undergarments and, possibly, even her menstrual rags were removed might also suggest that such bits of linen had a commodity value, and as such might be beyond the financial reach of some.³⁰

One surprising source of contemporary evidence for the possible practice of sanitary protection comes from the 1680 collection of poems which claims to be a posthumous publication of the notorious libertine, John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. Before his death, Rochester's poetry was disseminated in manuscript form to aristocratic and like-minded friends. It is deeply problematic as a source for the history of women's bodies since most poetry in the anthology focuses on the female body as used for male sexual gratification. The first poem of interest here is "Song" ("Against the Charmes our *ballocks* have"), written in the style of a literary ballad, cross-rhyming ABAB and in tetrameter/trimeter quatrains, which demonstrates an easy accomplishment at prosody, itself perhaps designed to make the irregularity of the subject more shocking. This ballad tells the story of a man who claims to be disgusted by a prostitute while he cannot resist being in her thrall. The

speaking voice in this ballad invites the reader to share his position. The subject of this relationship is apparently so distasteful that the speaker suggests that he will “write upon a double *Clout*, / And dip my *Pen* in *Flowr’s*” (7–8).³¹ “Flowers” is a very old name for menstruation in this era, from a horticultural metaphor explained by Jane Sharp, the seventeenth-century midwife, as being used because “Fruit follows” flowers, which is to say that it was believed that without menstruation, conception was impossible.³² So this speaker will write his salutary warning in the prostitute’s menstrual blood upon her sanitary protection, which is a play on the practice of writing love letters in one’s own blood for added dramatic effect. The speaker is thus using deliberately shocking imagery, linking menstruation to the prostitute’s enthralling body and behavior as characteristically unsavory aspects of female sexuality. This imagery further alludes to the magical and malicious properties that this blood was often believed to have, while never questioning the male voyeur who is using a female physiological event to publicize his feelings of entrapment by female sexuality.

In a similar vein, another ballad published in the same collection goes even further on the topic of sanitary protection. “*Song*” (“By all *Loves* soft, yet mighty *Pow’rs*”) deals with the subject of sexual intercourse during menstruation, warning men of the dangers of “fuck[ing] in time of flowers.” This practice was prohibited by both the Bible³³ and cultural taboos, which threatened results ranging from the excoriation of the penile skin due to the vitiated nature of menstrual blood, to the conception of monstrous progeny.³⁴ Predictably, Rochester is not interested in reinforcing normative cultural or Biblical prohibitions, but is perhaps using a taboo to increase the shock value of his already sensational topics. The poem suggests that a lack of personal hygiene is the norm for the woman he is having sexual relations with, despite her use of clouts. He says that if she were to always use paper when she uses the toilet, and a sponge to absorb her menstrual flow, then he would have more pleasure in coitus:

Fair nasty *Nymph*, be clean and kind,
 And all my joys restore;
 By using Paper still behind,
 And Spunges for before.³⁵

The speaker does not fear the assumed dire consequences of sexual intercourse during menstrual periods, but he would prefer to leave the fray without his "prick" suffering a "bloody nose" (11–12).³⁶ This, he assures the reader, is a turn-off of such proportions that only a naïve, inexperienced lover would be able to achieve an erection: "None but fresh *Lovers Pricks* can rise / At *Fillis* in foul linnen" (15–16). The speaker implies that, to solve this problem, he would prefer the sponge to be used tampon-like to remain in place during intercourse. This poem shows the way in which the prostitute, if she modified her behavior according to the speaker's concerns and managed her periods according to the codes that he outlines, would then seem even more sexually desirable, indeed irresistible.

The exchange of this manuscript material before its publication suggests that the use by some prostitutes of a sponge to enable them to continue working during their menstrual period was common knowledge. The use of a "pessary" in medical contexts was also a familiar practice, and there is some evidence of the use of absorbent pessaries in the case of post-partum bleeding from ancient times; however, most often a pessary was used for supporting the uterus, or to deliver medicines to the uterus, rather than to absorb blood. The anonymous best-seller, *Aristotele's Masterpiece*, for instance, describes using linen internally to help with a prolapsed uterus following a birth. "Aristotle" suggests that the midwife should anoint the abdomen with oil of St. John's Wort and then swaddle her belly to keep it warm, and that the midwife should "raise up the Matrix with a linnen Cloath many times folded."³⁷ Similarly, William Sermon's *The Ladies Companion* describes how one could manufacture a pessary to support a prolapsed womb, a very common condition in women who have had multiple births.³⁸ One of his ingredients is breast milk, possibly because of the assumed connection between breast milk and the blood of the womb. Breast milk was believed to be menstrual blood which had gone through a further stage of concoction in the body to transform it into milk, and was therefore a substance that would not irritate the womb. Sermon molded pessaries out of cork covered in wax, but crucially insisted that a hole left in the center would facilitate the egress of menstrual blood. Patricia Crawford comments that "there was no unwillingness to advise married women to insert objects into the vagina," and that, therefore, "it is pos-

sible that women might have used pessaries as well as cloth pads to cope with the practical problems of menstruation."³⁹ However, contemporary texts about menstruation suggest that anything which stopped the menstrual blood from freely flowing could have severe health implications for a woman. It is possible, therefore, that use of sponges to retain the blood within the body was only practiced among prostitutes, and would have been considered dangerous in the wider population.

Besides evidence for doubts about the use of pessaries for sanitary protection, there is some contemporary evidence that only women who bled heavily felt obliged to use protection to soak up the flow. A 1719 translation of Pierre Dionis's midwifery guide seems to corroborate this idea explicitly:

The Quantity of Blood to be evacuated can't be determined; some women lose very little, others are forc'd to use Linen-Cloths, otherwise they might be trac'd and exposed by the print of the *menstrual* Blood.⁴⁰

Dionis's explanation distances him somewhat from the often-rehearsed Hippocratic dictum that an average menstrual period yields between one and two pints of blood.⁴¹ John Freind conducted experiments which appeared to corroborate the Hippocratics' findings:

The quantity of the evacuated Blood is different according to the variety of Constitutions, Diet, Age, or the Like; yet in healthy and adult Persons it commonly amounts to twenty Ounces, which agrees with the measure assigned by *Hippocrates*, namely two *Hemina's*.⁴²

Lesley Ann Dean-Jones explains how the Hippocratics arrived at this measure: "The Hippocratic doctors . . . estimated the amount of blood a healthy woman should lose by the amount of fluid they thought the average non-pregnant womb could hold."⁴³ Perhaps the reason for the widespread acceptance of this quantitative measure was that blood spreads alarmingly. As Dean-Jones comments, "it only takes a small amount of liquid to produce a large stain," so estimating blood loss based on soiled cloths or garments could lead to a higher assumed blood loss.⁴⁴

As part of his discursive comments on the cause of menstruation, which he believes to be a localized ferment in the gall bladder, James Drake, in 1707, offers the reason that he, unlike John Freind, does not support the idea of a Galenic/Hippocratic plethoric buildup to be the cause of menstrual bleedings: such a buildup, he argues, would produce symptoms, such as a generalized feeling of heaviness, alerting a woman to her impending period. He explains that many women who

have *them* regularly and easily, have no warning, nor other Rule to prevent an indecent Surprize, than the Measure of Time; in which some that have slipt, tho' otherwise modest and careful Women, have been put to such Confusions and Shifts, as would not consist with the Notice that a *Plethoric* Body would give.⁴⁵

"To shift" in this period can mean to change one's clothing. This comment speaks volumes about the contemporary ideas of proper female behavior and is reinforced later in the eighteenth century when the physician Malcolm Flemyng also comments that some women have no symptoms to alert them to the start of a period, so that they "they scarce have warning enough to provide for decency."⁴⁶

Despite Drake's and Flemyng's comments, it would seem that for women who bled within the normal range by today's assumptions (approximately 2 to 3 ounces), or had no access to spare linen, allowing menstrual blood to seep onto the shift was probably deemed perfectly normal. As Dionis makes clear, only "some women" who bleed more heavily than the norm are "forc'd to use linnen-cloths."⁴⁷ This is corroborated in a comment by John Freind, who notes that sometimes women who think their period is over are surprised when the bleeding returns immediately, but he says that this is caused by women putting on their shifts when the material is "damper than usual."⁴⁸ The shift was a universal under-dress made from simple material, worn next to the body, underneath the stays (bodice or corset) with a petticoat over it, followed by an outer-dress. This statement seems to reply that Freind had developed a theory about this recurrent bleeding; perhaps his observations of female practices and the notion that clean linen was thought to draw moisture to the body led him to suggest that women bled into their shifts and have to wash them out more

frequently than normal and that the shifts do not thoroughly dry before they must be worn again. It is worth noting that this does not necessarily suggest that no clouts were used. Clouts might leak, and so a woman using clouts would probably still find that her shift needed washing regularly, too.

In what might prove to be the only account of her menstrual practices by a woman in this period, the normality of bleeding into one's shift is corroborated. In a notorious case in 1733, Sarah Malcolm was arrested for the murders of three women, one of whom had her neck slashed, the others having been strangled. Malcolm's employer, John Kerrel, confronted her about the murders and testified:

The next Thing I took Notice of was a Bundle lying on the Ground; I asked her what it was, she said it was her Gown. And what's in it? says I. Why Linen, says she, that is not proper for Men to see; and so I did not offer to open it.⁴⁹

A search of Kerrel's house revealed that the handle of the "Close-stool" door was covered in blood, and the room itself contained some dirty linen and a silver tankard. Malcolm claimed that the tankard was her own, inherited from her mother, and that it and the door handle had blood on them because she had cut her finger "and as for the Linen, she said, it was not Blood upon it, but a Disorder."

That this blood was menstrual was borne out by the testimony of a fellow prisoner, Roger Johnson, who claimed to have had orders to search Malcolm. He says that Malcolm asked him not to examine her: "she desir'd me to forbear searching under her Coats, because she was not in a Condition," and, to prove that she was menstruating, Malcolm "shew'd me her Shift, upon which I desisted."⁵⁰

In an extremely important and unusual account of menstruation through a woman's voice, Malcolm argues in her own defence:

Modesty might compel a Woman to conceal her own Secrets if Necessity did not oblige her to the contrary; and 'tis Necessity that obliges me to say, that what has been taken for the Blood of the murdered Person is nothing but the free Gift of Nature.

This was all that appeared on my Shift, and it was the same on my Apron, for I wore the Apron under me next to my Shift. . . . [A]nd Mr. *Johnson* who searched me in *Newgate* has sworn that he found my Linen in the like Condition.

If it is supposed that I kill'd her with my Cloaths on, my Apron indeed might be bloody, but how should the Blood come upon my Shift? If I did it in my Shift, how should my Apron be bloody, or the back part of my Shift? And whether I did it dress'd or undress'd, why was not the Neck and Sleeves of my Shift bloody as well as the lower Parts?

The language Malcolm uses is interesting because it implies that, despite the heavy use of circumlocutions like "Disorder" and "Gift of Nature" and the idea of menstruation as "women's secrets," she assumed that the watching audience would know just what she meant.⁵¹ Malcolm's use of the phrase "free Gift of Nature" is interesting because it differs from the common language of the medical world, and is perhaps a reflection on the idea, which Mary E. Fissell identifies, that the womb was seen as analogous to a good housewife in that it always keeps a store, ready to receive a guest, and this "free Gift" would have been used to nourish a baby had a conception occurred.⁵² Malcolm also suggests that another inventive solution to the issue of menstrual blood discharge may have been employed, when she describes turning her apron around to cover the lower half of the back of her body to add another absorbent layer to her dress, in order to protect the bedclothes from staining.

As I have argued earlier, menstruation in this era occupied a peculiar position in that it was both public and private, and it occupied a further contradictory status in being both mundane and taboo. These taboos are presented in the Bible in various books and settings, and, I would argue, are the key factors in the development of women's silence on the subject of menstruation, except under exceptional circumstances, such as Sarah Malcolm in the dock, or women's health writers like Jane Sharp, who saw that by breaking cultural codes of femininity and publishing a midwifery guide, she might save many lives.

The role of the Bible as the main cultural referent in the early modern period cannot be overstated, and one of the activities that the new

Protestant religion encouraged was self-examination of one's religious health. This reflection led several women to write journals detailing their devotion and religious contemplations and presenting overcoming illness and childbirth as pious activities.⁵³ In these journals, most women mention their menstrual cycle only obliquely, if at all, and yet many of them discuss other aspects of daily life at length. This omission could result not only from concern for decorum but also from Biblical comparisons of filthy or unworthy items to a cloth or clothing covered in menstrual blood.

The main English Bible of choice in the earlier part of the period was the Geneva Bible, which included marginal notes explaining some of the biblical ideas to the reader. Isaiah 30:22 in the 1560 Geneva Bible reads: "And ye shall pollute covering of the images of silver, and the riche ornament of thine images of golde, & cast them away as a menstruous cloth, and thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence." The marginal annotations explain that:

Ye shall cast away your idols, which you have made of golde and silver with all that belongeth unto them, as the moste filthy thing and polluted [.]. Shewing that there can be no true repentance except both in the heart and dede we shewe ourselves enemies to idolatrie.

The origin of this simile likening a false idol to a menstrual cloth is found in the translation of the feminine Hebrew noun "njdh," which is transliterated as a feminine noun "niddah," meaning "impurity," "filthiness," as well as "menstruous" and "set apart."⁵⁴

A devotional poem by John Vicars demonstrates the idea that cloths and clothing were considered to be defiled by contact with menstrual blood:

O, double, treble happy were I, sure,
 If once I might put-off *Sins rags* impure,
 Those *Menstruous cloathes* wherewith I am disguised,
 Whereby thine Image in mee's not agnized:
 Whereby in thy pure sight I am but loathed.
 O therefore that my *Soule* might once be cloathed
 With thy most *royall-Robes* of righteousnesse,
 Thy *Seamelesse, spotlesse Coote* of holinesse.⁵⁵

The posthumous sermons of Edmund Calamy and others make the distinction even more explicit when he suggests that human righteousness "is no better than *menstruous Cloaths* and *filthy Rags*."⁵⁶

In the Geneva Bible Isaiah 64:6, the image of a cloth with menstrual blood on it as disgusting is highlighted by the sixteenth-century marginal notes. The verse reads: "Our righteousnes and best vertues are before thee as vile cloutes" and, as previously cited, the marginal comments explain "or, (as some read) like the menstruous clothes of a woman." This example highlights that the translation to "menstruous" from "filthy" was subjective and was clearly influenced by the cultural context of the translation, and was not necessarily the meaning ascribed by the author of the book of Isaiah. This point is demonstrated by a translation which appeared shortly after the Geneva Bible, the King James Bible, in which this passage becomes: "But we are all as an uncleane thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy ragges, and we all doe fade as a leafe, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away." An early Christian dictionary by Thomas Wilson, 1661, examines the passage from Isaiah and says: "As *filthy rags*, Isa. 64. 6. Concerning the notion of the word here used, and not elsewhere read; as also concerning the notation of it, there is great variety of opinions, even among the *Jewish* Criticks themselves." After explaining the translations that this term can produce, such as "rags of old cloth, a patchwork coat, bandages on bloody sores, or cloths used in child birth," Wilson says, it is "a *cloth* or *cloth of separations*, a *menstruous cloth* or *clout*, as coming from a word that signifies both in Hebrew." Wilson says that when this text was translated from Hebrew into Greek, the term became a "sitting woman," but that this does not detract from the meaning of *menstruous*, because this reference is to Rachel (Genesis 31:35). The author of this dictionary therefore concludes that this usage is in fact what Isaiah intended to be understood: "And to some such Loathsome and nasty stuffe [as menstrual blood] in all likelyhood, doth the Prophet compare the most righteous among the main multitude of his people."⁵⁷

This understanding was challenged by Edward Nicholson in the early part of the following century, and perhaps precipitated the decline in the usage of this simile in printed devotional texts. Nicholson rages against the fact that nonconformist preachers use this image in the pulpit. He says

it is disgusting that Calvinists have substituted the term “menstruous” for “filthy” so that now even young boys recite the passages using this phrase and ask him what the meaning of this term is. He writes:

[We should] not disparage the beauty of those Vertues Christ has bestowed on us, and taught us by his own Example: By giving them such Vile Characters and Names, as if they were not to be touched without a pair of Tongs. *Pannus Menstruatus*, as you would word it, or the comparison of a Menstrous Cloth, the Prophet call'd it not so, but filthy Rags; and that he spoke not with Relation to Righteousness, quatenus [as] Righteousness: But he said, was of their condition that wanted Righteousness, and had none at all among them: Neither is the Word in that place altogether so Odious: Tho I have often heard that very Name you give it, in the Calvinists publick Pulpit Prayers, and some cou'd never pray in the Pulpit without it, to the great offence of many modest People to my knowledge. . . . But this Text the Calvinists assault it from, has not the Word they use, but a modester Word, only *filthy Rags*, and that [is] not spoken of true Righteousness, or good Life, but of the want of it. Yet they have made this monstrous reproachful Name, so unreasonably common upon this Occasion, that even their younger boys have it by heart, and often ask what the meaning of the Word is.⁵⁸

This diatribe speaks volumes about the anxieties that this word, and the simile it evokes, aroused in some parts of early modern society. Nicholson calls menstrual cloths vile and immodest, but does not appear to be disputing the sense of the verses, just the translation and word choice.

These similes occur regularly, although not particularly frequently, in devotional and conduct writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A sample reading of such texts from 1582 to the eighteenth century suggests that the number of authors who used the term “filthy” instead of “menstruous” were slightly in the majority. However, when authors preferred “filthy” they often added salacious adjectives to it to emphasize their point. For instance Thomas Bentley, in the well-known Elizabethan book of prayers for women, *The Monument of Matrones* (1582), writes in a “Psalm for the remission of sinnes,” “For I am uncleane and filthie: and all my righteousnesse is like a foule bloudie clowt.”⁵⁹ Authors who do not

wish to use menstruation overtly often alluded to it with the common alternatives of stained or polluted rags.⁶⁰ That menstrual blood pollutes is clear from the laws of Leviticus and in references to it, such as in Barnaby Barnes's play *The Devil*, where the devil says, "Thy soule foule beast is like a menstrous cloath, / Polluted with unpardonable sinnes."⁶¹

The simile of a menstrual cloth seems to be used by Protestants of all sects and affiliations, in all manner of devotional publications, including books of religiously inspired verse like Nicholas Billingsley's Presbyterian *Treasures of Divine Raptures*; verse 178, "On a Clout," reads:

Self-right'ousness enwrapping us about,
Is as a rotten ragg, or menstrous Clout.⁶²

Phyllis Mack argues that this sort of language is so common because "When [Protestants] spoke of the absolute nullity of human virtue in relation to divine love and judgement, that human nullity or spiritual nakedness was often seen as feminine."⁶³ And, of course, menstruation is the greatest signifier for femininity, because it was thought to be caused by the cold, moist, inactive nature of the female body.

In addition to its use in decrying human righteousness and in highlighting man's sinful nature, the term "monstrous clout" is often used in anti-Catholic propaganda. An apparent fear of the growth of Catholicism was seen through the various Stuart reigns in the seventeenth century. For example, in a treatise warning against a supposed rise in "popery," Anthony Gilby follows Isaiah and challenges the loyal "to cast away the reliques of Idolatrie" like a "menstrous clowte,"⁶⁴ here using the imputation in Isaiah as a direct reference to Catholic religious practices.

There is some evidence that, while this phrase was well-known and appeared in print regularly throughout the period, it was also presented orally in sermons by Calvinist and other nonconformist preaching on a regular basis, as Edward Nicholson describes. Patricia Crawford therefore argues that, "People in seventeenth-century England were familiar with the use of the symbol of the menstruating woman to define profanity."⁶⁵ One printed funeral sermon for a woman, Joice Featly, by the Puritan minister Thomas Gataker, indicates that this simile was used and expanded upon:

“Is there any man so vile, and void of shame, as that he dare presume solemnly to bequeath to some honourable person, some greasie dish-clout, or some durtie shoo-clout, or some filthie, menstrous, materie ragge?”⁶⁶ Here the “menstrous rag” is set within a context of domesticity and other household cloths, presumably because it is being discussed at the funeral of a housewife.

Patricia Crawford noted in 1996 that evidence of women using “menstrual metaphors with such aversion has yet to be located,”⁶⁷ and my research seems to partly support this finding, for women do not use the simile in the overt way that men do, despite attempts to ascribe this simile to a female voice, as in the Apocrypha of Esther published in the Geneva Bible, for example.⁶⁸ Lady Elizabeth Delaval uses this metaphor in a decorous way in her meditations, writing that “In thy sight (even) our vertu’s are so full of imperfections that they can scarce deserve the name of rags, much less of garments to clothe us in, fit in the least measure to appear before thee.”⁶⁹

The poet An Collins, however, does use the simile of a “Monstrous clout” in her verse. Collins’s single published volume of poetry encompasses all that is known about her life, and her verse has been argued to be “nakedly” autobiographical. Collins’s identification in her verses as a Calvinist would mean that she was familiar with the simile of the menstruous rag in her religious worship.⁷⁰ Much of Collins’s verse details not just her sense of faith but also her bodily ill-health, and in “Another Song” (“The Winter of my infancy being over-past”), she makes oblique references to her lack of menstruation.

In the poem “Another Song” (“Excessive worldly Grief”), Collins alludes to the fact that she has suffered from some unpleasant bullying, “taunting,” perhaps by other women, about her physical state. But possibly some of the hurt is self-inflicted, because she describes her own difficulty in overcoming the sin of envy of other women, in “Though Envy wait to blast the Blossoms green” (7). Sarah Skwire describes how in this poem Collins uses an extended simile to suggest that “to condemn a godly person, soul and all, because of an obvious physical defect is as senseless as preferring a perfect weed to a damaged rose.”⁷¹ The simile is extended to:

Or else as if a Monstrous Clout should be
Prefer'd before the purest Lawn to see,
Because the Lawn hath spots and this the Clout
Is equally polluted throughout.⁷²

In dealing with her complicated feelings about her amenorrhea, Collins taps into the familiar biblical image linking menstrual blood with pollution and filth. Her dress (metaphorically, her conscience and soul) may have a few marks on it, because man's fallen state means no one can be without sin, but this is in no way as bad as the pollution on a menstrual cloth. It is an indication of the contemporary cultural prejudice against menstrual blood that Collins chooses to defend herself in a way most usually heard in masculinist voices. This is perhaps an insight into the way that Collins deals with this affliction. We know from the earlier poem that she is in mourning for her lack of menstruation, so perhaps by elevating herself above the filth of this blood, and by extension, the lot of other women, Collins can take some comfort.

What this study has shown is that, except in extreme situations, like that of Sarah Malcolm, the early modern woman was largely silent on the subject of how she managed her menstrual blood loss. The evidence that is available is almost universally from men, and, therefore, must be treated with some caution because the practices they describe, in medical texts, verse, and jests, are not their own. As I have said earlier, conduct guides and housewifery manuals tell a woman how to manage her personal hygiene to the extent of cleaning out her ears and nose, but remain silent on the topic of sanitary protection. Perhaps this is not surprising, given the implicit cultural link between menstrual blood and disease, the social taboos of decency and shame, and the biblical comparison of menstrual rags and spiritual corruption. If the mere sight of a used menstrual cloth was supposed, apocryphally, to cure lovesickness in men, what might have been the effect of defying the taboos and writing about sanitary protection in guides for young women? It might be the case, though, that in the course of everyday life, using a method for absorbing menstrual flow was not considered necessary by many women because bleeding into layers of clothing was perfectly normal. However, just as the claims of Pliny about

the poisonous nature of menstrual blood have not entirely left us today, so, too there is an inheritance from the early modern woman in the assumption that sanitary protection is still somewhat taboo and embarrassing.

Notes

1. For two useful examples of writing on menstruation in early modern Britain, see Patricia Crawford, "Attitudes to Menstruation in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 91 (1981): 47–73; and Alexandra Lord, "'The Great Arcana of the Deity': Menstruation and Menstrual Disorders in Eighteenth-Century British Medical Thought," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 73 (1999): 38–63. I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the British Arts and Humanities Research Council in funding my research. I would also like to thank the staff and my fellow research students in the department of English and Drama at Loughborough University, who provide a vibrant and supportive research environment. I am especially grateful to Elaine Hobby for reading earlier drafts of this essay, and for her generous advice and encouragement.

2. Such was the interest in regulating menstruation that Etienne van de Walle's study of the use of herbal cures as emmenagogues has identified that, of the 325 plants mentioned in Nicholas Culpeper's *Complete Herbal* (1655), eighty plants "were said specifically to provoke women's courses and 51 to stay them"; see "Flowers and Fruits: Two Thousand Years of Menstrual Regulation," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23, no. 2 (autumn 1997): 192.

3. *The Fifteenth Book of the Practice of Physick: Of Womens Diseases*, trans. Nicholas Culpeper, Abdiah Cole, and William Rowland (London, 1655), 400.

4. See Janice Delaney et al., *The Curse: A Cultural History of Menstruation* (New York: New American Library, 1977), 41; Crawford, "Attitudes," 50; Helen King, *The Disease of Virgins: Green Sickness, Chlorosis and The Problems of Puberty* (London: Routledge, 2003), 72.

5. Pseudo-Albertus, *Women's Secrets*, trans. and ed. Helen Rodnite Lemay (Albany: State University of New York, 1992). The first English translation of *Women's Secrets* was by John Quincy (London: E. Curll, 1725).

6. Pliny the Elder, *The Historie of the World: Commonly called the Naturall History of Plinius Secundus*, trans. Philemon Holland (London: by Adam Islip, 1601), 308. For some typical examples of this type of ideological assumption, see Anon., *Aristoteles Masterpiece: Or, The Secrets of Generation Display'd in all the Parts Thereof* (London: Printed for J. How, 1684), 49; or James Drake, *Anthropologia Nova* (London: printed for Sam. Smith and Benj. Walford, 1707). Lesley Ann Dean-Jones suggests that Pliny's extreme views, taken from oral folk traditions, may have been a response to the extreme anxiety some men felt about the greater freedoms in society that Roman women enjoyed compared to their more subjugated Greek counterparts. This invective is not found in the same way in Greek medicine, she says. Indeed, Dean-Jones maintains that the evidence shows that the claim

in Aristotle's *On Dreams* (350 BCE) that the look of a menstruating woman could cloud a mirror, were not in the original text but added in the form of marginal notes at a later date; see *Women's Bodies in Classical Greek Science* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 248.

7. See Lesel Dawson, "Menstruation, Misogyny, and the Cure for Love," *Women's Studies* 34, no. 6 (September 2005): 461–84, for a discussion of the history and early modern presentation of the so-called "menstrual cure."

8. James Ferrand [sic], *Erotomania or A Treatise Discoursing of the Essence, Causes, Symptomes, Prognosticks, and Cure of Love, or Erotique Melancholy*, trans. Edmund Chilmead (Oxford: Printed by L. Lichfield, for Edward Forrest, 1640), 235–6. "She brought out of the place in question a monstrous cloth; 'Take a look, young man,' she said, 'at what you so much desire, in which is contained nothing apart from filth.'"

9. Mary Frances Wack, *Lovesickness in the Middle Ages: The Viaticum and its Commentaries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 39.

10. Gideon Harvey, *Morbus anglicus: or, The anatomy of consumptions* (London: printed for Nathaniel Brook at the Angel in Cornhill, 1666), 54–6.

11. Ferrand, *Erotomania*, 237.

12. Edward Shorter, *Women's Bodies: A Social History of Women's Encounter with Health, Ill-Health, and Medicine* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1991), 261.

13. See Virginia Smith, *Clean: A History of Personal Hygiene and Purity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), for a history of the changing ideals in personal hygiene throughout history.

14. Delaney et al., *The Curse*, 14.

15. Crawford, "Attitudes," 55.

16. Liza Picard, *Restoration London* (London: Phoenix Press, 1997), 113. "Towel" is a modern term in this context, and not one used in the early modern period.

17. Smith, *Clean*, 232. Any evidence on the washing of rags used for bodily functions does not support a daily washing theory. Rags were gathered in a bucket or tub and soaked, and presumably, when there was a sufficient quantity to justify the activity, they would be washed together.

18. Shorter, *Women's Bodies*, 261. Shorter cites a source text, albeit late medieval, and recounts an incident in which a woman who died in 1457 was discovered, upon intimate examination, to have been menstruating at her death; there were then some complaints that the inspectors would have been able to tell that she was menstruating by the state of her clothing, so there was no need to disrobe her.

19. Lord, "Arcana," 43.

20. Hence the seventeenth-century proverb, "Money is welcome, though it come in a shitten clout."

21. *The Shorter OED*, 432. The updated online OED has modified this slightly to remove the pejorative qualifier "squalid" and now says a "piece of cloth (esp. a small or worthless piece, a "rag"); a cloth (esp. one put to mean uses, e.g. a dish-clout)." Although the early modern period is notorious for idiosyncratic spellings, it does appear that this spelling, "clout," or "cloute" was used specifically for these cloth rags that were put to many

household uses. Other linen items such as tablecloths, for example, were usually spelled “cloath.”

22. Crawford, “Attitudes,” n55.

23. A. Marsh, *The Ten Pleasures of Marriage Relating all the Delights and Contentments that are Mask'd under the Bands of Matrimony* (London, 1682), 128.

24. *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford*, ed. D. J. H. Clifford (Stroud, England: Alan Sutton, 1992), 81.

25. Helkiah Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia* (London: printed by William Jaggard, 1615), 274. The colder female body is unable, according to this ancient system, to transform blood in the same way as the male body can to create seed, sweat, and extra hair; therefore female bodies create a surplus which needs to be eliminated from the body on a periodic basis.

26. Bernardino Ramazzini, *A Treatise of the Diseases of Tradesmen*, trans. anon. (London: for Andrew Bell and others, 1705), 103–4.

27. Quoted in Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 42 (from “Merry Passages and Jeasts”: *A Manuscript Jestbook of Sir Nicholas Le Strange [1603–1655]* [Salzburg, 1974], 59–62). “Monstrous” as a pun on “menstruous” was so well-known that Jane Sharp directly refutes this in *The Midwives Book, or the Whole Art of Midwifry Discovered* (1671), ed. Elaine Hobby (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 215.

28. John Freind, *Emmenologia*, 1703, trans. Thomas Dale (London: for T. Cox, 1729), 71.

29. Mary Carleton, *The Case of Madam Mary Carleton* (London: for Sam Speed and Henry Marsh, 1663), 72.

30. Carleton’s husband wrote his own account of this story, which refutes the idea that Carleton is the author of her narrative; cited in *Her Own Life: Autobiographical Writing By Seventeenth-Century Englishwomen*, ed. Elspeth Graham et al. (London: Routledge, [1989] 2002), 134.

31. Right honourable the E[arl] of R[ochester], *Poems on Several Occasions* (Antwerp, 1680), 73, lines 7–8.

32. Sharp, *Midwives Book*, 215. The OED 2b glosses the term “flowers” as the menstrual discharge, the menses, after the French term fleurs, which is regarded by French scholars as a corruption of flueurs, or flow. However, Monica H. Green’s careful research in *The Trotula* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 21, shows that “flowers” as a term for the menses had been in common vernacular use across Europe for hundreds of years, deriving from the horticultural term, long before science tried to reclaim the term as a derivative of the Latin “fluor” (or French “flueur”).

33. Leviticus 18:19 “And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness; he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.”

34. For some typical examples of this type of ideological assumption, see Drake,

Anthropologia Nova, 322; or Anon., *Aristoteles Masterpiece*, 49.

35. Rochester, *Poems on Several Occasions*, 72, lines 5–8.

36. Among many early modern gynecological texts on this point, see, for example, Drake, *Anthropologia Nova*, 322, which states that the “Malignity of [menstrual blood] is so great, that they Excoriate [pull the skin off] the Parts of Men by the Meer contact.”

37. Anon., *Aristoteles Masterpiece*, 157. On pessaries, see Moses Charras, *The Royal pharmacopoeia, galenical and chymical according to the practice of the most eminent and learned physitians of France and publish'd with their several approbations*, trans anon. (London: Printed for John Starkey, and Moses Pitt, 1678), 61: “Under the name of Pessaries, are comprehended all Medicines not liquid, which are put up into the Secret-parts of Women. But by the word *Pessary*, strictly tak'n is to be understood a sort of solid Medicine, about a fingers length, sometimes somewhat bigger, which is put up into the Secret-parts with a Riband fasten'd to one end.”

38. William Sermon, *The Ladies Companion: or, The English Midwife* (London: For Edward Thomas, 1671), 180. See François Mauriceau's *The Diseases of Women with Child, and in Child-bed* (London: by John Darby, 1672), 306, for some illustrations of pessaries.

39. Crawford, “Attitudes,” 55. Interestingly, Crawford says in the notes to this assertion that, during the nineteenth century, some women did not use any pessaries or pads, for they “feared that any cloth might prevent the menses from flowing.” The evidence from Sermon and others demonstrates that the view that nothing should impede the course of the menses was indeed a seventeenth-century commonplace, too.

40. Pierre Dionis, *A General Treatise of Midwifery*, trans. anon. (London: for A. Bell, 1719), 53.

41. The 1662 edition of Nihcolas Culpeper's *Directory for Midwives: or, a Guide for Women, the Second Part* (London: for Peter Cole) reads, “*Hippocrates* saith, They should bleed but a pint and a half, or two pints: this is not alike in all, but differs in respect of age and diet” (67). Sharp, in *The Midwives Book*, makes exactly the same comment (216). The quotation from the Hippocratic *On the Diseases of Women* is given by Dean-Jones: “The average amount of menses for any healthy woman is about two Attic Kotyls – or a little more, or a little less”; see *Women's Bodies in Classical Greek Science*, 88. Two kotyls are approximately one pint. It is unclear where the misinterpretation of a pint and a half to two pints first started, but it is common to see this amount offered in early modern texts.

42. Freind, *Emmenologia*, 1. A hemina is approximate to half an imperial pint measure, so Freind's quotation from the Hippocratic text is more accurate than that normally seen.

43. Dean-Jones, *Women's Bodies*, 90.

44. *Ibid.* Dean-Jones also suggests that women have a tendency to over-estimate the amount of blood they have lost.

45. Drake, *Anthropologia nova*, 325.

46. Malcolm Flemyng, *An Introduction to Physiology* (London: printed for J.

Nourse, 1759), 351.

47. Dionis, *A General Treatise on Midwifery*, 53.

48. Freind, *Emmenologia*, 74.

49. See www.oldbaileyonline.org, which offers a facsimile and transcript of the published record of Malcolm's trial (ref: t17330221-521).

50. For an analysis of this case, see Jane Magrath, "(Mis)Reading the Bloody Body: the case of Sarah Malcolm," *Women's Writing* 11, no. 2 (2004): 223–36.

51. Malcolm was reputed to be educated and literate. To her priest, the Rev. Piddington, she apparently wrote an account of her part in the crime, admitting to the thefts, which was published as *A true copy of the paper, delivered the night before her execution, by Sarah Malcom [sic] to the Rev. Mr. Piddington* (London: printed for J. Wilford, 1732) and sold by him to a publisher within days of her death. Perhaps this accounts for the articulation of her plea.

52. Mary E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 33. Fissell quotes from Thomas Raynalde, *The Byrth of Mankynde, otherwise named the Womans booke* (London: Tho. Ray, 1545), 35, which states, "Prudent lady nature wisely hath provided that there should be always pres[en]t and ready, a continual course and resort of blud in the vaines of the matrice as a very naturall source, spring, fountaine or wel[l] evermore redy to arouse, water and nourish the feature [foetus] so sone as it shal be conceaved." This is an adaptation of the Aristotelian theory that the menstrual blood did not play an active role in conception, but rather that it was there passively to receive the man's vital spirit and nurture it into a baby. Menstrual blood was, therefore, nutritive, because the blood was being stored in readiness for feeding a foetus. Raynalde was atypically pro-woman in his book. For example, as Fissell notes, he refuses to reprint the myths about the poisonous nature of menstrual blood, calling them "dreams and plain dotage." For a modern edition, see Thomas Raynalde, *The Birth of Mankind, Otherwise Named the Women's Book*, ed. Elaine Hobby (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), xxii, 66.

53. Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England, 1500–1720* (London: Routledge, [1993] 1996), 76.

54. See Kristin De Troyer, "Blood: A Threat to Holiness or toward (Another) Holiness," in *Wholly Woman, Holy Blood: A Feminist Critique of Purity and Impurity*, ed. De Troyer et al. (Harrisburg, London, New York: Trinity, 2003), 60; and *The Parallel Bible*, <http://studylight.org>, which states that this one Hebrew word is translated in the King James Bible as "filthiness, flowers, menstruous, menstruous woman, put apart, removed, removed woman, separation, set apart, unclean, unclean thing, uncleanness."

55. John Vicars, *A Prospective Glasse to Looke into Heaven* (London: Printed by W. Stansby for John Smethwicke, 1618); there are problems with the pagination, in that an extra gathering seems to have been inserted between the E and F gatherings.

56. Edmund Calamy et al., *Saints memorials, or, Words fitly spoken, like apples of gold in pictures of silver being a collection of divine sentences* (London, 1674), 3.

57. Thomas Wilson et al., *A Complete Christian Dictionary* (London: Printed by

E. Cotes, for Thomas Williams, 1661), 514.

58. Edward Nicholson, *The Death-Bed Repentance fully consider'd; proving that no mere death-bed repentance can be effectual to salvation* (Dublin: Printed by A. Rhames for the Author, 1712), 126–7.

59. Thomas Bentley, *The Monument of Matrones Containing Seven Severall Lamps of Virginitie* (London: Printed by H. Denham, 1582), 921.

60. See, for examples, George Downame, *A Godly and Learned Treatise of Prayer* (Cambridge: by Roger Daniel, for Nicolas Bourne, 1640), 363, "polluted clout"; and Andrew Willet, *Hexapla in Danielem* (Cambridge: Printed by Cantrell Legge, 1610), 143, "stained clout."

61. Quoted in Crawford, "Attitudes," 58.

62. Nicholas Billingsley, *Treasures of Divine Raptures* (London: Printed by T. J. for Thomas Parkhurst, 1667), 123

63. Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 19.

64. Anthony Gilby, *To my Louynge Brethren that is Troubled about the Popishe Apparrell* (Emden: E. van der Erve, 1566), sig. B^v.

65. Crawford, "Attitudes," 57.

66. Thomas Gataker, *Saint Stevens Last Will and Testament A Funeral Sermon on Acts 7. ver 59. Preached at the Enterrement of the Remaines of Mrs Joice Featly* (London: by Elizabeth Purslowe for Nicolas Bourne, 1638), 20–1.

67. Crawford, *Women and Religion*, 17.

68. The Apocrypha includes 14:15–16, comprising a prayer in which Esther offers, "Thou knowest my Necessity: for I abhor the sign of my high Estate in the Days, wherein I shew myself, and that I abhor it as a menstruous Rag, and that I wear it not when I am in private by myself"

69. "The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval, Written Between 1662 and 1671," ed. Douglas G. Greene (Gateshead: Northumberland Press, 1978), 148.

70. "An Collins" in *Her Own Life: Autobiographical Writings by Seventeenth-Century Women*, ed. Elspeth Graham et al. (London: Routledge, 1989), 54–71.

71. Sarah Skwire, "Women, Writers, Sufferers: Anne Conway and An Collins," *Literature and Medicine* 18, no. 1 (spring 1999): 1–23.

72. An Collins, *Divine Songs and Meditations* (London: for R. Bishop, 1653), 62.

Inscribing Gender on the Early Modern Body: Marital Violence in German Texts of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century

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Late medieval and early modern German literary and visual culture abounds with images of gender and marital violence. The figures of the quarrelsome wife and the brutal husband are omnipresent in many of the most popular genres and media of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: we find them in late medieval *Mären*, in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century carnival plays, and in the didactic literature and printed imagery of the sixteenth century.¹ So prevalent are these images that in the past whole genres were written off as unworthy of literary analysis, due in no small part to the excess in the texts' depiction of crude and often violent interactions between men and women. With their overabundance of somatic violence coupled with frequent references to bodily functions and sexuality, these kinds of texts and images were categorized as part of the "nicht mehr schönen Künste," the "no longer beautiful arts."²

Resisting interpretations that dismiss the literature of marital and gender violence as instances of consciously crude artistic expression intended to satisfy the presumably unrefined tastes of middle- and lower-class urban audiences, and setting aside socio-historical interpretations that focus primarily on the changing roles of men, women, marriage, and morality during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, I propose a reading that places seemingly humble and unsophisticated texts at the center of the early modern struggle towards an understanding of gendered bodies. This reading suggests that these texts provide crucial evidence key to current

efforts in writing what Monica Green has termed “body history.”³ Thus, the present study responds to recent calls for the inclusion of a “multiplicity of discourses and practices” in attempts to reconstruct the history of the body.⁴

In what follows I focus on three textual examples, one with accompanying print, that give an impression of the cultural landscape of late medieval and early modern imagery depicting marital and gender violence. I have chosen these specific texts because they belong to different genres (a play, a poem, and a *Teufelbuch*) and to different time periods (the late fifteenth century, the 1530s, and the 1560s).⁵ Through this selection of texts I wish to demonstrate that the focus on the violated body embedded in discussions of gender roles holds steady across chronological and genre lines even if the way the body is represented shifts (see the discussion of open versus closed bodies that follows). In my estimation, the vigor that the *topos* of somatic violence sustained across genre and time signals that it functioned as a potent rallying point in early modern debates about sex and gender.

I do close readings of three texts and give additional text references in my notes. The corpus of literary works featuring marital violence is so extensive that a representative sample in notes must suffice. Referring to early modern texts depicting the taming of unruly wives, Franz Brietzmann, for example, writes that “thrashing literature (*Prügeldichtung*) becomes more and more common” and that the greater frequency of scenes depicting beatings leads to “a growing intensification and outdoing, so that finally the most repugnant brutalities are being preached.”⁶ *Zähmungs-dramen*, plays depicting the taming of shrewish wives, are a staple also in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Netherlandish culture. Similarly to the texts discussed here, these plays operate through what Maria-Theresia Leuker calls the “ritualistic inversion of male and female roles” and a common conclusion in which the insubordinate wife is put in her place after the husband resorts to “*Brachialgewalt*,” “brute force.”⁷

In my analysis of these cultural artifacts—an anonymous fifteenth-century carnival play, a sixteenth-century poem by the Nuremberg author Hans Sachs with an accompanying image by Barthel Beham, and Adam Schubart’s sixteenth-century *Teufelbuch* titled *The She-Man, or, Against the*

House-Devil—I draw on current as well as seasoned theoretical approaches. I engage Valentin Groebner's work on early modern techniques of visualizing violence as well as Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of the grotesque, and I relate my findings to recent work by Jonathan Sawday, Katharine Park, and Andrew Cunningham on dissection and anatomy during the late medieval and early modern period. In my conclusions I take issue with Thomas Laqueur's thesis that the dimorphic body is an invention of the eighteenth century. The texts under consideration here tell a different story, I argue, as they vigorously point to the body as a site of difference. But my conclusions offer an elaboration on Laqueur's provocative chronology rather than a refutation of his findings. While anatomy may not have recognized dimorphism of male and female bodies, in my reading, the popular imagery of the time certainly did. The texts under discussion here, I argue, provide precisely what anatomy needed: maps and guides for understanding the newly discovered territory of the body. More importantly, the taxonomy provided by these texts is explicitly gendered and firmly establishes the connection of gender to the body by means of the repeated and relentless depiction of the infliction of somatic violence.

Of course, depictions of gender and marital violence in late medieval and early modern images and texts have innumerable, concurrently operating valences. Undoubtedly, these texts speak to and problematize the very real issue of domestic violence. In his examination of responses to marital strife by the Reformed consistory of the town of Bacharach (Germany), Joel Harrington, for example, observes that "[i]ndeed, the popular literary stereotypes of the hard-drinking, short-tempered husband and shrewish *böse Weib* found many real-life corollaries among the sparring couples of Bacharach. Usually men were cited more for physical abuse and women for verbal abuse. . . ."⁸ Many of the texts thus echo official concerns regarding orderly and disorderly conduct in marriage that find expression in the discourses of law and church at the time, including the issue of excessive disciplining of wives by their husbands. Thus the sixteenth-century English "Homily of the State of Matrimony" urges husbands to approach their wives with love and understanding rather than anger and violence.⁹ With reference to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, Emily Detmer writes, "The vigor of discourse on wife-beating exemplifies a culture at work reformulat-

ing permissible and impermissible means for husbands to maintain control over the politics of the family, without, however, questioning that goal.”¹⁰ The texts I discuss here would certainly have resonated within the German discourse on domestic violence and spousal disciplining.

At the same time, these texts presented an opportunity for either laughter or dismay on account of the portrayal—so frequently evoked at the time—of a disorderly, chaotic, and violent world. The educated elites of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century urban areas in which the genre of the carnival play thrived, for example, were worried that “the excesses portrayed and the representation of latent or even manifest violence might constitute a real attack on the social and moral order of the city.”¹¹ Today’s scholarly assessment of such displays of violence is more nuanced and recognizes that representations of violence, of the battle of the sexes, and of desire and bodily pleasure common to carnival culture worked in dual ways, performing transgression *and* regulating it at the same time.¹² Studies by Mikhail Bakhtin, Barbara Babcock, Natalie Zemon Davis, and—specifically in reference to the German context—Werner Röcke on carnival and images of inversion and violence highlight the complexity of the issue and suggest that the spectacle of carnival comedy and violence both questions and reinforces the social status quo.¹³

Didactic literature appears to offer a more limited spectrum of interpretation in this regard. Circumscribed by authorial comment or a narrator’s moralizing remark, didactic texts demand a certain kind of audience reaction. Simultaneously, didactic texts give the impression that their message pertains to “real” life and that what they describe is a reflection of life, society, and human behavior. For example, the poem by Hans Sachs shows what happens to wives who do not behave in properly wifely fashion: wives are beaten because they speak either too little or too much, because they are grumpy and unfriendly, wasteful, lazy, gossipy, or aggressive (fig. 1). Most commonly, however, and on the most fundamental level, they are beaten because they refuse to play a properly subordinate wifely role. When men are beaten (the texts usually indicate quite clearly), this constitutes a grotesque reversal of roles, and both the brutalized male as well as the violent female point to an improperly gendered order in which the weak of body and mind are strong and witty, and in which those who

are supposed to rule are subdued in the most humiliating manner. Quite obviously then, when men and women do violence to each other, when they go at each other with cudgels, logs, and whips, gender roles are at issue.¹⁴ But contenting ourselves with this finding would mean overlooking one crucial element in the representation of gender and marital violence: the body. For regardless of differences in medium or genre and regardless of the numerous overlapping and sometimes distinct and even contradictory valences evoked by images of a violent domestic world, these depictions have one thing in common, namely their focus on violated bodies. At the most fundamental level, then, the present study explores the ways in which violated bodies—placed center stage—operate in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century texts and images in which gender roles are at issue. Because my analysis works comparatively, I begin by introducing all three texts in chronological order.

Violence, bodies, and gender

The fifteenth-century anonymous carnival play, “A Peasant Play with an Evil Old Wife,” illustrates the case of a submissive husband who suffers under his wife’s attacks.¹⁵ Having settled down at an inn, a peasant begins to describe to his fellow taverners the suffering he is enduring: his wife regularly scratches him (48, l. 6); when in bed, she beats him back and front and boxes his ears until his eyes start watering (48, ll. 33–4); she drags him to the spinning wheel, orders him to stay while she leaves the house, and growls at him when, upon her return, he questions her on where she was and what she did (48, ll. 36–49).¹⁶ Lo and behold, while he tells his story, his wife shows up at the pub and immediately threatens more violence: “Leave, stop your whining, and let the people sit here in peace, or else I will hit you in the face” (49, ll. 15–7).¹⁷ The peasant seeks support from others surrounding him, and a fellow peasant is courageous enough to take on the hot-tempered woman at least verbally: “If you were my wife as you are his,” he proclaims, “with rage, then thrashing, wood and log, I would teach you how to sing to heaven” (49, ll. 31–3).¹⁸ In this particular instance the wife keeps the upper hand, and the two peasants—husband and friend—have to reformulate their threats of physical violence directed at the wife into

requests for mercy and, after the wife decides to abstain from any further violent attacks, expressions of gratitude. The reversal of roles—the completely helpless husband who suffers silently the verbal and physical attacks of his overpowering wife—in combination with the imagery of excessive violence and sexuality is commonplace for the carnival play of the fifteenth century with its favorite motif of the world turned upside down.¹⁹

The same thematic focus on marital discord can be observed in a print of a poem by the Nuremberg craftsman and author Hans Sachs, printed in 1530 with a woodcut image by Barthel Beham (fig. 1). The print is titled “The nine-fold skins of an evil wife, including their nine characteristics,” and it depicts the husband as the more dominant force in the marital row.²⁰ The text is a first person narrative. The narrator tells the audience that he recently ran into a young man who was scratched and beaten up and who, upon being questioned, told him about a brawl he had had with his wife. In the struggle, the husband beat his wife at length. Each round of beatings uncovered a new “skin” on his wife’s body, and for each newly revealed skin, the husband encountered a different kind of behavior in his wife. When he uncovered her bear skin, for example, the wife began to growl; the horse’s skin is associated with kicking, the cat’s skin with scratching, and so on. In the end, the husband laid bare his wife’s human skin. Reduced to her human nature, the wife began to cry, asked for mercy, and swore never to act in an inappropriate manner again. The husband reached his goal and uncovered his wife’s human skin by beating her blue (*plewen*), giving her a good one on the head (*gab ir noch ein guots an kopff*), hitting her on the ears (*stach sie wider zuo den oren*), pulling out a long cudgel to beat her pig skin (*Ich zuckt ein pruegel lanck genuog / Damit ichs auff die Sew haut schluog*), and by letting the cudgel dance “on her back and arms” (*Tantzt ir auff dem rueck und den armen*). To the husband’s attacks, the wife reacted primarily by making various animal sounds (or, we should add, by making utterances that the husband describes as non-human articulations), by scratching and kicking, and by verbally attacking him, accusing him of being a drunkard, a gambler, an adulterer, and a brothel visitor. In contrast to the carnival play, the second textual example has an—at least outwardly—didactic purpose. After hearing the young husband’s story, the narrator steps in to address the young man: “My friend, listen to what I say,” he urges, and proceeds to

exhort the young husband to use violent means sparingly and with reason (*mit vernunfft und wol bescheyden*) and only in cases where his wife refuses to be subservient and acts disobedient and stubborn.

The third text under consideration—Adam Schubart’s *The She-Man, or, Against the House-Devil*—belongs to the innumerable sixteenth-century texts from a variety of genres that can be categorized under the rubric of marital conduct and advice literature.²¹ Schubart’s text—first published in 1564 and then reprinted three times in the next five years—concerns itself with the specific issue of the unruly wife and straddles genres, combining some of the serious moralizing that characterizes much of sixteenth-century conduct literature with at times crudely humorous representations of improperly gendered behavior typically found in carnival plays.²² The text is of particular interest because it fashions the figure of *Herr Sieman*, “Master She-Man” in English, a term used in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century German to denote either an effeminate man, especially a subordinate husband, or more commonly—as in this text—a rebellious wife who rules instead of and over her husband.²³

Because of its length, I cannot describe this text in detail: a lengthy contemplation on the problem of female disobedience and insubordination in marriage, it begins with an exhortation directed at all wives to respect their husbands’ authority and an encouragement of husbands not to let their wives gain the upper hand in the household. It ends with similar exhortations. Both the beginning and the end give numerous examples culled from the Bible, Greek and Roman myth, and contemporary folklore illustrating the dangers inherent when women subdue their husbands. It is the text’s middle that is of particular interest for the current discussion. In it, a male narrator tells the audience how he first encountered a fellow who informed him about the havoc that Master She-Man was wreaking in all parts of the country, and how then, upon returning home, the narrator himself had a run-in with Master She-Man. He describes a full-fledged and drawn-out brawl that ends with Master She-Man’s death: the narrator literally beats the ambiguously gendered she-male to pieces in a manner very similar to that described in Sachs’s “Ninefold Skins.” Master She-Man also closely resembles the unruly wife depicted in “A Peasant Play with an Evil Old Wife”: he/she talks too much, slanders his/her husband, is equipped with the accoutrements of

domestic authority (purse and keys), spends more time outside the house than inside, and is generally unfriendly and rebellious, refusing to accept his/her husband's authority in the house. Schubart's text, however, goes a step further and in doing so gives us a glimpse into the ways in which the portrayal of violence does more than simply highlight problems with proper gender role assignment. For what we see in Schubart's text is not a struggle between a man and a woman, but, instead—as we will see—a brawl between a male and a female body.

I have argued elsewhere that in the figure of the ambiguously gendered Master She-Man—where male and female are no longer separate categories and where the two genders appear conflated—the issue of female misbehavior and female gender role disavowal is condensed, becomes *verdichtet*,²⁴ to represent the concept of “gender” itself, and especially the concept of gender difference and the thorny questions related to it: What makes women different from men? Where does one gender end and the other begin? And how can slippages between genders be prevented?²⁵ I wish to argue here that we can read marital violence—represented in this text primarily in the form of repeated violent attacks on Master She-Man's body—as the crucial element in the text's engagement with the question of difference.²⁶

The following passages vividly depict the disciplining of the ambiguously gendered creature's body through the infliction of violence. Thus the narrator threatens, “Be quiet and peaceful and don't be proud. Do you see that large piece of wood? I'll tan your hide with it” (264, ll. 469–71).²⁷ He also reports: “That made me take up weapons all the more. I took a sharp halberd and—enraged—I hit the She-Man violently” (264, ll. 496–498).²⁸ Adding more specificity to his description, the narrator testifies:

I hit She-Man over the head and threw him on the floor like a pot. He lay stretched out in front of me. I covered him with blows, quickly struck him, and beat him black and blue from head to toe. I beat his loins, back, and belly, and also his thighs (266, ll. 527–34).²⁹

Blood begins to flow, yet the violent attack continues until, in the end, Master She-Man lies half-dead and the narrator “tans his hide to pieces” (268, l. 596).³⁰ The narrator then hires four soldiers to finish the work he

began and instructs the men to “beat this animal black and blue once or three times or four [and] smash its arms and legs to pieces” (268, ll. 605–7).³¹ The soldiers do as instructed and “beat the She-Man so violently on his head and entire body that he lay dead right away” (268, ll. 610–12).³² Importantly, the weapons used in the brawl as well as the body areas receiving blows resemble characteristically male or female body parts in form and function. Among the weapons deployed are a large piece of wood (“jhens grosse holtz,” 264, l. 470), a sharp halberd (“ein scharffe Hellepart,” 265, l. 497), a sharp sword (“scharffes Schwert,” 267, l. 585), and an iron flail (“[e]yn eysern Flegel,” 266, l. 524). Interestingly, *Herr Sieman*—by picking up a spear (“ein Spies,” 265, l. 517) and a sharp knife (“mit einem Messer spitz,” 267, l. 589)—makes use of the same phallic weapons the narrator uses. In contrast, the text refers to female anatomy and physiology when it describes the objects that receive blows from the various phallic weapons described. Note, for example, the threat, “I will beat you on your shield and helmet” (“Ich schlae dich auff ein Schieldt und Helm,” 264, l. 482), and the description of a serious wound (“ein boesen schmietz,” 267, l. 590) and severe bleeding ([v]on ihme rahn das Rotte blut,” 267, l. 579) after the body is attacked by different phallic weapons.³³ It may not surprise us that the male narrator—although his arsenal of penetrating weapons is much larger than Master She-Man’s—also appears as the sexually receptive side on two occasions (his shield is beaten and he receives a gash), while Master She-Man is depicted as sexually receptive only once (the red blood is his/hers). In the end, however, the male narrator is victorious, and by pooling the forces of anatomy (having an excess of means of penetration) and sex (being dominant in the role of the one who penetrates), destroys the She-Man and thereby ends the rule of ambiguous gendering/sexing.³⁴ Ostensibly an instance of spousal punishment for wifely insubordination, the disciplining of Master She-Man’s body thus reads differently if one chooses to interpret Schubart’s *Sieman* as a cipher of gender and difference. In this case, the punishment seems to be directed not at an unruly woman but at a wayward body which fails to perform proper gender conformity, thus collapsing difference. Read in this way, it is as though the text, in its search for a visible marker of gender difference—the central interest in this text, I would argue—focuses on the body as that element which deserves

punishment for failing to do its job of properly marking and upholding difference.

The violence exerted in the text in the name of a desire to re-establish a properly gendered order thus insistently points to the body as a site of difference. In addition, this portrayal of violence is complicit in the act of gendering itself by choosing metaphors that denote anatomical difference and different male and female roles in sexual intercourse. One may surmise that fifteenth- and sixteenth-century audiences would have been sufficiently familiar with these types of allusions to see acts of gendering at play also—though much more subtly perhaps—in the violence depicted in the anonymous carnival play and Sachs’s poem. As I turn to Valentin Groebner’s analysis of early modern displays of violence, we will see quite clearly that gendering happens in all three texts even when direct invocations of anatomical and sexual imagery are absent. Moreover, violence is precisely the means by which gender is inscribed on the body. But how exactly does this happen?

Making gender visible

In his study of the visual culture of violence in the late Middle Ages, Valentin Groebner theorizes visual representations of violence and violated bodies as well as performative acts of violence.³⁵ Why represent violent acts, Groebner asks, in art, fiction, and performance, in chronicles, legal reports, and the like? What purpose do these representations fulfill? The key to acts of violence (whether represented in visual or literary art or performed on stage or at the gallows) is that they “revolve around visibility, around the [act of] making violence visible.”³⁶ This visualization of violence, this *Sehen-machen der Gewalt*, happens first and foremost by marking bodies visibly. Groebner writes:

First, violence appeared as the exercise of superior power, as defeat by a *force majeure*. Second, and quite divorced from this, violence appeared in a form that sought to gain dominion over the body of the inferior party. The person in question was marked as “inferior” to—that is, beneath—the victor through the application of an indelible sign documenting defeat.³⁷

According to Groebner, *Gewalt* as violence marks bodies. Specifically, it marks the body of the person who is inferior in the violent exchange through the application of a sign that clearly and indelibly documents defeat. The German term Groebner uses to designate the inferior competitor is “*der/die Unterlegene*,” and he proceeds to explain that, while it designates a person who is inferior in a competition or battle, literally it means “he who has come to lie under.” Violence in Groebner’s analysis then means more than just the infliction of pain and disfigurement: it is also a semiotic practice that visibly marks bodies, and by extension people, as inferior and superior. I find Groebner’s analysis of representations quite useful for my investigation of marital and gender violence. In the texts under consideration here, just as in the examples discussed by Groebner, violence equates with acts of somatic visualization in two ways: first, by pointing to bodies—in reality present or not—violence refers to the material/physical world, in which the text approaches the rather abstract task of locating gender difference, and second, it clearly marks bodies as either inferior or superior. As we will see, the texts under discussion here quite explicitly mark the inferior party as “lying under” the superior party.

Very importantly, this process of marking bodies through violence is concurrently an act of gendering. In this regard as well, Groebner’s analysis is instructive as he, too, describes—albeit implicitly—the visualization of violence as a gendering act. He does so by placing his discussion of *Gewalt* within the context of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century notions of honor. According to Groebner, for both men and women, honor and violence were related conceptually, yet honor as related to violence was a highly gendered concept that meant different things for men and women. One difference lay in the way honor was connected to the issue of *access* to violence. This means concretely that while men needed to possess “*persönliche Gewaltfähigkeit*” (“personal capacity to exert violence”) in order to have honor, women needed “*einen gewaltfähigen Beschützer*” (“a protector capable of exerting violence”).³⁸ Commenting on gendered notions of honor and violence, Groebner elaborates a second point:

In late-fifteenth-century cities, at least two or even three rhetorical fields of “honor” must be distinguished. They are connected, to be sure, but each had a certain autonomy and coherence. The first field, bodily integrity, referred exclusively to men. Honor was the opposite of being overpowered, of physical defeat. . . .”³⁹

According to Groebner, then, for men honor meant, first and foremost, “being physically unharmed,” and honor as a concept stood in diametrical opposition to being physically overwhelmed or experiencing physical defeat or submission.⁴⁰ In other words, while violence and the ability to evade or exert it are key factors in the dynamics of honor for both men and women, violence is deployed and interpreted differently depending on whether a man’s or a woman’s honor is at stake, with male honor entailing the personal capacity to exert violence (“persönliche Gewaltfähigkeit”) and the privilege to retain bodily integrity (“körperliche Unversehrtheit”).

Read in this way, the instances of physical abuse depicted in the texts under discussion here appear as inherently and unmistakably gendered and as complicit in the act of gendering by means of their somatic inscription and *Sehen-machen* of violence. In a culture in which *male* honor articulates itself first and foremost through the capacity to exert violence, artistic representations of marital or gender violence play on and support precisely these notions of gender difference.⁴¹ It can therefore be argued that, if in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century culture the position of the person possessing the capacity to exert violence and to remain free from physical harm is traditionally marked male, and the position of the person not in possession of *Gewaltfähigkeit* and lacking *körperliche Unversehrtheit* is marked female, then the infliction of violence in these texts, images, and performances should be read as an act of visualizing and inscribing gender and gender relations on bodies by means of violence. Or to put it differently: literary, visual, and performative representations of marital and gender violence constitute acts of visualization and inscription of not only violence, but also gender, on bodies. That these texts frequently invert this order for satirical effect does not undo the normative pattern according to which the position from which violence is exerted and which itself remains unviolated is marked male.

Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, the earliest of the three examples investigated here shows the greatest latitude with regard to the assignment of positions vis-à-vis the privilege of inflicting violence. The wife in “A Peasant Play with an Evil Old Wife” “cross[es] over” into male territory by defending herself against physical violation and by threatening violence (and presumably in the past having acted on those threats). Furthermore, the male protagonists—peasant and companion—appear emasculated by losing their privileged access to violence and bodily integrity and by—at least temporarily—coming to “lie under” or be inferior (*unterlegen*) to the “evil old wife.”

This temporary loss of exclusive access to *Gewaltfähigkeit* and *körperliche Unversehrtheit* on the part of the male protagonist is evident also in Schubart’s *Sieman*. This text, however, devotes much time and effort to the description of the male protagonist’s rebuttal of Master She-Man. Roles are normatively redistributed at the end of the passage that describes the fight between husband and wife: while the husband has received a small gash, and while his sole authority to dispense violence has been temporarily suspended, in the end Master She-Man’s body is beaten to death, highlighting that, after all is said and done, it is the man who has regained the privileged position of escaping physical harm (compared with the moral harm the *Sieman* has suffered) while wielding the power to inflict lethal violence. Sachs’s poem never once explicitly ventures into the territory of ill-defined gender roles with regard to violence: the wife’s scratching is noted only in passing, and the husband’s scratches and bruises appear rather minor in light of the lengthy description of the husband’s physical attacks upon his wife and his repeated stripping of her epidermis.

In addition, not leaving any doubt about the proper distribution of roles with regard to the privilege of dispensing violence and inscribing violence on bodies, both Schubart’s and Sachs’s texts in combination with Beham’s woodcut conclude with the ultimate gesture of marking and gendering bodies through violence: Barthel Beham portrays the young wife on hands and knees. She is turning her head and looking fearfully upwards at the hovering, threatening figure of the husband, one arm raised high to avert her husband’s blows. The male protagonist in Schubart’s *Sieman*, we are told, throws Master She-Man to the ground and beats him/her to

death. In each case, wives end up—both texts agree—in the proper wifely and female position: they come to “lie under,” their bodies marked quite literally as *unterlegen* and thus female.⁴² Consequently, in each of these texts, the body is the surface, the molding clay or matrix upon which violence leaves its mark in the form of gendered inscriptions. If Groebner is correct in positing that order is always the order of the visible, that violence is a means of establishing this order of the visible, and that a body’s positioning vis-à-vis access to and protection from violence is inherently gendered, then the repeated reference to marital violence in numerous late medieval and early modern texts, images, and plays can be interpreted as precisely that gesture of visualization or *Sehen-machen* (whether it happens in literary texts, in images, or in performances) that makes gender visible by exposing bodies to violence.

Hans-Jürgen Bachorski posits for fifteenth-century short narrative fiction “a rather free play with regard to the construction of gender identity.”⁴³ He concludes that in the fifteenth-century texts he evaluates, violence is *not* the prerogative only of men. Instead, several of the texts portray—and portray favorably, we should add—aggressive and violent wives and women. In addition, men are not immune from being on the receiving end of violent acts. This, in addition to the mutability of bodies (by means of castration, for example), leads Bachorski to conclude that the sex/gender system that seems to inform these texts appears highly unstable and ambiguous.⁴⁴ As we have seen, the texts under consideration here do not—with the exception of the earliest of the three, the fifteenth-century carnival play—endorse open and non-gender specific access to violence. Bachorski also notes a playful and laughter-filled celebration of dismemberment and opening of bodies in the fifteenth-century texts he examines. As we will see, the texts under discussion here, though no less violent, do *not* indulge in such joyful scenes of dismemberment. Quite on the contrary, these texts, especially Sachs’s and Schubart’s, perform closing rather than opening gestures that celebrate immutable and stable rather than open bodies.⁴⁵

Open bodies, closed bodies: Re-evaluating Bakhtin

When Michael Holquist writes in the prologue to the 1984 edition of Mikhail Bakhtin's *Rabelais and His World* that the "folk" as Bakhtin depicted them "are coarse, dirty, and rampantly physical, reveling in oceans of strong drink, pools of sausage, and endless coupling of bodies," this description captures rather well what is going on in several of the texts under consideration here.⁴⁶ Frequently coarse in dress, manner, humor, and morals, the peasant and bourgeois characters we encounter in the texts under discussion can also correctly be described as "rampantly physical," and such acts of violence perpetrated by husbands and wives appear regularly within the context of carnival culture.

However, in Bakhtin's analysis rampant physicality is not reducible only to violence, but also includes sex, eating, drinking, urinating, defecating, and dismembering. In addition, the carnivalesque is not characterized by the presence of rampant physicality alone. Indeed, Bakhtin stresses other carnivalesque elements over physicality:

This [carnival] experience, opposed to all that was ready-made and completed, to all pretense of immutability, sought a dynamic expression; it demanded *ever changing, playful, undefined forms*. All the symbols of the carnival idiom are filled with this *pathos of change and renewal*, with the sense of the gay relativity of prevailing truths and authorities.⁴⁷

My interest here lies with Bakhtin's positing of "changing, playful, undefined forms" as constitutive of carnival culture and of what he calls "the concept of grotesque realism."⁴⁸ Frequently, Bakhtin continues, the grotesque body is "two bodies in one." It is "unfinished and open" and "not separated from the world by clearly defined boundaries. . . ."⁴⁹ In addition, he writes, "The mask [of the grotesque] . . . rejects conformity to oneself. The mask is related to transition, metamorphoses, the violation of natural boundaries. . . ."⁵⁰ The texts under consideration here partake in the carnivalesque in two ways: through their unhampered display of physicality and violence, and through their numerous references to human forms that can be subsumed under Bakhtin's definition of bodies as gro-

tesque. Thus the body of the young wife who sheds several animal hides until her husband's beating reveals her (stable) human skin proves to be "ever-changing" and "unfinished." Her body is, in fact, more than "two bodies in one" and thereby negates all "conformity to [itself]." Constantly in transition, it certainly violates and challenges notions of "natural boundaries" (between individual living things and between human and animal).⁵¹ Similarly, the She-Man—forever vacillating between male and female and easily generated by an invisible transformation from "proper" wife into She-Male—can be interpreted as quintessentially grotesque. In their grotesquerie, these bodies exhibit an openness similar to that described also by Bachorski in reference to the fifteenth-century bodies depicted in the short narrative texts he examines. However, I see a fundamental difference between Bachorski's textual selections and mine. For where Bachorski's texts celebrate dismemberment and openness and, furthermore, the infliction of violence with the goal of opening bodies and placing them outside of a taxonomy that equates gender with differently sexed bodies, the texts presented here do the *exact opposite*. Here, the result of violence is not grotesque openness, but on the contrary, the containment of openness and restriction of ambiguity: thus Sachs's poem concludes with the uncovering of an immutable human skin, and Schubart ends his description of Master She-Man with the death of the ambiguously gendered body of the She-Male. While violence in these two cases may initially *provoke* a momentary lack of boundaries—the seemingly endless shedding of skins, the brawl in Schubart's text that threatens to emasculate the male protagonist by letting him become the victim of violence—the result in both texts is a return to firm ground and to well-defined and sufficiently boundaried bodies.

Bachorski's conclusions regarding the treatment of bodies in fifteenth-century Mären differ from my own findings regarding the texts presented here, especially the later texts (Sachs and Schubart). I see two possible reasons for the difference in the treatment of the body (open versus closed) that I note above. Perhaps the way in which the violated body was portrayed (and the use to which its representation was put in literature) changed over time, with the sixteenth century abandoning much of the playfulness that Bachorski attests to for the fifteenth century. Or perhaps the texts Bachorski selects do not share the didactic and moraliz-

ing tendencies we see at play especially with Sachs and Schubart. In other words, didactically oriented texts that attempt to teach appropriate gender role behavior focus more consistently—and for obvious reasons—on gestures of female submission and a portrayal of immutable, closed bodies. To a certain extent, the issues are interrelated. This change across time, particularly an intensified focus on the institution of marriage and more rigorous moral standards initiated by the Reformation, resulted in an increased number of didactic texts. In such texts, the mutual exchange of violence between men and women and the depiction of the violated body as open and in flux—two elements that Bachorski observes in fifteenth-century texts—were no longer acceptable.

Bakhtin differentiates between official and unofficial culture. According to this model, the culture of carnivalesque and grotesque aesthetics represents “the unofficial point of view.”⁵² In contrast, he posits for the post-Renaissance world a radical departure from this unofficial culture and from any acceptance of the grotesque, which henceforth takes on the appearance of something monstrous that is to be exiled to literary genres of comedy or terror. “The fact is,” he writes, “that the new concept of realism has a different way of drawing the boundaries between bodies and objects. *It cuts the double body in two and separates the objects of grotesque and folklore realism that were merged within the body.*”⁵³ Bakhtin’s categorical differentiation between two forms of cultural expression (unofficial and grotesque versus official and classical) is problematic because, on the one hand, it suggests too radical a differentiation that did not exist as such in early modern culture, and because, on the other hand, it posits radical historical change though there is no clear evidence of it. However, Bakhtin’s identification of a tendency running counter to that of grotesque aesthetics by “drawing the boundaries” between bodies and bodies (or between bodies and the world), and by cutting “the double body in two” is certainly supported by these textual examples that depict—towards the end of the narrative—a resolution in which boundaries are clearly drawn and in which the openness and multiplicity of bodies has been appropriately censored and eliminated. I have suggested earlier that indulging in images of violence as well as representing ambiguously embodied forms can be interpreted as elements of Bakhtin’s grotesque realism. In other words,

the representation of the woman with changing skins, of the amorphous She-Man, and of their demise by physical violence are quite at home in the world of grotesque realism that Bakhtin describes. However, grotesque realism and early modern representations make uneasy bedfellows. For as the former celebrates the “gay relativity” and the openness of boundaries, the latter is its negative response, and violence here leads precisely to the *demise* of ambiguity, fluctuation, metamorphosis, and openness.

To audiences familiar with the carnivalesque mode of representation in which bodies appear as open and in flux, Sachs’s “Ninefold Skins” as well as Schubart’s *She-Man* would have signaled the end to grotesque and monstrous forms and a closing-off of opportunities for bodily playfulness. Initially offering grotesque body forms but then foreclosing them, these texts discipline bodies into a gendered existence by means of violence. The texts here must be read as more than simply low-register forms of entertainment for the common man and woman because they constitute a twofold semantic practice of somatic inscription, marking the body as gendered *and* as closed and taxonomically reliable.⁵⁴ These texts, in other words, make the body available not only for the inscription of violence, gender, and gender difference. They also offer to their audiences a body that is stable, and as such, presents itself as the site of clear differentiation and as the matrix for the inscription of gendered taxonomic exactitude. The last step I wish to propose here is to read these texts in the context of another early modern—this time scientific—attempt at inscribing taxonomic certainty on bodies: early modern anatomy.

Violence and anatomy

Andrew Cunningham, discussing Martin Luther, highlights the importance of the body as “primary text” in sixteenth-century anatomy and compares Andreas Vesalius’s scientific preoccupations in the realm of anatomy with Martin Luther’s religious convictions. Cunningham writes that as Luther rejected all religious authority other than the Bible, so Vesalius “rejected all forms of authority other than ‘the body.’”⁵⁵ “Show them to me,” Vesalius reportedly challenged a fellow scientist who claimed that additional veins might exist to nourish ribs and muscles.⁵⁶ Cunningham explains:

Vesalius constantly returns to the body, to looking, showing, pointing. Only the true text, the body itself, can speak with authority. . . . Not only does Vesalius insist on the primacy of “the Word,” that is, the body, over written text and tradition, but like Luther with the Bible, he introduces touching and pointing, into both the practice of public anatomizing and its visual representation. . . .⁵⁷

In a gesture that I interpret to be very similar to those of both Luther and Vesalius, the texts under consideration here point with vigor and insistence to the body as the principal element, the matrix on which difference is to be inscribed unmistakably. Like Luther’s unrelenting pointing to the text of the Bible, and like the anatomists’ insistent gesturing to the body as the matrix that reveals the truth of nature, so the beating of bodies in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century texts and images in which gender is at issue makes one point insistently and with gusto: “This is where the truth lies,” the beating of bodies says, “and when gender difference is an issue, this is where it must be found.” In other words, the practice of anatomy and the aesthetics of gender and marital violence perform the same gesture of pointing to bodies designated as firm ground. In fact, reading the early modern literature of marital and gender violence alongside anatomical discourses offers a series of suggestive analogies and overlaps. Indeed, the literature of gender and marital violence must be seen, I would like to suggest, as deeply imbedded within what Jonathan Sawday calls the “culture of dissection.”⁵⁸

Like the practice of anatomy, so the aesthetics of marital and gender violence vigorously point to the body as the matrix for the inscription of universal—in this case gendered—taxonomies. At the same time, somatic violence is a constitutive element of both practices. Thus Sawday alerts us to the fact that “[t]he threat or the reality of violence runs through all Renaissance anatomizations, dissections, partitions, and divisions, whether we encounter the term in a medical sense or in a looser metaphorical set of registers.”⁵⁹ In addition, both operate within a deeply paradoxical framework in which the goal of producing order can be attained only by tolerating, indeed provoking and inviting, temporary disjunction and disorder. Elaborating on the double step inherent in anatomical practice of inviting disjunction in order to produce order, Sawday writes,

dissection is an insistence on the partition of something (or someone) which (or who) hitherto possessed their own unique organic integrity. But dissection or anatomization is . . . an act whereby something can also be constructed, or given a concrete presence. In medicine, anatomization takes place so that, in lieu of a formerly complete “body,” a new “body” of knowledge and understanding can be created.⁶⁰

Earlier, I used Bakhtin’s differentiation between grotesque and classical body models to read the bodily transformations that violence causes in the texts under consideration here. According to this reading, violence transforms open bodies into closed bodies by putting an end to their transformational capacities (by ending, for example, the shedding of skins and the fluctuations between male and female). Sawday’s comments on the practice of early modern anatomy open up another avenue—no less chronologically relevant—for the present reading of acts of marital violence. They draw attention to the destabilizing function of violence (or anatomy) on the one hand, its ultimately stabilizing and unifying function, on the other. Interestingly, in the case of the wife’s ninefold skins, it is the exertion of violence itself which *causes* the disintegration, or as Sawday puts it, “the partition of something (or someone) which (or who) hitherto possessed their own unique organic integrity.” But while violence causes the shedding of skins and the disintegration of wholeness into a multiplicity of parts, it also affords the resolution: the arrival at a new—and better, the text seems to suggest—form of oneness that, now, provides *true* homology of self with self (the woman is no longer several living beings in one). Like the practice of anatomy, marital violence in this case describes a movement from oneness to loss of oneness—even chaos—but finally to another, better, form of integrity and wholeness.

Finally, in the sixteenth century, the practice of anatomy itself appears as an inherently gendered and gendering act. Thus Sawday argues that the scientific inquiry into the body mirrored the inquiry into colonial territories and that both types of inquiry were conceived in distinctly gendered terms. Referencing John Donne’s “Elegie XIX,” an “erotic hymn to the female body,” that addresses the body of his loved one as “O my America! My new-found land, / My kingdome,” Sawday writes:

Just as the woman's body in *Elegie XIX* was transformed into an America, and hence was ready for subjection via discovery, first, and then the bonds of property and ownership, so the "scientific" body was transformed into an object of discovery and a regime of ownership. . . . But the Vesalian gesture of ownership is also a gesture of revelation. The right hand opens the woman's body to the gaze of all who care to see. Like Donne's roving hands, the roving hands of the anatomist have opened the body's cavities and claimed the body, if not for sex, then for knowledge.⁶¹

In describing the "Vesalian gesture of ownership," Sawday is referring to the title page of Vesalius's *De humani corporis fabrica* of 1543, which depicts the anatomist opening a female cadaver. Newly discovered geographical territories and the landscape of the body appeared, in other words, gendered female. Katharine Park analyzes Vesalius's title page with great attention to its details and comments on the sexualized presentation of the female corpse in the image as well as the "creation of a sense of [male] mastery and camaraderie through rough, often sexualized behavior around corpses" that accompanied many instructional dissections. In Park's description, as in Sawday's, public dissections thus appear as gendered and gendering occasions.⁶² More generally speaking, Sawday contends, "the cultural history of the body suggests that a body which *escapes* its boundary in this way—demanding attention by allowing its tokens of interiority to emerge on the surface—tends to be constructed, within widely different forms of representation, as female, whatever the biological sex of the subject in question."⁶³ It may appear paradoxical that the anatomized body should be constructed as female, especially because anatomy sessions that took place in academic settings availed themselves mostly of executed criminals who "were for the most part male."⁶⁴ However, supporting the notion that a symbolic affinity existed between the practice of anatomy and the female body, Park concludes that, even though dissections of male cadavers by far outnumbered those performed on female bodies, "the womb appears as a—arguably *the*—privileged object of dissection in medical images and texts."⁶⁵ "The uterus," Park writes, "acquired a special, symbolic weight as the organ that only dissection could truly reveal, and as a result, it came to stand for the body's hidden interior. . . . Thus the female figure has come

to illustrate internal anatomy in general, apparently by association with the uterus.⁶⁶ Like Sawday, Park attests to the “implicit link between the female body (the body defined by its interior) and dissection (the technique by which that interior might be revealed).”⁶⁷ Thus, bodies in flux, because of their own mischievous doing, or because of acts of violence inflicted on them, or because they are objects of anatomical investigation, appear gendered female.

These overlaps and parallels between the aesthetics of gender and marital violence and the theory and practice of anatomy should not surprise us, given the prominence anatomical inquiry enjoyed in the sixteenth century. Several recent studies on anatomical practice during the early modern period have highlighted the prominent role that anatomy played in early modern knowledge formation and cultural production. Thus, Claudia Benthien and Christoph Wulf observe, “Medical anatomy begins to operate as the dominant discipline as well as the key territory from which metaphors could be harvested for the advancement of science. . . . In examining the relationships between medical and literary texts we can demonstrate that body parts play a leading role in the symbolization of society and subjectivity during this time period.”⁶⁸

In his seminal work *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*, Thomas Laqueur writes, “[s]ometime in the eighteenth century, sex as we know it was invented.”⁶⁹ By focusing almost exclusively on examples taken from anatomical writing, Laqueur argues that in the sixteenth century even (or we should say, especially) the people who proclaimed to study the body itself—anatomists—were unable to see anatomical (sex) difference. “The more Renaissance anatomists dissected, looked into, and visually represented the female body,” he writes, “the more powerfully and convincingly they saw it to be a version of the male’s.” And he concludes, “The history of the representation of the anatomical differences between man and woman is thus extraordinarily independent of the actual structures of these organs or of what was known about them. Ideology, not accuracy of observation, determined how they were seen and which difference would matter.”⁷⁰ Laqueur’s argument is not unproblematic, of course, and has been relativized, most notably by Joan Cadden’s *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages*. Cadden’s study demonstrates very clearly

the dangers of focusing narrowly on one area of scientific inquiry, such as anatomy, in an effort to understand medieval and early modern notions of sex difference.⁷¹ Yet, Laqueur's observations regarding anatomy's "blind spots" are echoed by Sawday, who writes that, in the sixteenth century,

anatomists . . . were confronted with a seemingly invincible difficulty. That difficulty was taxonomic, since it expressed the absence, in Renaissance accounts of the human body, of a sufficiently complex system of definition with which to organize the structure that was now being revealed in dissection. . . . It was as if, having penetrated the interior, the explorer wandered through the new topography of the human world, bereft of reliable maps, and with guides who were proving increasingly untrustworthy.⁷²

The science of anatomy, in other words, afforded new sights without simultaneously instructing viewers on how to read these new sights. In a way, Sawday here describes what Laqueur pinpoints as a strange early modern paradox: the more the anatomists looked, the less they saw.

It is here that I would like to locate the importance of the texts under discussion in the present study. For these texts, it would appear, do precisely the cultural work necessary at a time when anatomy provided the sights but lacked the narratives to make the uncovered body speak coherently and authoritatively with regard to sex difference. These texts, I would like to suggest, are more than simply raucous carnivalesque literature. Instead, they constitute one of the links whose absence Laqueur bemoans when he claims that anatomists, despite all their looking, were unable to see anatomical difference. As I have shown, these texts speak a gendered language and evoke a clearly gendered world; they eye the potential of clearly defined taxonomies, and they glance towards anatomy and anatomical practice, seeming to imitate the anatomical gesture of pointing to bodies as the matrices of truth in their quest to assuage anxieties evoked by gender and gender difference. But where anatomists struggle to map the body as dimorphic, the literature of marital and gender violence is clearly a step ahead: in its evocation of bodies manipulated by means of violence, it genders bodies and establishes them as stable and immutable—as closed rather than open in Bakhtin's language—and thus as taxonomically reli-

able. These texts, in other words, tell a story about *difference* that is *firmly inscribed on immutable bodies*. They offer precisely what anatomy is missing at the time: a binary understanding of gender difference according to which this difference is clearly and immutably inscribed on the matrix of the body. They offer the narratives—the ideology, we might say—that anatomy lacked and needed in order to blossom by the eighteenth century, if not earlier, into what Londa Schiebinger describes as one of the “modern materialistic theories that grounded sexual difference in the fabric of the body.”⁷³

The aesthetics of marital and gender violence and the practice of anatomy orbit in close discursive proximity to each other within the universe of the early modern culture of dissection. And while both gravitate towards each other, it may indeed not be until the eighteenth century that we begin to read clearly the scientifically authoritative writing on the wall (and inscription on the body): that what we see in the body are the signs of immutable difference and not the signs of homology. While this writing on the wall took some time to appear clearly, the process of inscription is well underway in the sixteenth century. Some of the early, clearly legible marks documenting this process of inscription can be deciphered in the late medieval and early modern German literature of marital and gender violence.

Notes

1. A *Maere* is a short narrative in rhymed couplets of usually worldly content. See the entry “Maere” in Georg Braungart, Harald Fricke, Klaus Grubmüller, Jan-Dirk Müller, Friedrich Vollhardt and Klaus Weimar, ed., *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*, 3 vols. (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003).

2. See, for example, Werner Röcke’s comment referencing the fifteenth century carnival play: “The reciprocal relationship of sexuality and violence is the main theme of the Nuremberg carnival play of the fifteenth century. It opens a view onto the counter-world of the ‘no longer beautiful arts’: the world of the ugly and the obscene, of the functions and openings of the body, but also of the pleasure in desire, in consuming and devouring and in violence.” See Werner Röcke, “Literarische Gegenwelten: Fastnachtspiele und karnevaleske Festkultur,” in *Die Literatur im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit*, ed. Werner Röcke und Marina Münkler (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2004), 431; my translation of the German original.

3. Monica Green, "Bodies, Gender, Health, Disease: Recent Work on Medieval Women's Medicine," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 3rd Series, 2 (2005): 2.

4. Katharine Park, "Was there a Renaissance Body?" in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century, Acts of an International Conference, Florence, Villa I Tatti, June 9–11, 1999*, ed. Allen J. Grieco et al. (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2002), 331.

5. What holds the various genres discussed here together is that in all of them marital or gender violence is portrayed *schwankhaft*, in a manner that emphasizes humor and comedy, and with a didactic and moralizing bent. As a term referring to a specific genre, *Schwank* designates a usually short narrative of comic content in rhymed couplets or prose. See the entry "Schwank 2" in Georg Braungart et al., ed., *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*.

6. Franz Brietzmann, *Die böse Frau der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters* (Berlin: Mayer & Müller, 1912), 181; my translation of the German original. For further examples of *Prügeldichtung*, see Brietzmann, esp. 181–6, 223–7. Also helpful in this context is Tilmann Walter, *Unkeuschheit und Werk der Liebe: Diskurse über Sexualität am Beginn der Neuzeit in Deutschland* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), esp. 299–306, where he discusses several texts thematizing marital violence.

7. See Maria-Theresia Leuker, "Widerspenstige und tugendhafte Gattinnen. Das Bild der Ehefrau in niederländischen Texten aus dem 17. Jahrhundert," in *Ordnung und Lust. Bilder von Liebe, Ehe und Sexualität in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Bachorski (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1991), 102; my translation of the German original. Leuker discusses a number of texts. In the sixteenth-century play *Morkeens vel*, for example, the husband gains the upper hand by binding his wife, removing her clothes, and beating her until the switches he is using break. After that, he sews her into a salted horse's skin (103).

8. Joel F. Harrington, *Reordering Marriage and Society in Reformation Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 264.

9. Anger and violence are signs, husbands are warned, of "the common sort of men." See Lloyd Davis, ed., *Sexuality and Gender in the English Renaissance* (New York: Garland, 1998), 26.

10. Emily Detmer, "Civilizing Subordination: Domestic Violence and *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (1997): 273–74.

11. Röcke, "Literarische Gegenwelten: Fastnachtspiele und karnevaleske Festkultur," 421; my translation of the German original.

12. I am here paraphrasing Röcke, 422.

13. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984); Barbara A. Babcock, Introduction to *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, ed. Barbara A. Babcock (London: Cornell University Press, 1978), 13–38; Natalie Zemon Davis, "Women on Top," in *Feminism & Renaissance Studies*, ed. Lorna Hutson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 156–85; and Werner Röcke, "Das verkehrte Fest: Soziale Normen und Karneval in der Literatur des Spätmittelalters," *Neohelicon* 17, no. 1 (1990): 203–30.

14. The works of Lyndal Roper, Merry Wiesner-Hanks, Heide Wunder, Joy Wiltenburg, and Susan Amussen (to name only a few authors in a large and still growing field of scholarly inquiry) together draw a compelling picture of the sixteenth century as a time when—due to economic change, shifts in guild structures, the Protestant Reformation with its increased emphasis on marital order, and a general obsession with discourses of order and disorder—gender and the proper distinctions of male and female become focal points in contemplations of domestic, social, and divine order. See Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Joy Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992); Heide Wunder, “Überlegungen zum Wandel der Geschlechterbeziehungen im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert aus sozialgeschichtlicher Sicht,” in *Wandel der Geschlechterbeziehungen zu Beginn der Neuzeit*, ed. Heide Wunder and Christina Vanja (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), 12–26; Heide Wunder, *Er ist die Sonn', sie ist der Mond: Frauen in der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich: Beck, 1992); Heide Wunder, “Gender Norms and Their Enforcement in Early Modern Germany,” in *Gender Relations in German History*, ed. Lynn Abrams and Elizabeth Harvey (London: University College London Press, 1996), 39–56; and Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

15. Today approximately 150 carnival plays from the time period prior to 1500 survive. Most of them are from Nuremberg. The inquiry into representations of violence in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century drama could be expanded in productive ways by exploring the specifically performative aspects of this type of violence. On the question of performativity of medieval and early modern violence and overlaps with legal and punitive procedures, see Richard van Duermen, *Theater des Schreckens* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1985); and Jody Enders, *The Medieval Theater of Cruelty: Rhetoric, Memory, Violence* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999).

16. All translations from “Ein Paurenspil mit einem posem altem Weib etc.” are my own. The numbers given in parentheses indicate the page and line numbers of the German original as published in Adelbert von Keller, *Fastnachtspiele aus dem fünfzehnten Jahrhundert, Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart*, vol. 28–30 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965), 47–64.

17. “Ach ge und laß von dem gespei / Und laß die leut mit ru hin sitzen, / Ee ich dich werd in das antlutz smitzen.”

18. “Wert ir mein weib, als ir sein seit, / Mir [mit?] zurün dan prugel, holz und scheid, / Ich wolt euch lernen dultus singen.”

19. See Röcke, “Literarische Gegenwelten: Fastnachtspiele und karnevaleske Festkultur,” 431.

20. Röcke points out that Sachs in his carnival plays does not indulge as fully in representations of violence and sexuality as many of the fifteenth-century carnival plays, and

that his agenda is a different one (see Röcke, "Literarische Gegenwelten: Fastnachtspiele und karnevaleske Festkultur," 436). Instead, Sachs in his plays—and analogously in the poem accompanying Barthel Beham's woodcut—creates an ideal of urban and bourgeois ethics. As we will see, this shift in intent and emphasis coincides with a shift in the representation of violated bodies. While the short text under discussion here is not overtly sexual in nature and seemingly less excessive in its portrayal of marital violence, it should be noted that violence is, nevertheless, the central element of both image and text. For a brief introduction to the life and works of Hans Sachs, see, for example, the entries in Henry and Mary Garland, ed., *The Oxford Companion to German Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and in Matthias Konzett, ed., *Encyclopedia of German Literature*, 2 vols. (Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2000).

21. For information on Schubart, see the entries "Schubart, Adam" in Hubert Herkommer, Wilhelm Kosch, and Carl Ludwig Lang, ed., *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon: Biographisch-bibliographisches Handbuch*, 3rd ed., vol. 16 (Berne: K.G. Saur, 1996); "Schubart, Adam S." in Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften/Historische Kommission, ed., *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, vol. 32 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1891); and Ria Stambaugh, ed., *Teufelbücher in Auswahl*, vol. 2 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 441–2. The complete title of Schubart's text is: *Der Sieman das ist wider den Hausteuffell. Wie die bösen Weiber jhre frome Menner und wie die bösen leichtfertigen Buben jhre frome Weiber plagen, Sampt einer Vemanung aus H. Schriefft und schönen Historien, wie sich frome Eheleutt gegen einander verhalten sollen* (*The She-Man, or, against the house-devil. How the evil wives torment their virtuous husbands, and how the evil, careless fellows torment their virtuous wives. Including an exhortation from Holy Scripture and pleasant stories on how virtuous spouses ought to behave with each other*). All quotations from the text are referenced with page and line numbers as they appear in Stambaugh, *Teufelbücher in Auswahl*, 2: 237–307.

22. Schubart's text belongs to the genre of the *Teufelbuch*. Literally meaning "devil-book," the term *Teufelbuch* refers to texts that satirize or vilify specific forms of socially unacceptable behavior. In the *Teufelbuch*, a specific devil is portrayed as seducing humans into performing certain transgressive acts (dancing, drinking, gambling, cursing, or inviting conflict into the household). The *Teufelbuch* is a primarily Protestant didactic genre that enjoyed enormous popularity, especially during the second half of the sixteenth century. For further information, see Bebermeyer's entry on "Teuffelliteratur" in Georg Braungart et al., ed., *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*, esp. 382–92. Also relevant are Max Osborn, *Die Teuffelliteratur des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1965); Heinrich Grimm, *Die deutschen "Teufelbücher" des 16. Jahrhunderts: Ihre Rolle im Buchwesen und ihre Bedeutung* (Frankfurt am Main: Buchhändler-Vereinigung, 1959); Bernhard Ohse, *Die Teuffelliteratur zwischen Brant und Luther* (Berlin: Ernst-Reuter-Gesellschaft, 1961); Keith L. Roos, *The Devil in Sixteenth Century German Literature: The Teufelsbücher* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1972); and the epilogue provided in each of the five volumes edited by Stambaugh; see Stambaugh, *Teufelbücher in Auswahl*.

23. For a definition of the term *Sieman*, see Johannes Bolte, "Doktor Siemann und

Doktor Kolbmann, zwei Bilderbogen des 16. Jahrhunderts,” *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde* 12 (1902): 296; Waldemar Kawerau, “Lob und Schimpf des Ehestandes in der Litteratur des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts,” *Preussische Jahrbücher* 69 (1892): 760–81; and the entry “Siemann” in Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Wander, ed., *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon: Ein Hausschatz für das deutsche Volk*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1867). The figure of *Herr Sieman* enjoyed considerable popularity. It appears in the works of several of the most prominent authors of the sixteenth century, among them Martin Luther, Hans Sachs, Georg Wickram, Burkhard Waldis, and Andreas Musculus (Bolte, “Doktor Siemann und Doktor Kolbmann, zwei Bilderbogen des 16. Jahrhunderts,” 296–7). *Herr Sieman* also appears in sixteenth-century drama, as well as in woodcut illustrations; see David Price, “When Women Would Rule: Reversal of Gender Hierarchy in Sixteenth-Century German Drama,” *Daphnis* 20 (1991), esp. 152–8.

24. “*Verdichten*,” a verb frequently used by German literary historians and cultural critics, means “to compress, condense, or intensify, to heighten, thicken, increase or deepen.”

25. Katja Altpeter-Jones, “Adam Schubart’s Early Modern ‘Tyrant She-Man’: Female Misbehavior, Gender, and the Disciplining of Hybrid Bodies,” *Women in German Yearbook* 20 (2004): 52.

26. A text that is comparable to Schubart’s in this regard is Hans Sachs’s play *Der böß Rauch* (*The Evil Smoke*). Though this text does not feature an ambiguously gendered or sexed figure per se, it tackles explicitly the issue of the permeability of lines drawn between the two genders. The permeability of the boundary that separates male from female is here signaled not by means of a bimorphic figure but instead through the constant shift in the assignment of the role of “Herr und man” (“master and man”) in the household. The epithet “Herr und man” is here depicted as fluctuating, first applying to the wife, then the husband, and ultimately being presented as up for grabs: whoever will be victorious in the “battle for the pants” that unfolds will become “Master and man.” Though lacking the figure of the She-Male, this text thus suggests that a woman can be a man. It also suggests—and I will elaborate on this where I discuss the gendering effects of violence—that gender is determined through the infliction of violence on bodies.

27. “Bies stieß halt friedt und sey nicht stoltz / Siehestu auch jehns grosse holtz. / Damit schlae ich dich auff dein haut. . .”

28. “Itzt greiff ich erst recht zun Waffen. / Ergreiff ein scharffe Hellepart / Schlag zornig auff den Sieman hart.”

29. “Ich traff Sieman / eins ahn den Kopff / Schlag in zu boden wie ein Topff. / Er lag vor mier alda gestrackt / Mit schlegen ich in bas bedackt. / Schlag flux zu und bleuet in woll / Von der Scheitrell bies auff die Soll. / Auffn Lenden Rucken und Bauch / Ich schlug in auff die Schenckel auch.”

30. “Erst ich im sein leder gnug zerbert.”

31. “Und uberbleut jhens their / Ein mall drey oder vier. / Schlahet im Arm und Bein entzwey. . .”

32. “Schlugen den Sieman also fast. / Umb sein Heupt und gantzen leib / Das er

auff der stelle todt bleib."

33. On sexual and anatomical metaphors and their meaning in early modern culture, see Johannes Müller, *Schwert und Scheide: Der sexuelle und skatologische Wortschatz im Nürnberger Fastnachtspiel des 15. Jahrhunderts, Deutsche Literatur von den Anfängen bis 1700*, vol. 2, ed. Alois Maria Haas (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1988), esp. 56–8, 79–87, and 146–51.

34. The temporary ambiguity in gendering/sexing that we see represented in the figure of the She-Male itself, as well as in the varying assignment of phallic and vaginal symbolism are echoed in the text's hesitation with regard to the use of personal and possessive pronouns in reference to Master She-Man. While the text passages quoted here use only masculine pronouns, other passages waver in their assignment of grammatical gender. For a more detailed discussion of the grammatical gender of pronouns used in the text, see Altpeter-Jones, "Adam Schubart's Early Modern 'Tyrant She-Man,'" 47–8.

35. For the original monograph in German, see Valentin Groebner, *Ungestalten: Die visuelle Kultur der Gewalt im Mittelalter* (Munich and Vienna: Carl Hanser, 2003). For the book's translation on which I rely here for all English citations unless otherwise indicated, see Valentin Groebner, *Defaced: The Visual Culture of Violence in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. Pamela Selwyn (New York: Zone Books, 2004). On a functional level, Groebner does not differentiate between, for example, fictional representations of violence and representations found in reports on legal procedures, or between the violence enacted in a carnival play and the violence that might have been part of a public penalizing event such as a hanging or punitive dismemberment. All representations of violence and violated bodies were, according to Groebner, instruments aimed at evoking a specific audience reaction. See Groebner, *Defaced*, 32.

36. "The key to acts of violence (whether represented in visual or literary art or performed on stage or at the gallows) is that they are 'about visibility, about making people see violence'"; see Groebner, *Defaced*, 34.

37. *Ibid.*, 81. Groebner's argument hinges on the double meaning of the German word *Gewalt* which means both "power" and "violence." By being violent or propagating narratives and images depicting violence (*Gewalt*), according to Groebner's argument, warring groups were able to exert power (*Gewalt*); see Groebner *Ungestalten*, 88. On this point, see also Albrecht Classen, who writes: "In Middle High German . . . the term could imply both 'violence' and 'aggression' or 'authority' and 'political power'"; see Albrecht Classen, "Violence in the Shadows of the Court," in *Violence in Medieval Courty Literature*, ed. Albrecht Classen, Routledge Medieval Casebooks (New York: Routledge, 2004), 14.

38. Groebner, *Ungestalten*, 87. Selwyn translates *persönliche Gewaltfähigkeit* as capacity to "exercise personal might" and *einen gewaltfähigen Beschützer* as "a mighty protector" (Groebner, *Defaced*, 81). Both translations circumvent any mention of violence. I therefore prefer my own translation, given in parentheses in the text.

39. Groebner, *Defaced*, 81.

40. "Being physically unharmed" captures more adequately the German expres-

sion Groebner uses (“körperlich unversehrt”). He writes, “Man muss in den Städten am Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts also zumindest zwei, eher sogar drei rhetorische Felder von ‘Ehre’ unterscheiden, zwischen denen zwar Verbindungslinien existierten, von denen aber jedes eine gewisse Eigenständigkeit und Kohärenz aufwies. Im ersten dieser Felder tauchten ausschließlich Männer auf; es ist das der körperlichen Unversehrtheit. Ehre stand als Gegenbegriff zum körperlichen Überwältigtwerden, zur physischen Niederlage” (Groebner, *Ungestalten*, 88).

41. In his analysis of violence and pain in the works of Hartmann von Aue, Scott Pincikowski puts it succinctly: “Ultimately, only men are allowed to wield the authoritative power of pain”; see Scott E. Pincikowski, “The Body in Pain in the Works of Hartmann Von Aue,” in *A Companion to the Works of Hartmann Von Aue*, ed. Francis G. Gentry (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005), 118.

42. The gesture of marking female bodies as *unterlegen* can be found in a number of other texts. In Sachs’s play *Das boß Weyb mit den worten, Wuertzen und Stein gut zu machen* (*To Reform an Evil Wife with Words, Herbs and Stones*), an irreverent wife, tellingly equipped with “bruch, taschen und messer” (“pants, purse, and knife,” 133, stage directions inserted between lines 248 and 249), proclaims to be “Herr im Hauß” (“master of the house,” 133, l. 256) only to be tamed by her husband, who attacks her with stones that hit her head, neck, shoulders, and loins (135, ll. 302–8). As in Sachs’s “Ninefold Skins,” so here, too, the wife falls on her knees, raises her hands, and implores her husband to have mercy (135, stage directions inserted between lines 309 and 310). All references to this play are to Edmund Goetze, ed., *Elf Fastnachtspiele aus den Jahren 1550 und 1551 von Hans Sachs* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1883), 125–37. In Sachs’s *Die wuenderlichen man gschlacht zw machen* (*To Reform an Oddly Behaving Man*), a woman complains of her husband’s beatings and threatens that if he continues to beat her “blue” (“plewen,” 2, l. 53), she will refuse to “lie under his feet” (“Wil dir nirm untern fuesen liegen,” 3, l. 63). Despite this verbal provocation, she gives in at the end. All references to this play are to Edmund Goetze, ed., *Zwölf Fastnachtspiele aus den Jahren 1554 und 1556 von Hans Sachs* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1886), 1–13. The gesture of submission is similar in Jakob Ayrer’s *Ein schoens neus singets Spil von dem Knoerren Cuentzlein mit vier Personen*. Also known under the title *Die Erziehung des bösen Weibes*, Ayrer’s play depicts violence going both ways. Order is re-established, however, as the play concludes and the wife falls on her knees and implores her husband not to kill her (3090, ll. 8–11). All references to this play are to Albert von Keller, ed., *Ayrers Dramen*, (Stuttgart: Litterarischer Verein, 1865), vol. 5. In her analysis of early modern Netherlandish plays depicting the physical disciplining of wives, Leuker writes that “the reconciliation follows a certain ritual,” in which “[t]he women fall down on their knees and solemnly abdicate their power” (104). Leuker’s description of the women’s gesture as ritualistic indicates that this is a common pattern, not a singular instance. The gesture of marking the woman as *unterlegen* is, in other words, prevalent in many Netherlandish early modern texts that depict marital strife. Hans Sachs’s play *Der boß Rauch* is similarly explicit in this context by correlating references to lack of success in the “battle for the pants” with verbs describing, quite literally, the act

of being *unterlegen* and, vice versa, references to success with verbs describing “being on top.” See, for example, “Und welches in dem kampf erlig” (“and whoever succumbs in the battle” 29, l. 53), “Wer obligt, der sey Herr im hauß!” (“who subjugates the other, will be Master in the house” 31, l. 85), and “Und welches in dem kampf obleit” (“whoever is superior in the battle” 31, l. 89).

43. Hans-Jürgen Bachorski, “Das aggressive Geschlecht: Verlachte Männlichkeit in Mären aus dem 15. Jahrhundert,” *Zeitschrift für Germanistik* 8, no. 2 (1998): 266; my translation of the German original.

44. *Ibid.*, 269.

45. *Ibid.*, 272–3.

46. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, xix.

47. *Ibid.*, 10–11; my emphasis.

48. *Ibid.*, 18.

49. *Ibid.*, 26–7.

50. *Ibid.*, 40.

51. A comparable scenario is one in which a devil or several devils quasi-parasitically invade a wife’s body and begin to influence her behavior. Thus Nicolaus Schmidt describes the case “Wenn sich ein Fraw nicht thut bewaren / Und lest die Teuffel in sich faren” (“When a wife does not guard herself and allows the devils to invade her” 337, ll. 620–21). See Nicolaus Schmidt, *Von den zehen Teuffeln oder Lastern damit die boesen unartigen Weiber besessen sind . . .* (1557), in *Teuffelbücher in Auswahl*, vol. 2, ed. Ria Stambaugh (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 309–56. The recommended remedy is beating, though this approach is not without risks, for when husbands get rid of one devil by beating their wives, ten new ones enter her body at the same time (“schlagen sie [Menner] einen Teuffel heraus / so faren ir zehen wieder hinein” 315, ll. 34–5). Nevertheless, the text recommends beating wives who refuse subordination: “Sie meint / der Man muss sich schmiegen / Seinen willen nach dem iren biegen / Unnd lest sich darzu nicht regieren / Man thue sie denn mit knuetteln schmieren” (“She thinks that the husband has to give in, bend his will to hers. And she refuses to be governed unless one beats her with cudgels” 321–2, ll. 122–5). Insubordinate wives, Schmidt concludes, “sollen geschlagen / und bisweilen gar gekrüppelt werden” (“should be beaten and at times even maimed” 339, ll. 19–20). Andreas Musculus invokes the same image of the wifely body invaded by devils, though he uses it to support his opposition to the physical disciplining of wives (“Dargegen aber / sagt man auch / schlege machen nicht fromme weiber / schlecht man einen Teuffel raus / so schlecht man ir neun wieder nein” 120, ll. 7–9); see Andreas Musculus, *Wider den Eheuffel* (1556), in *Teuffelbücher in Auswahl*, vol. 4, ed. Ria Stambaugh (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 81–132.

52. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 41.

53. *Ibid.*, 53; my emphasis.

54. As Katharine Park points out, a closing off and hardening of boundaries is evidenced in many areas of early modern culture, and lines of demarcation are frequently located on/in the body; see Park, “Was there a Renaissance Body?” 334. Most of the

works referenced in note 14 draw attention to early modern attempts at defining clear and immutable lines of demarcation based on gender difference. For several articles highlighting the early modern concern with order, disorder, and boundaries more broadly defined—i.e. not just gender-related—in early modern German culture, see also Max Reinhart, ed., *Infinite Boundaries: Order, Disorder, and Reorder in Early Modern German Culture* (Kirksville, MO.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1998).

55. Andrew Cunningham, “Protestant Anatomy,” in *Religious Confessions and the Sciences in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Jürgen and Annette Winkelmann Helm (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2001), 48. In the sixteenth century, Andreas Vesalius is considered the European authority in the field of anatomy, and his *De humani corporis fabrica* (first published in 1543) is recognized today as the foundation and cornerstone of early modern anatomical theory and practice. Tilmann Walter writes that even though the relatively small number of surviving copies of German translations of the *Fabrica* indicates that they were not hugely popular, “the scientific revolution in anatomy was an international phenomenon” (*Unkeuschheit und Werk der Liebe*, 418 and 417; my translation of the German original). Vesalius’s work, in other words, would have been known in learned circles in the German territories, perhaps not the least because Vesalius became the personal physician of Charles V and Philipp II. German translations of Vesalius’s works were available, among them *Von des menschen cörpers Anatomey* (1543) and *Anatomia deudsch* (1551). For a more comprehensive list of German translations of Vesalius’s works, see Walter, *Unkeuschheit und Werk der Liebe*, 551.

56. Cunningham, “Protestant Anatomy,” 48.

57. Andrew Cunningham, “Luther and Vesalius,” in *The Renaissance in Europe: A Reader*, ed. Keith Whitlock (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 283–4.

58. Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), viii. Sawday uses the phrase repeatedly throughout his study.

59. *Ibid.*, 2.

60. *Ibid.*, 2.

61. *Ibid.*, 27.

62. See Katharine Park, *Secrets of Women: Gender, Generation, and the Origins of Human Dissection* (New York: Zone Books, 2006), chap. 5, esp. 216–17.

63. Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned*, 9.

64. Park, *Secrets of Women*, 14.

65. *Ibid.*, 26.

66. *Ibid.*, 27.

67. *Ibid.*, 33.

68. Claudia Benthien and Christoph Wulf, “Zur kulturellen Anatomie der Körperteile,” in *Körperteile: Eine kulturelle Anatomie*, ed. Claudia Benthien and Christoph Wulf (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2001), 13–14; my translation of the German original.

69. Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 149. As is well known, Laqueur differentiates between a one-sex model (in which male and female bodies are seen as anatomically identical, the only difference being that female sexual organs are inverted versions of male sexual organs) and a two-sex model, and argues for a transition from the former to the latter in the eighteenth century. This is what he means when he writes about the invention of “sex as we know it.”

70. *Ibid.*, 70 and 88.

71. Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages: Medicine, Science, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). As Cadden’s study demonstrates, a one-sex or Galenic model of homology was only one among many models for understanding male and female bodies during the Middle Ages. For other critiques of Laqueur, see Katharine Park and Robert A. Nye, “Destiny is Anatomy,” *New Republic* (February 18, 1991): 53–7; and Winfried Schleiner, “Early Modern Controversies About the One-Sex Model,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (2000): 180–91. Within the German context, Brigitte Spreitzer has criticized Laqueur’s model for stipulating a “paradigm shift from premodern to modern constructions of sex and gender” linking a gender-focused model with premodernity, a sex-focused model with modernity. Quoted in Ingrid Bennewitz, “Zur Konstruktion von Körper und Geschlecht in der Literatur des Mittelalters,” in *Genderdiskurse und Körperbilder im Mittelalter: Eine Bilanzierung nach Butler und Laqueur*, ed. Ingrid Bennewitz and Ingrid Kasten, *Bamberger Studien zum Mittelalter* (Münster, Hamburg, and London: Lit Verlag, 2002), 2; my translation of the German original.

72. *Ibid.*, 129.

73. Londa Schiebinger, *Nature’s Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 38.

Elizabeth Cary's Female Trinity: Breaking Custom with Mosaic Law in *The Tragedy of Mariam*

CRISTINA LEÓN ALFAR

In Act One, scene three of Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*, Salome takes a stand. Unlike other women in the play to whom, I will argue, she is linked by the inequity of Mosaic law, Salome resolves to appropriate the law and claim divorce as a female right: "I'll be the custom-breaker: and begin / To show my sex the way to freedom's door, / And with an off'ring will I purge my sin; / The law was made for none but who are poor."¹ With these words, Salome conceives of a revolution that would free, as she puts it, the play's female characters.² For she is not alone in her marital unhappiness, nor is she the only female character to come face-to-face with Mosaic law. Doris, wife to Herod prior to Mariam, suffers the humiliations attendant on wives who have been divorced by husbands arbitrarily. And Mariam, who hates her husband, has no recourse against him, no way to separate from him that will allow her to retain her prized virtue. In its depiction of these three women's experience of marriage, the play reveals an ideal performance of wifely duty as an ideological construction that depends on fictive rewards and punishments. The stability that humanists such as Juan Luis Vives hope to guarantee women who perform that ideal consequently becomes impossible to guarantee: Salome's lack of, and contempt for, virtue goes unpunished; virtue fails to win Mariam honor, fails, in fact, to guarantee her life; and Doris' virtue and devotion to Herod fail to guarantee her security as a wife. Thus, life, death, and divorce are divided from punishment, and we are asked to view these harsh outcomes as unpredictable and unjust.³ Because for Salome "shame is gone, and honour wip'd away" (1.3.293), a space opens in which she can imagine

divorcing a husband she no longer loves, usurping for herself powers that belong only to men.⁴

Cary's Judaic Palestine resembles early modern England insofar as English common law granted legal rights to husbands that it did not officially grant to wives, and those rights granted to husbands gave them significant economic powers over their wives. The result was a system in which husbands' potential abuse of their legal rights might place wives in vulnerable positions. Cary's Mosaic law, therefore, stands in for Renaissance English marriage law. While both Doris and Mariam are abandoned by Herod, Salome faces a different dilemma. Her marriage to Constabarus stands in the way of her wish to marry the Arabian prince, Silleus. Challenged by what she sees as an unequal distribution of legal rights that tie her unwillingly to a man she no longer loves, Salome rebels against laws she finds lacking in logic and justice. Locating the inequity between men and women in Mosaic law that bars women from divorcing their husbands while allowing husbands to divorce their wives, Salome rejects the constraints placed upon her as a married woman and seizes the opportunity of legal indeterminacy created by Herod's presumed death to inform Constabarus, "Thou shalt no hour longer call me wife, / Thy jealousy procures my hate so deep: / That I from thee do mean to free my life, / By a divorcing bill before I sleep" (1.6.417–20).⁵

Of course, Salome's arrogation of power makes her masculine in Constabarus's eyes, turning his "world . . . topsy-turvèd quite" (1.6.424). He expresses the conventional masculine anxieties of the early modern period about female nature, reaffirming as natural a sex-gender system that putatively guarantees systems of power and inheritance. But because women's sexual natures are often seen by men as uncontrollable, such a guarantee is illusory. While the play stages masculine anxieties in their full force in Constabarus's rage at Salome and in Herod's execution of Mariam for what he believes is her adultery and concomitant treason against him, it also dramatizes the profound costs to married women in a legal system that does not represent them. In so doing, the play rejects male views such as those of Constabarus.⁶ Thus, giving voice to women who suffer the brunt of masculine anxieties, *The Tragedy of Mariam* privileges what I will call "feminine anxieties" in its depiction of all the female characters, espe-

cially in the trinity of Mariam, Doris, and Salome. By depicting women who defy convention, the play stages women's multiple perspectives on, reactions against, and appropriations of patrilineal systems of law, custom, and power.⁷ Doris is both justifiably angry and determined in her hatred of Mariam. Mariam is both innocent of Herod's accusations and guilty of hubris. Salome completes the triangle of complex and contradictory female characters in her simultaneous attempt to choose affection over duty and her brutal deployment of systems of law and power. Together, the three women expose the callous and one-sided nature of the law and identify the material basis for feminine anxieties.⁸ Rather than offering us a single, unqualified response to the tyranny of Herod and Mosaic law, Cary offers us a range of experiences and responses, all of which contribute to the stories of early modern women's lives. In this way, the play presents a complex, three-tiered approach to women's perceptions of law and marriage. I emphasize as equal the roles of Mariam, Doris, and Salome under Mosaic law in uncovering feminine anxieties staged in *The Tragedy of Mariam*, a drama that replays and resists early modern cultural and juridical policies of inequities between husbands and wives and privileges women's experiences.⁹

The inequity of Mosaic law, then, forms the basis for feminine anxieties in the play and resonates within early modern English systems of marriage law. Salome's understanding of the way these systems of power work against women makes her the one who most forcefully states the injustice for women in a legal system that "is hostile to [their] interests" and that expects of them uncompromising obedience.¹⁰ Salome explains Mosaic law to her lover, Silleus:

In this our land we have an ancient use,
 Permitted first by our law-giver's head:
 Who hates his wife, though for no just abuse,
 May with a bill divorce her from his bed.
 But in this custom, women are not free,
 Yet I for once will wrest it. . . .

(1.5.333–8)

Mariam agrees with Salome's definition of Mosaic law, asking Doris when she is accused of adultery, "Did not Moses say, / That he that being match'd did deadly hate: / Might by permission put his wife away, / And take a more belov'd to be his mate?" (4.8.587–90). As Shari Zimmerman points out, Doris's response to Mariam is a "deceptively simple question, 'What did he hate me for?'"¹¹ While husbands have recourse against wives they no longer love, not only to divorce those wives but to remarry and raise subsequent families, wives enjoy no similar right. In fact, under Mosaic law abandoned wives and children live in poverty, without legal rights and economic security. Antipater, Herod and Doris's son, is disinherited, declared illegitimate, in effect, while Mariam and her children enjoy the economic and social security that was formerly theirs. Not unlike women in the period who appealed to the courts of Chancery and of Requests (equity courts—complementary to but separate from common law courts—that I will examine below), Salome appropriates existing laws for her own purposes to seek equity outside the law. In contrast to Doris, who only grieves and threatens revenge, and to Mariam, whose passive aggression animates her husband's violence, Salome acts to change her life.¹²

A growing number of studies have shed light on the ubiquitous masculine anxieties of the period. Mark Breitenberg's *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England* defines the condition as simultaneously "a signifier of cultural tensions and contradictions, but also as an enabling condition of male subjectivity in early modern patriarchal culture."¹³ For Breitenberg, anxiety is both produced by and produces patriarchy, and the term must be "wed" to masculinity because "those individuals whose identities are formed by the assumption of their own privilege must also have incorporated varying degrees of anxiety about the preservation or potential loss of that privilege."¹⁴ Anxiety attaches itself to masculine gender through social privilege and construction, not as a biological imperative, but as an effect of pressures and constraints specific to men in the period. My interest in feminine anxiety borrows from Breitenberg to read the masculine anxieties he studies as productive of and reciprocal with feminine anxieties. Breitenberg argues that "in the repetition or staging of anxiety men compensate for an anticipated danger that derives from the very patriarchal system in which they are engendered as subjects in the first place."¹⁵ This formation of mas-

culine anxiety perpetually replicates itself as a mode of social and political regeneration and (re)stability, and the anticipation of danger actually produces that which is feared. Indeed, anxiety, as Breitenberg explains, "may be seen as the result of projecting one's own mental constructions onto the world or onto another person and then mistaking them as objectively true."¹⁶ Masculine anxieties, then, may have to do with illusory fears, with haunting specters rather than with concrete threats.¹⁷

Breitenberg's use of the term "anxiety" confronts the phantasmatic nature of masculine anxieties in early modern drama and points to the formative relationship of power to gender. The threat that women pose for men is really a fantasy born out of the competitions for preferment and power in which men must engage. In this regard, I wish to underscore the actual power men have in contrast to the phantasmatic power men attribute to women to suggest that, contrary to masculine anxiety, what I am calling feminine anxiety is a response to the real threats arising out of masculine anxieties. In other words, what women have to be anxious about is the threat to their lives (often but not always a lethal threat) that can materialize when fathers, brothers, or husbands suspect them of inappropriate or adulterous behavior. I am particularly interested, then, in an exaggerated, even paranoid, tendency on the part of male characters to see harm where there is none (Herod's belief in Mariam's adultery and treason is a prime example) and to act against the female characters, often in violent ways. By contrast, women in these same plays feel anxiety born of men's violence against them, and therefore their anxiety—as opposed to that of the men—is of a concrete and material kind. Feminine anxiety, in this regard, is not a *projection* of women's mental constructions onto the world or another person or a *mistaking* of them as objectively true, but is instead a valid response to their domestic, legal, and political constraints. Thus feminine anxieties, like masculine anxieties, are a gendered response to a chaotic and unpredictable system of authority that depends on chaste female bodies for an imaginary stability. Masculine and feminine anxieties, in this regard, depend on an uneasy and conflicting dialectical reciprocity.

The Tragedy of Mariam portrays the right to authority claimed by men within a patrilineal structure and varied forms of resistance to that authority by women. The potential brutality of the system is embodied

in Herod, whose rule is based on violent usurpation and exploitation of Mosaic law. That Salome's rebellion imitates the violence and exploitation of her brother should not be a surprise, for if power is a violent attribute that in the early modern period is gendered masculine—that is if, as was believed, power is handed down in a patrilineal succession from God, to King, to Man—then we must expect women who take power to behave like men.¹⁸ As Judith Butler argues,

Assuming power is not a straightforward task of taking power from one place, transferring it intact, and then and there making it one's own; the act of appropriation may involve an alteration of power such that the power assumed or appropriated works against the power that made that assumption possible. Where conditions of subordination make possible the assumption of power, the power assumed remains tied to those conditions, but in an ambivalent way; in fact, the power assumed may at once retain and resist that subordination. This conclusion is not to be thought of as (a) a resistance that is *really* a recuperation of power or (b) a recuperation that is *really* a resistance. It is both at once, and this ambivalence forms the bind of agency.¹⁹

I argue that Salome's ability to conceive of divorce (or "freedom," as she terms it 1.4.310) as a way to separate from her husbands resembles the agency Butler proposes. The cultural custom and law in place both restrict and enable Salome's act, so that she simultaneously resists and reproduces structures of power in place prior to her desire for liberty. Cary's play, in this respect, offers an alternative not to systems of patrilineal control, but to the representation of female characters, to orthodox notions of female nature, and to the socio-political and naturalized hierarchy of power descending, from God, to King, to Man. As Robert Filmer explains it, "If we compare the natural rights of a father with those of a king, we find them all one, without any difference at all, but only in the Latitude or Extent of them: as the Father over one Family so the King as Father over many Families extends his care to preserve, feed, clothe, instruct, and defend the whole Commonwealth."²⁰ The anonymous author of *An Homilie Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion* agrees: "[God] not onely ordayned that in families and households the wife shoulde be obedient unto her hus-

bande, the children unto their parentes, the servantes unto their masters, but also, when mankinde increased and spread it selfe more larglie over the worlde, he by his holy worde dyd constitute and ordain in cities and countries severall and speciall governours and rulers, unto whom the residue of his people should be obedient."²¹ This patrilineal religious and political order, animated by the rebellion of angels against God, forms the crux of early modern political and domestic theory.²² It also informs, I will argue below, Salome's mode of agency, for when she decides what she wants, she imitates Herod, the play's primary agent and authority figure. The only way for a woman to overcome her anxieties, therefore, is to act, and to act—in this play—is to act ruthlessly.

Thus the play's staging of feminine anxieties interrogates early modern political, domestic, and moral order. When Cary writes a play whose wives struggle with and call into question their obedience to their husbands and their relationship to marriage law, and when one of these husbands is a king and a tyrant—largely because of his misuse of marriage law—Cary launches a simultaneous critique against orthodox forms of marriage and monarchy, for the absolute authority of kings and husbands makes of both institutions a tyranny against which married women have little recourse.²³ As Rebecca Bushnell has argued, on the Renaissance stage “[t]he tyrant figures a kind of improper authority figure that makes authority itself problematic, at the same time that the tyrant is destroyed to reestablish legitimate sovereignty.”²⁴ While legitimate rule is not restored in Cary's play—Herod's reign is always portrayed as usurpation—the tyrant is destroyed by and lives to regret his own tyranny. In this sense, Cary's play underscores the problematic nature of authority by allowing the authority figure to condemn his use of that authority. What Herod regrets, of course, is his execution of his wife. His tyranny, therefore, is linked to his roles both as husband and as monarch.²⁵

* * *

As many feminist scholars have noted, early modern conduct manuals and legal documents demonstrate masculine anxieties about female sexual nature and reflect early modern concerns that, in their emphasis

on women's obedience to men, disclose men's dependence on women for honor.²⁶ I want to look at a series of documents from the period—written by both men and women—to set up a history of feminine anxiety in which Cary's play participates and which may help illuminate early modern women's history in relation to law and marriage. Together, men's and women's texts map the material instability of wives. They show that the laws on divorce—even post-Reformation—and women's position in marriage changed very little from Vives's *The Instruction of a Christen Woman* (1523) to *The Law's Resolutions of Women's Rights* (1632). While *The Law's Resolutions* is written much later than either Vives's *Instruction* or Cary's play, it makes official for and available to women laws that were in effect throughout the sixteenth century. The date of this text, then, is less important than what it provides to us as an official account of laws relevant to women, especially those having to do with coverture and marriage. Together, *The Law's Resolutions* and Vives's curriculum emphasizing virtue act as bookends, revealing themselves to be culturally bound and implicated in the religious and political views on monarchical and domestic harmony found in *An Homilie Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion* (1570) and Filmer's *Patriarchia, or The Natural Power of Kings* (1616), which together span nearly the same period. The texts—some written for women to understand their private role and some written for men to understand their public role—overlap and intersect on numerous points having to do with the family and state structure that are relevant to and throw light on *The Tragedy of Mariam*. I hope that reading these texts alongside others written by women over the same period will provide a vision, though partial, of married women's legal and social position in the period.

While the view of women Vives holds is as old as Genesis, his particular version, inflected with humanist interests in education, makes it a relevant starting point for thinking about the status of women in early modern England. His juxtaposition of education and chastity with obedience and state authority lays out the contradictory role of women in the period and the stakes for both sexes in marriage. There are repeated links among education, chastity and obedience, and state authority in all the texts I read below, as well as in Cary's play. *The Law's Resolutions* docu-

ments the complicated lack of rights afforded women under common law, regardless of humanist ideals, and in this text, the tie between women's legal rights and religious and monarchical authority resurfaces, showing that women's social position and state power cannot be separated. Despite the law's absolutist basis, common law could be circumvented through equity courts, so that opportunities arose for women to manipulate the law, to appropriate what Tim Stretton calls its "flexibility" in equity court jurisdictions, in ways we might compare to Salome's appropriation of Mosaic law as a way to claim divorce for herself and other women.²⁷ In dialogue with the well known cultural and social customs and practices of these texts, Cary's play becomes part of women's history in England, contributing to our vision of the complexity of women's relationships to cultural ideologies and material laws.

In *The Instruction of a Christen Woman*, Juan Luis Vives argues that "chastyte is the principall vertue of a Woman."²⁸ Devoid of the "perle" of her virginity and consequently diminished in "pryce," a woman whose reputation is in question faces absolute alienation from everyone she knows and, therefore, loss of emotional and economic security.²⁹ But more than that, Vives describes graphically how "fathers have cut the throtes of theyr doughters, bretherne of theyr systers, and kynnesmen of theyr kinnes women." In one description, a family "shutte [a daughter] up in a stable with a wylde horse, kepte meateles." A woman is stabbed by brothers after giving birth to an illegitimate child, and another is strangled by her female friends.³⁰ While Vives does not actually say that parents, brothers, and friends ought to murder guilty young women, his stories affirm the violence of masculine anxieties about female sexuality and chastity because he makes it clear that such violence is not a "marvail ... that the affection of love and charite is turned so sodeaynely to hate."³¹

The link between women's subjection to men and to both their faith in God and their obedience and loyalty to the monarch in *An Homilie Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion* makes disobedience tantamount to blasphemy and treason, so that "such subjectes as are disobedient or rebellious against their princes disobey God and procure their owne damnation."³² Once women become rebellious subjects, what Leontes in *The Winter's Tale* calls "revolted wives,"³³ Vives assures them that "All thy

country folks, all ryghtes and lawes, thy countrey it selfe, thy parentes, all thy kyns folke and thyn husbände hym selfe shall damne and punissh thee: All mighty god wyll avenge moste rygorously his majeste so displeas and offended of the."³⁴ These texts work to define the place of wives in relation to husbands as congruent with the subject's relationship to the king in ways that resonate with Cary's play. As Herod's fury over Mariam's behavior attests, obedience on the part of wives signifies an ordered society, secure in its lines of authority, while disobedient wives signify a world disordered: chaos not only at home but in the realm.

To legitimize an ordered society, law in England—like Mosaic law in Cary's play—connects to religious dogma. *The Law's Resolutions of Women's Rights* invokes Eve's sin as that which brought women into subjection. Eve "because she had helped to seduce her husband hath inflicted on her an especiall bane. *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth thy children, thy desires shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.* See here the reason of that which I touched before, that Women have no voyce in Parliament, They make no Lawes, they consent to none, they abrogate none."³⁵ Perpetually paying for the sin of Eve, women have no public place, no legal voice. The religious narrative invokes a concrete origin for coverture that is as flimsy and mythical as the stability of the order itself. But the law makes fact out of fiction, limiting women's rights on a day to day basis. "Section ix, *That which the Wife hath is the Husbands*" confirms that "[f]or thus it is, If before Marriage the Woman were possessed of Horses, Neate, Sheepe, Corne, Wool, Money, Plate, and Jewels, all manner of moveable substance is presently by coniunction the husbands, to sell, keepe, or bequeath if he die: And though he bequeath them not, yet are they the Husbands Executors and not the wives which brought them to her Husband."³⁶ In this acute lack of proprietorial interests and legal standing, women cannot even file charges against husbands who beat them: "if a man beat an outlaw, a traitor, a Pagan, his villein, or his wife, it is dispunishable, because by the Law Common these persons can have no action."³⁷ On the same level legally as traitors, pagans, and servants under common law, hemmed in by threats such as those Vives obliquely makes, and ill-positioned for acts of self-rule, the wife who displeased her husband was especially vulnerable in the world.³⁸

But what of women who offended neither family nor husband? What were the guarantees that a woman who fulfilled Vives's ideals would receive the love and honor he promises or would never need to worry about property or money? Renaissance husbands' economic and emotional negligence did not seem to be as reliably attached to their wives' disobedience and loss of chastity as early modern moralists would have women believe. The cases of Elizabeth Stafford Howard, Duchess of Norfolk, Margaret Cuninghame, and Elizabeth Bourne, real women who were abandoned by their husbands, suggest some answers. These three women's stories dovetail with the marital experiences of the three female characters I examine in Cary's play because Norfolk, Cuninghame, and Bourne struggled with the financial, social, and emotional consequences of being married to men who abused and abandoned them. And, like Cary's women, these women's responses to their husbands' abandonment is varied: Cuninghame complains in a diary, Norfolk petitions for redress in letters (as Cary herself is driven to do in the 1620s), and Bourne seeks a divorce. These three real women's narratives of marital betrayal demonstrate the rhetorical power women could achieve through writing letters and diaries, recording their complaints and perceived injustices. While there are many other cases to consider, these three resonate with the "cases" of Mariam, Doris, and Salome and illuminate both the fact of married women's constraints and their defiance of those constraints.

* * *

Elizabeth Stafford Howard, Duchess of Norfolk, was imprisoned by her husband, Thomas Howard, third duke of Norfolk, when she objected to his bringing his mistress, Bess Holland, into her house. The unhappiness of the married couple became quite a scandal, as Betty Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott note, primarily because the duchess wrote frequent and detailed letters to Thomas Cromwell, chief minister for Henry VIII, begging him to force her husband to increase her allowance.³⁹ In particular, her letters testify to what she felt was distress caused by her husband's neglect. On June 26, 1537, she wrote, "For if the King's Grace granteth my daughter of Richmond her jointure (which he had never a penny for at her

marriage) . . . [my lord my husband] will not let me have the remainder of my jointure . . . though my lord, my father, paid two thousand marks with me with other great charges, . . . which my lord my husband hath forgotten now he hath so much wealth and honors and is so far in doting with that quean [Bess Holland] that he neither regardeth God nor his honor.”⁴⁰ The Duchess was shocked that her careful performance of wifely duty had not roused in her husband some form of loyalty and respect: “I have always lived like a good woman!” she lamented, “And here is poor reward I have in my latter days for my well doing!” (43). The letter compellingly testifies to a competition between mother and daughter created by Norfolk’s abandonment. Evidently, the payment of her daughter’s jointure canceled out the Duchess’s ability to lay claim to her own, so that neither mother nor daughter had the assurance of money legally due them. The Duchess’s complaint reads much like that of Cary’s Doris, who rejects Herod’s grounds for divorce on the basis of her virtue and fertility. Neither the Duchess’s goodness nor her obedience to Norfolk won her favor from her husband and male relatives, so that Vives’s promises were unfulfilled. Like Cary’s Doris, the Duchess expresses both bewilderment and outrage at a system that had betrayed her.

Also suffering financial and emotional abandonment, Margaret Cuninghame recorded her marital experiences from 1598–1608 in “A Part of the Life of Lady Margaret Cuninghame, Daughter of the Earl of Glencairn, that she had with her first Husband, the Master of Evandale, *The just and true Account thereof, as it was at first written with her own hand.*”⁴¹ The author demonstrates the insecurity and contingency of a woman’s position in marriage, so that a husband’s treatment of his wife becomes a product of arbitrary and overwhelming pressures that cannot be predicted or adequately explained. Margaret Cuninghame’s account of her marriage to Sir James Hamilton, the Master of Evandale, focuses on her husband’s unwillingness to support her financially despite the birth of children, and attempts by her father to persuade him of his marital responsibilities. While the couple were married in 1598, it was not until 1601 that they lived together as husband and wife. She writes that, when she finally joined her husband, she “was boarded in a hostler house, while the next May following, and then I rode again to my Lord my father, being

great with bairn: and I bore with his Lordship my eldest son James, on 4th of July, and I remained with his Lordship till the next February. Then I rode home to Evandale again, and was boarded in a hostler house six weeks, and then they would furnish me no longer, because they got evil payment. So then I was destitute, and I requested my goodfather and goodmother to deal with my husband to give me some reasonable money to live upon. . . ."⁴² She traveled back and forth between her parents' home and various hostler houses where her husband boarded her without paying for her board. She was evicted from these hostler houses, gave birth to five children, and finally separated from her husband in 1608.

Cuninghame seems to imply that Hamilton treated her with particular and willful contempt, for there was a brief period of time in 1604 when for a quarter of a year "he took [her] home to Evandale, where [she] remained with him, very lovingly used by him." But this idyll was interrupted by her husband's return to his former bad temper. He abandoned Cuninghame once more, "put[ting] both [my gentlewoman] and me forth of his house naked, and would not suffer us to put on our clothes, but said he would strike both our backs in two with a sword."⁴³ His brief affection was portrayed as a stark and lonely alternative to his abuse; he could not be constrained either by law or by family and friends to maintain a stable home for his family. Cuninghame's chronicle of her husband's chaotic and brutal behavior resembles Mariam's complaints against Herod, who threatens her with violence. The humiliation Cuninghame experienced, when evicted from hostler houses, when her husband sent her out of doors without her clothes, and when he ignored the birth of their children, forms a narrative that emphasizes the ultimate instability of women's lives in an institution that is supposed to guarantee stability.⁴⁴ Cuninghame was forced to depend on the benevolence of her parents, who came to her rescue on a number of occasions, but her marriage to him continued until the final break in 1608. Her apparent obedience and malleability did nothing to endear her to him, proving how false are the guarantees of love and honor promised to women by moralists such as Vives.

Finally, in another case that exceeds the limits of a complaint or a diary, Elizabeth Bourne filed a document on December 6, 1582, to be read by Sir Julius Caesar, who was an Admiralty judge, a Master of Requests

and, later, Master of the Rolls in the Court of Chancery.⁴⁵ In her complaint, Bourne asks for permission from the Privy Council to divorce her husband, Anthony, for his refusal to live with her, his continual adultery, his financial negligence, and his threats against her life. "Mr. Bourne," she alleges, was "in breach of his holy vowes of chast matrimonie; and hath lived, and still continueth in open sinne and shame with harlots, to the ruinne and spoile of himselfe, mee, and my children."⁴⁶ Bourne's complaint asks formally for the right to divorce her husband, a man whose philandering brought her humiliation, poverty, threats from hired assassins, and the threat of the pox. Like Salome, Bourne claims a right to divorce her husband, despite the law's clear bias against her.

The significance of Bourne's request cannot be overestimated. Sixteenth-century English common law did not allow wives to divorce their husbands; in fact, under common law married women had few legal rights. Bourne's self-assurance in her document, however, speaks to both her desperation and her sense of entitlement, so that it cannot be said with any comfort that married women's official legal powerlessness automatically bred in them a sense of victimization or inaction. In fact, as several historians have shown, wives sued their husbands for separation from bed and board relatively frequently in Ecclesiastical courts and also for financial independence in equity courts. Moreover, suing for slander or defamation often gave women a route to public speech.⁴⁷ Thus, there existed a gap between theory and practice of law in early modern England that both limited and licensed women's voices.⁴⁸ Bourne's chief complaint against her husband—that he engaged continually in adultery with harlots, evaded his economic responsibilities, and repeatedly threatened her life—demonstrates her sense of the justice of her complaint and of her right to seek an utter divorce from him. The legal restrictions she faced are evident in her request, but they did not stop her from attempting to free herself from a man who tormented her life for sixteen years.

The law in early modern England was complex, governed by several court systems, including Ecclesiastical, Equity, Custom, and Common law, all of which might have some jurisdiction on the subject of marriage and divorce.⁴⁹ According to Laura Gowing, "England emerged from the Reformation with a uniquely unreformed canon law on marriage: while

Protestant states in Europe were moving towards separations which allowed at least the innocent party to remarry, England's church courts remained empowered to do no more than grant judicial separations, 'from bed and board.' Such separations allowed couples to live apart, but precluded remarriage by either party, guilty or innocent."⁵⁰ Maria Cioni, Amy Erickson, Tim Stretton, and Gowing have shown that when it came to real applications of the law, women of all classes made use of various court systems, bringing cases of libel, slander, and defamation, litigating for the right to separate property, and suing their husbands for legal separation and divorce, citing violent cruelty and adultery.⁵¹ Ecclesiastical courts could be used to enforce moral behavior, in particular sexual propriety, and allowed women to sue in their own name.⁵² Equity courts (such as the court of Requests and Chancery) were a venue for seeking relief outside common and ecclesiastical law. Stretton explains that the Masters (such as Sir Julius Caesar) viewed equity as a remedy to the inflexibility of rules of law, focusing on the individual needs of parties.⁵³ As a result, while married women did not officially have legal rights, there were courts sympathetic to their property disputes, the settlement of estates, and legal protection after legal separations won in the Church courts. Consequently, women could carve out a space to make their claims in systems of law, custom, and ideology that traditionally denied them such agency. In fact, equity courts worked precisely to allow women agency that they did not have under law, so that "equity" becomes literally that which is not found in law.⁵⁴ Legal remedies were available to women despite the apparently inflexible nature of English common law, and they took full advantage of a number of legal avenues for pursuing what they evidently saw as their right to equity and independence before the law.

Divorce, however, was a very difficult matter. The legal standards for a divorce suit brought by either husbands or wives were extremely high, involving proofs of impotence, precontract, consanguinity, affinity, or tender age for a divorce *a vinculo matrimonii*. And for a divorce *a mensa et thoro*, only proof of adultery, extreme cruelty, desertion, or bitter enmity could form a successful basis.⁵⁵ As both Stretton and Gowing agree, wives' claims of husbands' adultery were never enough for either a legal sentence or for granting separation. A wife had to couple her complaints of adultery with

something else, usually violent cruelty and financial abandonment.⁵⁶ Thus, Bourne accuses her husband of squandering her lands and money in order to maintain his mistress, and her accusation of adultery carries with it the accusations that he intended to infect her with syphilis and to murder her. When she refused to hand over her portion to finance his mistress, she writes, “he offered me the terror of his dagger, . . . with solemme othes vowed, hee would tearre the skinne off[f] my backe; if he might not, he would blow up mee and my house with gunpowder, but he would be revenged and rid of mee.” In Bourne’s case, according to Hill, “There was no ‘divorce’ as such—even a legal separation—but there was an interesting application of the P[ri]v[ate] C[ouncil]’s quasi-judicial authority which left her protected from her husband. . . .”⁵⁷ Bourne’s case is notable for her direct application to the Privy Council. As Greenberg shows, appeals to Parliament were effective because they were statutory, and “courts were bound to uphold them, even if they directly conflicted with common-law precedent.”⁵⁸

What we have, therefore, is a profoundly contradictory and unreliable set of laws and practices. It is my contention that married women’s precarious and unpredictable legal standing in relation to their husbands produced in them their own set of anxieties about their status under the law. Cary’s *The Tragedy of Mariam* reflects such anxieties, performing cultural and historical work that illuminates the experiences of women caught between contradictory socio-juridical liberties and constraints. Cary’s play dramatizes the anxieties to which women of the period might be subject, given their rank as daughters, wives, and widows, rankings that depended on women’s relationships to men. Cary’s portrayal of Doris’s nearly passive, though certainly vindictive, suffering, of Mariam’s verbally aggressive defiance of Herod’s authority, and of Salomé’s active and unpunished pursuit of her desire, emphasizes the dynamic and plural nature of women’s responses to domestic and legal tyranny, responses that—like those of the angry, letter-writing Duchess of Norfolk, the record-keeping Margaret Cuninghame, and the divorce-seeking Elizabeth Bourne—were produced by the legal and social pressures that women were forced to negotiate.⁵⁹

Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* dramatizes the reciprocal nature of masculine and feminine anxieties when Herod's outrage at Mariam's rebellion against him in Act Four forces her to depend on him for her life.⁶⁰ When she coldly greets Herod, resists a happy reunion with him upon his return to Palestine, and refuses to accept his claim to grief over her brother's death, Mariam refuses to guarantee unconditionally her husband's desire. Herod's ambition leads him to execute those who threaten his legitimate right to the throne and to divorce women he no longer finds useful. In response to her resistance, he threatens Mariam obliquely: "By Heav'n, you vex me, build not on my love" (4.3.147).⁶¹ But Mariam denies him the greeting that he desires and that she owes him as wife and subject when she retorts, "I will not build on so unstable ground" (148).⁶² Neither his growing displeasure nor his threats of punishment succeed in changing her position, so that her disobedience makes her a rebellious wife and subject. As Vives enjoins, there are two virtues of a wife, "chastite and great love towarde her husbande."⁶³ Men's requirement that women hold these complementary virtues leads Vives to argue that "all loves and charites" are broken by the loss of chastity, so that transgression of one virtue throws the others into doubt.⁶⁴ And once chastity is questioned, a woman becomes a traitor: "What greater offense canne [women] do: ... that destroye theyr country and perisse all lawes and justice, and mourther their fathers and mothers, and fynally defile and marre all thynges both spirituall and temporall?"⁶⁵ According to Vives, Mariam's rebellion calls into question all her virtues and subjects her to the scrutiny of both the state and her husband.⁶⁶

Thus, Mariam's rejection of Herod as a husband becomes in his mind a revolt threatening the purity of his line, his life, and his throne. Like the Duchess, whose letters to the king enraged her male relatives and made them fear for their own security at court, Mariam threatens Herod's stability as a king.⁶⁷ That Mariam's speech should stimulate such anxieties points to the phantasmatic nature of female identity. Herod's reaction against her conflates verbal disobedience with sexual betrayal: "Bright workmanship of nature sulli'd o'er, / With pitchèd darkness now thine end shall be: / Thou shalt not live, fair fiend, to cozen more, / With [heav'nly] semblance, as thou cozen'dst me!" (4.4.211–14). While her refusal to obey him, and therefore to confirm his power, contributes to his violence against

her, it is his assumption of her adultery—an act of petty treason—that seals Mariam's fate.⁶⁸ Devoid of logic, Herod's reaction implies what the conduct manuals overtly argue: female rebellion, most often in the form of public acts such as speech, serves as evidence of loose sexual morals. Because the transmission of his crown depends on Mariam's fidelity, on the inviolability of her body as a vessel of procreation, the least act of rebellion provokes his leap in logic. Speech, which for women is always characterized as a public act, equals infidelity; infidelity equals treason. For Herod, as for tract writers, chastity is the definitive signifier of his wife's loyalty, goodness, and right to life. When Herod believes himself to be a cuckold, Mariam's right to life ends. Cary's play, however, rejects this cautionary tale by deconstructing the connection between punitive consequences and actual guilt. Mariam's innocence problematizes any direct equation between chastity and honor. As with the Duchess of Norfolk, the rewards of chastity Mariam supposes are hers fail to materialize.

Herod's paranoia leads to Mariam's death by decapitation, a sentence that grossly exceeds the threat posed by Mariam's verbal aggression. The anxieties to which he is subject as an early modern monarch (in Cary's construction though not, of course, in fact), invested in the purity of the female body as a sign of his power, animate his judgment against her life. Thus, Cary's play stages the material basis for Mariam's own anxieties about Herod's return to Palestine, her rebellion against him, and her concerns for her life and the lives of her children. As she says, she can build neither trust nor love on the unstable ground of Herod's love for her, or on the unstable ground of his authority (4.3.148). In contrast to Herod's fantastic basis for her punishment, Mariam's worries extend out of the very real threat her husband poses to her and those she loves. Herod's murder of her grandfather and brother, as well as his repeated order for Mariam's execution, are graphic examples of his power, and when Mariam herself refuses to obey Herod's wishes, her fears become reality.

Cultural expectations for female behavior serve to consolidate and simultaneously to remove anxieties about the fragility of male power; such expectations also stimulate Mariam's anxieties. While she refuses to submit to Herod or to confess any wrong to him, Mariam worries about her own behavior as a wife. Being a good woman is an ideal with which

Mariam grapples privately, struggling with her culpability as a wife whose disobedience to her husband earns his violent wrath and contradicts the norms of her culture: "Had I but with humility been grac'd, / As well as fair I might have prov'd me wise" she acknowledges, "But I did think because I knew me chaste, / One virtue for a woman might suffice" (4.8.559–62). Mariam's need to "live up to patriarchal ideas of femininity" illustrates her valuation of patrilineal conceptions of appropriate femininity.⁶⁹ Mariam's investment in these ideals constrains her acts. Like women who did not seek relief at court, as described by Barbara J. Harris, Mariam dies affirming cultural ideals of virtue and morality.⁷⁰ Her speech resembles, in this regard, the penitent confessions of early modern anti-heroines who pay tribute to and affirm "appropriate" femininity.⁷¹ Like the Duchess, who is dismayed by her husband's failure to acknowledge her obedience and honesty as his wife, Mariam insists on her virtue and, by doing so, rejects Herod's view of her as "sullied" and as a rebel.

At the same time, Mariam realizes that the rewards promised her as a chaste woman are not just uncertain, but a fiction; innocence is not enough, for any woman can be accused and found guilty.⁷² Zimmerman points to the "slippery matter of perception" in her analysis of Cary's motto "be and seem" and argues that the problem of "suspicion" or "show" becomes "not only *as* important *as*, but actually *more* important *than*, innocence itself; making 'seeming' more important than 'being.'" ⁷³ As a result, Mariam envisions a life after death where her "soul is free from adversary's power. / You princes great in power, and high in birth, / Be great and high, I envy not your hap. / Your birth must be from dust, your power on earth; / In Heav'n shall Mariam sit in Sarah's lap" (4.8.570–74). Because earthly rewards are elusive, Mariam looks to heaven for the freedom she seeks. And she creates of it a matriarchal haven. The sanctuary and female community she finds in Sarah's lap allow her to view Herod dispassionately, even sympathetically: in her last words (as reported by Nuntio), she predicts Herod will regret her execution (5.1.77–8); she has none of Constabarus's vitriol as he curses Salome, but imagines Herod to be capable of grief. Her emancipation from Herod's rule, however, is only bought by her death, which takes away from the victorious note of her speech. Thus, masculine anxieties are disclosed as threats to women's lives. Mariam's fluctuating and contra-

dictory responses to the reports of her husband's death and resurrection signify conflicted and confused feelings about the freedom his death brings and the submission his return requires of her. Her anxieties exist, in this regard, in an uneasy—both complementary and contradictory—dialectical reciprocity with those of her husband.

When Doris confronts Mariam with the injustice of her divorce from Herod, the material basis for feminine anxieties comes into sharper relief. Doris's complaint reveals the capriciousness of male authority under Mosaic law that does not require a man to provide compelling evidence for a divorce:

I am that Doris that was once belov'd,
 Belov'd by Herod, Herod's lawful wife:

 What did he hate me for: for simple truth?
 For bringing beauteous babes, for love to him?
 For riches, noble birth, or tender youth?
 Or for no stain did Doris' honour dim?
 Oh, tell me, Mariam, tell me if you know,
 Which fault of these made Herod Doris' foe?
 (4.8.583–4, 591–6)

Like Bourne, the Duchess of Norfolk, and Cuninghame, Doris wonders at her own unjustified desertion by her husband. Though Mosaic law gives husbands the right to divorce their wives and makes Mariam Herod's legal wife, Doris challenges the basis of that law when she testifies to her spotless virtue as Herod's first wife and, therefore, to his exploitation of the law. While the law itself appears impervious to such virtues, Doris's performance of gender, as Clarke also notes, resonates with early modern tracts and custom as faultless, so that the law becomes unjust.⁷⁴ Doris knows what Mariam has only just discovered: a woman's spotless virtue is no guarantee of her husband's love and loyalty.

Doris's complaint accentuates the wrongs committed against women in inequitable systems of power, so that their anxieties about abandonment and violence are staged as having real and present bases. Her divorce from

Herod robs her and their son Antipater of the prestige and honor they once owned as much as they owned their names, so that her anxieties are attached as much to the need for prestige and honor as men's are:

So long it is since Mariam's purer cheek
 Did rob from mine the glory, and so long
 Since I return'd my native town to seek:
 And with me nothing but the sense of wrong,
 And thee dear boy, whose birth, though great it were,
 Yet have thy after fortunes prov'd but poor:
 When thou wert born, how little did I fear
 Thou should'st be thrust from forth thy father's door!
 Art thou not Herod's right begotten son?
 Was not the hapless Doris Herod's wife?
 Yes: ere he had the Hebrew Kingdom won,
 I was companion to his private life.
 Was I not fair enough to be a queen?

 Yet thou ungrateful cast me off with scorn,
 When Heaven's purpose rais'd your meaner fate.

(2.3.223–35, 245–6)

Abandoned by Herod, Doris and Antipater suffer a dispossession that throws their identities into crisis. Herod's unpredictable behavior, his self-interested use of power and law, lie at the root of Doris's complaint. In contrast to Herod's anxieties about Mariam's infidelity, Doris's anger is animated by actual events, by material effects—loss of status and inheritance rights—rooted in Herod's desertion of her. She wishes for "revenge," and she hopes that her dispossessed son "before [Herod's] bastards might be placed" (2.3.251, 256). Though Herod and Mariam have been married for some time, Doris seems to wander in a kind of fog. Like the Duchess of Norfolk, she is still stunned by the injustice of her husband's behavior, still suffering its effects, hardly recognizing herself as the woman who was once respected, admired, and honored. While she rejects Antipater's wish that "Mariam's children might subverted be, / By poison's drink, or else by mur-

derous knife / So we may be advanc'd, it skills not how" (2.3.274–6), she curses Mariam and her children (4.8.609–24), and wishes them harm. As both Laurie Shannon and Naomi Miller have observed, Mosaic law forces women to compete against one another for their positions in society.⁷⁵ But Doris's loss of identity, place, and position makes her neither maid, wife, nor widow, and confirms the materiality of her anxiety in contrast to Herod's spectral fears.

Doris, like Mariam, remains invested in ideals of female honor and reputation. Thus, her interrogation of Herod's tyranny is limited to railing at and blaming Mariam for Herod's abandonment. She displaces her anger at Herod onto Mariam as a way of avoiding direct confrontation with laws and ideologies that have destroyed her status in society. So while Doris understands the law's contradictions and the injustices the law creates for women, she does not actively work to subvert it. Like the women who did not take advantage of equity court systems to sue their husbands, Mariam's and Doris's responses to Herod's abuse reflect the cultural pressures on early modern women not to threaten systems of law. Their reactions—fundamentally different in tone and effect, yet sharing an inability to improve their lives—demonstrate the diversity of women's experiences in marriage and their common vulnerability to laws that benefit only men.

In Cary's play, not only deserted and oppressed women show how the patrilineal order tyrannizes women and animates feminine anxiety. Salome offers a third response, expressing her own set of culturally derived fears and constraints, as well as the rebellion she plans against the law.⁷⁶ While most scholars assume Cary's identification with Mariam, I want to suggest that once Mariam and Doris become two parts of a trio completed by Salome, she speaks in ways that are consistent with the play's views on marriage. That Salome is accused of transgressing her gender by male characters need not lead to the conclusion that she is vilified by Cary. Indeed, Ronnie Mirkin points out that "Elizabeth Cary manifested unfeminine traits . . . [and] was seen by her society as transgressing the prescribed boundaries of her gender, constituting her as a masculine woman."⁷⁷ If Mirkin is correct, and Cary herself behaved in ways that contradicted early modern notions of femininity, then perhaps Salome can be read as a complex complement and alternative to the other women in the play.⁷⁸ The artificiality of gender

roles seems to be understood by Cary, so that her representation of Salome avoids moral condemnations in favor of creating a character who, as a function of plot, provides the play with its crux, with its problem, by both criticizing marital inequities and exploiting them.

This function must be seen within Cary's frame for marriage and divorce, which I argue is monarchical tyranny. Salome's first solution to her marital unhappiness with Constabarus is to seek legal redress. Murder is an extreme solution she resorts to only when the law fails her, so we must acknowledge the context of Salome's actions within the political and legal designs of the play. Admittedly, Constabarus endorses the view of the early modern anti-feminist tracts on women's nature (4.6.310–35), and the Chorus appears to endorse traditional notions of femininity. The play's stance on Salome is, therefore, ambivalent. However, the figure of Salome unveils the arbitrary nature of appropriate and inappropriate configurations of femininity which also haunts Mariam and Doris. As Karen Raber also points out, Salome identifies these notions as ideological constructs.⁷⁹ Moreover, her keen understanding of the kinds of oppression women face, as portrayed by Mariam's and Doris's experience with Herod, problematizes her position as a vice figure and as Mariam's foil. Finally, despite conduct associating her with the women killed by friends and relatives in Vives's tales, Salome survives unpunished, thus calling into question her position as vice figure as well. Her aggression, in contrast to the behavior of Mariam and Doris, forces questions about the tyranny of Mosaic law and absolute monarchy.

Salome's pivotal role in the play is emphasized by her questions about the justice of Mosaic law, especially in terms of women's inequality in relation to men. While her analysis is motivated by her desire to divorce Constabarus and to marry Silleus, she describes accurately Doris's position as Herod's cast-off wife. Salome's claim that "Who hates his wife, though for no just abuse, / May with a bill divorce her from his bed" (1.4.335–6) is substantiated by Doris's complaint to Mariam, quoted earlier. Doris's experience confirms that the justice of a husband's rationale for divorcing his wife is as capricious as Salome attests. And, as I have shown earlier, Mariam, too, agrees with this understanding of Mosaic law. Salome's veracity on this point lends her credibility when she speaks against the tyranny of women's lack of

legal standing in marriage. The capriciousness of the law licenses husbands to desert their wives despite those wives' fulfillment of their duties—despite their riches, beauty, obedience, subservience, and giving birth to sons. Salome admits that her hate for Constabarus is based on her desire for Silleus and convincingly argues that her reasons for seeking a divorce are no more ill-founded than those of many husbands who divorce their wives:

If [Constabarus] to me did bear as earnest hate,
 As I to him, for him there were an ease;
 A separating bill might free his fate
 From such a yoke that did so much displease.
 Why should such privilege to man be given?
 Or given to them, why barr'd from women then?
 Are men than we in greater grace with Heaven?
 Or cannot women hate as well as men?
 I'll be the custom-breaker: and begin
 To show my sex the way to freedom's door,
 And with an off'ring will I purge my sin;
 The law was made for none but who are poor. . . .

(1.4.301–12)

Salome argues that the laws on divorce enforce women's subjection, allowing husbands a God-given, absolute right over wives. She questions that right and exposes it as an ideological apparatus, cogently deconstructing men's naturalized and legalized right to divorce.⁸⁰ Because, in this play, women's sexuality is regulated and commodified in part through the constant threat of divorce (and death), Salome's call for women's equality through appropriation of Mosaic law threatens the stability of patrilineal authority. She strikes at the heart of women's inequality, precisely tracing the route to married women's freedom through breaking and appropriating Mosaic law. Thus, Salome speaks directly against the injustices Mariam and Doris have suffered and acts, as they do not, to redress inequities that cause their suffering, both by arguing in favor of women's access to divorce and by claiming the right to divorce for herself. Salome's role as the third point of the triangle I am proposing is crucial, therefore, to reading the

play's multiple interests in women's responses to law and marriage.

Salome's appropriation of the law resembles the appropriation of common law in the courts of Requests and Chancery. Since Masters like Sir Julius Caesar depended on common law for their rulings, but also flouted the laws on coverture to find in favor of married women's suits to safeguard and retain property, we can see that "equity" is practiced in some real sense outside the law.⁸¹ If, as Stretton defines it, equity is "a body of principles developed in contrast to common law and statute law . . . to compensate for deficiencies caused by the strictness of common law[,] then the term begins to refer to a radical correction of existing law, so that married women, once Requests or Chancery had ruled in their favor, were granted rights they officially did not have."⁸² Salome does not have the right to divorce her husband under Mosaic law. However, like the women seeking relief in the equity courts and like Elizabeth Bourne in her letter to Caesar, she argues in favor of allowing women to divorce husbands in certain circumstances. Thus "equity" in Cary's play resembles equity in early modern England, as a process of relief for those who cannot find remedy within the law.

What makes Salome evil in the eyes of the Chorus and earns her Constabarus's vitriolic condemnation is her appropriation of men's legal privileges, which he sees as a breach of a natural gender divide. "Are Hebrew women now transformed to men?" he asks: "Why do you not as well our battles fight, / And wear our armor?" (1.6.421–3). He draws on 1400 years of Jewish divorce law to define Salome's wickedness (ll. 445–50). However, Salome's disruption of the law points to its inequity on several levels, so that Constabarus's point of view can hardly be seen as one endorsed by the play. Indeed, her motives for divorce contrast with those of Herod, who, despite his protestations of love for Mariam, married her to legitimize his right to the throne. Salome, on the other hand, declares to Silleus, "'Tis not for glory I thy love accept, / Judea yields me honours worthy store: / Had not affection in my bosom crept, / My native country should my life deplore" (1.4.357–60). In a position of privilege that allows her to choose a husband based on her "affection" for him, Salome's motives for divorce are a complex combination of love and hate. She identifies the basis of divorce as hate not because she is "as bad as" or worse "than the men,"⁸³ but

because Mosaic law identifies the grounds for divorce as hate. Salome does not originate the tenets of the law but claims for women the rights given to men in an already established structure of relations. Following her brother, she abandons a spouse for selfish reasons and eliminates those who are enemies. When she cannot divorce Constabarus after Herod has returned to Palestine, she reveals his treason to Herod (Constabarus has defied Herod's orders in regard to the Sons of Babas). While Salome's behavior by early modern standards is clearly willful and, therefore, monstrous, she reveals the inconsistencies of Mosaic law and women's relationship to it, so that the law may be seen as an uncomfortable and inadequate solution either for resolving marital unhappiness or for disciplining unruly wives.

Salome is a symptom, therefore, of a larger disease that the play addresses. If this is a play in large measure about the inequity of legal and domestic relations between husbands and wives, it gets its logic from the frame of monarchy, which in the Renaissance was seen as the model for domestic relations (husbands are kings of miniature domestic kingdoms). In *The Tragedy of Mariam*, Herod's rule is based on usurpation, expulsion of a first wife, and violent control of a second wife. In this play, marriage, law, and monarchy are institutions that confer power only on men, and wives are provided for at the whim of the husband, who inherits his authority from the monarchical line (which we know, from *An Homilie Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion* and *Patriarchia, or The Natural Power of Kings*, is not mitigated by usurpation).⁸⁴ Doris's abandonment by Herod is a palpable example. Marriage becomes, both in itself and in Herod's practice, a tyrannical institution. Salome is a woman who is constrained by Mosaic laws on marriage and liberated by Herod's example as both husband and king. In their world, husbands have power to discard wives, and kings have power to execute disobedient subjects. Salome brings both these powers together, first attempting to divorce her husband, and then resorting to his execution as a traitor. Salome's appropriation of divorce law depends on Herod's death. His absence occasions a suspension of law that opens a space for her claim to the right to divorce her husband. The news of his arrival, very much alive, returns Salome to plotting Constabarus's death; she cannot pursue divorce outside the law, once the tyrant or enforcer of the law has returned to power, and the rest of her violence stems from

Herod's return. Crucially, then, it is the inequity, even tyranny, in the law that drives her to violence against her husband, triggering questions about the wisdom and efficacy of a law that is not applied equally to all. She fails to divorce her husband, then, because she is a woman in a legal system that does not allow her that right, and not because murder is her preferred *modus operandi*. While Cary is writing a historical tragedy, it would have been easy enough for her to imagine a Salome who is herself capable of murder. The Renaissance theater is not devoid of murderesses. But Cary depicts a woman whose first thought is a legal divorce—or at least the appropriation of a legal right to divorce—and who turns to murder only when divorce is not an option.

Thus, we may say, following Butler in *Psychic Life of Power*, that Salome acts both in subjection to a patrilineal system and as an agent outside that system. She tries to assume power over her marriage, first by divorcing and then by executing her husband, both imitating and exceeding the intents of the patrilineal system that denies her such rights. The contradictory nature of my claim rests within a reading of acts not as choices of free individuals, but as implicated in organized, complex, and contradictory workings of power that exist prior to and within Salome's, or any subject's, appropriation. As Butler explains,

Power acts on the subject, an acting that is an enacting; an irresolvable ambiguity arises when one attempts to distinguish between the power that (transitively) enacts the subject, and the power enacted by the subject, that is, between the power that forms the subject and the subject's "own" power. . . . Moreover, what is enacted by the subject is enabled but not finally constrained by the prior working of power. Agency exceeds the power by which it is enabled. One might say that the purposes of power are not always the purposes of agency. To the extent that the latter diverge from the former, agency is the assumption of a purpose *unintended* by power, one that could not have been derived logically or historically, that operates in a relation of contingency and reversal to the power that makes it possible, to which it nevertheless belongs. That is, as it were, the ambivalent scene of agency constrained by no teleological necessity.⁸⁵

I read Salome as working within the understanding of power explained by Butler. Salome's attempt to appropriate Mosaic law, as she sees it, is a correction of the inequity built into the law. It is an attempt that demonstrates her use of power as a radical form of agency unintended by the law. At the same time, Salome deploys her power in ways that reproduce the law's inequities and uses her social status as sister of the king to claim divorce (those who are poor must obey the law) and to arrange for Constabarus's execution. Salome is, therefore, neither a free subject we must condemn nor a victim without agency. More than that, she is a character in a play who performs a critical—that is, interrogative—function, one who by what she does and how she does it calls attention to the inequities built into marital relations and the tyrannical basis for those inequities.

Clearly, the role Salome plays as social critic and nonconformist is one that cannot be assigned to a character such as Mariam, whose overall dramatic role is that of innocent victim. And Doris, while poignant in her complaint against Herod, is not quite the right character to take on the arrogation of power the play seems to demand. Salome, however, is the appropriate character to do so because she embodies an imaginary space of outlaw behavior. Salome's desire for Silleus remains a violation of the law, but she rejects the anxieties that accompany definitions of appropriate feminine behavior. Her repudiation of shame complicates the equation between transgressive desire and evil. Before declaring her love for Silleus, Salome considers the different direction her life might have taken in a speech that both echoes and parodies Mariam's anxieties about appropriate feminine behavior:

'Tis long ago

Since shame was written on my tainted brow:
 And certain 'tis, that shame is honour's foe.
 Had I upon my reputation stood,
 Had I affected an unspotted life,
 Josephus' veins had still been stuff'd with blood,
 And I to him had liv'd a sober wife.
 Then had I never cast an eye of love
 On Constabarus' now detested face,

Then had I kept my thoughts without remove:
And blush'd at motion of the least disgrace:
But shame is gone, and honour wip'd away,
And Impudency on my forehead sits:
She bids me work my will without delay,
And for my will I will employ my wits.
(1.4.282–96)

In this speech, Salome comes the closest to expressing the conflict Mariam experiences between the appropriate, submissive behavior society expected of women, and the self-determination for which Mariam longs. But she surpasses Mariam by working toward a semblance of female power on earth rather than after death “in Sara’s lap” (4.8.574). The gap opened by the contradiction in the law on divorce—licensing one sex while forbidding the other—offers Salome the opening she requires to envision her rebellion. Salome’s speech juxtaposes patrilineal injunctions for appropriate female identity with the interrogation of the naturalized order that ostensibly follows. While she seems to endorse the masculinist views of obedience and chastity as honor, she suggests that virtue is an affectation, a pose or performance, a matter of seeming rather than being, and therefore not an actualized or real state. Shame and honor, in Salome’s mind, are at war with independent thought and action—certainly at war with desire, with her will. But rather than worry about whether her feelings are virtuous, Salome casts off the anxiety her culture imposes on her gender and makes her own rules. Impudence, branded on her forehead, rather than fostering repentance, becomes personified as the voice of a liberated desire.

In this light, the anxieties expressed by Mariam about being a proper wife are deconstructed by Salome. Doris’s example demonstrates to Salome that, under Mosaic law, husbands can ignore their wives’ performance of their obligations. Thus, propriety and impropriety are equally slippery and arbitrary states. Salome’s rejection of obedience and submission—juxtaposed with her critique of women’s lack of power in marriage—makes her violence a product of gender inequities in absolutist socioeconomic systems. That women’s economic and physical survival depends on the deliverance Salome proposes is substantiated by the mar-

ital tyranny Doris and Mariam have faced as wives. Thus, Salome's rebellion revises the passive-aggression of Mariam and Doris as she traces the route to equity for women through an already existing legal system and simultaneously behaves as selfishly as Herod. As Goldberg notes, "Salome's existence is entirely defined by the institution of marriage; even the rebelliousness of her promiscuous desire is situated within it."⁸⁶ Valbuena agrees, arguing that "while Salome's 'wit' appeals to a seemingly progressive feminist ideology, she depends entirely upon men to achieve her ends."⁸⁷ Salome's alliance with marriage and dependence on men, according to Goldberg and Valbuena, complicate Salome's feminism. However, I would like to suggest that feminism need not be defined by women's rejection of marriage or their relationships to men, but by their recognition of the systems of power that determine their scope of choice. Salome's feminism comes out of her usurpation of power that is reserved for men alone under Mosaic law, and her critique of that law. Indeed, she sees herself as a custom-breaker, one who will teach her sex freedom, and when she argues with Constabarus about the legality of her act of divorcement, she declares, "Though I be first that to this course do bend, / I shall not be the last, full well I know" (1.6.435–6). Salome not only interrogates the double standard for a potentially corrupt constitution of legitimate grounds for divorce but also envisions her act as one that other women already desire and will claim. She may not, finally, bond with or do the other women any personal favors, but she speaks their anxiety and identifies its cause. She does so not just out of immorality but as a move toward more equitable marriage relations.⁸⁸ If indeed Salome is immoral, then I would argue her immorality is produced by and is a reflection of a tyrannical system of marriage and monarchical relations that the play depicts as immoral. While she depends on men to achieve her ends, we might ask upon whom Salome, as a woman living in a patrilineal socioeconomic state, ought to depend in order to see her goals achieved? Her dependence on her brothers for her freedom is not at all a surprise when we read her acts in light of historical women's dependence on men and family for legal equity in the period, women such as the Duchess of Norfolk, Margaret Cuninghame, and Elizabeth Bourne, who all depended on male relatives and advisors for protection from husbands.

As argued earlier in this essay, masculine and feminine anxieties have a reciprocal relationship, one that suggests an endless process of reiteration. Systems of preferment and power generate competition between men that materially affects the lives of men and women and animates circulations of anxiety for those men and women. But if feminine anxieties have their own legitimacy, complementary but also contradictory to masculine anxieties—since the goals attached to each set of anxieties (freedom vs. control) necessarily conflict—then a space opens for analysis of female characters even when they confound early modern visions of “woman.”⁸⁹ As the testimonies I have discussed above show, historical women suffered in material ways when husbands abandoned their financial and emotional duties. But more than adding to the history of women’s victimization, these documents illustrate women taking action. Thus, while the period seems to be dominated by the sentiments found in Vives’s *Instruction* and the Homilies—that women are inferior to men and therefore must live in subordination to them—women contradicted those notions in their letters, written complaints, and law suits. As the examples of the Duchess of Norfolk, Cuninghame, and Bourne attest, women saw the inequity of the legal and domestic system and responded to it, like Cary’s women, in different ways, sometimes wishing for, sometimes pleading for, sometimes demanding equity.

The Tragedy of Mariam acts in dialogue with historical women’s texts, then, for all three of the female characters I have analyzed find themselves at odds with a law that does not acknowledge them, but which supports Herod’s capricious and absolute rule. While all three characters behave competitively to survive, an examination of their anxieties reveals the complexity of their acts. Salome, initially a persuasive proponent of women’s rights, becomes violent in Herod’s brutal order, a system requiring male competition and denying women rights. Doris’s bitterness and her desire that Mariam experience abandonment and that her children suffer violent harm is a prime example of that system of competition. Doris was abandoned by Herod, not for infractions that made her a bad wife, but because a union with Mariam legitimized his usurpation of the throne. Mariam’s personal integrity in the face of Herod’s tyranny contrasts with her position as the “other” woman and her insensitivity to Doris’s suffering, so that her

role is also contradictory. With traditional notions of female subjectivity unsettled, the multiplicities of feminine anxiety animating the play's action take center stage and win legitimacy against the overblown and orthodox interests of its men. Ultimately, then, Cary becomes the custom-breaker, staging a set of circumstances, unpredictable and even contradictory, that unveil the material basis for feminine anxieties and the necessity for equity between men and women.

Notes

1. Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Mariam, The Faire Queen of Jewry, with The Lady Falkland Her Life*, ed. Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 1.3.309–12. All quotations of the play will be from this edition and cited parenthetically in the text. I wish to thank Karen Raber and my colleagues, Lynne A. Greenberg and Trudy Smoke, for their generous comments on this manuscript. I also wish to send heart-felt gratitude to L. M. Hill for his warm and enthusiastic reply to my email, which came out of the blue, in regard to Elizabeth Bourne's case. To Emad Alfar and Barbara J. Webb (Deputy Chair of the Department of English at Hunter College, CUNY), love and more thanks than I can say for making sure I had time to write and rewrite this essay. Finally, warm regards and thanks to Norman Clarius, Hunter College, CUNY Inter-Library Loan Librarian.

2. I am consciously excluding Graphina from this discussion primarily because there is so little to go on in an analysis of her relationship to the play's position on feminine anxieties. While she does not appear to be ruled by Pheroras as the three other women are ruled by men, her power is no wider than that of Mariam, Doris, or Salome—nor would it have been in the period. That is, Pheroras invites Graphina to speak her thoughts, to make her wishes known. He does not assume he knows what she wishes or that there is a standard set of desires she ought to perform. At the same time, Pheroras's solicitude toward her does not necessarily give her advantages over those of the other women (and I am not here concerned with her class as a servant, though, of course, her class constrains her and makes her one for whom, in Salome's estimation, the laws exist). Alexandra is also marginalized in my argument, yet I would suggest that the rebellion Salome conceives of might make Alexandra less dependent on her daughter's link to Herod. However, Jonathan Goldberg has written a persuasive analysis of Graphina's role in the play, which contradicts my brief claim here in very useful ways; see Jonathan Goldberg, *Desiring Women Writing: English Renaissance Examples* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 164–90. See also Margaret W. Ferguson's persuasive reading of Graphina in *Dido's Daughters: Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 284–9. On Cary's critique of the law, see Laurie J. Shannon, "The Tragedy of Mariam: Cary's Critique of the Terms of

Founding Social Discourses," *ELR* 24, no. 1 (1994): 135–53. As with quotations from the play, full citation of scholarship throughout will be offered in notes initially and then cited parenthetically in the text.

3. See Shannon, who argues that "actual and perceived chastity are two separate life-and-death matters in a climate of intense suspicion" ("Cary's Critique," 138).

4. In this sense, Salome differs from other "evil" women in early modern tragedy who must die in order to pay for their rebellion against orthodox morality. For discussions of cultural and literary representations of women's criminality, deaths, and/or their confessions, see Frances E. Dolan, "Gentlemen, I have one more thing to say': Women on Scaffolds in England, 1563–1680," *Modern Philology* 92, no. 2 (1994): 157–78; Sara Eaton, "Defacing the Feminine in Renaissance Tragedy," in *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. Valerie Wayne (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 181–98; Anne M. Haselkorn, "Sin and the Politics of Penitence: Three Jacobean Adulteresses," in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990), 119–36; Stuart A. Kane, "Wives with Knives: Early Modern Murder Ballads and the Transgressive Commodity," *Criticism* 38, no. 2 (1996): 219–37; and Leonard Tennenhouse, "Violence Done to Women on the Renaissance Stage," in *The Violence of Representation: Literature and the History of Violence*, ed. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (New York: Routledge, 1989), 77–97. Danielle Clarke also argues that divorce is a crucial element in Cary's play; see "'This Domestic Kingdome or Monarchy': Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* and the Resistance to Patriarchal Government," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 10 (1998): 182.

5. See also Ferguson, who notes crucially that Salome cannot plot Constabarus's death without Herod (*Dido's Daughters*, 311).

6. Clarke assumes that the play judges Salome along with Constabarus; see "*The Tragedy of Mariam* and the Politics of Marriage," in *Early Modern English Drama: A Critical Companion*, ed. Garret A. Sullivan, Jr., Patrick Cheney, and Andrew Hatfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 254.

7. Feminist scholars have examined Cary's play from a multitude of perspectives, including lively debates on the merits and demerits of the biographical reading, and on the play's radical or conservative statement concerning marriage and/or monarchy. Feminist scholars have also analyzed its treatment of women's representation and privileging of female voices and its racial politics. Gwynne Kennedy's *Just Anger* comes the closest to studying women's responses to cultural pressures and constraints in the manner I urge here; see *Just Anger: Representing Women's Anger in Early Modern England* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000). See in particular Dympna Callaghan, "Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*, *Faire Queen of Jewry*," in *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (New York: Routledge, 1994), 163–77; and Danielle Clarke ("Politics of Marriage" 248–59), who caution against the biographical reading. Barbara K. Lewalski's chapter on Cary in *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard

University Press, 1993) is perhaps the most useful of those analyses which view the play through the lens of Cary's life. Meredith Skura defends the biographical reading to privilege the role of mothers in Cary's life and play in "The Reproduction of Mothering in *Mariam, Queen of Jewry: A Defense of 'Biographical' Criticism*," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 16, no. 1 (1997): 27–56. See also Katherine Acheson, "'Outrage your face': Anti-theatricality and Gender in Early Modern Closet Drama by Women," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 6, no. 3 (2001): 7.1–16, <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/06-3/aecheoutr.htm>; Elaine Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 157–76; Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985; New York: Routledge, 1993), 171–5; Alexandra G. Bennett, "Female Performativity in *The Tragedy of Mariam*," *SEL* 40 no. 2 (2000): 293–309; Margaret W. Ferguson, "Running on with Almost Public Voice: The Case of 'E. C.'," in *Traditions and the Talents of Women*, ed. Florence Howe (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 37–67, and "The Spectre of Resistance: *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613)," in *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, ed. David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (New York: Routledge, 1991), 235–50; Sandra K. Fischer, "Elizabeth Cary and Tyranny, Domestic and Religious," in *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985), 225–37; Nancy Gutierrez, "Valuing *Mariam*," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 10, no. 2 (1991): 233–51; Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, "The Canonization of Elizabeth Cary," in *Voicing Women: Gender and Sexuality in Early Modern Writing*, ed. Kate Chedgzoy, Melanie Hansen, and Suzanne Trill (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1996), 55–68; Valerie Lucas, "Alone of all her Sex: Elizabeth Cary, the Viscountess Falkland," in *The Renaissance Theatre: Texts, Performance, Design*, vol. 1, ed. Christopher Cairns (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1999), 68–75; Naomi K. Miller, "Domestic Politics in Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*," *SEL* 37, no. 2 (1997): 353–69; Nancy Cotton Pearse, "Elizabeth Cary, Renaissance Playwright," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 18, no. 4 (1977): 601–8; Diane Purkiss, "Blood, Sacrifice, Marriage: Why Iphigeneia and Mariam Have to Die," *Women's Writing* 6, no. 1 (1999): 27–45; Karen Raber, "Gender and the Political Subject in *The Tragedy of Mariam*," *SEL* 35, no. 2 (1995): 321–44; Laurie J. Shannon, "Cary's Critique," 135–53; Marta Straznicky, "'Profane Social Paradoxes': *The Tragedie of Mariam* and Sidnean Closet Drama," *ELR* 24, no. 1 (1994): 104–34; Betty S. Travitsky, "The Femme Covert in Elizabeth Cary's *Mariam*," in *Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Carole Levin and Jeanne Watson (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 184–96; Olga Valbuena, *Subject to the King's Divorcement: Equivocation, Infidelity, and Resistance in Early Modern England* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2003); and Kim Walker, *Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (New York: Twayne, 1996). Jeanne Addison Roberts rejects the specter of the six marriages of Henry VIII and his struggles with divorce law in favor of more contemporary marriage scandals as a way of explaining the 1613 publication date of the play; see "Marriage and Divorce in 1613: Elizabeth Cary, Frances Howard, and Others," in *Textual Formations*

and *Reformations*, ed. Laurie E. Maguire and Thomas L. Berger (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998), 161–78.

8. Lyn Bennett sees a “two-pronged challenge to the anti-feminist view of women” in Cary’s play, whereas I submit there are three prongs to the play’s challenge; see “Written on my tainted brow’: Woman and the Exegetical Tradition in *The Tragedy of Mariam*,” *Christianity and Literature* 51, no. 1 (autumn 2001): 5–28. For essays interested in Cary’s interrogation of tyranny and her privileging of the female voice, see Elaine Beilin, “Elizabeth Cary and *The Tragedy of Mariam*,” *Papers on Language & Literature* 16, no. 1 (1980): 45–64; Sandra K. Fischer in *Silent But for the Word*, ed. Hannay (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985), 225–37; Lewalski, *Writing Women*, 179–211; Pearse, “Elizabeth Cary, Renaissance Playwright,” 601–8; Raber, “Gender and the Political Subject,” 321–44; and Betty S. Travitsky, “The *Femme Covert*,” 184–96.

9. Ferguson also examines “[t]he play’s representation of angry wives—Mariam, Salome, and Doris” and observes that “By giving both Mariam and Salome a strong case for divorce, while also questioning, through Salome and Doris, the husband’s right unilaterally to divorce the wife, Cary’s play participates in a cultural debate on marriage and divorce that had profound implications for ideas about rulers and their subjects” (*Dido’s Daughters*, 309). While Ferguson and I am clearly interested in many of the same issues in the play, her interest in equivocation as a Catholic practice that Cary deploys throughout her play focuses her argument differently from my own. And while she complicates the moral categories usually attached to the female characters, Salome never loses her role as villain. I suggest that the very fact of Cary’s interrogation of the monarch-subject dynamic in light of marital relations renders these moral categories entirely insecure; see my argument in regard to Salome’s simultaneous subjection to and imitation of Mosaic law and Herod’s power in the last section of this essay.

10. Shannon, “Cary’s Critique,” 142.

11. Zimmerman, 577. Zimmerman’s comparative analysis of Cary’s play and Milton’s *Divorce Tracts* in light of the inscription in a ring Cary gave her daughter, which read “Be and Seem,” does much to revise popular visions of Salome. She argues that Salome’s claim, that under Mosaic law a man may divorce his wife “for no just abuse,” “performs a critique of the ‘abuses’ of not only Mosaic law, the male prerogative established by Deuteronomy 24:1, or the uncertain grounds of hatred upon which divorce may actually proceed. The interpolation might be said to perform a critique of the ‘abuses’ of even translation itself, of making the text *be* other than it *seems*, of ‘confounding the meaning’” (578); see “Disaffection, Dissimulation, and the Uncertain Ground of Silent Dismission: Juxtaposing John Milton and Elizabeth Cary,” *ELH* 66, no. 3 (1999): 553–89.

12. Danielle Clarke argues in her overview of the play that Cary gives us “a range of female characters that manage to step outside the parameters of womanhood dictated by early modern culture” (“Politics of Marriage,” 249). Karen Raber (“Gender and the Political Subject”) and Gwynne Kennedy (*Just Anger*) do much to complicate Salome’s role. While Raber sees Salome as a foil to Mariam, she argues that “Salome discredits any comfortable reliance on ‘natural’ sexual difference to warrant gender inequity” (335–6).

Kennedy complicates both Mariam's and Doris's responses to their marriages. And while Salome is "immoral" in her reading (67), she treats Salome as a crucial part of the play's vision of wives, with Mariam as the play's ideal (71–4). Shannon's analysis of the play is concerned with Mosaic law and its "built-in gender differential" ("Cary's Critique" 143), so that she makes Constabarus the play's "moral pole" (149) and Salome "a part of the disease from which the kingdom suffers." For Shannon that disease is inconstancy (150–1). While I would agree with Shannon (and Raber who makes a similar point) that Salome certainly exploits systems of power to get what she wants, our arguments diverge significantly in our visions of Salome's function in the play. Irene Burgess also emphasizes Salome's complicity in masculinist interests, but like Shannon's argument, Burgess's does not finally offer any alternative to the vision of Salome which has established her already as an evil woman ("'The wreck of order' in Early Modern Women's Drama," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 6, no. 3 [2001]: 6.1–24, <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/06-3/burgwrec.htm>, 11–16). Both Lyn Bennett ("Written on my tainted brow") and Clarke ("This Domestic Kingdome or Monarchy") defend Salome, but also reinscribe binaries: Mary/Eve and good rebellion/bad rebellion. Ferguson suggests that the difference between the female characters "emerges, specifically, as different modes of speech" and sees the differences between Mariam and Salome, in particular as "shot through with complexities" ("The Spectre of Resistance," 237). See also Jeffrey Allen Lodge, "The Abuse of Power: Gender Roles in Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*," *Pleiades* 12, no. 2 (1992): 63–75; Gutierrez, "Valuing *Mariam*," 233–51; Tina Krontiris, *Oppositional Voices: Women as Writers and Translators of Literature in the English Renaissance* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 85; Lewalski, *Writing Women*, 196; Fischer, "Elizabeth Cary and Tyranny," 232–3; and Straznicki, "Profane Social Paradoxes," 127. For more ambiguous visions of Salome, see Callaghan, "Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*," 174; Pearse, "Elizabeth Cary, Renaissance Playwright," 604; Betty Travitsky, "Husband Murder," 187; Heather E. Ostman, "Backbiters, Flatterers, and Monarchs: Domestic Politics in *The Tragedy of Mariam*," in *Images of Matter: Essays on British Literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Proceedings of the Eighth Citadel Conference on Literature, Charleston, South Carolina, 2002*, ed. Yvonne Bruce (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002), 183–205; and Alexandra Bennett, "Written on my tainted brow," 300, 303–4.

13. Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 3. See also Coppélia Kahn's seminal *Man's Estate: Masculinity in Shakespeare* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981); and Valerie Traub, *Desire and Anxiety: Circulations of Sexuality in Shakespearean Drama* (New York: Routledge, 1992). Mark I. Millington and Alison S. Sinclair, "The Honourable Cuckold: Models of Masculine Defense," *Comparative Literature Studies* 29, no. 1 (1992): 1–19, observe that anxiety stimulates a need to control and "the strong expression of control testifies to a level of fear about what might happen were that control not to be exercised" (2). See also Lisa Celovsky, "Early Modern Masculinities and *The Faerie Queene*," *ELR* 35 (2005): 210–47; Kathleen Kaplan, "As if the end they purpos'd were their own': Early Modern Representations of Speech Between Women," *Women's*

Studies 35 (2006): 757–77; and Cynthia Lewis, “Horns, the Dream-work, and Female Potency in *As You Like It*,” *South Atlantic Review* 66, no. 4 (fall 2004): 45–69. On women’s anger, see Kennedy’s study of early modern women’s defenses of women which “try to define the categories of appropriate and inappropriate female speech so that their angry criticisms of misogynistic attitudes are understood as legitimate, forceful objections, rather than as scolding, shrewishness, or evidence of women’s weaker natures” (*Just Anger*, 31). Kennedy’s analysis focuses on anger, an emotion viewed in the period as legitimate for men but illegitimate for women, and begins the kind of cultural analysis of women’s experiences I urge here. But by anxiety, I do not refer explicitly to anger.

14. Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity*, 3.

15. *Ibid.*, 6.

16. *Ibid.*, 4.

17. See my discussion of woman as specter in the Derridean sense (from his *Specters of Marx*) in *Fantasies of Female “Evil”: The Dynamics of Power in Shakespearean Tragedy* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), 32–6.

18. Such power is handed down in a patrilineal succession even when the King is a Queen. As we know, Elizabeth called herself a Prince and endeavored to rule in ways consistent with that line. See my *Fantasies of Female “Evil,”* 47–63.

19. Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 13.

20. Robert Filmer, *Patriarchia, or the Natural Power of Kings* (London, 1616), Gallica: Bibliothèque nationale de France, <http://gallica2.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k833663.r=Filmer.langEN>.

21. Anonymous, “An Homilie Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion” (London 1570), Early English Books Online, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, STC 13679.2, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99839928.

22. On women as subjects of the state and marriage, and on beheading as a female sacrifice, see Purkiss “Blood, Sacrifice, Marriage,” 30–1, 38–9.

23. See also Ferguson, *Dido’s Daughters*, 314.

24. Rebecca Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants: Political Thought and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 5. See also Kegl’s reading of Herod, “Theaters, Households and a ‘Kind of History’ in Elizabeth Cary’s *The Tragedy of Mariam*,” in *Enacting Gender on the English Renaissance Stage*, ed. Viviana Comensoli and Anne Russell (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 135–53.

25. Ostman argues similarly that “most integral to Herod’s authority as a monarch is Mariam’s outward, albeit inauthentic, compliance with the standards for female chastity, which includes the restraint of her tongue. Hence, as she resists Herod’s demands for her obedience, his identity begins to destabilize, and by revealing the intricate system of deceit that Herod’s kingdom is built upon, Cary demonstrates its instability” (“Backbiters, Flatterers, and Monarchs,” 184).

26. For readings of such texts, see in particular, Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy*;

Viviana Comensoli, *"Household Business": Domestic Plays of Early Modern England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter: Male Friendships and Fictions of Women in Sixteenth-Century England* (New York, Routledge, 1994); Theodora Jankowski, *Women in Power in the Early Modern Drama* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Kennedy, *Just Anger*, 23–50; Marie H. Loughlin, *Hymeneutics: Interpreting Virginity on the Early Modern Stage* (London: Associated University Press, 1997); and Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). Linda Woodbridge traces the formal controversy in *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540–1620* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986). For feminist analyses of treatises on female nature, see Pamela Joseph Benson, *The Invention of the Renaissance Woman: The Challenge of Female Independence in the Literature of Italy and England* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992); Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus, eds., *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England 1540–1640* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985); Ann Rosalind Jones, "Counterattacks on the 'Bayter of Women': Three Pamphleteers of the Early Seventeenth Century," in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990), 45–62, and "Nets and Bridles: Early Modern Conduct Books and Seventeenth-Century Women's Lyrics," in *The Ideology of Conduct: Essays on Literature and the History of Sexuality*, ed. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (New York: Methuen, 1987), 39–72; Joan Larsen Klein, ed., *Daughters, Wives, and Widows: Writings by Men about Women and Marriage in England, 1500–1640* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); and Valerie Wayne, "'Some Sad Sentences': Vives' Instruction of a Christian Woman," in *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1985), 15–29.

27. Tim Stretton, *Women Waging Law in Elizabethan England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 70–100, 129–54.

28. Juan Luis Vives, *The Instruction of a Christen Woman*, ed. Virginia Walcott Beauchamp et. al. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 51.

29. *Ibid.*, 30, 29.

30. *Ibid.*, 32–3.

31. *Ibid.*, 33.

32. Anon., *An Homilie Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion*.

33. William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, ed. Stephen Orgel, *The Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1.2.197.

34. Vives, *The Instruction of a Christen Woman*, 91.

35. T. E., "The Lawes and Resolutions of Womens Rights: Or, the Lawes Provision for Woemen. A Collection of Such Statutes and Customes, As Doe Properly Concerne Women (1632)" in *Legal Treatises*, selected and introduced by Lynne A. Greenberg, *The Early Modern English Woman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works*, part 1, Essential Works

for the Study of Early Modern Women, ed. Betty S. Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott, 3 vols. (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005), 1: 6.

36. *Ibid.*, 3: 130.

37. *Ibid.*, 3: 128.

38. Laura Gowing notes that women's charges against husbands for physical cruelty in court were almost always successfully defended by husbands as necessary corrections to wives' unruly behavior. The power of women, then, is limited by both ideology and law, while the power of men is reiterated in both ideology and law. See *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996, 1998), 206–29. See also Sara Butler, "Runaway Wives: Husband Desertion in Medieval England," *Journal of Social History* 40, no. 2 (winter 2006): 337–59.

39. Betty S. Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott, eds., *Female and Male Voices in Early Modern England: An Anthology of Renaissance Writing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 39–40.

40. Elizabeth Stafford Howard, Duchess of Norfolk, "Elizabeth Duchess of Norfolk To Secretary Cromwell (June 26, 1537)," in *Female and Male Voices*, ed. Travitsky and Prescott, 41–3. Quotations from Norfolk's letters will be from this edition and cited parenthetically in the text.

41. Margaret Cuninghame, "A Part of the Life of Lady Margaret Cuninghame, Daughter of the Earl of Glencairn, that she had with her first Husband, the Master of Evandale, *The just and true Account thereof, as it was at first written with her own hand*," in *English Women's Voices, 1540–1700*, ed. Charlotte F. Otten (Miami: Florida International University Press, 1992), 25–8.

42. Cuninghame, "A Part of the Life," 25–6.

43. *Ibid.*, 27.

44. Significantly, Christine Peters argues that "[m]arriage as an institution seems to have been weakest in Scotland," where trial marriage, allowing a man to take a woman to live with him for a year and a day and then either to marry her or to terminate the relationship, was common practice (9). While Peters also claims that clan ties in Scotland might have strengthened the marriage bond, men's right to "try out" wives for the space of a year before committing to them might explain Evandale's lack of obligation; see *Women in Early Modern Britain, 1450–1640* (New York: Palgrave, 2004).

45. Tim Stretton calls Sir Julius Caesar, "[Request's] most influential master" (*Women Waging Law*, 8). For Caesar's extraordinary rise to Master of the Rolls (Court of Chancery), see Lamar M. Hill, *Bench and Bureaucracy: The Public Career of Sir Julius Caesar, 1580–1636* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). On the Privy Council's interests in maintaining order through attention to familial disputes (including an analysis of the Bourne case), see Hill's "The Privy Council and Private Morality in the Reign of Elizabeth I," in *State, Sovereigns and Society in Early Modern England*, ed. Charles Carlton et. al. (Gloucestershire, England: Sutton, 1998), 205–18. While both courts of Requests and Chancery were arms of the Privy Council, the Privy Council also heard pleas independently from the courts. Hill's historical study, *Mistress Bourne's Complaint*:

The Failure of a Sixteenth-Century Marriage, is in progress. Hill believes that connections to Sir Francis Walsingham on the parts of both Sir Julius Caesar and Elizabeth Bourne brought these two into contact (e-mail message to author, July 31, 2004).

46. British Library. Add. MS. 38170, fols. 14–28. In regard to Elizabeth Bourne's appeal to the Privy Council rather than to a court of law, L. M. Hill argues that "In Elizabeth's case, a recourse to a competent court would have been only marginally useful to her. A court could have granted her a divorce *a mensa et thoro* (a legal separation) but, under the circumstances, it probably could not have protected her interests in her husband's estate" ("The Privy Council," 207). Emily Sherwood and I are currently co-editing and transcribing the text of the complaint and letters relevant to the case. Quotations from Bourne's text will be from our manuscript.

47. See Lynne A. Greenberg, "A Peal of Words: Criminal Speech in *Samson Agonistes*," in *Reassembling Truth: Twenty-first-Century Milton*, ed. Charles W. Durham and Kristin A. Pruitt (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2003), 189–200. See also Ostman, who places the play within the context of women's slander suits ("Backbiters, Flatterers, and Monarchs," 188–90). Ina Habermann also discusses the play's treatment of slander and the "slandered heroine," in *Staging Slander and Gender in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2003), 135–51.

48. See Maria Cioni, *Women and Law in Elizabethan England with Particular Reference to the Court of Chancery* (New York and London: Garland, 1985); Amy Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Gowing, *Domestic Dangers*; and Stretton, *Women Waging Law*. On marriage, separation, and divorce in England, see Lawrence Stone, *The Road to Divorce*. And on the English church courts' treatment of marriage, see Martin Ingram, *Church Courts*. Lynne A. Greenberg's Introduction to her *Legal Treatises: The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works*, offers a clear and cogent description of the law and of women's legal status in the early modern period.

49. Stretton, *Women Waging Law*, 25–33.

50. Gowing, *Domestic Dangers*, 180–1.

51. Erickson argues that the focus on common law "ignores the other four bodies of law which regulated property ownership in the early modern period . . . the system called 'equity' originated in order to modify what was perceived as the harshness of the common law, and throughout history a considerable business of the equity courts consisted of cases involving the property of married women, which the common law did not recognize. Ecclesiastical law regulated the division of personal property, and in so doing it followed Roman civil law, which was considerably more egalitarian than the common law insofar as it advocated a form of community property within marriage. . . . Manorial or borough law varied locally. . . . Finally, parliamentary statutes, made by common lawyers sitting in parliament, also played a crucial role in regulating property transmission, principally by intervening in Ecclesiastical law" (*Women and Property*, 5).

52. See Gowing, *Domestic Dangers*, 11.

53. Stretton, *Women Waging Law*, 90–1.

54. See Cioni, *Women and Law*, 13; and Barbara Kreps who argues that "The rigorous laws which consigned women's property and goods to their husbands so disabled women economically that they perforce fostered obedience; but they also paradoxically fostered the necessity of finding a new kind of law in equity that would to some extent defy husbands who tried to coerce their wives out of what was still legally theirs." See "The Paradox of Women: The Legal Position of Early Modern Wives and Thomas Dekker's *The Honest Whore*," *ELH* 69, no. 1 (spring 2002): 93.

55. Greenberg, Introduction, 23–4. See also B. J. Sokol and Mary Sokol, *Shakespeare, Law, and Marriage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 144.

56. Stretton, *Women Waging Law*, 194–201; and Gowing, *Domestic Dangers*, 180–231.

57. E-mail message to author, July 26, 2004. Hill argues that the Privy Council was particularly sympathetic to women's claims, acting much like the courts of Requests and Chancery (which were initially judicial arms of the Privy Council), often granting women money and lands as protection from irresponsible husbands ("The Privy Council," 210–11).

58. Greenberg, Introduction, 5.

59. See Weller and Ferguson's introduction to *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1–59); and Kennedy, who argues that "Cary's wives displace much of their anger onto other women and express their feelings of self-worth in moral, racialized, and class-inflected language that serves the interests of those benefiting from the prevailing social order" (*Just Anger*, 52).

60. See Ferguson's detailed analysis of Mariam's conflict with her husband and her conflicting feelings when he is reported dead (*Dido's Daughters*, 291–9).

61. See Maureen Quilligan, "Staging Gender: William Shakespeare and Elizabeth Cary," in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Image*, ed. James Grantham Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 225; and Ferguson, "Running on with Almost Public Voice," 52.

62. See also Zimmerman, "Disaffection, Dissimulation," 567.

63. Vives, *The Instruction of a Christen Woman*, 89.

64. *Ibid.*, 90.

65. *Ibid.*, 91.

66. For an analysis of Mariam's insubordination, see Krontiris, *Oppositional Voices*, 78–91.

67. See the letter written by Norfolk's brother, Henry Stafford, "Henry Stafford to Secretary Cromwell (May 13, 1533)," in *Female and Male Voices in Early Modern England: An Anthology of Renaissance Writing*, ed. Betty S. Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 43–4.

68. See Travitsky, "Husband-Murder and Petty Treason in English Renaissance Tragedy," *Renaissance Drama* 21 (1990): 173; and Frances Dolan, "The Subordinate(s) Plot: Petty Treason and the Forms of Domestic Rebellion," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (1992): 317–40.

69. Raber, "Gender and the Political Subject," 330.

70. Harris points out that such suits took special courage on the part of married women who could be ostracized as a result of their suits. See *English Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 52.

71. Such anti-heroines include, but are not limited to, Evadne in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy* (1610), Beatrice-Joanna in Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* (1622), Bianca in Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (1621), and Annabella in Ford's *'Tis Pity She's A Whore* (1633). On penitent confessions, see Haselkorn, "Sin and the Politics of Penitence," 119–36.

72. On the play's subversion of "conventional formulations of wifely duty and male idealizations," see Lewalski, *Writing Women*, 199.

73. Zimmerman, "Disaffection, Dissimulation," 557.

74. Clarke, "'This Domestic Kingdome,'" 185.

75. Shannon, "Cary's Critique," 150–3; Miller, "Domestic Politics," 356, 360. Kennedy also notes that "there is no female solidarity in this play" (*Just Anger*, 62).

76. See Ferguson's reading of Salome, "Running on with Almost Public Voice," 49.

77. Ronnie Mirkin, "The Portrait of Elizabeth Cary in the Ashmolean Museum: 'Cross Dressing' in the English Renaissance," in *The Renaissance Theatre Texts, Performance, Design*, vol. 1, ed. Christopher Cairns (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1999), 77–105.

78. See also Skura, whose biographical reading finds Cary's own tendency to sleep through stress mirrored in Cary's portrayal of Herod, so that "[w]hen biography affects fiction, it does not reproduce itself exactly; the stories people tell are related to the stories of their lives, but not necessarily in predictable ways" ("The Reproduction of Mothering," 28). Through this kind of biographical reading, many characters may be read as expressing or embodying Cary's views.

79. Raber, "Gender and the Political Subject," 336.

80. *Ibid.*, 336. Shannon concedes admiration for Salome's "flawless logic" ("Cary's Critique" 150); and Lewalski admits that Cary gives Salome's views a "full and forceful airing" ("Writing Women," 197).

81. See Cioni, who notes that "Equity operated in a positive manner to give relief where the common law procedure was too rigid and, in so doing, developed principles as rules in areas where the common law was deficient or obscure. Chancery did not foster a rival system of law; on the contrary, it sought to supplement and complement the common law and even to follow it as far as was possible. . . . However, this was not the case with married women's property rights. This was one area in which Chancery directly opposed the common law by recognizing that married women could have an estate separate from that of their husbands" (*Women and Law*, 8).

82. Stretton, *Women Waging Law*, 243.

83. Shannon, "Cary's Critique," 151.

84. The "Homilie" makes it clear that "As in readying of the holye scriptures, we

shall finde in very many and almost infinite places, as well of the olde Testament, as of the newe, that kings and princes, as well the evill as the good, do raigin by gods ordinaunce, and that subjectes are bounden to obey them" (L.iii). In *Patriarchia*, Filmer writes, "In all Kingdoms or Commonwealths in the World, whether the Prince be the Supreme Father of the People or but the true Heir of such a Father, or whether he come to the Crown by Usurpation . . . Yet still the Authority that is in any one, or in many, or in all these, is the only Right and natural Authority of a Supreme Father. There is and always shall be continued to the end of the World a Natural Right of a Supreme Father over every Multitude, although by the secret Will of God many at first do most unjustly obtain the Exercise of it" (22–23).

85. Butler, *Psychic Life of Power*, 15.

86. Goldberg, *Desiring Women Writing*, 179.

87. Valbuena, *King's Divorcement*, 144.

88. See Keith Thomas, "The Double Standard," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20, no. 2 (1950): 195–216. Thomas argues that marriages reinforced the idea that a woman's chastity was not her own: "The double standard . . . was but an aspect of a whole code of social conduct for women which was in turn based entirely upon their place in society in relation to men" (213).

89. Kim Walker argues that the play's disjunctions constitute its interrogation of gender ideology; see *Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (New York: Twayne, 1996), 139.

A Women's Republic of Letters: Anna Maria van Schurman, Marie de Gournay, and Female Self-Representation in Relation to the Public Sphere

ANNE R. LARSEN

In the study of early modern women writers' participation in transnational networks of epistolary exchange, a remarkable example is the one centered on the polyglot Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678). One of the most famous erudite women in Europe and the most celebrated in the Protestant world, Schurman corresponded with many women, with whom she established a commonality of purpose and a sense of community. She addressed letters both to the well-known—such as the Huguenot Princess Anne de Rohan (1584–1646), Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia (1618–1689), and the latter's sister Sophie von der Pfalz (1630–1714), later Electress of Hanover—and to the relatively obscure—such as a Madame de Coutel, who shared her interest in portraiture, and Anne de Merveil, Dowager of Prostring.¹ The concept of a *respublica literaria mulierum* (a women's Republic of Letters) emerges strongly from Schurman's letters and poems addressed to her peers in other lands.²

In France, during the first part of the seventeenth century, three notable contemporaries of Schurman, Marie le Jars de Gournay (1565–1645), Anne de Rohan, and Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701), either entertained an epistolary exchange with her or knew her work firsthand. In the second half of the century, Schurman continued to be admired for her erudition, knowledge of languages, defense of women's higher education, and modesty: Madame de Motteville (1615–1689), in a letter written in 1660 to Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans (1627–1693), Duchesse

de Montpensier, praised Schurman along with Elisabeth of Bohemia, Catherine de Sainte-Maure, Comtesse de Brassac, and Madeleine de Scudéry; their “knowledge,” she states, “did not take away their modesty and the gentleness that befits our sex.”³ The bio-bibliographers Jacqueline Guillaume and Marguerite Buffet included Schurman in their catalogues of contemporary intellectual women.⁴

Of particular interest to this study are Schurman’s views of the women intellectuals with whom she corresponded, as well as their understanding of and influences on her.⁵ These views are linked to the concepts of imitation and mimesis which are central in Renaissance exemplarity, whether male or female. Exemplarity assumed two slightly differing forms, one based on the lives of illustrious figures taken from the Christian past and Roman moral philosophers, and the other on conduct books containing examples to follow or avoid in the conduct of daily life. The first form, leading to the genre of the “femmes illustres,” is found in Boccaccio’s *De mulieribus claris* (*On Famous Women*), which played a crucial role in the *querelle des femmes*. Boccaccio’s use of the exemplary biography facilitated revisionist arguments on the nature of women. The second form of exemplarity, as illustrated in Juan-Luis Vives’s *De institutione feminae Christianae* (*The Education of a Christian Woman*), proposed models of good women applicable to everyday life. Both forms reinforced the conventional female virtues of silence, chastity, and obedience, which were viewed as complementary to male virtues. As Ian Maclean points out, moralists of the period argued that “male and female capacity for virtue *in genere* is different, and that they [men and women] should practice different virtues, which are complementary in character (silence, eloquence; obedience, command).”⁶

These forms of exemplarity, however, are problematic for a woman writer. The illustrious female exemplars from antiquity are too remote, and the conventional virtues, silence especially, cannot inspire nor adequately guide. In seeking models for her life as a humanist scholar, Anna Maria van Schurman turned, instead, to the women with whom she corresponded. In this she followed a trend among women writers of the early modern period, who started to claim each other as models in the fashioning of their lives as writers. This was a relatively new phenomenon that began in the sixteenth century with the growing number of women writing, circulating

their manuscripts, and publishing.⁷ Rather than limiting themselves to models in the compendia of illustrious women and conduct books, they referred to each other as would-be models and guides.⁸

An examination of Anna Maria van Schurman's writings about and correspondence with Marie de Gournay is particularly interesting in that both women at first glance are more different than alike. Gournay was forty years older than Schurman, of a different nationality, and Catholic. Gournay was at the end of her career, while Schurman was beginning her ascendancy in the Republic of Letters as a gifted linguist and prodigy of learning. As will be seen, their views of each other are both positive and negative, admiring and critical. What did they share in common? In what ways did they admire each other, how were they critical, and how were they models for each other as thinkers and writers?

This study examines the circumstances surrounding the epistolary relationship between Schurman and Gournay, the literary affiliation that Gournay proposed, and their views of and influences on each other in their parallel quests for ways to depict a woman writer's self in relation to the literary public sphere.

Anna Maria van Schurman's Writings about and Correspondence with Marie de Gournay

The humanist writer Marie le Jars de Gournay was well-known to scholars in the Low Countries and the Dutch Republic. Justus Lipsius wrote that she should consider him as her brother;⁹ the son of the Leiden historiographer Daniel Heinsius declared that she had entered into a combat with men and vanquished them;¹⁰ the polymath Hugo Grotius translated some of her verses; and Dominicus Baudius referred to her as the "French Siren" and the "Tenth Muse."¹¹ She was especially appreciated as the editor of Montaigne's essays, which were eagerly read in Leiden's and Amsterdam's intellectual circles.¹²

Gournay gained Schurman's respect and admiration by virtue of her life-long battle to legitimize women writers and women's education. Gournay also represented for Schurman an unusual contemporary

example of a professional writer who had refused marriage to live an independent life of letters in Paris.¹³ Schurman, too, had refused to marry and instead devoted herself to a life of faith, piety, and learning.

Gournay appears in three different ways in Schurman's printed *œuvre*: in a brief Latin epideictic poem, in two Latin letters on women's education addressed to the French Calvinist theologian André Rivet (1572–1651), and in her French correspondence with Gournay. In each case, Gournay is cast not as Montaigne's editor, but as an illustrious defender of the cause of women's learning. Schurman had read Gournay's treatise *L'Égalité des hommes et des femmes* (*The Equality of Men and Women*, 1622) and the shorter *Le Grief des dames* (*The Ladies' Complaint*, 1626) which had appeared in Gournay's collected works, *L'Ombre de la damoiselle de Gournay* (*The Shadow of Mademoiselle de Gournay*, 1626) and was re-edited twice in *Les Advis, ou, Les Presens de la Demoiselle de Gournay* (*The Opinions, or the Gifts of Mademoiselle de Gournay*, 1634, 1641). The second (1634) edition of Gournay's collected works was published in the precise time period that Schurman was reflecting on the controversial issue of female education. André Rivet, who had become Schurman's mentor, may have provided her with an introduction to Gournay.¹⁴

The three ways in which Gournay is either mentioned or directly addressed reveal Schurman's views of her. First, in her Latin poem, Schurman likens Gournay to an Amazon warrior fighting for the cause of women:

Anna Maria van Schurman congratulates
 The great and noble-minded heroine of Gournay,
 Strong defender of the cause of our sex.
 You bear the arms of Pallas, bold heroine in battles,
 And so that you may carry the laurels, you bear the arms of Pallas.
 Thus it is fitting for you to make a defense for the innocent sex
 And turn the weapons of harmful men against them.
 Lead on, glory of Gournay, we shall follow your standard,
 For in you our cause advances, which is mightier than strength.¹⁵

Gournay is characterized as a *virago* filled with the spirit of war and as a great and noble-minded heroine.¹⁶ To illustrate Gournay's fighting "virile"

mind, Schurman declares twice in chiasmic form her heroine's allegiance to Pallas Athena: "You bear the arms of Pallas, bold heroine in battle; / And so that you may carry the laurels, you bear the arms of Pallas." Schurman notes that Gournay has earned her place in history: the latter does battle with the written word and carries the "laurels," a reference to both military victory and poetic immortality. In her writings Gournay, as advocate of her sex, has turned rhetorical weapons, once exclusively male possessions, against "harmful men." The poem ends in a resounding call to follow Gournay beneath her banner, for in her "our cause advances."

The cause to which Schurman refers is the advancement of women's education that she herself had strongly advocated in Latin, French, and Dutch poems penned to commemorate the inauguration of the University of Utrecht in 1634, the year of the publication of the second edition of Gournay's collected works.¹⁷ In these poems, Schurman has Pallas Athena as titular goddess of higher learning demanding the admission of young female students into the halls of the University of Utrecht. Gournay's proto-feminist treatises likely influenced Schurman to voice such a radical call, for Gournay as well upheld the ideal of an intellectually integrated community of letters transcending gender lines in which women were accepted on the basis of intellectual merit.

Second, Gournay's advocacy for women's learning is referred to in two Latin letters on the topic of women's education that Schurman addressed to her mentor, André Rivet. Schurman wrote these letters at the same time that she penned her laudatory verses to Gournay between November 1637 and March 1638. Like Gournay, she criticizes those who state that "pulling the needle and distaff is an ample enough school for women,"¹⁸ thereby echoing her French peer's indictment in her *Equality of Men and Women* of those who limit women's sphere to the "distaff, yea, to the distaff alone."¹⁹ And like Gournay, Schurman argues that such a "received custom" is an artificial construct because countless ancient authorities "demonstrate the contrary, as she who is the noblest glory of the Gournay family shows with both wit and learning in the little book that she entitled *The Equality of Men and Women*."²⁰

Schurman, in her reply to Rivet's critique of her arguments,²¹ reiterates her appreciation for Gournay's *Equality of Men and Women* even though, she

states, she cannot approve of all its aspects: "Just as, on the basis of its elegance and wit, I can by no means disapprove of the little dissertation of the most noble Gournay *On the Equality of Men and Women*, at the same time I would certainly not dare nor would I want to approve of it in all things."²² What in particular would she not have approved and what would she have endorsed? Just prior to citing Gournay's work, Schurman defends herself against Rivet's accusation that she is claiming the superiority of women. She rejects this criticism on grounds of "maidenly modesty" and "innate shyness" and notes that it "troubled" her to read "that otherwise outstanding treatise by Lucrezia Marinella, to which she gave the title *The Nobility and Excellence of Women, along with the Defects and Deficiencies of Men*."²³ By juxtaposing Gournay with Marinella, Schurman indicates that she disagrees with the more radical aspects of their defenses of women. As for her approval of Gournay, in her previous letter to Rivet, she had called attention to Gournay's listing of the "testimony of the wise authorities" in *The Equality of Men and Women*; these authorities include Plato, Socrates, Seneca, the Church Fathers, Montaigne, and the Scriptures. In stating anew her appreciation for Gournay, she underscores the legitimacy of Gournay's defense of women's learning by specifically approving her citation of classical and biblical sources. On account of her humanist training, Gournay advocated that knowledge of the ancients was the best way for a woman writer to show her intellectual acumen and that only through erudition could she participate in an aristocracy of the mind reserved for what she called "great women and great men."²⁴ By engaging in erudition, women could rival men in the Republic of Letters.

Last, Gournay and Schurman corresponded with each other. Gournay, however, not only praised Schurman; she also took the liberty of critiquing her. In an unpublished manuscript letter dated October 20, 1639, Gournay begins by thanking Schurman for her epideictic poem. She then comes to the main point of her missive:

Dare I in passing tell you philosophically a word from my limited perspective: languages take an inordinate and too long a time for a mind as capable of matters, and of the best, as yours; nor is it useful for you to say, as you do, that you want to read the Originals in every case because their translated versions are not worthy of them.²⁵

In this highly revelatory exchange, Gournay presses Schurman on two issues: the most beneficial way for her to spend her time, and whether a translation is in fact inferior, as Schurman supposes, to the source text. Additionally, Gournay may be implying that the amount of time that Schurman spends on translation works to the detriment of her own writing in becoming a published author. She advises her younger counterpart to focus only on Latin and Greek texts, to which she can add with little effort works in Italian, Spanish, and especially the French language that Montaigne's essays "have made necessary for the whole world."²⁶ Gournay draws attention here to the increasing popularity of French as the lingua franca of politics and among the European elite. She pointedly omits Hebrew, which she thought should be reserved only for specialists whose profession necessitated its acquisition.²⁷ In critiquing Schurman, she is likely censuring the Dutch scholar's pious orthodoxy which, as a skeptical disciple of Montaigne, she may have found excessive. Gournay ends her letter by stating that, should she live several more years, she would send the Dutch scholar a new printing of her collected works, the *Advis*, "where your name will be included."²⁸

Schurman opens her reply to Gournay, written three months later in early 1640, with a reference to her epideictic poem in which she has "testified" to "the advantages that your [Gournay's] heroic virtues have procured for your sex."²⁹ She reveals how moved she is at Gournay's promise to mention her in her 1641 edition of the *Advis* and writes that Gournay has given her "the hope that my name will one day be consecrated to immortality by the favor of your Muse"; she adds, "I imagine by a sweet dream that the marks of your affection, which will here be read no doubt, will not be less glorious [for me] than the honor of a praise that I might have merited."³⁰ Admittedly, Schurman's allusion to Gournay bestowing literary glory on her is part of the rhetorical *captatio benevolentiae* (the seizing of goodwill).³¹ However, it is clear from this letter that Schurman, whose reputation in the Republic of Letters was growing, was not averse to having her name linked to Gournay's. Finally, touching on Gournay's criticism of her study of oriental and Semitic languages, she argues that she does so only in her leisure time and then only rarely: "With regard to your opinion that I occupy myself too much with the study of languages, I can assure

you that I contribute only my leisure hours to them and sometimes after rather long gaps of time, if you permit me to make an exception of the sacred language.”³² She insists on making an exception for Hebrew: she argues that no translation is capable of expressing “so well the simplicity and dignity of these Holy Mysteries” and that the use of Hebrew “(according to the feeling of the most learned) will endure into the next life.”³³

A Mother-Daughter Alliance

Marie de Gournay was to write at least one more known letter to Schurman, which has since been lost. This we learn from a passage in a manuscript Latin letter from Schurman to Rivet written eight months after Schurman’s last reply to Gournay. Schurman describes receiving a request from Gournay that they form a mother-daughter alliance, and she eagerly asks Rivet for his “paternal” guidance—or permission—in her response to Gournay:

Your most Noble Gournay recently addressed me in writing, making it possible for me to firm up a closer bond (that of mother and daughter of course) between us. I beg you urgently, in accordance with prudence and your paternal oversight, to advise me as rapidly as possible what follow-up I should give to this request.³⁴

An intellectual alliance in the early modern period was founded on a literary partnership which was viewed in terms of a family tie. Male writers often entered into such relations either with each other—as in the case of Montaigne and Etienne de La Boétie (1530–1563)—or with members of their own family and clan. The poet Clément Marot (1496–1544) had a *mère d’alliance*,³⁵ while Jacques de Romieu (1555–1632) collaborated in a literary partnership with his sister Marie de Romieu (ca. 1556–1598). Male intellectuals also chose literary sisters and daughters unrelated to them: Marot designated Anne d’Alençon, one of his dedicatees, as his *sœur d’alliance*, while Maurice Scève called Pernette du Guillet his *sœur par alliance*,³⁶ and Madeleine de L’Aubespine declared to Ronsard, “I call myself your daughter.”³⁷ Probably the most famous *alliance* was the one between Gournay and Montaigne, which began when Gournay was young and

which she likely sought to develop as a parallel to the relation between Montaigne and La Boétie. In the much older Montaigne she sought literary advice and correction, and a means to launch her writing and publishing career. She was also “adopted” into a *famille d’alliance* consisting of Montaigne as her “father,” Montaigne’s wife as her “mother,” Montaigne’s only surviving daughter Leonor as her “sister,” and Montaigne’s brothers who, she writes, “do me the honor of declaring themselves also members of my family.”³⁸

Gournay’s desire to form a mother-daughter alliance with Schurman, on the other hand, is highly unusual. A few literary mothers in early modern France mentored and collaborated with their own daughters: Antoinette de Loynes (1505–1568), the wife of the courtier and humanist pedagogue Jean de Morel, mentored, along with several humanist tutors, her three precocious daughters, Camille, Lucrece, and Diane de Morel;³⁹ Madeleine des Roches’s collaboration with her daughter Catherine des Roches, which was integral to their self-representation, is another well-known case.⁴⁰ The Dames des Roches, *mère et fille* (mother and daughter), as they were commonly called, needed each other to legitimize their writing, publishing, and coterie. Another mother-daughter literary alliance was that of the Dames du Verger, both governesses in Paris at the end of the sixteenth century. Their educational treatise, *Le Verger fertile des vertus* (*The fertile Orchard of virtues*), is said to have been written by the mother and corrected and amplified by her daughter.⁴¹

It is clear that Marie de Gournay and Anna Maria van Schurman did not need each other in the same way as the Dames des Roches or the Dames du Verger. Gournay was nearing the end of her scholarly career, and Schurman in 1640 was well on the path to fame. However, Schurman was interested in enlarging her circle of women correspondents and eager to show Gournay how much the latter had inspired her during the critical phase of her writing a reasoned defense of women’s education. Gournay’s emphasis on women’s capacity to reason and her use of evidence from authorities of antiquity and the Christian past appealed to her sense of argumentation and encyclopedic mastery of ancient texts. Why did Gournay, on the other hand, offer an intellectual alliance to her Dutch counterpart?

Gournay's chief desire throughout her life, to gain respect and recognition in the Republic of Letters as a serious writer and intellectual, was reflected in her fight to engage literary men to take literary women seriously. She may have seen in Schurman an extraordinarily learned woman who, belonging to the category of the *grands esprits* (great minds), stood a better chance than she of drawing male respect and confounding the mockery attendant on a learned woman.⁴² As a "mothering figure," she hoped for a younger "literary daughter" as an ally against the incomprehension of the age. As such, she may have cast Schurman as a nonconformist who dared, like her, to tread a path that few other women took, but who, unlike her, was able to outmaneuver the obstacles. She describes such a woman in her *Promenade of Monsieur de Montaigne*:

Everyone will say afterward that such a woman does ill, because she does not behave like others, neither in choosing her activities nor in regulating her actions. Let them talk; the worst I see in this is that we have to live in an age when a person who wishes to follow the right road must quit the well-worn one. Great intellects always stray from the beaten path, the more so because they have persuaded themselves that what is straying, according to custom, is submission to reason. . . . Superiority itself exists only in difference.⁴³

Gournay also likely saw in Schurman an ally in defending the ancients, classical education, and humanistic literature against new poet grammarians such as François de Malherbe (1555–1628), whom she accused of changing the definition of literature and language to suit fashionable taste. Cathleen Bauschatz notes that Gournay faulted elite, salon women for the decline in classical education and the degeneration of the French language and states that they "helped to nail the lid on the coffin of humanism."⁴⁴

Gournay may have also wished to integrate Schurman into her own *réseaux de sociabilité* (networks of relationships), which included a number of distinguished women of the period, such as the Protestant intellectual Marie de Bruneau, Dame Des Loges, whose salon Gournay had frequented in the 1620s, Catherine de Sainte-Maure, Comtesse de Brassac, an habituée of Madame de Rambouillet's salon, Madeleine de Seneterre, author of the novel *Orasie* (1646–1648), Jeanne de Schomberg (1600–1674),

Duchesse de Liancourt, Antoinette de Pons, Marquise de Guercheville, a lady-in-waiting to Marie de Médicis (1573–1642), Marguerite de Valois (1553–1615), and Anne of Austria. All these women figure in her references, dedications, prefaces, and letters, and function as protective *marraines* (godmothers) of her works.⁴⁵ Now in her declining years, Gournay herself could have wished to be a *marraine* to Schurman's writing career, thereby making herself useful in, and possibly shaping, the trajectory of a rising female star on the European literary stage.

Anna Maria van Schurman, Marie de Gournay, and the Representation of the Female Self in Relation to the Public Sphere

Gournay's manuscript letter to Schurman in October 1639, discussed previously, indicates not only praise of Schurman but also criticism of her and a touchiness vis-à-vis the latter's academic training in multiple ancient and oriental languages. This criticism springs from a possible competitiveness in Gournay stemming from their differing views on the self-representation of a woman intellectual in the literary public sphere.

As mentioned, Gournay may have thought that the time that the Dutch scholar spent on translating original sources was ill-founded and wasted. True knowledge for Gournay could be had in just one or two languages, French especially, rather than a host of them. In her *Abregé d'institution, pour le Prince Souverain* (*Abridged institution, for the Sovereign Prince*) for the future Louis XIII, she advised the young prince not to learn Latin and Greek (unless he had an inclination to do so) on grounds that he could read "all good Latin books" in French translation. Moreover, he was not to think of learning many languages as a worthy goal since "knowledge and wisdom" were far more important.⁴⁶

Gournay could have also contrasted her own lack of a formal education—she was an autodidact—to Schurman's academic training (Schurman was the first woman to attend a Dutch university). In her autobiographical self-justification, *Apologie pour celle qui escrit* (*Apology for the Woman Writing*), first published in 1626, she states that she had to

struggle to learn on her own, “without formal schooling” as she puts it, only one of the ancient languages, Latin. To ward off her critics, she calls herself “a learned woman without Greek, without Hebrew, without aptitude for providing scholarly commentary on authors, without manuscripts, without Logic, without Physics or Metaphysics, Mathematics or the rest.” Since she did not claim to be the *femme sçavante* her critics made her out to be, they should leave her alone: “So why will the babbling of the world not permit me to rest, without opposing me, in the seat of the learned or of the ignorant, of human beings or of beasts?”⁴⁷

Although Gournay was respected and praised by a number of well-known writers of her time, she was the target throughout her life of slanderous attacks and the butt of cruel jokes.⁴⁸ Her defense of the ancients and Pléiade poets against linguistic theorists earned her ridicule. Her negative attitude toward language changes favoring salon and court usage was derided. She was also considered an embittered prude. Her learning, the difficulties she encountered as editor of Montaigne, and her unmarried state, made her extremely vulnerable to public condemnation.⁴⁹ Furthermore, she promoted herself as an independent woman and professional writer, which was bound to create unbridgeable social—even financial—difficulties.

Schurman, on the other hand, sought to avoid any negative publicity associated with her status as a single learned woman. She was especially wary of her growing fame and entertained throughout her life a deeply held suspicion, fueled by her Calvinist convictions and piety, of the praise heaped upon her. Time and again, she insisted in her letters to famous men that she sought not the praise of men but of God. The following excerpts, for instance, epitomize her refusal to bask in her fame: “Now as for me,” she wrote to the Calvinist theologian Pierre du Moulin (1568–1658), “I would rather direct my gaze to God, the true dispenser and supporter of faithful friendships, than look to the favors of fame, for fear that truth itself might unsettle this foundation and interrupt your good graces.”⁵⁰ She asserted to Sir Simonds D’Ewes (1602–1650), an English antiquary at Parliament: “You ascribe unto me such literary glory that if I should willingly admit it, I should greatly offend against the laws of truth and modesty.”⁵¹ Her adept use of the humility trope—used by both men and

women, but especially by women to discount their learning—and her protectors' use of it in their epistolary references to her, played a central role in making her more acceptable as a woman intellectual.

Schurman would have thus found problematic the confrontational and public aspects of Gournay's exemplarity. As Linda Timmermans reminds us in *L'accès des femmes à la culture*, Schurman's emphasis on the more private and personal goals of women's learning was consonant with "the strategy of a social conformity which was more profitable than the anti-conformity of a Marie de Gournay who was indeed famous but was mocked and jeered at to such a degree that her memory today still suffers from it."⁵²

* * *

The epistolary exchange between Anna Maria van Schurman and Marie de Gournay presents a fascinating instance of two learned women intellectuals, their views of and influences on each other. Gournay admired, and perhaps even envied, Schurman's erudition, likening her to the "new Star" that Tycho Brahe discovered in 1572.⁵³ Yet she disapproved of her extensive studies in oriental and ancient languages on grounds that these detracted from demonstrating her philosophical learning, and that mastery of only a few languages—Spanish, Italian, French, Greek, and Latin—was sufficient. She may have invited her younger peer into a mother-daughter alliance to influence her and gain an ally in the fight against the incomprehension attendant on erudite women.

Schurman admired Gournay as a leader in the cause of women's education, which she strongly advocated in her writings in the 1630s. However, Gournay's confrontational honesty on gender relations, her radical advocacy of equality, and the mockery she often had to endure—all were at odds with Schurman's retired personality and beliefs. Unlike Gournay, Schurman impressed her male learned contemporaries without offending them. The French Protestant *Parlementaire*, Claude Sarrau (ca. 1600–1651), characteristically pointed out in a letter to Rivet: "She [Schurman] is certainly one of the marvels of our age. Her modesty enhances her erudition to which one is right to attach great importance."⁵⁴ Schurman's perceived modesty constituted her best strategy for acceptance

into the Republic of Letters. This resulted in her being admired throughout her career in the 1630s and 1640s for her virtue, goodness, and merit, qualities little connected to extensive literary output but essential to a woman writer's self-representation and acceptance in the public sphere.

APPENDIX

Marie de Gournay to Anna Maria van Schurman, October 20, 1639, ms. 133 B 8, no. 76. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague.

Mademoiselle,

I would be unfair to the rightful purpose of my letter, if I mixed in other matters with my very humble thanks, which your generous favors have so justly deserved; or else what field wouldn't be open for me to praise you! I indeed admit freely that the ability to represent them [your favors] as they should be is limited by the narrow bounds of my ability as well as the rewards of so few services that I have rendered to the Muses. Receive, therefore, my thanks, which I consider worthy to be received by you in these lines only because of the religious wish that I am making that my heart will celebrate such thanks forever.

Will I dare tell you Philosophically, in passing, a little word of advice:⁵⁵ languages employ too much, and for too long a time, a mind as capable of things, and of the best, as yours; nor is it of any help for you to say, as you do, that you want to read the Originals in every case, because the translations are not worthy of them; indeed, all that letters can contain that is truly worthy of a soul like yours, I find written in Latin, and at the furthest also in Greek, to which you can add with little trouble Italian, Spanish, and above all French, which the essays,⁵⁶ among others, have rendered necessary to the universe. If I still live a couple more years I will send you the new impression of my *Advis* where your name will be included,⁵⁷ remaining however with all my heart,

MADEMOISELLE,

Your very humble and very faithful servant,
GOURNAY. The 20th of October, 1639.

Notes

1. Other well-known female correspondents include Queen Anne of Austria (1601–1666), Bathshua Reginald Makin (1600–ca. 1675), Lady Dorothy Moore (ca. 1610–1664), Birgitta Thott (1610–1662) of Denmark, and Johanna Eleonora Petersen (née von Merlau) (1644–1724). Schurman's writings were known to the Anglo-Saxon scholar Elizabeth Elstob (1616–1680) and the latter's close friend Mary Astell (1666–1731), Queen Christina of Sweden (1626–1689), who paid Schurman a visit in 1652, and the German countess Benigna von Solms-Laubach. My thanks to the journal's anonymous readers and to Charles Huttar for their helpful editorial comments.

2. This *respublica litteraria mulierum* evokes the international Republic of Letters, a loosely knit network of literary and scientific scholars and writers who freely exchanged books, ideas, and information with each other. Recent studies on Schurman's international female letter-writing network include those by Pieta van Beek, "Een Vrouwenrepubliek der Letteren? Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) en haar netwerk van geleerde vrouwen," *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* 3 (1996): 36–49; Cornelia Niekus Moore, "Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)," *Canadian Journal of Netherlandic Studies* 11 (1990): 32, n5; Siep Stuurman, "'L'égalité des sexes qui ne se conteste plus en France.' Feminism in the Seventeenth Century," in *Perspectives on Feminist Political Thought in European History From the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Tjitske Akkerman and Siep Stuurman (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 67–83; Jane Stevenson, *Women Latin Poets, Language, Gender and Authority, from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Mirjam de Baar, "God has chosen you to be a crown of glory for all women! The International Network of Learned Women Surrounding Anna Maria van Schurman," in "I have heard about you": *Foreign Women's Writing Crossing the Dutch Border: From Sappho to Selma Lagerlöf*, ed. Suzan van Dijk, Petra Broomans, Janet F. van der Meulen, and Pim van Oostrum (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2004), 108–35; Carol Pal, "Forming *familles d'alliance*: Intellectual Kinship in the Republic of Letters," in *Crossing Borders: Early Modern Women and Communities of Letters*, ed. Julie D. Campbell and Anne R. Larsen, special issue, *Sixteenth Century Journal* (forthcoming).

3. Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans, Duchesse de Montpensier, *Against Marriage*, in *The Correspondence of La Grande Mademoiselle*, ed. and trans. Joan DeJean, The Other Voice Series (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 53. Françoise Bertaut de Motteville and Catherine de Sainte-Maure (d. 1648) were ladies-in-waiting of Anne of Austria.

4. Guillaume (dates unknown) expresses her appreciation for Schurman with the words "l'incomparable Anne Marie de Scurman me charme" ("the incomparable Anna Maria van Schurman charms me"), *Les Dames illustres où par bonnes et fortes raisons, il se prouve, que le sexe féminin surpasse en toute sorte de genre le sexe masculin* (Paris: Thomas Jolly, 1665), 282; Buffet (d. 1680) added two foreign women, Christina of Sweden and Schurman, to her list of seventeen French contemporary learned women, *Nouvelles obser-*

vations sur la langue françoise, où il est traité des termes anciens et inusitez, et du bel usage des mots nouveaux: Avec les éloges des illustres sçavantes, tant anciennes que modernes (Paris: Jean Cusson, 1668), 242.

5. Schurman's letters and writings on women's education were first published in an unauthorized edition entitled *Amica dissertatio inter nobilissimam virginis Annam Mariam a Schurman & Andream Rivetum de ingenii muliebris ad scientias et meliores literas capacitate* (Paris, 1638) (*A friendly discourse between the most noble virgin Anna Maria van Schurman and André Rivet concerning the aptitude of the female mind for sciences and the Belles Lettres*) and two years later in an authorized edition, *Nobiliss. Virginis Annae Mariae A Schurman. Dissertatio, de Ingenii Mulieribus ad Doctrinam, & meliores Litteras aptitudine. Accedunt Quaedam Epistolae, ejusdem Argumenti* (Leiden: Elzevir, 1641) (*A Dissertation of the most Noble Virgin Anna Maria van Schurman on the aptitude of the Female Mind for Science/Theology and Belles Lettres. To which are added certain letters on the same arguments*). The letters and treatise appeared again in Schurman's most famous work, *Nobiliss. Virginis Annae Mariae a Schurman, Opuscula Hebraeae, Graeca, Latina, Gallica. Prosaica & Metrica* (Leiden: Elzevir, 1648, 1650) (*Minor Works in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French. In Prose and Verse by the Most Noble Virgin Anna Maria van Schurman*). Further editions appeared in 1652 in Utrecht, in 1672 in Leiden and Herford, in 1700 in Wezel, in 1723 in Dresden, and in 1749 and 1794 in Leipzig. For an excellent recent English translation, see *Whether a Christian Woman should be Educated and Other Writings from her Intellectual Circle*, ed. and trans. Joyce L. Irwin, The Other Voice Series (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998). Citations in English are from this translation and citations in Latin from the 1641 edition of the *Dissertatio* and the 1648 edition of the *Opuscula*. All other translations are mine.

6. Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 56, cited in Pollie Bromilow, *Models of Women in Sixteenth-Century French Literature: Female Exemplarity in the Histoires tragiques (1559) and the Heptameron (1559)* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2007), 18.

7. Starting in the Renaissance, women writers read each other's works and increasingly dedicated their writings to one another. See, for instance, Laura Anna Stortoni and Mary Prentice Lillie, ed. and trans., *Women Poets of the Italian Renaissance: Courtly Ladies and Courtesans* (New York: Italica Press, 1997); Diana Robin, *Publishing Women: Salons, the Presses, and the Counter-Reformation in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); and Janet Smarr, *Joining the Conversation: Dialogues by Renaissance Women* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

8. Contemporary women writers' search for applicable contemporary models is related to a decline in the use of ancient exemplars in humanist texts. Recent critics have described this decline as a late Renaissance "crisis of exemplarity." Late humanist writers, they argue, questioned the applicability and universality of ancient exemplars, given the diversity and unpredictability of human actions. See François Rigolot, "The Renaissance Crisis of Exemplarity," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59, no. 4 (1998): 557–63, and the articles in this issue by several leading critics in the debate on humanist exemplarity. Pollie

Bromilow argues insightfully that female writers are important and unacknowledged players in the decrease in authority of ancient exemplars during the Renaissance period. Female authors such as Marguerite de Navarre, she indicates, "were far more cautious in embracing the ideology that came as part and parcel of the exemplary deed. The vested interests represented by the careful excavation of the glorious and prestigious past are repeatedly shown not to be relevant to women's experience as either writer or reader." See "The Case of Lucretia: Female Exemplarity in Boaistean and Belleforest's *Histoires tragiques* and Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron*," in *Female Saints and Sinners: Saintes et mondaines (France 1450–1650)*, ed. Jennifer Britnell and Ann Moss (Durham, England: University of Durham, 2002), 165.

9. In a Latin letter dated May 24, 1593, giving news of Montaigne's death (trans. Jean-François Payen, "Recherches sur Michel de Montaigne; correspondance relative à sa mort," *Bulletin du Bibliophile et du Bibliothécaire* [1862], 1291–1311), Lipsius ends his letter: "Je vous aime, savante fille, mais de ce chaste amour que j'ai voué à la sagesse. Rendez-moi le même sentiment, et puisque votre père a cessé de vivre, considérez-moi désormais comme votre frère" ("I love you, erudite maiden, but with the chaste love that I devote to wisdom. Return to me the same sentiment, and since your father has ceased to live, consider me from now on as your brother"). Six of Marie de Gournay's letters to Justus Lipsius are included in the recent edition of her *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Jean-Claude Arnould, 2 vols. (Paris: Champion, 2002), 2: 1932–44. Lipsius failed to become Gournay's hoped-for mentor; see Jeanine G. De Landtsheer, "Michel de Montaigne, Marie de Gournay and Justus Lipsius: Some Overlooked Particulars Preserved at Leiden University Library," in *Montaigne and the Low Countries (1580–1700)*, ed. P.J. Smith and K. A. Enenkel (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 63–78.

10. Nicolas Heinsius, *Liber Elegarium*, cited in Giovanna Devincenzo, *Marie de Gournay: Un cas littéraire* (Fasano and Paris: Schena Editore and Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2002), 136: "Ausa virgo concurrere viris scandit supra viros" ("A woman, having dared to battle against men, has trod all over men").

11. Devincenzo, *Marie de Gournay*, 135–6: "Syrene Française" and "Dixieme Muse." On Gournay's reception in the Low Countries, see Paul Bonnefon, *Montaigne et ses amis* (1898), 2 vols. (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1969), 2: 365; Marie-Thérèse Noiset, "Marie de Gournay et le caprice des siècles," *Études françaises* 29 (1993–94): 193–205.

12. The Amsterdam poet Pieter C. Hooft wrote a lengthy epideictic composition in honor of Montaigne, who was frequently discussed in his coterie at his country estate of Muiden; see Pierre Brachin, *Le Cercle de Muiden (1609–1647) et la culture française* (Paris: Archives des Lettres modernes, 1957).

13. According to Alan Boase, "Marie de Gournay was that extreme rarity in her time, a professional writer, not a princess or a great lady dabbling in literature." See *The Fortunes of Montaigne* (London: Methuen, 1935), 55.

14. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 13.

15. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 13; *Opuscula*, 264: "Magni ac generosi animi / HEROINAE Gornacensi, / Causam sexus nostri fortiter defendenti gratulatur

/ANNA MARIA A SCHURMAN / Palladis arma geris, bellis animosa virago; / Utque geras lauros, Palladis arma geris. / Sic decet innocui causam te dicere sexus, / Et propria in sontes vertere tela viros. / I prae Gornacense decus, tua signa sequemur: / Quippe tibi potior, robore, cause praeit." For a slightly different translation, see Pieta van Beek, "Alpha Virginum: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)," in *Women Writing Latin from Roman Antiquity to Early Modern Europe*, ed. Laurie J. Churchill, Phyllis R. Brown, and Jane E. Jeffrey (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 3: 289.

16. Gournay is likened to the "Femme forte" (strong woman), an androgynous figure that would become popular in France in the 1640s in such works as Madeleine de Scudéry's *Les Femmes illustres* (1644), Jacques du Bos's *La Femme heroique* (1645), and Pierre Le Moyné's *Gallerie des femmes fortes* (1647).

17. Schurman's ode, *INCLYTAE ET ANTIQUAE URBI TRAJECTINAE Nova Academia nuperrime donatae gratulatur ANNA MARIA SCHURMAN* (*Anna Maria Schurman congratulates the famous and ancient city of Utrecht on its recently founded university*), and her French composition, *Remarque d'Anne Marie de Schurman* were published in a commemorative volume containing speeches given by Utrecht professors. Her Dutch poem was published on the back of Utrecht professor and theologian Gisbertus Voetius's *Sermoen van de Nuttigheydt der Academien ende Scholen* (*Sermon on the Usefulness of Academies and Schools*), given on the occasion of the founding of the university of Utrecht. The Latin ode was later included in the *Opuscula* (1648), 262–3, while the French poem was added to the 1652 edition of the *Opuscula*, 302. On these poems, see Pieta van Beek, "O Utrecht, lieve stad . . . : Poems in Dutch by Anna Maria van Schurman," in *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)*, ed. Mirjam de Baar, Machteld Löwensteyn, Marit Monteiro, and Agnes Sneller (Dordrecht, Boston, and London: Kluwer, 1996), and Pieta van Beek, "Alpha Virginum."

18. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 43; *Dissertatio*, 48: "colum & acum tractare, mulieribus satis amplum Lycæum esse."

19. Gournay, *Apology for the Woman Writing and Other Works*, ed. Richard Hillman and Colette Quesnel, *The Other Voice Series* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 75; *Égalité des hommes et des femmes*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1: 965: "la que-nouille, ouy mesmes à la que-nouille seule."

20. Schurman to Rivet, November 6, 1637, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 44; *Dissertatio*, 48: "contrarium evincit ... Uti non minus lepidè quàm erudite ostendit nobilissimum Gornacensium decus in libello quem inscripsit, *Égalité des hommes & des femmes*."

21. Rivet to Schurman, March 18, 1638, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 48–54.

22. Schurman to Rivet, March 24, 1638, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 55; *Dissertatio*, 71: "Nobilissimæ Gornacensis dissertatiunculam: *De l'égalité des hommes & des femmes*, uti ab elegantia ac lepore improbare minimè possum: ita eam per omnia comprobare nec ausim quidem, nec velim."

23. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 55; *Dissertatio*, 71: "virginali modestia"; *Dissertatio*, 71: "innato mihi pudore"; *Dissertatio*, 71: "pigeat tractatum cætera insig-

nem Lucretiæ Marinellæ, cui titulum fecit, *La nobilta e l'exelença delle donne con diffetti e mancamenti de gli huomini.*"

24. Cited in Anna Maria Franchetti, *L'Ombre discourante de Marie de Gournay* (Paris: Champion, 2006), 178: "les grandes femmes et les grands hommes."

25. A *Collection of Seventy Four Letters and Four Latin Poems etc. in the handwriting of the very talented and very celebrated Anna Maria de Schurman, the letters altogether addressed to Andrew Rivet D.D., Tutor of the Young Prince of Orange and Author of "Critici Sacri" etc. etc., 1632–1669*, ms. 133 B8, no. 76, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague: "Oseray je en passant vous dire philosophiquement un mot de mon petit advis: les langues employent trop, et longtemps un esprit capable des choses, et des meilleures que le vostre, ni ne vous sert de dire, comme vous faictes, que vous voulez lire les Originaux par tout, pour ce que les versions ne les valent pas." This letter has been published in Gilles Banderier, "Une lettre inédite de Marie de Gournay (1639)," *Montaigne Studies* 16 (2004): 151–5; and Anne Marie de Schurman, *Anne Marie de Schurman. Femme savante (1607–1678). Correspondence*, ed. Constant Venesoen (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004), 156–8. See my translation of this letter in the appendix to this essay.

26. Gournay to Schurman, October 20, 1639: "ont rendu necessaire à l'univers."

27. Gournay states in an essay addressed to the future Louis XIII that he need not waste his time on Greek and Hebrew, "deux langues qui seroient reservées à ceux que leur profession oblige à les sçavoir" ("two languages that are reserved for those whose profession obliges them to learn"). See "Abregé d'institution, pour le Prince Souverain," in Marie Le Jars de Gournay, *Les advis, ou, les Presens de la Demoiselle de Gournay 1641*, ed. Jean-Philippe Beaulieu and Hannah Fournier, presentation by Marie-Thérèse Noiset, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 1: 202. My thanks to Marie-Thérèse Noiset for bringing this text to my attention and for commenting on an earlier draft of this essay.

28. Gournay to Schurman, October 20, 1639: "où vostre nom se lira."

29. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 70; *Opuscula*, 318: "des advantages, que vos heroiques vertus ont procuré à nostre sexe."

30. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 70; *Opuscula*, 318: "esperance que mon nom se verra un jour consacré à l'immortalité par la faveur de vostre Muse"; *Opuscula*, 318: "je m'imagine par une douce reverie, que les marques de vostre affection qui s'y liront sans doute, ne me seront pas moins glorieuses que l'honneur d'une loüange que j'aurois meritée." In the final edition of her *Advis* (1641), Gournay includes in her catalogue of women worthies only one contemporary woman whom she judged the grand exception, Schurman. The astronomer Tycho Brahe, she states, had he lived later, would surely have named the new planet that he discovered after "Mademoiselle de Schurman: l'emulatrice de ces illustres Dames en l'eloquence, et de leurs Poetes Lyriques encores, mesmement sur leur propre Langue Latine, et qui possede avec celle-là, toutes les autres antiques et nouvelles et tous les Arts liberaux et nobles." See Gournay, *Oeuvres complètes*, 1: 969. ("Mademoiselle van Schurman: the rival of those illustrious ladies in eloquence, and of their lyric poets, too, even in their own Latin language, and who, besides that language, possesses all the others, ancient and modern, and all the liberal and noble arts.")

See *Apology for the Woman Writing*, 78). This is the first and only time that Gournay cites Schurman. See also Mario Schiff, *La fille d'alliance de Montaigne, Marie de Gournay* (Paris: Champion, 1910), 79.

31. The purpose of the rhetorical *captatio benevolentiae* is to make the hearer or reader favorably disposed and attentive.

32. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 70; *Opuscula*, 319: "Quand à ce que vous avez opinion, que je m'amuse trop à l'estude des langues, je vous puis assurer que je n'y contribue que les heures de mon loisir, & quelquefois après d'assez longs intervalles; si seulement vous me permettez d'excepter la langue Sainte."

33. Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman*, 71; *Opuscula*, 319: "si bien la naïveté & l'emphase de ces S. Mysteres"; *Opuscula*, 320: "(selon le sentiment des plus sçavans) durera jusques dans l'autre vie."

34. Schurman to Rivet, Latin letter, October 4, 1640, ms. 133 B 8, no. 23, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague: "Scripto me nuper compellavit Nobilissima vestra Gornacensis artioris foederis, matris scilicet ac filiæ, inter nos firmandi potestatem mihi faciens: qua de re quid mihi statuendum sit, pro prudentia ac jure tuo paterno quam primu designes etiam atque etiam rogo." See Anna M. H. Douma, "Anna Maria van Schurman en de Studie der Vrouw," (PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 1924), 45, for a reference to this letter.

35. Cited in Marjorie Ilesley, *A Daughter of the Renaissance: Marie le Jars de Gournay* (The Hague: Mouton, 1963), 31, n19.

36. Verdun L. Saulnier, *Maurice Scève* (1948) (Geneva: Slatkine, 1981), 179–80.

37. Madeleine de L'Aubespine, *Cabinet des saines affections*, ed. Colette H. Winn (Paris: Champion, 2001), 17: "ta fille je m'apelle." Another striking example is François Le Poulchre de La Motte-Messemé (1546–96), who addressed Marie Le Gendre (dates unknown) as his *fille* (daughter) while Le Gendre dedicated her *Exercice de l'âme vertueuse* (*Exercise of the virtuous soul*) to Le Poulchre, signing the dedicatory epistle with the words "vostre treshumbre et obeissante fille d'alliance" (your very humble and obedient chosen daughter). See Marie Le Gendre, *L'exercice de l'âme vertueuse*, ed. Colette H. Winn (Paris: Champion, 2001), 116.

38. Gournay, *The Promenade of Monsieur de Montaigne*, in *Apology for the Woman Writing*, 31; *Oeuvres complètes*, 2: 1287: "me font cet honneur de se dire aussi les miens." On the *famille d'alliance* as a form of clientage, see Michèle Fogel, *Marie de Gournay: Itinéraires d'une femme savante* (Paris: Fayard, 2004), chap. 5.

39. On the Morel household, see Samuel F. Will, "Camille de Morel: A Prodigy of the Renaissance," *PMLA* 51 (1936): 83–119; and M. Gerard Davis, "A Humanist Family in the Sixteenth Century," in *The French Mind. Studies in Honor of Gustave Rudler*, ed. Will Moore, Rhoda Sutherland, and Enid Starkie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 1–16.

40. See Anne R. Larsen, ed. and trans., *From Mother and Daughter. Poems, Dialogues, and Letters of Les Dames des Roches*, The Other Voice Series (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

41. Susan Broomhall and Colette H. Winn, eds., *Le Verger fertile des vertus. Composé par defuncte Madame du Verger augmenté et amplifié par Philippe du Verger sa fille, femme d'un Procureur de la Cour* (Paris: Champion, 2004). Neither the mother nor the daughter can be verified in archival and historical documents. The editors surmise that the treatise may in fact have been entirely written by the daughter and that the notion of a maternal authorship is a strategy of legitimation.

42. In *Grief des Dames*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1: 1075, Gournay states: "il n'y a si chetif qui ne les rembarre avec approbation de la pluspart des assistans, quand avec un souris seulement, ou quelque petit branslement de teste, son éloquence muette aura dit: 'C'est une femme qui parle'" (*The Ladies Complaint*, in *Apology for the Woman Writing*, 101: "there is no man, however mediocre, who does not put them [women] in their place with the approval of most of the company, when, with merely a smile or some slight shaking of his head, his mute eloquence pronounces, 'It's a woman speaking'").

43. Gournay, *The Promenade of Monsieur de Montaigne* (1594), in *Apology for the Woman Writing*, 55; *Oeuvres complètes* (1641), 2: 1356: "Or après tout le monde dira qu'une telle femme faict mal, puis qu'elle ne faict pas comme les autres, ny a choisir son exercice, ny a disposer ses actions; laissez-le parler, le pis que je voye en cecy, c'est que nous ayons a vivre en un siecle, où il fault quicter le chemin fraié qui veult suivre le droict chemin. Les grands esprits ont tousjours des extravagances hors l'usage, d'autant qu'ils se sont persuadez que ce qui est extravagance a la coustume est reduction a la raison. . . . Si est-ce que l'adventage mesme ne peut avoir lieu qu'en difference."

44. Cathleen Bauschatz, "Marie de Gournay and the Crisis of Humanism," in *Humanism in Crisis: The Decline of the French Renaissance*, ed. Philippe Desan (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 288.

45. Jean-Philippe Beaulieu and Hannah Fournier, "'Les interests du sexe': dédicataires féminins et réseaux de sociabilité chez Marie de Gournay," *Renaissance and Reformation* 28, no. 1 (2004): 47–59.

46. *Abregé d'institution, pour le Prince Souverain*, in *Les Advis*, 202: "tous les bons Livres Latins"; *Les Advis*, 202: "la Doctrine et la suffisance."

47. Gournay, *Apology for the Woman Writing*, 126; *Oeuvres complètes*, 2: 1394: "sçavante sans Grec, sans Hebreu, sans faculté d'illustration sur les Autheurs, sans Manuscrits, sans Logique, Physique, ny Metaphysique, Mathematique ny sa suite"; *Oeuvres complètes*, 2: 1395: "Que ne me permet donc le babil du monde, de me reposer sans contredit, au siege des Doctes ou des Ignorans, des hommes ou des bestes?"

48. See Giovanna Devincenzo, *Marie de Gournay*, 124–40, for contemporary positive views on Gournay.

49. On these difficulties, see Devincenzo, *Marie de Gournay*, 157–62.

50. Schurman to Pierre du Moulin, French letter, March 20, 1635, in *Opuscula*, 278: "Or quand à moi, j'esleveray plustost mes yeux à Dieu qui est le vray dispensateur et soutien des amitez fideles, que de m'arrester aux faveurs de la renommée: de peur que la verité mesme puisse esbranler ce fondement, et m'interrompre vos bonnes graces."

51. Schurman to Sir Simonds D'Ewes, Latin letter, October 31, 1645, in *Opuscula*,

218: "Eam quippè literarum gloriam mihi attribuis, quam si ultro admitterem, in veritatis ac modestiæ leges graviter peccarem."

52. Linda Timmermans, *L'accès des femmes à la culture*, 307: "la stratégie de conformisme social était plus payante que l'anticonformisme d'une Marie de Gournay, célèbre, certes, mais moquée, raillée, à tel point que sa mémoire en souffre encore aujourd'hui."

53. Gournay, *Apology for the Woman Writing*, 78.

54. Sarrau to Rivet, French letter, August 28, 1643, in *Correspondance intégrale d'André Rivet et de Claude Sarrau*, vol. 3, ed. Hans Bots and Pierre Leroy (Amsterdam: APA-Holland University Press, 1978), 85: "C'est certainement une des merveilles de nostre aage. Sa modestie releve son erudition de laquelle on a raison de faire grand cas."

55. "Advis" in the original, a play on the title of Gournay's work *Les Advis, ou, les Presens de la Demoiselle de Gournay* (1634, 1641).

56. A reference to Montaigne's essays.

57. Gournay included a tribute to Schurman in her final edition of the *Advis* (1641); see *Oeuvres complètes*, 1: 969; *Apology for the Woman Writing and Other Works*, 78.

Women's Musical Voices in Sixteenth-Century England

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For nearly two hundred years, there has been continuous multi-media ascription of music and musical activity to the most prominent women of sixteenth-century Britain. From Gaetano Donizetti's grand Italian operas *Anna Bolena* and *Maria Stuarda* in the 1830s through the 2007 Broadway musical extravaganza *The Pirate Queen*, the female monarchs of England and Scotland have appeared and re-appeared on stage, screen, and endless audio recordings as superb singers in a wide range of post-Renaissance musical styles. Queens Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, and a youthful Princess Mary Tudor dance to period music in the 1970 BBC television series *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*. The fictitious gentlewoman Viola de Lesseps does likewise to a late-twentieth-century composition meant to evoke an Elizabethan pavane in the 1998 film *Shakespeare in Love*. The endless fascination with Elizabeth I alone has given audiences over the past sixty years or so at least one superb opera (Benjamin Britten's *Gloriana* of 1953) and a ceaseless supply of films and television mini-series that incidentally depict the young princess and the mature monarch as a dancer, auditor, and participant in many musical rituals and ceremonies. A recent trend in historically-informed recordings of sixteenth-century British music has been the compilation of albums whose titles reflect the lives of women, but whose contents generally reinforce the conventions of "great composers" and the public circulation of music.¹

What of the actual musical practices of those who inspired these wide-ranging characterizations and marketing ploys? What of their kinswomen, their maidservants, their ladies-in-waiting? What sorts of musical education

did they receive? What and how did they play or sing or write or dance, and in whose presence? What songs with female narrators or characters might they have known, and how were they addressed in songs by men? With very few exceptions, women were not raised for roles in the public sphere where the most famous and spectacular musical performances took place. Nor in England could they exercise such skills as professional actors or nuns. Nonetheless, both sexes were affected by the cultural and technological changes of the sixteenth century, which, in turn, affected musical education and practice, as well as the transmission of musical materials. The agendas of courtly humanism and the rise of the middle classes helped to make the acquisition of musical performance skills a necessity for the well-rounded individual of literate social strata, with specific gender distinctions laid out in conduct manuals. The Reformation, with its goal of universal access to the vernacular Bible and its replacement of intricate Latin choral works with simpler congregational psalms and hymns in the parish church, encouraged its adherents to learn songs with sacred text as expressions of faith. The rise of the printing press extended to specialized notation, allowing for the mass production and circulation of musical works for those with the skill to read them, and, in many cases, the money for expensive instruments. At court and in such private spaces as the home afforded, women sang, danced, and practiced music from a number of genres as aspects of larger rituals and entertainments with men, and for their own physical and spiritual refreshment and edification. Even more ubiquitously, from church to theater to court to any place that could support the performance of a song or ballad, females from honored saints to fantasy figures became the narrators and subjects of texts set to music, or objects of address by male narrators.

A thorough study of women's music from sixteenth-century Britain still remains to be undertaken. The majority of information about early modern English women's participation in music originates in the seventeenth century, from which survives a wealth of material evidence, including memoirs, diaries, portraits with instruments, and musical manuscripts owned by women. Earlier material, especially from the first half of the sixteenth century, is tantalizingly sparse and even harder to verify. Music, like the breath or airy spirits to which it was linked in the era's neo-Platonic thought, decays and dies with the sounding body that produces it.

Early modern music was highly improvisatory in nature and belonged as much to oral custom as to notational practice, leaving far less distance between auditor, performer, and composer than in later years. Many works were never written down, and a multitude of musicians had no need to read notation or to preserve their own works visually. Nonetheless, there is a rich repository of song whose texts speak to women's lives, actual or imagined, beginning with the early Tudor era. Until very recently, and even to this day in many genres, Western musical notation served primarily as an aid to memory rather than the prescription for a performance. Sir Philip Sidney, brother of musical patroness and performer Mary Sidney Herbert, the Countess of Pembroke, reminds us that the poetry of his era was inseparable from music. The poet, he says, "cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well enchanting skill of music."² Yet little of the century's well-proportioned poetry traveled with musical notation in manuscript or print.

Any investigation of women's voices in sixteenth-century England must start with the reign of Henry VIII, one of the most important musical patrons in the history of Britain. Composer, collector of musical instruments, dancer, lyricist, connoisseur, and performer on strings, winds, and keyboards, the king employed an impressive retinue of musicians from such leading international centers of musical production as Venice and Flanders, as well as from his native country.³ State occasions he attended at home and abroad literally resounded with ceremonial music, paying acoustic tribute to royal entries, diplomatic negotiations, and other public events. Music was created and performed as part of elaborate court rituals, including tournaments, hunts, royal births, state funerals, May games, religious observances, and a full range of entertainments such as masques, interludes, and pageants.⁴ Henry's cosmopolitan musical taste and the abilities of the musicians in his service were a reflection on the international position of the English court and, by extension, the entire nation, as the medieval world gave way to modernity.

At first glance, women appear to occupy at best a subordinate position in this auditory culture. Of the many acknowledged composers of the era, none are female. Named court musicians are all male. Nothing is known of the musical culture of English convents in the final days before the

Reformation; tragically, documentation was probably destroyed with the dissolution of these institutions. Finally, warnings of the grave moral dangers of music for dutiful women were already being published in the vernacular with the full authority of the leading Classical authors and the ancient Fathers of the church. "And the mynde, set upon lernyng and wysedome, shall not only abhore from foule lust," says Juan Luis Vives in the 1531 translation of his *Instruction of a Christen Woman*, "But also they shall leave all suche light and trifling pleasures wherin the light fantasies of maides have delite, as songes, daunces, and suche other wanton and pyvishe plaies."⁵ In spite of such obstacles, women's musical voices do survive from Henrician England. Evidence further suggests that patterns of performance and representation that lasted through the next century and beyond were already set by the 1530s.

Henry ascended to the English throne as the ideal of the medieval poet-knight gave way to the early modern courtier; in both idealized roles, men were expected to demonstrate a range of musical skills and to entertain women with stylized songs of love. The discussions at the court of Urbino that took place around this time and were immortalized as Baldessare Castiglione's influential and widely-circulating book on courtly conduct emphasized the extraordinary effects of music on the human body and soul. The ideal courtier, according to the dominant view among Castiglione's interlocutors, should be able to read musical notation and play several instruments well, especially lute and viol to accompany his own singing. Such skills are especially to be exercised in the presence of women, says Signor Federico Fregoso, because the sight and sound of the comely male performer "sweeten[s] the mindes of the hearers, & make[s] them more apte to be perced with the pleausantnesse of musike, & also they quicken the spirites of the verye doers."⁶ In other words, accompanied song was thought to arouse both the female auditor and the male performer, making it particularly suitable for courtship or seduction.

The most famous of the few surviving manuscripts of secular music from Henry's reign, British Library Add. MS 31922 (which is also known as Henry VIII's book), was probably compiled in 1522/23.⁷ Extremely eclectic and thoroughly international in its contents, the collection includes a number of songs by the King and other composers that evidently date from the time of his courtship of Catherine of Aragon. The texts in English or French are

simple and formulaic, professing the narrator's eternal and exclusive devotion or presenting the object to whom they are addressed as the extrinsic cause of his suffering. As such, they are recognizable to any student of late medieval or early modern courtly lovesongs. Those by the King especially tend to have brief, straightforward texts and music suitable for amateur performance.

Among these stand the smooth four-voice chanson "Hélas madame," whose melody is derived from a Franco-Flemish model and whose harmonies suggest an exercise in compositional part writing.⁸ Its rhythms suggest the *basse danse*, whose stately gestures were performed by rows of couples. The narrow vocal ranges, metrical regularity, and straightforward rhythms are eminently suitable for amateur performance of the sort recommended by Castiglione's courtiers. In keeping with sixteenth-century practice, performers would have a range of choices beyond the obvious group of unaccompanied voices. The top two parts are melodic enough that either could be sung by a soloist who might play the other part, on a viol, or all three on lute or keyboard, or be accompanied by two or three additional performers on viols or recorders. The text is set in a predominantly syllabic and homophonic style to allow the clear expression of the words:

Hélas ma dame, celle que j'aime tant
 Souffrez que sois votre humble servant
 Votre humble servant serais à toujours
 Et tant que je vivrai aultr' n'aimerai que vous.

(Alas, my lady, you whom I love so much
 Suffer me to be your humble servant
 Your humble servant shall I always be
 And as long as I live I shall love only you.)⁹

The message of the work is transparent. "[Music is honest and praiseworthy] principally in Courtes," says Castiglione's Count Lodovico da Canossa, "where . . . many thynges are taken in hande to please women withal, whose tender and soft breastes are soone perced with melody and fylled with sweetness."¹⁰ Since courtly women are especially pleased by music, it becomes an especially powerful tool for moving their affections.

In the stylized games of love and fealty at Henry's early court, it was not only the King and his male courtiers who addressed idealized female figures to pierce their breasts with melody and fill them with sweetness. Another song in the Henry VIII manuscript addresses the King in the voice of a woman for whom he is "soverayne lord"—presumably Queen Catherine. In conventional carol form, with an alternation between a recurring burden (the refrain repeated after the verses in this musical-poetic genre) and a number of musically-identical verses with changing text, the narrator describes the "lord of puissant power" competing publicly "for [her] poor sake" with sword and spear in a ring. The epitome of manly virtue, a king without equal, "He hath [her] heart and ever shall" in the most conventional female version of the courtly love lyric. The context of the song is clearly a tournament, either actual or imagined. But it poses a mystery: the music for its recurring burden "Whiles life or breath is in my breast / My sovereign lord I shall love best" is attributed to court composer William Cornysh. Yet its six verses lack any indication of melody, harmony, or number of voices. Was the music meant to be improvised, or was it lost before the manuscript was compiled? Were the words framed to a pre-existing tune too well known to need notation? Was the piece written for an actual tournament, as part of some other entertainment, or merely to evoke the knightly ideal of England's king? Were the verses sung by Catherine herself or by another or others in her narrative voice? If the latter, was her part taken by a woman, boy, man, or chorus, an amateur or a professional?¹¹ Surviving documentation gives no indication as to the musical taste or training of Henry's first wife, but it is inconceivable that her parents, Ferdinand and Isabella, did not include musical skill among their daughter's educational curriculum.¹² Their own court was certainly a center for musical production.

Queen Catherine, or possibly some fictive lover of the lord of the realm, was far from the only woman given voice in early sixteenth-century English vernacular art song. The era's surviving musical manuscripts are populated by a range of females, courtly and common, some in dialogue with men. For every "lady," "dame" or "queen" addressed or given voice in the lyrics, there is a "Besse," "Joan," or "dairymaid" whose very different sort of life is likewise presented. The full range of gender implications of the many works in the secular music manuscripts of the first third of the century have yet to be considered.

The anonymous carol, "Hey trolly lolly lo," whose title syllables comprise a popular nonsense refrain in art song from the era, presents a dramatic dialogue between a gentleman (which we know because the female interlocutor addresses him as "sir") and a maiden on her way to milk her cow. The situation is an old one from lyric literature: using courtly language for erotic conduct (he plans to gather her "flowres both fayer and swete," for instance), a knight attempts to seduce a comely commoner who ultimately bests him and retains her honor. The work, alternating in modified carol form between a through-set (composed with continuity of musical thought) verse and varied burden, is a complete drama in miniature, taking place entirely through its music. The maiden's part is simple and dance-like, repeating both her insistent refusal to "melle with" him out of fear that her mother might see, and her desire to return to her humble task. The man's part is rhythmically and metrically more complex, reflecting his greater rhetorical skill and erotic experience as well as the sophistication expected of a higher-class gent. Set for three voices, the song opens with the lower voices taking the man's part and the higher voices the woman's, but, as the piece progresses and each speaker becomes more insistent, all three are used together for both characters. Musically, "Hey trolly lolly lo" is demanding enough that it would be more suitable for professional performers or for more skilful amateurs than "Hélas madame."¹³

In contrast to such songs of carnal wit stand a number of nonliturgical works that evoke female holy figures or Christian moral dilemmas, bringing together the sacred and secular in the years leading up to the English Reformation. Among these is a lovely carol by Richard Pygott, composed for four voices to an alternating English and Latin text whose ungrammatical burden has been described as "dog Latin":¹⁴

Quid petis, o fili? Mater dulcissima ba ba
O pater, o fili, michi plausus oscula da da

(What's the matter, o son? Sweetest mother [nonsense]
O father, o son [bad grammar referring to the narrator wanting
kisses, further nonsense])

But wait. Let's not presume that the poet was a poor Latin scholar. A closer look at the grammatical infelicities of the burden reveals at the ends of the second and fourth lines the first phonemes uttered by babies learning to speak: "ba" and "da"—the missing "ma" is clearly present within the person of "*mater dulcissima*"—sweetest mama. As to the horrible syntax of the final line—"*Michi plausus oscula da da*"—it's imitation babytalk, just what one might have imagined a Latin-speaking Virgo Maria repeating to her Child in private: "Me want kisses, *da da*." The three vernacular verses describe the Virgin and Child in alliterative language that may be older than the very *au courant* early sixteenth-century musical setting.¹⁵ The complete text therefore evokes a strong sense of the old fashioned, the simply nostalgic, eminently suitable for the Christmas season. The changing textures of the piece, the long melismas (groups of notes sung to one syllable of text) to emphasize important words, and the musical skill required to hold one's own part through polyphonic (nonchordal multi-part) passages help to emphasize the wonder of beholding Mary with the infant Jesus. They also indicate that this lovely carol was probably written for professional singers, perhaps the boys and men of the Chapel Royal, who frequently entertained at court.

Another piece that combines Latin and the vernacular as a narrator relates to a woman's private musing is the anonymous "Up Y arose in *verno tempore* (springtime)." The strophic song (consisting of a series of stanzas) is set for two high voices and one low in a predominantly homophonic (chordal) style that emphasizes its text. The narrative begins with an individual who overhears a maiden lamenting under a tree. The remainder of the song is presented in the maiden's words, so that the listener, like the unnamed and presumably unintentional voyeur, identifies with her plight. She feels a child quicken inside her body, fathered by a cleric with whom she lay, and she is afraid to tell her parents or presumably her lover, facing an understandable dilemma about her pregnancy. Nothing less than her immortal soul is at stake. The division of each line into English and Latin sections emphasizes the young girl's hapless position, caught between her own inner voice and the powerful authorities around her, the expedient solution and its eternal consequence. Like vernacular medical manuals that name diseases or shameful body parts in Latin, the things she fears are

voiced in the formal language of church and law: her parents, her lover, the rods and sticks with which the former will beat her when they learn of her condition, the multitude in front of whom she will be chastised, her choices of what to do, and, perhaps most importantly, the life eternal she would forfeit by killing the baby. Since simple young maidens were unlikely to have been taught Latin, the linguistic divide is probably more for dramatic effect than for representational accuracy. Her dilemma is not resolved during the course of the song's four stanzas. The woman's ultimate course of action is therefore left to the audience, who must consider her choices and select the one that each would—or should—make. This poignant song comes from a manuscript most likely compiled for a provincial religious establishment, perhaps Exeter Cathedral, whose singers would have been called upon for many kinds of civic and religious occasions.¹⁶ For what sort of occasion and for whom was such a song meant? Young girls, seminarians lacking the proper temperament for their vocation, mothers responsible for daughters' moral education, writers of sermons, or any and all human beings who must make choices that affect their immortal souls? The upper parts, suitable for boys' voices, would suggest the maiden herself, while the bass would emphasize adult male authority.

Although the professional musicians of church and court were necessarily male, early sixteenth-century Englishwomen were not relegated to musical auditorship, or to serving as objects of address or stock character voices in songs. Castiglione not only emphasizes the effects of music on female listeners, but also assigns them a set of performance skills.¹⁷ The lady courtier, says his Magnifico Giuliano de' Medici, ought to sing, dance, and play instruments "with the soft mildnesse that . . . is comlie for her." She must perform only when cajoled, "with a certain bashfulness that may declare the noble shamefastnes that is contrarye to headinesse." Her choice of instruments must likewise help to display "the sweete mildnesse which setteth furth everie deede that a woman doeth" through their technical demands and the ways in which they display her body.¹⁸ For practical purposes this meant keyboards and plucked strings, instruments associated with women as well as with men in early Tudor England. The lutenist assigned to Henry VIII when he was Duke of York also evidently taught his sister Mary.¹⁹ His sister Margaret is reported to have played both this

instrument and the clavichord in the company of her future husband on her formal progress to Scotland in 1503.²⁰ Among the Marquis of Exeter's servants in 1538 was one Anne Browne, aged 22, whose primary skill is listed as needlework but who was also remarked for her ability to play well on the lute and virginals.²¹

A letter from Catherine of Aragon to her daughter Mary during their separation at the time of Henry's divorce proceedings against her recommends that "for your recreation use your virginals, or lute, if you have any."²² Mary's Privy Purse accounts between 1536 and 1544 record that she received instruction on the lute from court musician and Groom of the King's Privy Chamber, Philip van Wilder. She also took lessons on the virginals from one "Mr. Paston" and from court keyboard player Simon Burton, a Gentleman of her own Privy Chamber; two other known musicians were among her "gentleman waiters" in 1533.²³ The 1547 inventory of Henry VIII's collection of instruments notes that a lute and its case had been loaned to Mary since 1543/44.²⁴ Much earlier, on July 2, 1520, it is recorded that Mary welcomed "the French gentleman" with "pleasant pastime in playing at the virginals."²⁵ At the time, the prodigious princess would have been four and a half years old, a fine age for acquiring musical skill. What might she have played then, or five years later when her curriculum of study instructed her "to passe her tyme most seasons at her Verginalles, or other instruments musicall"?²⁶

Unfortunately, no keyboard manuscripts associated with noble amateurs of either gender survive from this period, nor is it known whether Mary would have read music, played by rote, or improvised at the age of four or even nine. It has recently been suggested quite plausibly that the famous "Henry VIII's book," British Library Add. MS 31922, may have been copied in 1522/23 as a pattern book to help the young princess learn how contemporary music from across Europe was constructed, so that she could judge that of others if not create her own.²⁷ Even small hands could easily play such simple instrumental pieces as her father's unnamed Consort II, which is also free of "those hard and fast divisions that declare more cunninge then sweetnesse," that would have rendered it unsuitable for women according to Castiglione.²⁸ It is not known whether Mary composed original music as did her father. It is certain that, as Queen, her skill

as a keyboard player and especially as a lutenist impressed the Venetian ambassador Giovanni Michele.²⁹ She also had the taste and knowledge to seek the latest and most expressive international Catholic music for her chapel.³⁰ Her music-loving father had never let her lack for instrumental training or for entertainment appropriate to a young woman who might some day represent his country on the international marriage market.

Any consideration of English women musicians of the early sixteenth century must include Anne Boleyn. Like other aspects of her biography, her reputed musical skills have been subject to so much speculation from her day to ours that it is difficult to sort fact from fiction. Even otherwise careful scholars have seized on spurious evidence so that she has emerged as the unique woman composer of sixteenth-century England and as the intended recipient of at least one music book that was not commissioned for her. The source of the most-cited tribute to her musical ability has never been verified and may be completely apocryphal.³¹ In its original cultural context, what has been universally accepted as praise emerges as more hyperbolic or downright chilling than approbatory: "Besides singing like a siren, accompanying herself on lute, she harped better than King David. . . ."³² The sixteenth-century siren or mermaid was a soulless creature, hell-bent on her own pleasure and the destruction of men and was certainly used in England as a term for a courtesan or common prostitute. Anne's sometime-reputed paramour, Sir Thomas Wyatt, metaphorically embodies the dangers of secular delights as "mermaids and their baits of error" in his translation of Psalm 6.³³ To play the harp better than King David would be equally unnatural even if it were possible. More important, by the early sixteenth century the harp was outmoded as a courtly amateur instrument in northwestern Europe. It was replaced by the lute and plucked-string keyboards of the sort played by other royal women of the early Tudor court. This account therefore probably insinuates more about the supposed unearthly power of a woman who faced charges of sorcery than it accurately describes her musical practices.³⁴

A number of more trustworthy sources do portray Anne as a singer, dancer, and accomplished lutenist; she probably acquired these skills at the court of France, where she resided for much of her youth in the retinues of Mary Tudor and Queen Claude. "She knew well how to sing and dance . . .

[and to] play lute and other instruments to drive away sorrowful thoughts,” reminisces Lancelot de Carles, Bishop of Riez in his 1545 poetic “Letter containing the criminal trial brought against Queen Anne Boleyn of England.”³⁵ There are more surviving indications of the music that she may have actually performed than for Catherine of Aragon, Margaret Tudor, or for either Mary Tudor. However, these facts have also been obscured by fantasy and spurious scholarship. The anonymous song “O Deathe Rocke Me Asleep” has been popularly attributed to Anne since the eighteenth-century music historian John Hawkins purchased a copy of the poem from a “judicious antiquary lately deceased” who claimed that it had been written “either by, or in the person of Anne Boleyn.”³⁶ In spite of challenges to this highly speculative attribution since 1790, the complete song—music as well as text—has come to be widely ascribed to the unfortunate queen at least since 1912.³⁷ On this basis, Anne earned a place in the 1994 *New Grove Dictionary of Women Composers* and in the 2004 *Historical Anthology of Music by Women*.³⁸ The intensely dramatic piece survives in several versions and multiple arrangements from the mid-sixteenth century to the early seventeenth, none of which indicates the poem’s author or music’s composer.

Anne’s name actually does appear in period penmanship along with her father’s motto on an internal page of an early sixteenth-century music manuscript now in the Royal College of Music in London. The work is an enigmatic collection of Franco-Flemish art-music, mostly Latin motets by the leading Continental composers of the day, along with three French chansons. The book was once believed to have been compiled for Queen Anne between 1533 and 1536 by court keyboard player and dancer Mark Sme[a]ton, one of the men executed for presumed adultery with her.³⁹ In an unpublished 1997 dissertation from the University of Maryland, Lisa Urkevich demonstrates that the manuscript was more likely commissioned during the years 1500–1508, long before Anne met Henry.⁴⁰ It was certainly compiled in France, possibly for the betrothal of either Louise of Savoy or her daughter, Marguerite d’Alençon. The book may have been given as a gift by the latter to young Mistress Boleyn some time before 1529, perhaps for her own short-lived betrothal to James Butler in 1520 or 1521.⁴¹ Most important, the collection preserves what has to be identi-

fied as women's repertory from the early years of the sixteenth century. Its compositions, by such luminaries connected to the French court as Josquin des Pres and Jean Mouton, largely invoke the Virgin, female saints, and classical goddesses, including Juno and Pallas. Its sacred and secular texts are scattered with references to women's gender roles, such as sister, daughter, wife, and hostess. Most telling, the musical settings are arranged for equal and near-equal voices (voices of the same or similar kind, such as two sopranos or soprano and mezzo-soprano), indicating that they could be performed by an *a cappella* ensemble of women.⁴² Among these works stands Claudin de Sermisy's exquisite setting of Clement Marot's poem, "Jouissance vous donneray." In addition to being a particular favorite of Marguerite's, the song is legibly depicted in several sixteenth-century French paintings in which it is shown being performed by women.⁴³ Its text has the flavor of yielding to a suit, a hoped-for response and a cure for a lover's erotic melancholy:

Jouissance vous donnerai
 Mon ami, et vous menerai
 Là où pretend votre espérance
 Vivante ne vous laisserai
 Encore quand morte serai,
 L'esprit en aura souvenance.

(Pleasure will I give you
 my beloved, and I will lead you
 wherever your hope aspires.
 While I live I will not leave you
 And even when I am dead
 My spirit will remember.)

It is indeed the sort of song, as musicologist Edward Lowinsky speculates, that Anne may have sung to the accompaniment of the lute for Henry's pleasure.⁴⁴ One can as easily imagine a small group of young women singing it alone together, dreaming of true romance while exercising the musical skills deemed appropriate to their high social status. The narrow vocal

ranges of each part are eminently suitable for amateur singers, as are the predictable intervals between notes. The polyphonic play between parts and the ornate melismas on several key words keep the setting interesting and would provide a satisfying challenge for experienced performers.⁴⁵

Under the influence of the English Reformation, as more voices joined the printed controversies over religion and women's proper upbringing, native writers increasingly echoed the Church Fathers on whom Vives had built his warning against "all suche light and trifling pleasures" as songs and dances for young Christian females. In an inversion of Castiglione's objectification of the susceptible female auditor, a number of English writers from the 1560s well into the seventeenth century link women's performance to the seduction of men and to the performer's own passions run rampant. Music is repeatedly associated with "shameless curtezans" and similarly negative female figures.⁴⁶ "[I]f you would have your daughter Whorish, baudie, and uncleane, and a filthie speaker, and suche like, bring her up in Musicke and Dancyng, and my life for yours, you have wonne the goale," says Phillip Stubbes in a typically hyperbolic passage.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the great Elizabethan educational theorist, Richard Mulcaster, names singing and instrumental music, along with reading and writing, as the four requisite subjects for girls to study.⁴⁸ "Musicke is much used, where it is to be had, to the parents delite, while the daughters be yong," he adds in a passage that applies as well to the first two Tudor monarchs as to his own contemporaries.⁴⁹

Greater information and far more material survive concerning women's musical practices from the second half of the century, undimmed by graphic warnings about the art's potential to induce moral depravity. Women's alternately tender and unyielding hearts continued to serve as subjects of courtly art song, and Elizabethan broadside balladry encompasses a veritable catalogue of female types. In an era of increasing controversy about performance, spectatorship, and leisure activities in general, women and their guardians had to negotiate every aspect of participation in music with the utmost care. Thomas Salter's 1579 conduct manual for women, *The Mirrhor of Modestie*, like its earlier Italian model, claims that music "beareth a sweete baite, to a sowre and sharp evill" for young females. "Therefore I wish our Maiden, wholie to refraine from the use

of Musicke [because] it openeth the dore to many vices," he concludes. He does, however, make an exception "For those that bee overworne with greef, sorowe, trouble, cares, or other vexasion, and have neede of recreation, as *Agame[m]non* had in *Homer* and *Saule* in the holie Scripture, by the Harpe and sweet syngyng of *David*."⁵⁰ It is easy in context to recall the claim that Anne Boleyn had sounded her lute and other instruments to divert sorrowful thoughts. In fact, for many women from the Elizabethan era through the seventeenth century, the domestic solo performance of music on virginals and on plucked-string instruments of the lute family became not merely acceptable but strongly encouraged. Repeated references to this sort of activity for mental refreshment raises questions about previous assumptions that melancholy and its treatment were primarily associated with men.⁵¹

Perhaps most famous among Elizabethan women who are known to have played solo instrumental music alone in their private chambers is Boleyn's daughter, the future Queen Elizabeth. One of the leading patrons of cutting-edge art music of her era, Elizabeth probably received a musical education to rival Henry's other children. Like her sister Mary, Elizabeth played the virginals in the presence of a diplomat who responded favorably to the performance. Unlike Mary, Elizabeth felt compelled by her generation's social norms to stop when she realized that she had an audience. The evening after she had learned from Scottish ambassador Sir James Melvill that her cousin Mary of Scotland played the lute and virginals "reasonably [well] for a Queen," she evidently staged an opportunity for him to overhear her.⁵² "[M]y Lord of Hunsdean drew me up to a quiet Gallery. . . where I might hear the Queen play upon the Virginals," reminisces Melvill. "After I had hearkened awhile," he continues, "I took by the Tapistry that hung before the door of the Chamber, and stood a pretty space hearing her play excellently well, but she left off immediately, so soon as she turned her about and saw me. She appeared to be surprised to see me, and came forward, seeming to strike me with her hand, alledging she used not to play before Men, but when she was solitary to shun melancholy."⁵³ What sort of music might she have played? Nothing is known of any collection of music she might have possessed, and the earliest anthologies of keyboard music intended for women's performance belong to the next century. Based on

keyboard collections for amateur domestic performance from her century and the following, her repertoire was likely to have been similar to her sister's so many years before: abstract contrapuntal pieces and arrangements and variations of pre-existing tunes.⁵⁴

The Psalms of David in metrical English settings make up another genre increasingly associated with women throughout the sixteenth century. As early as the 1530s, in the preface to the first published collection of English metrical psalms, Myles Coverdale states that "yf women syttyng at theyr rockes, or spynnyng at the wheles, had none other songes to passe theyr tyme withal, then [psalms such as Biblical women had sung], they shulde be better occupied, then with hey nony nony, hey troly loly, & such lyke fantasies."⁵⁵ From their introduction, then, metrical psalms were strongly associated with women's domestic performance. A profession of Protestant faith as well as musical skill, the popularity of private psalm singing with or without instrumental accompaniment must have been boosted tremendously by the delight expressed by King Edward IV at hearing Thomas Sternhold, his Groom of the Robes and one of the co-authors of the most popular collection of English metrical psalms, sing such works.⁵⁶ Lady Grace (Sharrington) Mildmay recounts in her memoirs that, as a young girl at mid-century, her governess and kinswoman had set her to singing psalms and sometimes doing needlework "when she did see [her] idly disposed."⁵⁷ As a teenaged Elizabethan bride whose husband was often away, she shunned her generation's equivalents of "hey tolly lolly lo" and "Jouissance vous donneray" at court in favor of singing psalms and setting five-part arrangements to her lute at home.⁵⁸

Of the many publications offering arrangements of the familiar English metrical psalm tunes of the era, only one is dedicated to a woman and places the "common tune" not in the tenor part, but in the treble: Richard Allison's *Psalmes of David in Meter* (1599), presented to "The right Honorable and most virtuous Lady, the Lady Anne, Countesse of Warwicke." The composer's settings range from simple to moderately challenging, and are sometimes quite inventive in spite of the clear presentation of the familiar Sternhold and Hopkins melodies. Allison provides numerous choices for potential performers, stating that works may "be sung and plaide upon the Lute, Orpharyon, Cittern or Base Violl, severally or

altogether, the singing part to be either Tenor or Treble to the Instrument, according to the nature of the voice, or for fowre voices."⁵⁹ The top three parts are fairly close in register, and would therefore fit most women's voices comfortably. The texted bass lines not only suit the lowest viola da gamba, but many fit a low contralto voice, especially if the singer has enough skill to change octaves for certain notes or phrases. Women could easily perform these psalms with each other in multiple aesthetically-pleasing arrangements. One of the most striking pieces in Allison's book is not technically a psalm, but the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father Which in Heaven Art," which helps to reinforce the tone of private meditation and prayer that dominates the entire collection. The composer's setting reflects the richness of Elizabethan part writing while preserving the simplicity of the original tune and allowing the text to be clearly expressed.⁶⁰

There were also several other genres suited to small-scale domestic performance and to the edification or healthful refreshment of the performer or auditor associated with Elizabethan women. Ballads, presumably both broadside and traditional, were almost universally condemned by moralists from one end of the century to the other. However, the contested contexts were most often public spaces. There is some indication that female servants sang narrative ballads and told old romantic tales to entertain each other and their masters' families in their places of employment. The seventeenth-century historian John Aubrey fondly recalls that he first learned the entirety of British history from the ballads of his old nurse. He further suggests that, in the days before literacy, it had been women who had taught these national stories to their daughters through song.⁶¹

At the other end of the social spectrum, a number of late Elizabethan publications in the two pre-eminent secular art-song genres, madrigal and ayre, were dedicated to women. The madrigal was originally an Italian import adapted to English taste during the 1580s and 1590s. Native composer and music theorist Thomas Morley considered it to be the most delightful and artificial of secular genres, "full of diversity of passions and airs."⁶² Most often written for three to six voices from mezzo-soprano to bass, the majority of English madrigals require men in order to be performed as written. In fact, as many recordings and concert performances attest, they can easily be performed without women. The two complete

exceptions are collections of canzonets, a lighter madrigalian form, dedicated by Morley in 1593 and 1595 respectively to Lady Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, and to Lady Periam, born Elizabeth Bacon and, as Lady Nevell, the recipient four years earlier of the earliest extant English keyboard manuscript known to have belonged to a woman.⁶³ Both women came from extended families noted for their patronage of music; the Countess of Pembroke was also an extraordinary poet and sibling to one of the pre-eminent literary figures of the day, Sir Philip Sidney. Both collections dedicated to them can be completely sung by women, and are written for only two and three unaccompanied voices. Nothing is known of Lady Periam's musical training or skill, and Morley's dedication gives no indication as to whether she might have sung his canzonets or whether pairs of her ladies or maidservants (who had recently included Morley's wife, Suzan) might have sung them for her enjoyment.⁶⁴ In contrast, the composer praises the Countess's "heavenly voice," presumably meaning that she has skill to sing these moderately intricate pieces.⁶⁵

The lute ayre, born as the century died, was associated from its inception with privacy and personalized confession, qualities connected strongly with virtuous womanhood.⁶⁶ One of the early collections of the genre, which also includes madrigals, was dedicated by gentleman composer Michael Cavendish to his second cousin, Lady Arabella Stuart, in 1598.⁶⁷ Lady Arabella's extremely musical extended family included her uncle and sometime guardian, Gilbert Talbot, the seventh earl of Shrewsbury.⁶⁸ She developed and maintained a general reputation as a patron and participant in the arts.⁶⁹ Cavendish's dedicatory remarks "To the Honourable protection of the Ladie Arabella" do not specifically name any musical skills among her "rare perfections in so many knowledges."⁷⁰ However, nine years later, composer John Wilbye remarked on her "particular excellency in this of Musicke" in the dedication to her of his second set of madrigals.⁷¹ The vocal lines of the ayres in Cavendish's collection have the narrow range and predictable melodic intervals typical of a genre that was marketed to literate amateurs; nor are the lute parts particularly demanding. "Wandering in This Place" is typical in its structure, and was also set as a five-voice madrigal to conclude the same collection.⁷² Its anonymous text particularly emphasizes the reflection and interiority that typify the lute-ayre genre

by blurring the boundaries between the emotive and the confessional, the sacred and the secular, original English and borrowed Latin. Narrated in the first person, the poem moves from a personal expression of abiding sorrow to a quotation from Lamentations 1:12, associated liturgically with Palm Sunday. The scriptural words are not presented in the official English of the Great Bible or the Geneva version of the Elizabethan era, but in the older Latin of St. Jerome's Vulgate:

Wandering in this place as in a wilderness,
 no comfort have I nor yet assurance,
 Desolate of joy, repleat with sadness:
 wherefore I may say, *O deus, deus,*
 non est dolor, sicut dolor meus.

(O God, God, / there is no sorrow, like my sorrow.)

In the musical setting, the lute echoes the singer's preliminary "wandering" even as it widens, and the repeated phrase "desolate of joy" descends each time it is sung. The vocal "sadness" is illustrated through a carefully prepared and resolved dissonance, mixing the bitter with the sweet, and the most extended syllables of the melismas are on the self: the "I" who suffers, and the "meus" to whom the incomparable "dolor" applies.⁷³ This highly personal yet comfortingly familiar meditation on abiding sadness would be as suitably sung and played by a woman as by a man in the private chamber or closet.

In conclusion, women participated in many kinds of music and to many ends in England during the sixteenth century, only a few of which have been shown here. Sometimes women simply served as stock characters created and envoiced by men, occasionally with surprising sympathy. Elsewhere, women were singers, dancers, auditors, patrons, or recipients of performances and collections of music. Especially during the second half of the century, women had to negotiate numerous cultural strictures placed on appropriate venues and audiences. As performers, most Tudor women were confined to domestic space, but in those varied locations they played, sang, and listened to many genres, from early sixteenth-century French and

Flemish part-songs to metrical psalms, ballads, Anglo-Italian madrigals, lute songs, and various genres of instrumental music by the end of the century. For them, as for their male contemporaries, music offered healing and refreshment for both body and soul.

Notes

1. This essay was originally presented as the 2007 lecture for the meeting of the Society of Early Modern Women at the Sixteenth Century Conference, Minneapolis, MN, October, 2007. See, for example, The Baltimore Consort, *Elizabeth's Music* (Dorian Recordings, 1999); The Baltimore Consort, *The Ladyes Delight* (Dorian Recordings, 1998); Cappella Nova, *Sacred Music for Mary Queen of Scots* (Asv Living Era, 1994); Harry Christopher and The Sixteen, *Philip & Mary: A Marriage of England and Spain* (Coro, 2006); *Music for the Six Wives of Henry VIII* (CCL-Ltd. Great Britain, 2002); Edward Parmentier, "Musick as befits a Quene": *English Virginal Music 1570–1650* (Berkeley, CA: Wildboar, 1994); and Emily Van Evera and Christopher Morrongiello, *My Lady Rich: her Teares and Joy* (Heartsease Productions, 2005).

2. Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry or The Defence of Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd, third edition revised and expanded by R. W. Maslen (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2002), 95.

3. See Ignace Bossuyt, "The Art of Give and Take: Musical Relations between England and Flanders from the 15th to the 17th Centuries," *The Low Countries: Arts and Society in Flanders and the Netherlands* (1993–94): 42–43; Theodor Dumitrescu, *The Early Tudor Court and International Musical Relations* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 37, 63–116, and 231–3; David Fallows, "Henry VIII as a Composer," in *Sundry Sorts of Music Books: Essays on the British Library Collections*, ed. Chris Banks, Arthur Searle, and Malcolm Turner (London: British Library, 1993), 27–39; Maggie Lyndon-Jones, "Henry VIII's 1542 and 1547 Inventories," *FOMRHI Quarterly* 92 (July 1998): 11–13; John Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court* (London: Methuen, 1961), 233–64 and 296–328; and Barry Wilson, "The Keyboard Instruments of King Henry VIII," *The Organ Yearbook, Netherlands* 13 (1982): 31–45.

4. See John Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 235–59.

5. Juan Luis Vives, *The Instrucio[n] of a Christen Woma[n]*, trans. Richard Hyrd (London: Thomas Berhtelet, 1531), fol. viii verso.

6. Baldessare Castiglione, *Il Cortegiano* (Venezia: Aldo, 1528), published in English as *The Courtier of Baldesar Castilio*, trans. Thomas Hoby (London: William Seres, 1561), sig. Miii.

7. See Theodor Dumitrescu, *The Early Tudor Court and International Musical Relations*, 164; Dietrich Helms, "Henry VIII's Book: Teaching Music to Royal Children," forthcoming in *Music and Letters*; and Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 4–5 and 388–428.

8. See Fallows, "Henry VIII as Composer," 31.

9. All translations are the author's. For further information about this piece, see Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 389. A musical setting in modern notation is given in *Music at the Court of Henry VIII*, trans. and ed. John Stevens, *Musica Britannica* 18 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1962), 14–15. For historically-informed recordings, see Sirinu, *All Goodly Sports: The Complete Music of Henry VIII* (Chandos Records Ltd., 1998), track 8; and I Fagiolini and Concordia, *All the King's Men: Henry VIII & the Princes of the Renaissance* (Metronome Recordings, 1996), track 4.

10. Castiglione, *The Courtier*, sig. Jii.

11. See Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 1–2, 241, and 405–06. For a musical setting in modern notation, see Stevens, *Music at the Court of Henry VIII*, 40.

12. Garrett Mattingly's biography of the Queen claims that Isabella of Castile saw to it that her daughter's education included music, among other subjects; see Mattingly, *Catherine of Aragon* (New York: Vintage Books, 1941), 8–9.

13. For a musical setting in modern notation, see Stevens, *Music at the Court of Henry VIII*, 95–8. For an historically-informed recording, see I Fagiolini and Concordia, *All the King's Men*, track 1.

14. Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 421.

15. *Ibid.* For a musical setting in modern notation, see Stevens, *Music at the Court of Henry VIII*, 82–5. For an historically-informed recording, see Lionheart, *My Fayre Ladye: Tudor Songs and Chant* (Nimbus Records, 1997), track 9.

16. *Ibid.*, 5–6. For a musical setting in modern notation, see Stevens, *Early Tudor Songs and Carols*, *Musica Britannica* 36 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1974), 19. For an historically-informed recording, see Lionheart, *My Fayre Ladye*, track 11.

17. Castiglione, *The Courtier*, sigs. Jii–Jiii.

18. *Ibid.*, sig. CCi.

19. See Andrew Ashbee, "Groomed for Service: Musicians in the Privy Chamber at the English Court, ca. 1495–1558," *Early Music* 25 (1997): 188; and Eileen Sharpe Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians, 1485–1547: Their Number, Status, and Function" (PhD diss., New York University, 1986), 139–40.

20. Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 268–9. Records indicate that Henry VII provided lutes and musical education to all four of his children, and that Margaret's lute teacher not only accompanied her on her progress to Scotland, but remained there permanently in her service after her marriage; see Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 55, 67, and 139–41.

21. Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 276.

22. As quoted in Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 76, with reference to the source as British Library MS Arundel 151, fol. 194. See also Frederic Madden, *Privy Purse Expenses of Princess Mary, Daughter of King Henry the Eighth, afterwards Queen Mary* (London: W. Pickering, 1831), cxxxix–cxl, which refers to the same piece of material advice. A later letter from Queen Catherine Parr additionally indicates Mary's pas-

sionate fondness for music, *ibid.*, cxxxix.

23. Ashbee, "Groomed for Service," 188–9 and 194; and Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 73. On July 4, 1546, Prince Edward wrote to thank his father for sending the same Philip van Wilder to help him "become more expert in striking the lute"; see Ashbee, "Groomed for Service," 194.

24. See Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 261. The same had also been borrowed by Edward, and a virginals by Elizabeth.

25. *Calendar of Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J. S. Brewer et al., 21 vol, 1862–1910, vol. iii, pt. I, 896, as quoted in Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 276.

26. Frederick Madden, *Privy Purse Expenses of the Princess Mary*, xli. This pastime, along with her other studies and forms of recreation, was supervised by her "ladie governess" the Countess of Salisbury while the young princess was settled in her house at Thornsby in Gloucestershire.

27. Helms, "Henry VIII's Book," forthcoming.

28. Castiglione, *The Courtyer*, sig. CC1. For a musical setting in modern notation of Consort II, see Stevens, *Music at the Court of Henry VIII*, 41. For an historically-informed recording of the piece performed on the sort of keyboard instrument Mary may have played, see Sirinu, *All Goodly Sports*, track 7.

29. See Madden, *Privy Purse Expenses*, cxxxix, which quotes Michele as being particularly impressed with the speed of her fingers and the quality of her performance ("la velocità della mano, et. . . la maniera del sonare") on the lute.

30. See Bossuyt, "The Art of Give and Take," 43.

31. Edward E. Lowinsky, "A Music Book for Anne Boleyn," in *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance and Other Essays*, vol. 2, ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 502–3, n72. This essay had originally been published in *Florilegium Historiale: Essays Presented to Wallace K. Ferguson*, ed. J. G. Rowe and W. H. Stockdale (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 161–235.

32. *Ibid.* See also Claudia Knispel, "Abschied von dieser Welt: Ein Lautenlied von Anne Boleyn?," *Concerto: das Magazin für alte Musik*, 14, no. 129 (Dec. 1997–Jan. 1998): 25–9; and Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 280, both of which use this account in support of Anne's musical skill.

33. Linda Phyllis Austern, "'Teach Me to Heare Mermaid's Singing': Embodiments of (Acoustic) Pleasure and Danger in the Modern West," in *Music of the Sirens*, ed. Linda Phyllis Austern and Inna Naroditskaya (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 79–80.

34. For a succinct summary of chroniclers' bias against Anne Boleyn, see Retha M. Warnicke, "Inventing the Wicked Women of Tudor England: Alice More, Anne Boleyn, and Anne Stanhope," *Quidditas: Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 20 (1999): 18–21.

35. "Elle sçavoit bien chanter, & dancier / . . . [et] Sonner de luz, & daultres instrumens / Pour diverter les tristes pensemens," from *Epistre contenant le process criminal*

faict a l'encontre de la royne Anne Boullant d'Angleterre. Par Carles Aulmsnier de Monsieur le Dauphin. On les vend à Lyon, près nostre Dame de Confort. M.D.XLV., as quoted in Lowinsky, "A Music Book for Anne Boleyn," 503. For more information about Anne's actual musical skills, see *ibid.*, 502–3; and Lisa Ann Urkevich, "Anne Boleyn, a Music Book, and the Northern Renaissance Courts: Music Manuscript 1070 of the Royal College of Music, London" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 1977), UMI Microform 9736652, 100–2.

36. Sir John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, vol. 3 (London: T. Payne and Son, 1776), 30–2. It must be pointed out that Hawkins presents "O Death, Rocke me on [sic] Slepe" as one of two poems claimed to be "written either by, or in the person of Anne Boleyn" in a section on "poetical compositions" of the later Middle Ages and early Tudor era; the work is not presented with music or any reference to musical settings. For further information on the history and plausibility of various attributions of the text and music of this song, see Philip Brett, *Consort Songs, Musica Britannica* vol. 22 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1967), 177, which points out that the same poem is mentioned in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, part 2, 2.4.211 and that Ritson (*Ancient Songs*, 1790, 120–2) questioned the attribution to Anne Boleyn and put forward the name of her brother George, Viscount Rochford. J. W. Hebel and H. H. Hudson have suggested Richard Edwards, which Brett finds plausible; see Hebel and Hudson, *Poetry of the English Renaissance* (1929), 920.

37. The earliest publication of any of the extant versions of the piece in modern notation is Arnold Dolmetsch, ed., *Select English Songs and Dialogues of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, vol. 2 (London and New York: Boosey, 1912), 1–3, in which it is "ascribed to Ann [sic] Boleyn" on the basis of "a Tradition mentioned in Hawkins's 'History of Music,' and which nothing disproves, as far as I know, that this song was written by the unfortunate Queen Anne Boleyn, whilst in prison, waiting for her execution" (Preface). This highly questionable attribution became widely accepted from this point without verification; see, for example, Marcel Bijlo, "Anna Boleyn en Hendrik VIII: Aanbeden en versmaad," *Tijdschrift voor oude muziek* 14 (1999): 19; Knispel, "Abschied von dieser Welt," 25 and 28; and Janet Pollock, "Anne Boleyn," in *New Historical Anthology of Music by Women*, ed. James Briscoe (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 39–44.

38. John Milson, "Anne Boleyn," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*, ed. Julie Anne Sadie and Rhian Samuel (London: Norton, 1994), 70; and James Briscoe, ed., *New Historical Anthology of Music by Women*, 39–44. A modern transcription of the version for solo voice and lute from the early seventeenth-century British Library MS Add. 15117 is given in Briscoe, 39–40, and in Knispel, "Abschied von dieser Welt," 26. For an historically informed recording, see Julianne Baird and Ronn McFarlane, *The English Lute Song* (Dorian Recordings, 1988), track 7.

39. Lowinsky, "A Music Book for Anne Boleyn," 506–11. For further information about Sme[a]nton, see Ashbee, "Groomed for Service," 193–4; and Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 245 and 318–19.

40. Urkevich, "Anne Boleyn, a Music Book, and the Northern Renaissance Courts," 227.

41. See *ibid.*, 120–6, 211–40, and 244–50. Dumitrescu questions the evidence by which Urkevich ascribes specific ownership to either Louise or Marguerite, but agrees that the book is of French provenance from the early part of the century and finds further evidence that it was in England and used by English performers at an early date; see *The Early Tudor Court and International Musical Relations*, 151–2.

42. Urkevich, "Anne Boleyn, a Music Book, and the Northern Renaissance Courts," 225–6.

43. *Ibid.*, 202.

44. Lowinsky, "A Music Book for Anne Boleyn," 500.

45. A musical setting in modern notation is included in *The Oxford Book of French Chansons*, ed. Frank Dobbins (1987; rpt. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 36–7. For an historically-informed vocal ensemble recording, see Ensemble Clément Janequin, *les cris de Paris: chansons de Janequin & Sermisy* (Harmonia Mundi France, 1996), track 17; and for a recording with accompanied solo soprano, see Ensemble Douce Mémoire, *Pierre Attaignant/Imprimeur du Roy, Chansons nouvelles et dancieries* (Audivis France, 1995), track 21.

46. Thomas Lodge, *A Reply to Stephen Gosson's Schoole of Abuse* (n.p., 1579), 33. See also, for instance, Thomas Salter, *The Mirrhor of Modestie* (London: Edward White, [1579]), sig. C8; and Phillip Stub[be]s, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London: Richard Jones, 1584), fol. 109.

47. Phillip Stub[be]s, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, fol. 110. For further information about this topos, see Austern, "Alluring the auditorie to effeminancie: music and the idea of the feminine in early modern England," *Music & Letters* 74, no. 3 (Aug 1993): 343–54; "Music and the English Controversy over Women," in *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*, ed. Susan C. Cook and Judy S. Tsou (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994): 52–69; and "'Sing Again Siren': The Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature," *Renaissance Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (fall 1989): 420–8.

48. Richard Mulcaster, *Positions*, 177.

49. *Ibid.*, 178.

50. Thomas Salter, *A Mirrhor mete for all Mothers, Matrones, and Maidens, intituled the Mirrhor of Modestie* (London: Edward White, [1579]), sigs. C6^{r-v}. This book is clearly modeled after Giovanni Michele Bruto's *La institutione di una fanciulla nata nobilmente/L'institution d'une fille de noble maison* (Antwerp: Jehan-Bellere, 1555), which was translated into English nearly two decades after Salter's book appeared.

51. See in particular Juliana Schiesari, *The Gendering of Melancholia: Feminism, Psychoanalysis and the Symbolics of Loss in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 96–101; and Robin Headlam Wells, *Elizabethan Mythologies: Studies in Poetry, Drama and Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 189–207.

52. Sir James Melvil[1], *The Memoires of Sir James Melvil[1] of Hal-Hill*, trans. and ed. George Scott (London: E. H. for Robert Boulter, 1683), 50.

53. *Ibid.* There is a certain amount of controversy over whether Elizabeth, like her sister and her royal cousin, played the lute in addition to the virginals; see David Scott, "Elizabeth I as Lutenist," *Lute Society Journal* 18 (1976): 45, and "Elizabeth I, Queen of England," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com.turing.library.northwestern.edu>.

54. An historically-informed recording of typical English virginal music from the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth centuries is Edward Parmentier, *Music as befits a Quene: English Virginal Music, 1570–1650* (Wildboar, 1994).

55. "Myles Coverdale unto the Christian reader," preface to *Goostly psalms* ([London:], ca. 1535), reprinted as Appendix II of Robin A. Leaver, "Goostly psalms and spirituall songes": *English and Dutch Metrical Psalms from Coverdale to Utenhove 1535–1566* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 288.

56. See Ashbee, "Groomed for Service," 195. The collection was dedicated to the young King; see Thomas Sternhold, *Certayne Psalms chose[n] out of the Psalter of David, and drawe[n] into English Metre* (London: [Nicholas Hill for] Edouardud Whitchurche, [1549?]), sig. Aiii.

57. Linda Pollack, *With Faith and Physic: The Life of a Tudor Gentlewoman Lady Grace Mildmay 1552–1620* (London: Collins and Brown, 1993), 26.

58. Pollack, *With Faith and Physic*, 34–5.

59. Richard Allison, *The Psalmes of David in Meter* (London: William Barley, 1599), title page.

60. *Ibid.*, sigs. C5^r–C6^v; a contrasting setting of the Lord's Prayer is also given on sigs. R2^r–R3^r. For an historically-informed recording of the latter by soprano soloist with three viols, see Circa 1500, *A Handefull of Pleasant Delites: Elizabethan Ballads & Dances* (Gaudeamus/ASV Ltd., 1997), track 11.

61. See Robert A. Schwegler, "Oral Tradition and Print: Domestic Performance in Renaissance England," *The Journal of American Folklore* 93, no. 370 (Oct.–Dec., 1980): 436 and 438–9.

62. Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597)(London: Humphrey Lownes, 1608), 180.

63. Tomas Morley, *Canzonets or Little Short Songs to Three Voyces* (London: Thomas E[a]st for William Byrd, 1593), dedicated "To the most rare and accomplished Lady the Lady Marye Countes of Pembroke; and Morley, *The First Booke of Canzonets to Two Voices* (London: Thomas E[a]ste, 1595), dedicated "To the most Vertuous and Gentle Ladie The Ladie Periam." Modern editions of both collections are included in *The English Madrigalists*, ed. Edmund H. Fellowes, revised by Thurston Dart (London: Stainer and Bell, 1956), vol. 1, parts 2 and 1 respectively. Recordings of select works from both books, almost invariably sung by men, are widely available. For further information about Lady Periam and the famous manuscript of Willam Byrd's keyboard music known as *My Ladye Nevells Booke*, see John Harley, "My Lady Nevell' Revealed," *Music and*

Letters 86 (2005): 1–15.

64. Morley's dedication offers the works "like two wayting maydes desiring to attend upon you; destined by my Wife (even beefore they were borne) unto your Ladieships service . . . that these therefore with their presence should make good & supply that hir absence," presumably because of pregnancy; see *The First Booke of Canzonets to Two Voices*, dedication.

65. "Receive then (most worthy Lady) these simple gifts. . . to which if at any time your Ladiship shall but vouchsafe your heavenly voice; it cannot be but they will so returne perfumed with the sweetnesse of that breth. . ."; see Morley, *Canzonets or Little Short Songs to Three Voyces*, dedication.

66. See Daniel Fischlin, "The Performance Context of the English Lute Song, 1596–1622," in *Performance on Lute, Guitar, and Vihuela: Historical Practice and Modern Interpretation*, ed. Victor Coelho (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 58–61.

67. Michael Cavendish, *14. Ayres in tablatorie to the lute. . . And 8. madrigalles to 5. voices* (London: Peter Short, 1598).

68. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance*, 103–5.

69. See Sara Jayne Steen, ed., *The Letters of Lady Arabella Stuart* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), Introduction, 55–6.

70. Cavendish, *14. Ayres in tablatorie to the lute*, dedication.

71. John Wilbye, *The Second Set of Madrigales to 3. 4. 5. and 6. parts* (London: Tho[mas] E[a]ste for John Browne, 1609). A modern edition of this collection is included in Fellowes and Dart, *The English Madrigalists*, vol. 7. See also Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance*, 106.

72. A modern edition of this work is given in *Songs Included in Michael Cavendish's Booke of Ayres and Madrigalles (1598)*, *The English School of Lutenist Song Writers*, ed. Edmund Horace Fellowes, second series, vol. 7 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1925), 24–27.

73. For an historically-informed recording, see Julianne Baird and Ronn McFarlane, *Greensleeves: A Collection of English Lute Songs* (Dorian Recordings, 1989), track 10.

Demure Transgression: Portraying Female “Saints” in Post-Tridentine Italy

HELEN HILLS

Two contrasting images institute an exploratory incision into the relation between female holiness and representation in Counter-Reformation Italy: Stefano Maderno’s sculpture of *St. Cecilia* of 1600 in the basilica of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome (fig. 1) and an engraved portrait of Mother Superior Maria Villani, the frontispiece to the Dominican Domenico Maria Marchese’s *Vita della venerabile Serva di Dio Suor Maria Villani dell’Ordine de’ Predicatori*, first published in Naples in 1674 (fig. 2). The first is a sculpture of a canonized female saint; the second, a new genre of image, a portrait frontispiece to the *Vita* of a recently deceased female would-be saint. Although the constant generation of holy figures was one of the most distinctive cultural features of this period, little attention has been paid to the production enterprises surrounding new saints, especially those whose bids for canonization simply drained into the sands.¹ And no attention at all has been paid to their pictorial representation in frontispieces.²

Recent years have witnessed a renewed scholarly interest in Counter-Reformation sanctity, but the degree to which holiness was visually inflected by gender has been largely overlooked.³ This essay explores the visual gendering of post-Tridentine spirituality in relation to this new genre: portrait frontispieces of would-be saints, published in Italy between ca. 1650 and ca. 1750.

Part of the energy of Catholic Reform drew from and focused on the recovery and celebration of ancient saints and their relics. Portrait frontispieces of would-be saints depart from the established reliance on

historical exemplar to emphasize instead observation and introspection, as we shall see in the comparison between the two image types with which this essay opens. The claim to authority represented by the new genre is examined through its relations to representations of canonized saints, traditions of portraiture and to the author frontispiece. That claim is of particular importance in relation to female would-be-saints, with whom this essay is primarily concerned. I further explore the question of the “transgressiveness” of their female subjects, not only in relation to the sharp discrepancies of tone apparent between text and portrait, but also through comparisons with portrait frontispieces of male would-be saints.

I show here that portrait images drew on the conventions of aristocratic portraiture, of author-portrait frontispieces, and even of altarpiece paintings. While the practice of combining biography with a portrait to bestow fame was well established and readily mobilized in relation to campaigns for canonization, the Counter-Reformation portrait of the venerable in frontispiece form accompanying a *Life* and a devotional work articulated starkly new forms of spiritual engagement.

The Female Martyred Saint

In considering Maderno’s sculpture of the martyred saint (fig. 1), to start at the beginning is to start at the end. The sculpture shows Cecilia at the moment of her death, but also at the moment of her body’s subsequent *inventio* as holy relic—proof of Cecilia’s sanctity (in the uncorruption of her fleshly body) and the potential for redemption of others that a relic gives. Seventeenth-century sources insist upon the authenticity of the sculpture as much as on the authenticity of the relic.⁴ They insist that the sculpture shows Cecilia’s body as it was found on its excavation from the catacomb: “as we saw, so we recognized and adored,” claimed Cesare Baronio.⁵ The sculpture portrays her body at the moment of death, of martyrdom, and as relic at the moment of discovery. It thereby seeks to combine historical truth, represented by the archaeological discovery of the saint’s body, with spiritual truth, her martyrdom, thus combining the spiritual “origin” with the historical (archaeological) discovery, and collapsing place and event.⁶ Or, more accurately, it combines two different sorts of “origins” of the

contact point between human and divine: the end of the human being/beginning of the spiritual being, and the *inventio* of the saint's relics. The sculpture shows spiritual truth both as confirmed by archaeology (history, knowledge, place) and as beyond it (history, knowledge, place are radically reconfigured by sanctity). It transforms place itself into relic, a spring of holiness (like the Holy Land during the Crusades). The basilica of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, where the statue occupies the key position in front of the main altar, is thereby reinscribed, in relation to year zero, back to the beginning, to the origin, and therefore the end of something old and the beginning of something new.

St. Cecilia's body bears the wound of martyrdom (fig. 3).⁷ That wound is turned to the viewer, even as the face is turned away. That wound, like a mouth replacing the mouth, is an opening to something, as if to utter something of the ineffable. The body lies before us, facing us, chastely beautiful, the face swivelled away, the wound marking the turning point between the body and the head, between the visible and the ineffable, visible wound and unseeable eyes. The wound is the point of entry to the beyond, the point at which spirit and matter become one. The wound that marks the death of the subject marks the opening to martyrdom, the transformation of body into relic. The relationship between self and Other is presented as this gaping slit, this dumb mouth, a departure from history, that is, from continuity and human time. The main altar thus becomes the point at which historical time (the finding of the body) meets spiritual time through the martyred body (the relic), meeting at that juncture which is severed, at the wound. But it is something "new" that is positioned outside of historical time. It is the end of history and the start of that which is beyond the edge of history. Here visual analogy represents the embodiment of spiritual faith: spirituality is embodied at the point where it is disembodied. This is what the Tridentine concern with the relic proffered, and which has been too hurriedly smoothed out by historians into a linear history.⁸

Maderno's *St. Cecilia* is incontestably a saint: through her martyrdom and through her miraculous relics. But what of contemporary seventeenth-century female would-be saints? How could they be most effectively portrayed when, on their behalf, claims could be made only in terms of

exceptional holiness, without the authority and authorization of archaeology, martyrdom, and canonization? A saint was already a saint while living, but their death constituted a critical moment for their future reputation; and sanctity was specifically manifest through miracles after death. The portrayal of a living saint therefore challenges the orthodox mode of construing sanctity. It was not simply that the cult of saints and their visual representation—pictorial, sculptural, and architectural—characterized the post-Tridentine Catholic Church.⁹ Increasingly, the Catholic Church's struggle for authority shifted its focus from history and past martyrs to living and future saints. The frontispiece portraits imagine what modern saints and quotidian holiness might look like.

Let us now turn to the second image, the engraved portrait frontispiece of the founder of the convent of Divino Amore in Naples, first published in 1674, only four years after Villani's death (fig. 2). Far from Stefano Maderno's Roman *St. Cecilia*—concerned with point of origin as authority, focused on history and redemption through a martyr's death, mobilizing history and place to destroy difference, and showing the silent woman with two mouths (both silenced)—the frontispiece portrait portrays this would-be saint Maria Villani as alive, of this earth, mundane, laborious, dignified, and respectable. The claim to authority is there—even if it cannot be made through martyrdom and death. While Maderno's sculpture dwells on the elongated, prone body of the canonized saint and martyr, all but ignoring her face, the engraved half-length portrait of Villani shrinks from her body, engulfed in folds of her habit, to attend to her face, to her gestures as she writes with one hand and points with the other towards the small crucifix on her desk, and to the books surrounding her in her cell.

Like Cecilia, Villani is unmistakably silent: the tight purse of the mouth, that shrewd and uncompromising stare, her bound throat, the gesture to the crucifix tell us this. Unlike Cecilia, however, she has a voice—her own writing of her experience of Christ (again her left hand pointing tells us that). Remarkably, Villani is portrayed as a writer and holy intellectual, surrounded by works of theology, theological commentary, and religious devotion, pen poised, and her gesture towards the crucifix tells us that she is not keeping conventual accounts, not undertaking household tasks, but writing about religious experience, about what she believes.

For all the image's inherent interest, what is most striking to me is the curious disjuncture between its cool detachment, its focus on Villani's external world, and the heated language and emotive figuration of spiritual experience which drives the accompanying *Vita*.¹⁰ I quote two short passages from that text:

Maria Villani, [aged six years], locked herself in her room, and there prostrate before a Crucifix, she bared her breast across her heart, and again and again with an iron point she punctured the flesh that covered it, so that her blood seemed to be drawn up almost from the heart, as if she wanted to dig out the blood from it with which she should write the deed that claimed to document her giving herself to God.¹¹

Every time I received Communion from the Lord, my soul would be infused with such light and warm love, that for many years, each time that he gave me Communion, the sweetness and tenderness in my heart was such that it dissolved in tears, which, without the slightest tumult, but with the greatest sweetness, streamed from my eyes, and hollowed in the ground a little pool large enough to hold my tears, where I used to prostrate myself after Holy Communion.¹²

The language, violently emotional, intimately charged, and intensely corporeal, is apparently at odds with the frontispiece portrait of its subject. The portrait presents Villani as insular, gaunt, ascetic, unemotional, and devoid of intimacy or the suggestion of erotic impulse. To the modern eye there is a sharp dissonance between, on the one hand, the language of the text—suffused at once with carnal imagery and with visions of the divine, and which evokes Maria Villani as without clear boundary, frayed, and porous—and, on the other hand, the stiff austerity of the portrait, which conjures neither heavenly glimpses nor sensations but presents her in terms of the enclosed and bounded. Miracles and signs of divine intervention, the hallmark of sanctity to which the text abundantly refers, are also entirely absent from the engraving. The porous, overflowing, uncontainable body of the text is replaced by a well-contained body, imporous, emitting nothing—at this point even her writing page is blank.

Nor is this an unusual disjuncture. Similar discrepancies occur between almost all the stiff and austere frontispiece portraits of would-be female saints and their exuberant texts.¹³ What are the implications of this disjuncture for understanding holiness in this period? Was this dissonance simply the result of artists' cautiousness in producing an unfamiliar sort of portrait? After all, the frontispiece portrait of holy men and women established a new type of portrait: the portrait of the would-be saint before official beatification and sanctification. Thus the question they faced was how to depict someone who had a reputation for holiness, but was not yet—and, indeed, might never be—beatified or sanctified. This question, in turn, engaged with the production of holy women in this period, the relationship between image and text in the hagiographic book, and the question of imaging sanctity and of portraying a would-be saint. What would it mean to make a *portrait* of a saint? In particular, how might the saintliness of a female would-be saint most effectively be portrayed?

The Face of Catholic Reform

It is my contention here that the production of the body of the canonized saint and the production of the face of the would-be saint were essential parts of the cultural project of the Counter-Reformation. This must be understood in the broader context that was the cultural production of saints.

After an hiatus of sixty-five years, an astonishing fifty-six canonizations occurred between 1588 and 1769.¹⁴ But canonization did not make a saint. In Michel de Certeau's words, "to 'reform' is to remake the forms."¹⁵ To imagine the faces and sufferings of saintly beings, past and present, fundamentally altered what Catholic Reform could be; their depictions produced new emotional experiences and changed what Catholic Reform was. Visual depictions of saints and would-be saints accompanying their biographies were more than just a vital part of this production; they altered its course.¹⁶ Certeau has brilliantly demonstrated that the production of a body played an essential role in mystics, arguing that what appears to be a rejection of "the body" or of "the world"—ascetic struggle, prophetic rupture—was but the necessary and preliminary elucidation of a histori-

cal state of affairs.¹⁷ According to Certeau, what is termed a rejection of “the body” or of the world constitutes the point of departure for the task of offering a body to the spirit, of “incarnating” discourse, giving truth a space in which to make itself manifest: “contrary to appearances, the lack concerns not what breaks away (the text), but the area of what ‘makes itself flesh’ (the body). . . . What is the body? Mystic discourse is obsessed by this question.”¹⁸ I suggest that the delineation of the spiritual and divinely gifted face in the portrait frontispieces to holy biographies, just as the delineation of the body in Maderno’s *St. Cecilia*, was part of Catholic Reform’s energetic production of the body—and face—of holiness. The saintly body was the intended goal of a journey that moved, like all pilgrimages, toward the site of a disappearance. There was discourse (a logos or theology), but it lacked a body, either social or individual. Whether reforming a Church, founding a community, constituting a (spiritual) “life,” or preparing (for oneself and others) a body to be raised in glory, the production of first a dead body and then a living face was fundamental in producing Counter-Reformation holiness.

Pierre Deloos usefully emphasized that saints are produced “through others,” that religious experience is based on exceptionality, and that sanctity is therefore not only a retrospective construction, but depends on “self-construction”—repentance, asceticism, charity, preaching—before social recognition and institutional sanction.¹⁹ Both “self-construction” and social recognition necessitated the presentation of the right sort of face: frontispiece portraits should be seen as part of that production.

Frontispiece portraits of would-be saints began to appear in Italy around 1630 and became steadily more common through the early eighteenth century. They appear in a considerable portion, but fewer than half, of *Vite* of would-be saints, almost invariably as frontispieces. They range from simply produced small pamphlets, such as Giovanni Battista Pacichelli’s *Vita del Servo di Dio P. Gioseppe Imparato* (Naples, 1686) (fig. 4), to elaborately illustrated quarto volumes, such as Antonio Maria Bonucci’s *Istoria della santa Vita e Virtù eroiche della Ven. Serva di Dio Veronica Laparelli* (Naples, 1714) (fig. 5), the lavishness of which is exceptional: 200 folio pages, boasting two full-page frontispiece images, with decorated capital letters, friezes of trophies, fountains, antique masks, and geometrical designs throughout.²⁰

There is considerable interest currently in the various forms of “life-writing” abundantly produced in the period after the Council of Trent, and enlisted in the campaign for a reformed and activist Catholicism.²¹ But while the texts of saints’ and would-be saints’ spiritual biographies, published as part of concerted efforts to promote their subjects to sanctification, have received considerable attention in recent scholarship, the portrait images which sometimes adorn them have been ignored.²² This is perhaps understandable. With few exceptions, the images which greet us match visual austerity with pictorial crudeness. The frontispiece portrait of Sister Celestina Raineri (1734) shows a hard, shriveled, and shrunken face, a dark habit smothering body curves, an unyielding, monotonous background, and a few accoutrements signaling death and self-mortification—typical of this genre’s inexorable refusal to provide visual pleasure (fig. 6). Indeed, the pleasure of these images seems to arise perversely from deliberate ascetic and aesthetic despoilment.

Unappealing though they may be to modern eyes, these images cannot be simply reduced to the *Lives* they adorn. They are significant as visual forms of imagining sanctity as part of the Catholic Reform; and, in the case of portraits of would-be saints, they produced a new form of image: the portrait of the modern would-be saint. Portraits of *would-be* saints were a new category of art; their relationships with the developing pictorial tradition of portraiture, with frontispiece images of canonized saints, and with the written texts they adorn intersect in telling ways. The depiction of would-be saints must be understood in relation to the aim of their eventual canonization. The visual demonstration of their holiness was part of a strategy towards beatification or canonization.

It is possible, I think, to interpret the portraits of female would-be saints in two opposing ways. On the one hand, these portraits can be seen as reactionary—reinscribing the escaping female subject which emerges in the texts in terms of a respectable, circumscribed, grounded body. On the other hand, by occupying the place traditionally occupied by author portraits—at the initial opening of the book, usually facing the title page—these images locate their subjects as authors of their own spiritual destiny as traced in the text. Furthermore, in their subversion of conventions of aristocratic portraiture, these portraits search for the transparent



Figure 1: Stefano Maderno. *St. Cecilia*, 1600. Basilica of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome. Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 2: Frontispiece portrait to Domenico Maria Marchese, *Vita della venerabile Serva di Dio Suor Maria Villani dell'Ordine de' Predicatori* (Naples, 1674). Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 3: Stefano Maderno. *St. Cecilia*, 1600. Basilica of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome. Detail of the neck wound. Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 4: Portrait in G. B. Pacichelli, *Vita del Servo di Dio P Giuseppe Imparato* (Naples: Camillo Cavallo and Michele Luigi Muzio, 1686). Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 5: Frontispiece portrait to Antonio Maria Bonucci, *Istoria della santa Vita e Virtù eroiche della Ven. Serva di Dio Veronica Laparelli* (Naples, 1714). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark: 1486.k.2.



Figure 6: Frontispiece portrait to [Anon. Benedictine priest], *Vita della serva di Dio Sor Celestina Raineri Palermitana, sorella professa nel venerabile Monastero del Cancelliere di ... Palermo* (Palermo, 1734). Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 7: Portrait of Albertus Magnus, from Paolo Giovio, *Elogia Virorum literis illustrium ... Ex eiusdem Musaeo ... ad vivum expressis imaginibus exornata* (Basel: Petri Pernaie, 1577). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark: C.189.C.8.

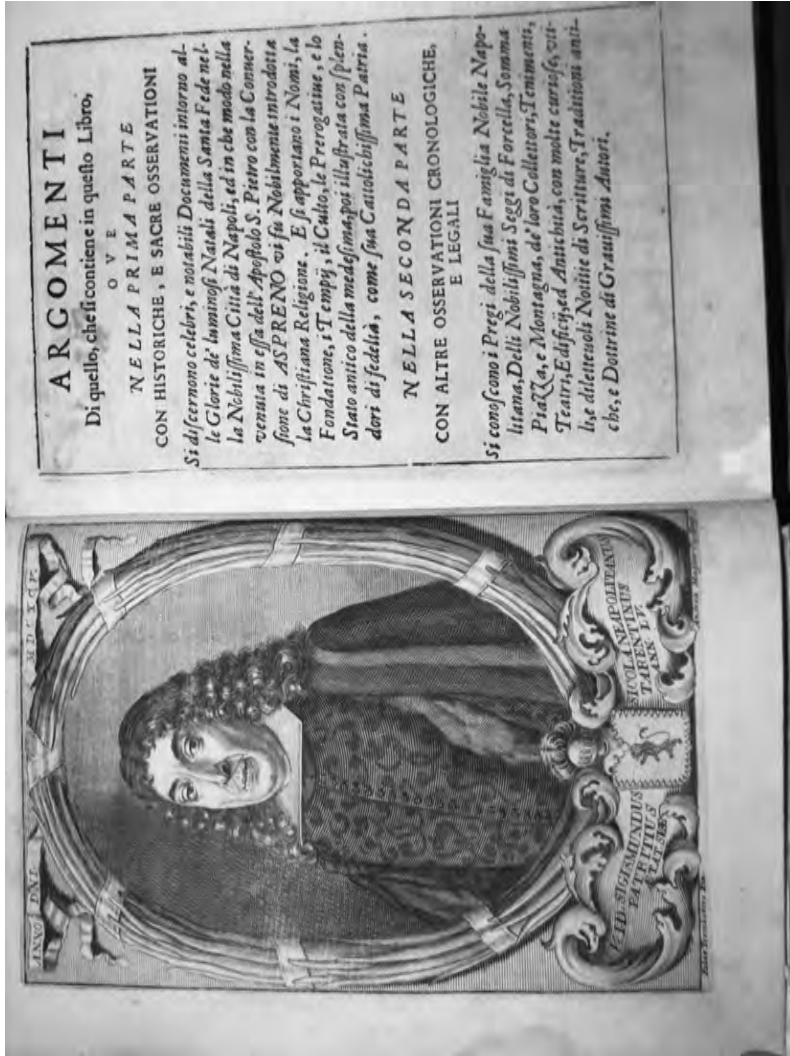


Figure 8: Frontispiece portrait to Sigismondo Sicola, *La Nobiltà Gloriosa nella Vita di S. Aspreno* (Naples: Carlo Porsile, 1696), engraved portrait of Sicola, 1695. Photo courtesy of author.

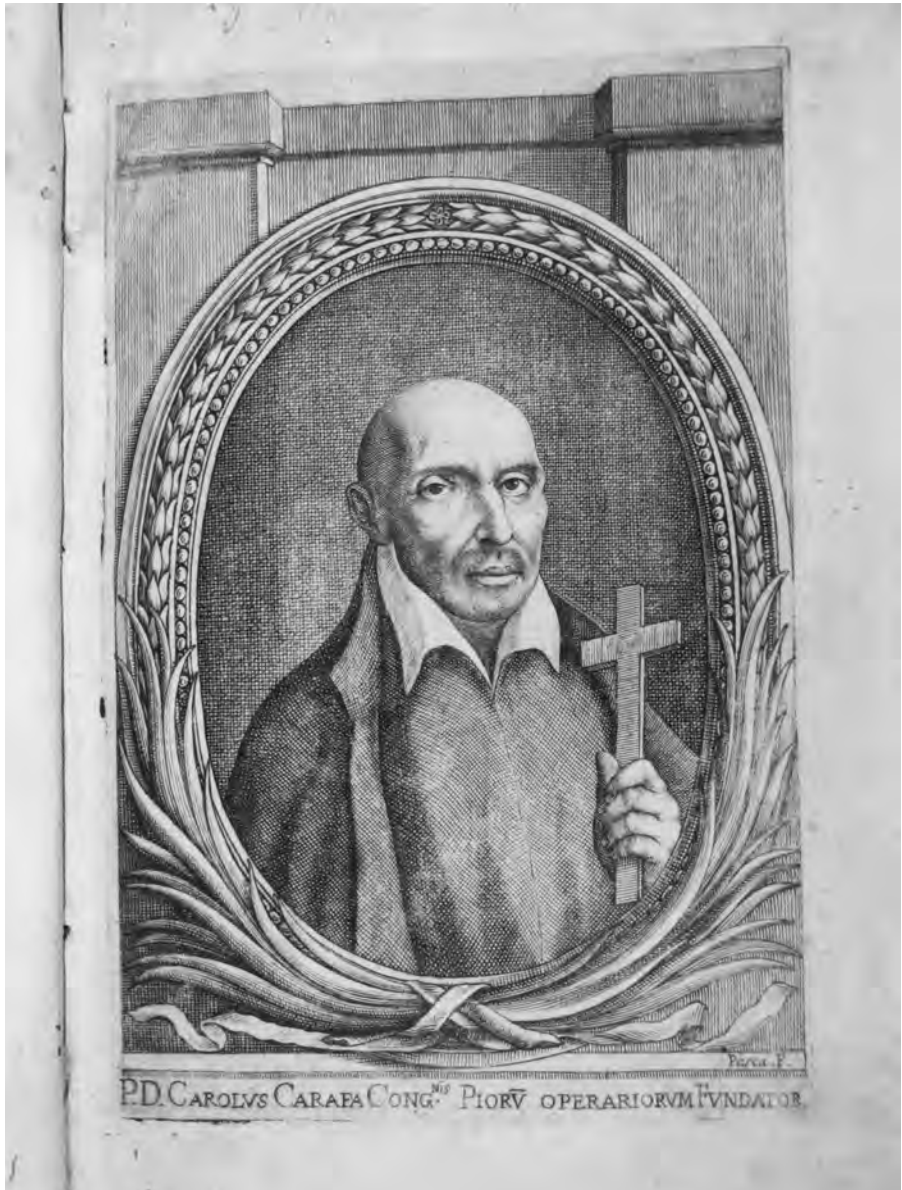


Figure 9: Frontispiece portrait to Pietro Gisolfo, *Vita del P. D. Carlo Carafa, Fondatore della Congregazione de' PP. Pij Operarij di Napoli* (Naples: Luc'Antonio di Fusco, 1667). Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 10: Frontispiece portrait to Antonio Bulifon, *Cronicamerone, overo Annali, e Giornali storici delle cose notabili accadute nella Città, e Regno di Napoli dalla Natività di N.S. sino all'1690* (Naples: Bulifon, 1690), portrait of the author, who also financed the publication. Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 11: Antonio Baldi. Frontispiece portrait to P. Ignazio Maria Vittorelli, *Vita e virtù di suor Maria Aurelia Cecilia di S Giuseppe ... detta nel secolo D. Teodora Costanza Caracciolo, degli Eccellentissimi Duchi di Martina* (Naples, 1743). Photo courtesy of author.

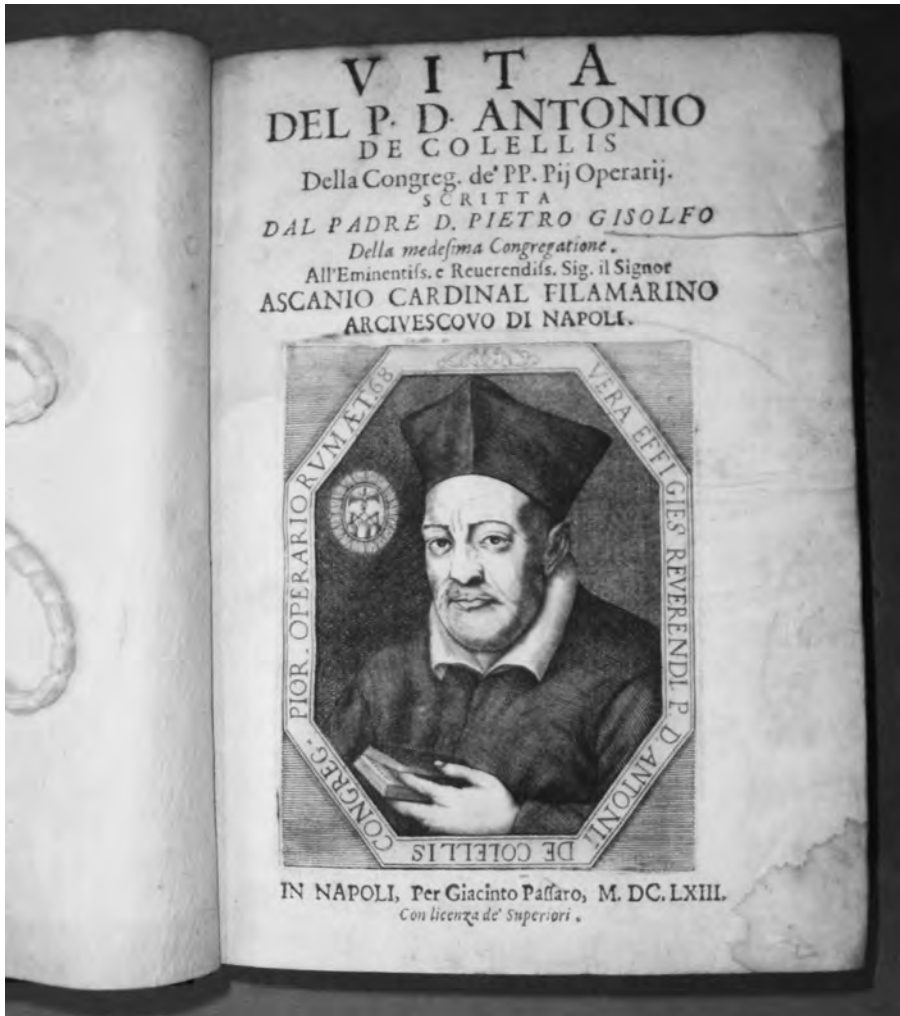


Figure 12: Title page portrait to Pietro Gisolfo, *Vita del P. D. Antonio De Colellis* (Naples: Giacinto Passaro, 1663). Photo by permission of Massimo Velo.



Figure 13: Joseph Greut. Engraved title page to Giovanni Antonio Cagiano, *Vita di Paolo Burali D'Arezzo* (Rome: Vitale Mascardi, 1649; Naples: Secondino Roncagliolo, 1650). Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 14: Frontispiece portrait to [Anon. Discalced Carmelite Confessor], *Vita della Serva di Dio Suora Teresa Benedetta Monaca professa del ven. Monastero di S. Gio: Battista detto lo Riglione nel secolo D. Caterina Gerbino el'Agras* (Palermo, 1744). Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 15: “St Januarius stems the flow of lava during the eruption of Vesuvius in 1631,” in Niccolo Carmine Falconi, *L’Intera Storia della famiglia, vita, miracoli, traslazioni, e culto del glorioso martire San Gennaro* (Naples: Felice Mosca, 1713), image facing p. DXIV. By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark: 663.k.20.



Figure 16: Frontispiece portrait to G. Silos, *Vita del Venerabile Servo di Dio D. Francesco Olimpio dell'Ordine de' Cherici Regolari* (Naples: Salvatore Castaldo, 1685). Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 18: [G. F.], *La Vita della Ven. Serva di Dio D. Cammilla [sic] Orsini Borghese P.ssa di Sulmona di poi suor Maria Vittoria Religiosa dell'ordine dell'Annunziata* (Rome: Francesco Gonzaga, 1717), image from the *Vita* of Camilla Orsini showing a pivotal point in her life. Photo courtesy of author.



Figure 19: [G. F.], *La Vita della Ven. Serva di Dio D. Cammilla [sic] Orsini Borghese P.ssa di Sulmona di poi suor Maria Vittoria Religiosa dell'ordine dell'Annunziata* (Rome: Francesco Gonzaga, 1717), image from the *Vita* of Camilla Orsini showing a pivotal point in her life. Photo courtesy of author.

body.²³ Face and body become the “material” of the selfless life. I suggest that the inclusion of portrait frontispieces in the *Lives* of would-be saints was part of a strategy for canonization and was therefore determined by those most closely involved: author, publisher, members of the subject’s family (both religious and blood). While little direct evidence exists, there is no reason to assume that the supposedly self-effacing subjects were not often instrumental in the process of securing their own portraits. The *Vite* often refer to portraits of their subjects being made shortly before death, despite the protestations of their subjects. An urgent wish to capture the image of would-be saints is closely related to intimations of their sanctity.

The frontispiece engravings draw deeply on portraiture’s established traditions of celebrating illustrious individuals, aristocrats, and authors, including the well-developed relationship between portraits and biographies and the established tradition of author-portrait frontispieces.²⁴ Renaissance Italy pioneered this new genre, with at least thirty-four author portraits known before 1550 (including Petrarch, Dante, Ariosto, and Aretino).²⁵ Author portraits counterpose body and spirit—with the portrait supposedly representing one and the text the other—and seek their relation. Thus the frontispiece portrait of Pierre de Ronsard’s *Amours* (Paris, 1552) is inscribed “Ici le corps, et l’esprit dans ses vers.” [“Here is his body; his spirit is in his verse.”]²⁶ Author portraits imply that information about a writer helped readers understand his or her works.²⁷ Thus, Wouverius wrote to Federico Borromeo, founder of the Ambrosiana in Milan, “to judge at the same time the spirit of the authors by their books and bodies, face and physiognomy . . . excites a generous soul.”²⁸ A self-conscious revival of the ancient cult of portraiture of great men developed in Italy from the fourteenth century on.²⁹ The humanist bishop of Como, Paolo Giovio (1483-1552), a notable example, interested in the relationships between appearance, moral character, and deeds, created a portrait collection of famous men, constantly badgering people for their portraits, demanding exact likenesses. Giovio had the inspiration of expanding identificatory inscriptions to *elogia* or capsule biographies to accompany the images.³⁰ In turn, Giovio’s new approach to portrait collecting made an impact on classical portrait iconography through the publication of Fulvio Orsini’s *Imagines et eulogia virorum illustrium et eruditorum ex antiquis et*

nomismatib. (Rome, 1570) and of Giovio's own *Elogia virorum literis illustrium* (Basel, 1577), which included some portraits with the biographies of its distinguished subjects, such as Petrarch, Leon Battista Alberti, and Albertus Magnus (fig. 7).³¹ The figures included in these books were arranged chronologically in sections: men of action, poets, philosophers, historians, orators, grammarians, lawyers, and physicians. Moreover, text and image counterposed features and work, body and spirit. The author-portrait frontispiece is a development of this tradition.

Moreover, by drawing on the tradition of author portraits, frontispiece portraits of would-be saints accrued authority and social prestige to their subjects through their format and position alone. Like frontispiece author portraits, frontispiece portraits of would-be saints are usually bust-length and, like them, they played a role in advancing their subject's importance. For example, Sigismondo Sicola's *La Nobilta Gloriosa nella Vita di S Aspreno* (Naples, 1696), written partly to advance claims to nobility for his own family, boasts an engraved portrait of Sicola himself which includes his family arms (fig. 8).³² Many would-be saints are presented as if in framed portraits, such as Carlo Carafa (1667) (fig. 9). Thus, the authority of both author portrait and framed oil painted portrait are here combined.

Frontispiece portraits of would-be saints sometimes evoke funerary monuments, thereby harnessing associations with the illustrious deceased. For example, *Cronicamerone, overo Annali, e Giornali storici delle cose notabili accadute nella Città, e Regno di Napoli dalla Natività di N.S. sino all'1690* (Naples, 1690) by Antonio Bulifon (1649–ca. 1707) boasts an elegant portrait of the author (fig. 10), who also financed the volumes, set in an octagonal inscribed frame, as if standing on a tomb-chest, like a funerary monument.³³ The funerary monument format was taken up in earnest for portraits of venerable nuns, including that of Maria Aurelia Caracciolo (1743) (fig. 11), which strongly evokes a memorial to an illustrious deceased, and this format extended also to male venerables such as Antonio De Colellis (Naples, 1663) (fig. 12), Carlo Carafa (Naples, 1667) (fig. 9), and appears as late as 1797 in the case of Cesare De Bus (Rome and Ivrea, 1797).³⁴ Sometimes the evocation of a tomb-chest with portrait above is particularly strong, as with Bulifon's frontispiece, where the portrait is inscribed with his name, anagram, age, and date of birth, or with that of Carlo Carafa, or that of

Giuseppe Imparato, which precedes his spiritual biography, and shows a crudely drawn portrait in an oval medallion with fanciful ribbon above and an inscription, of the sort commonly found on memorials, on a rectangle like a tomb-chest below (figs. 4, 9, and 10). Treating the portrait of the *Vita's* subject as an image within an image gave scope for powerful ideological claims, which would have been awkward if advanced more directly on behalf of their ostensibly humble subjects. A useful example is the title page engraved by Joseph Greut for Giovanni Antonio Cagianò's *Vita di Paolo Burali D'Arezzo* (Rome, 1649; Naples, 1650), in which two winged putti hold up a cloth on which the title appears and a rope from which hangs a medallion portrait of the esteemed Theatine, Archbishop of Naples (1576-1578) (fig. 13).³⁵ A Theatine version of Fame, with eyes and ears on her wings, blows her trumpet above the entire ensemble: thus the man, his life, and the *Vita* are equated and jointly celebrated.³⁶

The author-portrait format was taken up particularly for portraits of venerable nuns, such as Maria Aurelia Caracciolo (Naples, 1743) (fig. 11), and Teresa Benedetta Gerbino (Palermo, 1744) (fig. 14), but was given a specific twist. The frontispiece portrait of Teresa Benedetta Gerbino is a good example of the way in which these depictions of nuns tended to subvert the conventions of the aristocratic portrait genre on which they depended. Here a conventional portrait frame is replaced by a frame made of thorns, interspersed with doves holding symbols of the Passion. This devotional frame disturbs the internal order associated with portraits. It is as if the Passion frames both Teresa Benedetta's outlook on the world and her being within it, staging her mortified flesh, not just in the enclosure of the convent, but in the confines of her own shrouded, chastised, and benumbed body. The frontispiece frames her through symbols of Christ's suffering: thus the risks of self-aggrandizement and vanity associated with the portrait are undercut and reframed from within. Sister Teresa herself, standing before an altar or desk on which lies a tiny Christ Child—a holy wax model—holds a flaming heart in one hand and gestures with the other to a flail. Self-mortification, love of Christ, and adoration of the Christ Child are bound in her devotion.

In this case, image and text are unusually consonant. The *Vita* emphasizes how sister Benedetta's life was marked by spiritual exercises, self-abomination, torture of her own body, and continuous mental prayer in order

to achieve a “nobile schiavitù,” or “noble slavery” through her “beloved torments.”³⁷ The text informs us that “she often had ropes and irons in her hand to flagellate her body, believing that the voluntary vexation of the flesh was a sure way to achieve a judicious soul.”³⁸ Her bed was not for rest, but was fashioned like a cross, with rough planks underneath the sheets, to satisfy her wish for disrupted sleep.³⁹ Furthermore, the frontispiece image corresponds unusually closely to a specific passage of the *Life*, which describes how Teresa Benedetta, given a wax figure of baby Jesus, set it in a special cave made of thorns, surrounded by doves holding in their beaks palms, olives, ropes, nails, and chains. One dove held a heart in flames above the Christ doll’s head. The *Vita* recounts how Teresa Benedetta spent much time there, gazing at it lovingly, as if sharing in his sufferings, and was even seen in ecstasy before it. The frontispiece frames her life through symbols of Christ’s suffering.

The emphasis on the single figure in frontispiece portraits of would-be saints derives not only from the tradition of portraiture, but also from the emphasis on the necessity of solitude for all religious, especially women.⁴⁰ Devotional handbooks remind nuns that their spirit, breath, and mind should all be focused on prayer, and not on interaction with others.⁴¹ In these portraits the nuns’ bodies are themselves reformed. Yet what is figured in these portraits is an intense isolation, beyond solitude, a refusal of the other, unless it is the Other. It is possible to regard these nuns’ somatic experiences as forging for themselves an exclusive society, deliberately at odds with the bodies of the external world, and which would be hotly repudiated by that outside world: a grotesque and repulsive body. In other words, nuns are forging not only a special identity for themselves, but also for their social group, through such apparently extravagant behaviors.

Paradoxically, however, in these frontispiece portraits the spiritual trials of isolation and loneliness are deliberately confused with and eclipsed by the pictorial conventions celebrating remarkable individuals. Isolation and soul-searching teeter on the brink of celebration and elevation. The problem of the narcissistic image rears its head. While the texts tell us of self-humiliation, of nuns eating food so decayed that “grubs were its condiment,” or sharing chickens’ bran; or, while nursing a sick sister nun, of sucking out the pus, and holding the soaked bandages in their mouths “for some time,” the images point elsewhere.⁴² In adopting the portrait for-

mat, the *Vite* adroitly conjure a powerful visual language of achievement, respectability, social recognition, and high birth.

Celebrating humility: the paradox of transgression

Gillian Rose, modifying Donna Haraway, suggests that bodies are the “maps of the relation between power and identity.”⁴³ Where and how those bodies are depicted further inscribe those maps. For political and spiritual ends, portraits of would-be saints strove to exploit the difficulties of containing female identity within the schemata provided by author portraits and aristocratic portraiture. Portraying holy men and women who had withdrawn from the world in order to deny its values, including those of vanity, beauty, and worldly success, posed problems which the celebration of the physical appearance of authors or men of action did not. The inclusion in *Vite* of portrait images of their subjects, therefore, involves a series of apparent contradictions between the supposed subject matter of the texts and the worldly traditions of portraiture. Partly for this reason, and to shield their subjects from any accusation of worldly vanity during the processes of canonization, the hieratic aloofness of canonized saints is replaced in portraits of female venerables in particular by an emphasis on fleshly mortification.⁴⁴

The *Vite* are full of paradoxes, and the images of their subjects share many of them directly with the text. The paradox of including a portrait image of a subject who apparently eschews any earthly recognition echoes one of the central paradoxes of the *Vite* as a genre. The spiritual biographies of female would-be saints are not conventional accounts of self-sacrifice and demure virtue. They demonstrate, instead, strong, independent women whose activities run counter to the stereotypes about feminine behavior in early modern Italy. As Elizabeth Petroff has observed, female saints were doubly transgressors, both by their nature as saints, stretching the boundaries of human limits, and by their nature as women, in breaking rules and flouting boundaries.⁴⁵ The texts skillfully mediate and even deny transgression in their subjects’ lives, presenting independence and insubordination, not as necessary for achievement by ambitious nuns, but as obedience to God’s will, while repeatedly emphasizing subjects’ humility and obedience to ecclesiastical authorities. Thus, while descriptions of

abject humility and self-mortification play the major key, the counterpoint sounds the discordant notes of self-assertion and political ambition.⁴⁶

Ambition and determination of the protagonists burn through the *Vite*, but they are matched by the subtlety with which the biographical account conceals them. Biographers frequently take care to address the objections of a skeptical reader as they go. Thus, after reporting that sister Teresa Benedetta was visited by Saint Ciro, the author of her *Vita* (her confessor) quickly brushes away any burgeoning objections from the reader. This cannot be thought the result of the girl's imaginings, the author insists defensively, since she was not even aware that such a saint existed.⁴⁷ To show that he has not been duped by female wiles, the author parades his awareness of female weaknesses. The female sex, he writes, "is easily excited, just as it is more deftly imaginative, and frivolous in taking true for false and bad for good."⁴⁸ Such declarations serve to present their authors as both detached and authoritative, as objective recorders of scrupulously analyzed facts, rather than as interested parties.

The emphasis on unadornment, plainness, even ugliness in these portrait images is particularly transgressive and shocking when presented in the format of the portrait associated with gracious aristocratic portraits of idealized feminine beauty. Indeed, these frontispiece portraits of would-be saints are also remarkable in this regard—in daring to present women in terms other than of worldly beauty.⁴⁹

But transgression is part of the divine. In what is still the most illuminating discussion of transgression, in which he seeks to free it from confusion with the scandalous and the subversive, Michel Foucault remarks:

Transgression, then, is not related to the limit as black to white, the prohibited to the lawful, those outside to the inside ... rather their relationship takes the form of a spiral which no simple infraction can exhaust. Perhaps it is like a flash of lightning in the night which, from the beginning of time, gives a dense and black intensity to the night it denies, which lights up the night from the inside, from top to bottom, and yet owes to the dark the stark clarity of its manifestation, its harrowing and poised singularity; the flash loses itself in this space it marks with its sovereignty and becomes silent now that it has given a name to obscurity.⁵⁰

The nuns' transgressions are inextricably linked to the divine, since the limit marked by the sacred opened the space where the divine functions. The practices of asceticism, strenuous piety, and active charity, which are common to all holy women's lives, blend gradually into the manifestation of miracle-working power as nuns survive impossibly lengthy fasts and deprivations. It is commonplace to read of holy women washing the sores of the sick and drinking the effluvia. These are demonstrations neither of self-control nor of good nursing. Rather, they are transgressions, violations of the proper order of things, profoundly ambiguous, at once heroic, transgressive, compelling, miraculous.⁵¹ The limit glorifies the nature it excludes: "The limit," suggests Foucault, "opens violently onto the limitless, finds itself carried away by the content it had rejected and fulfilled by the plenitude that invades it to the core of its being."⁵² The portraits are not silent about such acts, though they do not depict them literally.

The ravaged faces of sister Teresa Benedetta Gerbino or Celestina Raineri attest to their pain-filled piety (figs. 6 and 14). The very transgressions which marked female sanctity and which raised venerable women to extraordinary heights are also precisely those acts and qualities whose visual depiction is shown as marked on and depicted through the body. Here we see the difficulty in portraying a self that is permeated by otherness. These images can be read in terms of a deterritorialization, in the shifting of the imbrication of the material and the semiotic, in terms of transgression and spiritual intensity, and also of reterritorialization of the portrait as respectable, following this shift.⁵³

Mundane Sanctity?

If frontispiece portraits owed much to the tradition of author portraits, they were formed in a field which was increasingly regulated by the Papacy. Urban VIII tightened papal control over visual representations of would-be saints who were not beatified or canonized. In 1625, he prohibited the depiction of supernatural attributes (haloes, rays of heavenly light) for mere "servants of God." Intended to affirm the Papacy's determining role, and to rein in rampantly proliferating local cults, this ruling contributed significantly to the depiction of holiness in *everyday* or mundane terms.

While the Neapolitan frontispieces might abide literally by the decrees of Urban VIII in depicting the divine in terms of the unremarkable, the plain, and the austere, their import is thereby in many ways potentially more revolutionary. The *Vite's* function as devotional works do not sufficiently explain those steady stares. More than simply setting forth role models, they challenge the reader to acknowledge the heroism of the life depicted. There could be no claim to holiness without a demonstration of power. Frontispiece portraits of "living" saints, depicted in understated and austere terms, coupled with the emotive exploits of their spiritual biographies, marked a radical change in the production of holiness. Holiness was represented no longer apodeictically, achieved through bloody martyrdom or the hand of God from without, but something within the reach of everyday mortals, from within.

The new interiorized holiness of these would-be saints contrasts markedly with depictions of extroverted and public holiness of ancient patron saints.⁵⁴ Consider the representation of Saint Januarius stemming the eruption of Vesuvius of 1631 (fig. 15), one of a series of beautiful engravings representing episodes of the life of the principal patron saint of Naples, which adorns Carminio Falcone's lavish *L'Intera Storia di San Gennaro* (Naples, 1713).⁵⁵ Here all is elevation, movement, and mediation. Vesuvius's effusions of flame and smoke echo, in threatening but minor key, the saint's triumphal soaring. Sainly intervention, volcanic eruption, Naples's natural topography, and the spires, towers, and domes of her churches and castles are bound together in a dramatic transcendental economy, based on verticality and might.

By contrast, the portrait figures do not, on the whole, share the fluid and resolved world which Saint Januarius inhabits: they do not crane towards Heaven or gaze blissfully at heavenly visions. Instead, almost all of the portrait figures, particularly female figures, are static and locked into a horizontal economy, engaging directly with the viewer-reader. Their gestures tend to be constrained and also horizontal, often pointing towards a crucifix or standing close behind or before one. Their faces and bodies are ravaged by the holy, rather than delirious in its transports. The holy is a secret (a frightening, scarring one) held by and marked on these bodies, rather than an uplifting experience orchestrated through them.⁵⁶

The absence of the supernatural in the portraits of would-be saints, both male and female, is emphatic, as the examples of Francesco Olimpio (fig. 16) or Maria Villani show (fig. 2). This is a world governed less by vertical movement between the earthly and the transcendent (characterized by Roland Barthes in another context as “the sacramental economy of medieval Catholicism”) and more by an interiorized spirituality, privatized and contained, as exclusive as it is holy.⁵⁷

In these portrait frontispieces, female holiness, in particular, is not an elision between human and divine, as in frontispiece images of canonized saints, but a disjuncture between, on the one hand, disciplined appearance and, on the other, a raging, emotional, porous, and unbounded corporeal engagement with holiness. Here female identity is conceptualized in terms of a different understanding of boundaries. Fundamentally concerned with boundaries, as these images are, their subjects are both the boundary and the Other against which all identity is constructed, and that which confuses all boundaries. As Irigaray suggested, body boundaries do not contain the self; they are the embodied self.⁵⁸ Thus, in spite of their apparent static rigidity, these portraits imply potentiality, force, and flow, over stasis and containment.

The nuns do not meddle in the transgressively divine; they are mundane, in spite of the trappings of holiness, and they are holy even in their insistent ordinariness. These are not nuns who turn their eyes up in ecstasy; despite their close engagement with the crucifix, they stare fixedly out at the viewer-reader, addressing her or him levelly. The gaze of a male venerable, such as Francesco Olimpio (fig. 16), closely echoes that of canonized saints (male and female), such as Saint Januarius (fig. 15): upward-looking, extroverted, engaged with Heaven. But the gaze of female venerables, such as Maria Villani (fig. 2), Maria Aurelia Caracciolo (fig. 11), or Maria Rosa Giannini (fig. 17), is earth-bound.

Something of the discrepancy between Maria Villani’s austere portrait and the turbulent and highly emotionally charged life recounted in the texts exists in the *Vite* of male would-be saints, such as Giuseppe Silos’s *Vita* of Francesco Olimpio (Naples, 1685), who died in Naples in 1639 (fig. 16).⁵⁹ Certainly, the depiction of would-be male saints is marked by austerity, even if this is less pronounced than in the portraits of their

female counterparts. Although a canonized male saint enjoys aerial elevation on a hierophanic cloud (fig. 15), the would-be male saint is firmly earthbound, notwithstanding his other-worldly expression and attributes (fig. 16). The discrepancy between text and image is particularly acute in the *Vite* of female venerables. While the lives of holy women are described in more emotional terms than their male counterparts, their portraits are more restrained, and their relationship to the divine is depicted as more mediated. The restraint in depicting women's contact with the divine visually is not echoed in the texts. While intense spiritual experience was readily encouraged amongst literate nuns, perhaps it was too threatening to be made available to the illiterate or poor in relatively cheap prints.⁶⁰

Bodily mortification and the daily martyrdom

Although effective display tends to be downplayed in nuns' frontispiece portraits, they demonstrate a remarkable emotional engagement with Christ's Passion. In the Christian tradition, the model *par excellence* is Christ, and fundamental in defining women's affective spirituality in this period at least was a close identification with Christ. Whereas the written texts emphasize nuns' experiences as *sponsae Christi*, their portrait engravings show them in relation to his (and their) Passion. While the Incarnation justified the performance of, and identification with, Christ's suffering body, that performance and identification were roads not just to redemption, but to sanctity.

Whether, like Veronica Laparelli, they embrace the crucifix (fig. 5), like Maria Aurelia Cecilia, lightly caress the figure of the crucified (fig. 11), or, like Maria Villani, simply indicate a crucifix on their desk (fig. 2), the relationship between nun and crucifix marks the spiritual center of these images. Far more than for their male counterparts, identification with the Passion of Christ is the nuns' spiritual spine. Indeed, the close relationship between nun and crucifix became a form of shorthand indicating the depth of the nun's dedication to her religious life. In the unusual sequence of three portraits which illustrate Camilla Orsini's *Vita*, marking the critical junctures of her life, her monachal state is marked not so much by her habit (after all, her widow's weeds are distinctly habit-like), but by the crucifix

(figs. 18 and 19). The suffering Christ and the soul of the nun are forcibly combined in pain, piety, and pity, in what Barthes, in another context, has called the *chronos* of passion.⁶¹ These are living martyrs. In short, this was self-sacrifice. But it was a sacrifice which allowed them to come closer to God. In their identification with the crucified Christ, these holy women allied themselves not only with his sufferings, but also with the unmoved constancy of his election and the certainty of His triumph.

Celestina Raineri (d. 1734), a lay sister at Santa Maria dei Cancelleri in Palermo, is portrayed as Christ crucified, at one with Christ through her body (fig. 6). In her discussion of the life writings of Maria Domitilla, Capuchin nun of Pavia (1595–1671), E. Ann Matter astutely observes, “If we look at her autobiography with the question ‘Who was she?’ we find her own narrative telling us that she was, as far as possible, someone else: Christ.”⁶² Thus Celestina Raineri is shown performing Christ’s Passion, a martyr, surrounded by instruments of her self-mortification. She holds the martyr’s lily, her face gouged by the marks of fasts, while flail and chain brush against her sleeve. Her emaciated features receive as much emphasis as the cross, lily, and crown of thorns she bears, while the chains and whip on her desk testify to her routine self-flagellation: her “harsh life” is literally articulated in the inscription which, spilling out from the oval, binds frame and image together. Here, most forcibly, the body, far from being ruled by discourse, is itself a symbolic language, and it is the body that is responsible for a specific truth: the Other was in her before her.⁶³

Bodily mortification infuses these portraits, both textual and pictorial. Nuns’ close identification with Christ’s Passion, often evinced in their close contact with a crucifix, is a metonym for both the adversarial relationship between saints, especially female saints, and their bodies, and the exploitation of their bodies to achieve intense spiritual pleasure and fulfilment. Their bodies, therefore, represent both their limit, which must be overcome, and the mode by which that limit can be transcended. The saint overcomes her body through self-inflicted suffering. Likewise, self-mortification assumes an importance far greater in *Vite* of female venerables than in either their male counterparts or in canonized saints’ lives. It is a dominant theme throughout the *Lives* of female would-be saints, and its blood-thirsty details often run on for several chapters. These narratives explore

deep ambivalences about the relative participation of body and soul, and the boundaries between body and soul.⁶⁴ There is a hardness, even a harshness, in the faces and stances of the nuns, as if to demonstrate that their self-control, indeed, their self-mortification, take absolute and necessary precedence over spiritual rapture (compare figures 6, 14, and 19).

The martyrdom of self-persecution, not mere bloodless asceticism, is claimed through these portraits. Nuns' ascetic feats are shown to induce physical pain and scars of the sort associated with martyrs' persecution.⁶⁵ The would-be saints bear the marks of Christ rather than of femininity. They deserve to be saints because they have conquered their womanly bodies. The restoration of their beauty in representation readily followed canonization (see figure 1). However, while martyrs suffered persecution from others as a consequence of their refusal to surrender their Christian faith, these self-mortified nuns suffered persecution at their own hands, not simply as punishment of their own bodies for departing, even momentarily, from dedication to Christ, but as the very means by which they might be conjoined with Christ in shared suffering.⁶⁶ Their faith and suffering (by which their faith was to be measured) are depicted as overwhelmingly interiorized, introverted, even privatized, as befits the life of enclosure, in direct contrast to the public, political, and topographical martyrdoms of canonized saints, such as St. Cecilia (compare figures 1 and 6).⁶⁷ Thus they are not so much imitating Christ, as *performing* Christ. This is especially evident in the portraits of Teresa Benedetta (fig. 14) or Celestina Raineri (fig. 6), where the degree of performativity is pronounced; but it is implicit, too, in the portrayal of sister Maria Vittoria (Camilla Orsini) (fig. 18) or even Maria Villani (fig. 2). Consequently, the portraits are literally—often awkwardly—self-effacing, marking absence as much as presence, gesturing elsewhere. These portraits succeed in being images of dislocation, even of self-deconstruction.

The tenacity of purpose emphasized in the frontispiece portraits of female would-be saints is not at odds with Trent's approach to free will. Original sin was seen as weakening but not extinguishing free will.⁶⁸ Through grace, sinners might be helped to "convert themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to and cooperating with that grace."⁶⁹ "Justification" was not only the remission of sins, but also the "sanctifica-

tion and renewal of the inner man through the voluntary reception of the grace and gifts whereby an unjust man becomes just; these gifts are not faith alone, but faith, hope, and charity."⁷⁰ Cooperation with grace leads to salvation, claims Trent; such cooperation means faith and good works.⁷¹ As Thomas Worcester has suggested, the transformation from a life of "sin" to a life of "sanctity" was imagined as a grace, a process, a work, a combat, and an art.⁷² Trent treats justification and sanctification not as precipitous events, but as processes that can move forward or be reversed; placing hope in God, one should also "fear for the combat that remains with the flesh, with the world, and with the devil."⁷³

Male holy figures rarely demonstrate the intense identification with the crucified Christ of their female counterparts. In the portrait of would-be saint Francesco Olimpio (fig. 16), for instance, the crucifix is a shadowy accoutrement on his desk, like the skull, devoid of the emotional involvement and physical contact that characterize female venerables. The devout Theatine gazes upwards slightly to his left, while he clasps rosary beads and a lily, his arms crossed over his chest; a skull, cross, and scourge lie on the table next to him. Behind, glimpsed through a window (silled, but unglazed and unmulioned, as if giving direct access to the venerable father's spiritual state), above a simple building in a wood, the sun sends a shaft of light to earth, a metaphor for his religious purity, on which the text comments.⁷⁴ The building perhaps represents the remote chapel in Sorrento which held St. Anthony Abbot's relics, where Francesco Olimpio often went to pray:

This place is very remote, and also very apt for contemplative silences: and there Francesco would often stay for a long time in the most fervent prayers; since it seemed to him that close to Saint [Anthony] Abbot's ashes his own internal fire of devotion would increase. Sometimes while he was in Sorrento, he was so attentive to God, that drawn beyond his own feelings, it seemed that his soul was flying through Heaven.⁷⁵

On the whole, male would-be saints are both freer to display emotion and less accessible to the viewer-reader than are their female counterparts. While sister Maria Aurelia Cecilia's delicate detachment is more the product of youth and breeding than of spiritual affect (fig. 11), some of

the holy men are borne away by intense spiritual rapture; their being is removed from their bodies, transported through their relationship with the divine. Thus Francesco Olimpico (fig. 16) and Francesco Pavone gaze upwards and downwards, respectively, hands crossed over their bodies, closing themselves off to the viewer, open only to an interiorized relationship with the divine.⁷⁶ The holy books, lilies, rosaries, skulls, and crosses simply function as props (or potential attributes to be assumed after successful canonization, perhaps). The emphasis on interiorization effectively makes the transcendent present within, at once possessed and possessing, privatized, and secret.

Let us now turn again to the portrait which accompanies Antonio Maria Bonucci's *Istoria della Santa Vita e Virtù eroiche della Ven. Serva di Dio Veronica Laparelli* (Naples, 1714) (fig. 5).⁷⁷ What makes this image remarkable is the intensity of spiritual energy in the figure of Veronica Laparelli. The wave of divine energy surging beneath Veronica's habit is unparalleled among frontispiece portraits and recalls baroque sculpture, such as Gianlorenzo's *St. Teresa* (1647). Laparelli's experience of Christ is at once visual and tactile, embodied and invasive. Emotional energy sweeps through her, combining pain and pleasure in her experience of the divine. She clasps in her left hand a crucifix, twists her head to her left to gaze intently at the figure of Christ, particularly at the wounds on his feet, while her right hand stretches across her own palpitating heart. Her habit, swirling about her heart and her face, seethes with emotional energy.

Unlike many of the frontispiece portraits of holy women, Veronica Laparelli is energized and electrified by her faith, rather than emaciated and drained by it. The crucifix itself protrudes beyond the confines of the medallion frame, while its shadow and that of the venerable Veronica fall across it: Christ's death and her religious fervor resist confinement. Touch and affect are one. The fingers of Laparelli's left hand touch not the cross but Christ's body; and her right hand presses her habit over her own heart, as if to transmit the immensity of Christ's suffering. Religious affect is shown here to be literally touching—the union of touch, sight, and emotion. Just as the frame of the image is exceeded by the image, so the images which frame the book cannot contain the life within.

The Face As “Frame”

Frontispiece portraits of would-be saints produced a new form of devotional reading, as frames for spiritual biographies, *antiporte* to (the reading of) exemplary lives.⁷⁸ Thus these images constituted part of programmatic attempts to propel their subjects towards sanctification, and functioned as models of holiness, examples, like rhetorical figures, for readers to imitate. Usually an image is framed; here the image frames the text, the *Life*, and in its austerity acts as damper to the textual incitements and excitements. In the case of Maria Villani, the disciplined body of the image frames the leaking one of the text. Do these images render the *Vite* more effective as works of devotion, while also serving to regulate the transgressiveness that saintly lives represented?

In assuming the place of the portrait of the author, the portrait of the biographical subject of the *Vita* positioned the would-be saint as author of his or her spiritual life, and a self-conscious shaper of his or her holy experience, rather than apodeictically afflicted from without.⁷⁹ The holy women look straight out at the viewer. This cannot simply be explained as a residue of the conventions of portraiture. The holy women directly address the reader-viewer, enjoining them to imitation. Those looks, like the biographical texts themselves, seem directed predominantly at other religious women, whether nuns or women in the world seeking spiritual devotion. The holy women confront the reader levelly, offering the example of spiritual experience, spiritual *competence* to the reader-viewer.⁸⁰

The paradoxes of the search for fame coupled with rejection of the world, and the depiction of the face coupled with refusal to adorn the self, were particularly marked in seventeenth-century portraits of female would-be saints. By the eighteenth century, the conventions of aristocratic portraiture seeped in a particularly marked manner into frontispiece portraits of nuns. In itself this is an arresting conflation. The redemption of historical suffering and the patrician tradition of portraiture would seem to be inexorably at odds with each other. The patrician portrait shows the perfectly content aristocratic world in which the gaze produces a strictly human interrogation. Yet not only did frontispiece portraits of female venerables increasingly adopt the manners of aristocratic portraits, but

more significantly, they also tended to emphasize the aristocratic manner of their subjects over spiritual dedication. Or rather, they tended to collapse the one into the other. Thus, the frontispiece portrait of Maria Aurelia Caracciolo (fig. 11) is marked, in its poise and elegance, as aristocratic before it is holy. Indeed, in general throughout Italy, eighteenth-century frontispiece portraits of nuns tended to emphasize their aristocratic breeding.⁸¹ As a result a new nobility of holiness came to replace an older tradition of self-effacement—an apparent self-effacement that is a claim to power through the face. By the mid-eighteenth century, as we see in sister Maria-Rosa Giannini's portrait (1755) (fig. 17), the hieratic stiffness of the seventeenth-century portraits is banished and replaced by a courtly miraculous.

Conclusion

The point was to create transparent bodies ... that a body might preach without speaking, and that in walking around it might make visible what lives within.

—Michel de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable* (88).

Caught between excess and lack, these frontispiece portraits are marked by an ambiguous passage from presence to absence, indicating how a body “touched” by desire and engraved, wounded, written by the Other, replaced the revelatory, didactic word.⁸² *Imitatio* is not a necessary goal of hagiography. Bonaventure's *St. Francis*, Chiara Frugoni argues, was to be venerated, not imitated.⁸³ The saint is perfect before his birth; and the virtues that appear during his life are manifestations of that perfection. Such lives glorify God rather than provide models for mortals. Yet the frontispiece portraits, by contrast, stage their subjects as models. Even as papal involvement in canonization grew more intense, and even as official recognition of holiness demanded well-documented cases, these portrait frontispieces appear to mark a shift in notions of sanctity, from that which is innate and to be venerated, to a mundane holiness that is lived and can be imitated.⁸⁴ They thus bind together the two principal categories of images inherited from classical antiquity: the portrait (εἰκὼν, *icona*, *imago*, *effigy*) and the

narrative picture (*historia*): one recorded the appearance of a person; the other presented an event, historical or mythological. The elision of difference between *historia* and *icona* reflects the fundamental Christian belief in the progression from the invisible God who revealed himself to the Chosen People through sacred history to the Incarnate Christ alive in heaven who is always accessible. The portrait frontispieces of the would-be saints are both portraits and spiritual narratives, each affirming both the effigy of a human being and the presence of Christ in heaven as accessible through and in that very person.

Nevertheless, the images risk lapsing into cliché. As Certeau acutely observed of mystics, "their procedures are sometimes contradictory, since in multiplying the mental and physical techniques that fixed the conditions of possibility of an encounter or dialogue with the Other (method of prayer, meditation, concentration, etc.), they end up, in spite of having laid down the principle of an absolute gratuitousness, producing an ersatz presence. That preoccupation with technique is already the effect of what it opposes."⁸⁵ Thus, the use of the crucifix to stand metonymically for a self-mortifying religious devotion risks presenting religious experience as mere technique, or, worse, mere cliché. We can read the light play of sister Maria Aurelia Cecilia Caracciolo's aristocratic fingers across the crucifix, her thumb just glancing against Christ's right shin, as almost ironic (fig. 11). The hands which touch Christ crucified are aristocratic before they are holy, deliciously delicate rather than blunted and careworn.

In short, portrait frontispieces of would-be saints stage portraits of mundanity as divine, of living saints as self-effacing mortals, saints who have not yet been endorsed and officially recognized by the Church, yet are capable of awakening holiness in the reader. In other words, here we see representations of saints-in-the-forging. These spiritual examples depart from heavy reliance on historical event as example, such as was evinced in the celebration of ancient saints and their relics, to a new emphasis on observation and introspection. Both the role of the example and the reader change.⁸⁶ There is a shift from past to present, from evidence available only in texts to evidence visible in the everyday world.⁸⁷

Notes

1. In Naples alone there were 105 cases of *fama di santità* between 1540 and 1750; see Jean-Michel Sallmann, *Santi barocchi. Modelli di santità, pratiche devozionali e comportamenti religiosi nel regno di Napoli dal 1540 al 1750* (Lecce: Argo, 1996), 163–85. The research for this article was largely undertaken during my British Academy Research Readership 2005–2007. A British Academy Small Grant also facilitated research in Naples. I am pleased to thank the British Academy for its generous support. I am indebted to the library staff at the Biblioteca Nazionale in Naples. Thanks also to colleagues in the History of Art Department at the University of York. Alessandra Pompili gave expert guidance with Latin. The editorial team at *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal* have been remarkably assiduous in their suggestions for editorial improvements: my thanks to them all.

2. Jean-Michel Sallmann first accorded frontispiece images of saints attention, but his analysis is blunted, both because his engagement with these images is visually limited, and because his discussion of the visual does not distinguish between representations of canonized saints and those of would-be saints; see Sallmann, *Santi barocchi*, 51–71.

3. While religious devotion has received close attention with regards to gender, visualizations of holiness have not. Recent years have seen a great deal of scholarship on post-Tridentine sanctity and individual canonizations, but the work of Jean-Michel Sallmann remains outstanding for its combination of historical precision and imaginative analytic lucidity. See Sallmann, *Santi barocchi*, esp. 167–83; Sallmann, “Image et Fonction du saint dans la Région de Naples à la fin de XVIIe et au début du XVIIIe siècle,” *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome* 91, no. 2 (1979): 827–74. For recent work on religious books as gendered, and on women writing and inspiring devotional texts, see Donna, *Disciplina, Creanza cristiana dal XV al XVII secolo*, ed. Gabriella Zarri (Rome: Edizioni di storia e Letteratura, 1996); and Katherine Gill and Lisa Bitel’s co-edited website, <http://monasticmatrix.usc.edu/bibliographia>. For the example of the printing presses of San Jacopo di Ripoli and Monteluce in Perugia, see Mary Rouse and Richard Rouse, *Cartolai, Illuminators, and Printers in Fifteenth-century Italy: The Evidence of the Ripoli Press* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988).

4. Marc’Antonio Boldetti, *Osservazioni sopra i Cimiterj de’ Santi Martiri, ed antichi cristiani di Roma. Aggiuntavi la Serie di tutti quelli, che sino al presente si sono scoperti, e di altri simili, che in varie Parti del Mondo si trovano: con alcune riflessioni pratiche sopra il Culto delle Sagre Reliquie* (Rome: Maria Salvioni, 1720), 300. See also Filippo Caraffa and Antonio Massone, *Santa Cecilia Martire Romana: Passione e culto* (Fratelli Palombi: Rome, 1996).

5. The Latin reads “Vidimus, cognovimus, et adoravimus”; see Cesare Baronio, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, 9 (Venice, 1604), 507, 604. Bosio dedicated to Cardinal Paolo Sfondrato a special publication on the *passio* of St. Cecilia, St. Valerian, Tiburtius, Maxminus, and of Popes Urban and Lucius. In it he claimed to narrate “according to what we ourselves have seen with our own eyes and also learned from the trustworthy

account by the same Cardinal" ("prout cum oculis nos ipsi conspeximus, tum ex ipsius Card. Sphondrati . . . fideli relatione cognovimus"). That is, Bosio was not a witness of the *cognitio*, but saw the relics when they were displayed for public veneration before being placed under the main altar: "Intra hunc loculum statua B. Caeciliae Virginis è pario marmore candidissimo collocata visitur, ea omnino forma, qua sacrum eius Corpus intra Arcam veterem compositum, inventum est: Iacet enim tenuissima veste ad talos fluente praecincta, humum dextero premens latere, vultu ad Confessionem obverso, it aut astantium conspectum refugiat; caput linteo circumuolutum, manus in anteriorem partem proiectae, genuaque paululum erecta cernuntur." ("In that *loculus* can be seen located the statue of the Blessed Virgin Cecilia made of white parian marble. It is exactly how her holy body was found placed in the old coffin: for it lies clothed in an extremely gauzy dress that reaches to her feet, she lies on her right side, with her face turned towards the confessio, as if trying to flee the gaze of onlookers; her head is enfolded in cloth, [and] one can distinguish her hands extended out from her body, and her slightly bent knees"); see Antonio Bosio, *Historia Passionis Virginis B. Caeciliae Virginis, Valeriani, Tiburtii, et Maximi Martyrum Necnon Urbani, et Lucii Pontificum, et Mart. Vitae atque Paschalis Papae I. LITERAE de eorumdem Sanctorum corporum inventione, & in Urbem translatione* (Rome: Stefano Paulino, 1600), 172–3 and 170. For a reading of this sculpture as a "fulfilment of contemporary liturgical concerns," see Tobias Kämpf, "Framing Cecilia's Sacred Body: Paolo Camillo Sfondrato and the Language of Revelation," *The Sculpture Journal* 6 (2001): 10–20. For an early study of the statue, see Antonio Muñoz, *Stefano Maderno. Contributo allo studio della scultura barocca prima del Bernini* (Rome: Tipografia Editrice Romana, 1915); for discussion relating the sculpture to the basilica, see Antonia Nava Cellini, "Stefano Maderno, Francesco Vanni e Guido Reni in Santa Cecilia in Trastevere," *Paragone* 20 (1969): 18–41.

6. Bosio, *Historia Passionis Virginis B. Caeciliae*, 1, 7. A huge investment of effort in ecclesiastical historiography conferred on relics a theoretical and historical legitimation; Cesare Baronio's *Martyrologium Romanum* (Rome, 1584; 2nd ed., 1586) and the monumental work of the Bollandists, *Acta sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur* (published from 1643) were fundamental.

7. God became incarnate and died for the sins of others; therefore all bodily events (including the terrible wounds of martyrs) were possible manifestations of grace.

8. For the significance of relics in art and architecture of the Counter-Reformation, see Alexandra Herz, "Cardinal Cesare Baronio's Restoration of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo and S. Cesareo de'Appia," *The Art Bulletin* 70, no. 4 (Dec. 1988): 590–620; for an exemplary treatment of the dynastic exploitation of a relic, see John B. Scott, *Architecture for the Shroud: Relic and Ritual in Turin* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003). For women's use of relics, particularly the avid collector of relics Maria Maddalena of Austria, see Alice Sanger, "Women of Power: Studies in the Patronage of Medici Grand Duchesses and Regentesses 1565–1650" (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2002), 43–169; Ulrike Strasser, "Bones of Contention: Cloistered Nuns, decorated relics and the contest over women's place in the public sphere of Counter-Reformation Munich,"

Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte 90 (1999): 255–88; Helen Hills, “Nuns and Relics: Spiritual Authority in post-Tridentine southern Italy,” in *Behind the Veil: New Aspects of Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Cordula Van Wyhe (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008). On the cult of relics, see especially *Heiligen Verehrung in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher and Dieter R. Bauer (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1990); Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), and “The Female Body and Religious Practice in the Later Middle Ages,” in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, Part 1, ed. Michel Feher with Ramona Naddaff and Nadia Tazi (New York: Zone, 1989), 163; Patrick Geary, *Furta Sacra: Theft of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), and *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 202; Alain Joblin, “Lattitude des Protestants face aux reliques,” in *Les reliques: objets, cultes, symboles*, ed. Edina Bozóky and Anne-Marie Helvétius (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 123–41; Jean-Claude Schmitt, “Les reliques et les images,” in *Les reliques*, ed. Bozóky and Helvétius, 145–68; F. Scorza Barcellona, “Le Origini,” in *Storia della santità nel cristianesimo occidentale*, ed. Anna Benvenuti et al. (Rome: Viella, 2005), 52–61; Sofia Boesch Gajano, “La strutturazione della cristianità occidentale,” in *Storia della santità*, ed. Anna Benvenuti et al., 105–8; Edina Bozóky, “Voyages de reliques et demonstration du pouvoir aux temps féodaux,” in *Voyages et Voyageurs au Moyen Âge*, Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l’Enseignement Supérieure Public (Paris: Sorbonne, 1996), 267–80; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence. A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), esp. xxi.

9. The Churches of Reformed Protestantism and of the Catholic Counter-Reformation claimed authority in part by producing histories and paintings which set their martyrs center stage. Thus was produced a remarkable literature of saints’ and martyrs’ lives, from John Foxe’s *Actes and monuments of these later dayes, touching matters of the Church*, first published in Latin (Strasburg, 1554) and afterwards in English (London, 1563), to Cesare Baronio’s *Martyrologium romanum* (Rome, 1586) and *Annales Ecclesiastici* (Rome, 1588–1607).

10. The claim that the earthly identity was perhaps always related to the heavenly seems to me to be too hasty. See, for example, Deborah Shuger, “The ‘I’ of the Beholder: Renaissance Mirrors and the Reflexive Mind,” in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, ed. Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 21–41.

11. “Si rinferrò nella camera, ed ivi prostrata avanti ad un Crocefisso, scovertosi il petto dalla parte del cuore, con un puntaruolo di ferro forò più volte le carni che lo covrirano, quasi dal cuore, chè e fondate [sic] del sangue, volesse cavarne il sangue, col quale dovea scriver l’istromento, che pretendea stipolare di donazione di se stessa a Dio.” See D. M. Marchese, *Vita della ven. Serva di Dio Suor Maria Villani dell’Ordine de’ Predicatori. Fondatrice del Monastero di S. M. del Divino Amore di Napoli* (Naples: Vincenzo Orsino, 1778), 15.

12. “Quando mi comunicava il Signore, infondeva tanta luce, ed amor cordiale all’anima mia, che per molti anni, ogni volta, che mi commuicava, era tale la dolcezza, e tenerezza del mio cuore, che si diffondeva in lagrime, che senza alcun tumulto, con grandissima dolcezza, diluando dagli occhi, faceano in terra una fonte in un fossetto proporzionato, ove era io solita di prostrarmi dopo la sagra Comunione” (Marchese, 423).

13. The distinction between “would-be saint,” “holy” individual, and “saint” is that of *sanctio*: official recognition by an *auctoritas*, which sanctity requires. See Anna Benvenuti, “Introduction,” in *Città e santi patroni nell’Italia medievale*, ed. Hans Conrad Peyer (Florence: Le Lettere, 1998), 9. The uncanonized subjects of the seventeenth-century *Vite* are usually referred to as “venerabile” (“venerable”), or as “santo” or “santa” (“holymen” or “holywoman,” or “saint” in the noncanonical sense). I have adopted here the term “would-be saint” as best encompassing the ambition of the *Vite*.

14. Diego d’Alcala, canonized in 1588, was the first new saint since 1523.

15. Michel de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable, Vol I: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, trans. M. B. Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 20. Scholarship to date has tended to view the post-Tridentine generation of saints in socio-political or reactionary terms, a search for authority based on “history,” partly in response to Protestantism, and centered on the retrieval of ancient saints’ relics from catacombs. See, for instance, Simon Ditchfield, “Il mondo della Riforma e della Controriforma,” in *Storia della santità nel cristianesimo occidentale*, ed. Anna Benvenuti et al. (Rome: Viella, 2005), 261–386. The political and religious implications of the new forms in which that history was fashioned and the new faces of “living saints” urgently require attention.

16. I suggest that the inclusion of portrait frontispieces in *Lives* of would-be saints was part of the strategy to canonization. On subjects securing their own portraits, see p. 180 of this essay. Increasing the number of images of saints and would-be saints was intimately linked to their cults. Thus the painter Francesco Curradi (1570–1661) testified that he had produced more than eighty paintings of St. Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi during the first decades of the seventeenth century that were distributed throughout Italy in the lead-up to her canonization proceedings. See Ermanno Ancilli, “Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi,” in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, vol. 8, ed. Iosepho Vizzini et al. (Rome: Istituto Giovanni, 1967), 1107–31; on visual iconography in promoting Pazzi’s sanctity, see Piero Pacini, “Contributi per l’iconografia di Santa Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi: una vita inedita di Francesco Curradi,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts Florenz* 3 (1984): 279–350.

17. Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, 7.

18. *Ibid.*, *The Mystic Fable*, 80.

19. Pierre Deloos, *Sociologie et canonizations* (Liège: Faculté de Droit; La Haye: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), 18–32. For similar arguments, see Sofia Boesch Gajano, *La santità* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1999).

20. Giovanni Battista Pacichelli, *Vita del Servo di Dio P. Giosepe Imparato* (Naples: Camillo Cavallo and Michele Luigi Muzio, 1686); Antonio Maria Bonucci, S. J., *Istoria della santa Vita e Virtù eroiche della Ven. Serva di Dio Veronica Laparelli* (Naples, 1714).

For the latter, see below, and Sallmann, *Santi barocchi*, 52. Although detailed computation remains to be done, my impression is that a somewhat higher proportion of more expensively produced volumes were dedicated to women than to men.

21. See *The Rhetorics of Life-Writing in Early Modern Europe: Forms of Biography from Cassandra Fedele to Louis XIV*, ed. Thomas F. Mayer and D. R. Woolf (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), esp. Laura Antonucci, "Scrivere la santità," 654; and Jodi Bilinkoff, "The Many 'Lives' of Pedro de Ribadeneyra," *Renaissance Quarterly* 52 (1999): 180–96.

22. The authors of these biographies not infrequently were closely associated with their subjects. The texts themselves were usually officially credited to confessors, sometimes to academics or family members. It is quite likely that some would-be saints contributed substantially and directly to their *Vite*. See Sallmann, *Santi barocchi*, 64. Usually close connections are played down in the text, to suggest instead a disinterested narrator and an objective account, more persuasive in canonization processes. It was, after all, often verbal exchanges in the confessionals or parlors which furnished the religious "directors" with "material" from which to construct the literature of edifying "lives," as Certeau noted years ago. Far from subverting ecclesiastical authority, this massively distributed material permitted the authorities to reconquer and "inform" the Christian people; see Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, 88. More recently, Jodi Bilinkoff has returned to the role of confessors in "The Many 'Lives' of Pedro de Ribadeneyra," 180–96, esp. 182.

23. The "transparent body" reflects directly the holiness within. See Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, 88. Portraits of sitters as saints also existed and were not uncommon. The most famous example is Dürer's self-portrait as Christ (1500, oil on panel, 67x49 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich). Probably made for viewing in the domestic sphere, they include, for example, Francesco Furini's *Portrait of a Youth Dressed as David* (ca. 1630, oil on canvas, 66 x 52 cm, private collection); see Sebastiano del Piombo's *Portrait of a Lady with the attributes of St. Agatha* (after 1540, National Gallery, London), Elisabetta Sirani's *Portrait of Ortensia Leoni Cordini as St. Dorothy* (1661), which was commissioned by Ortensia's Florentine husband Francesco Cordini, and a series of portraits by Jacopo de Empoli (1600–1615), of *gentildonne* dressed as Saints Barbara, Margaret, and Margaret of Antioch. See *Il Seicento Fiorentino. Arte a Firenze da Ferdinando I a Cosimo III*, vol. 1 (Florence: Edizioni Cantini, 1986), 132; and *Elisabetta Sirani: "pittrice eroina" 1638–1665*, ed. Jadranka Bentini and Vera Fortunati (Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2004), cat. 4, p. 87.

24. Peter Burke, "Reflections on the Frontispiece Portrait in the Renaissance," in *Bildnis und Image: Das Portrait zwischen Intention und Rezeption*, ed. Andrea Köstler and Ernst Seidl (Cologne, Vienna: Böhlag Verlag, 1998), 150–62; Giuseppina Zappella, *Il ritratto nel libro italiano del Rinascimento*, 2 vols. (Milan: Editrice bibliografia, 1988), 1: 13–23. Medieval living authors often had themselves portrayed on presentation copies of their manuscripts. In the early sixteenth century, the portrait of the living author appeared on the title page itself. For example, an oval medallion portrait of Sir John Harington appears on the title page of his translation of *Orlando Furioso* (London: Richard Field,

1591). See Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece: The Emblematic Title-page in England 1550–1660* (London: Routledge, 1979), 43.

25. Burke, "Reflections on the Frontispiece Portrait," 152.

26. See Pierre de Ronsard, *Amours* (Paris: la Veuve M. de la Porte, 1552), frontispiece.

27. Even if the images of famous writers in the Vatican, the Ambrosiana, and the Bodleian libraries show less "individualized portraits" than scholarly types, such depictions were driven by a belief in the close relationship between outward face and inner spirit. See Burke, "Reflections on the Frontispiece Portrait," 160.

28. Quoted by Pamela Jones in *Federigo Borromeo and the Ambrosiana: Art Patronage and Reform in Seventeenth-Century Milan* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 109, 142.

29. The tradition of portraying biographical subjects stemmed from ancient biographers such as Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius, in whose work portraiture memorialized the lives of famous men (of action and intellect). Roman patricians were also known to have collected and exhibited portraits with elogia. See Anton von Salis, "Imagines Illustrium," in *Eumusia: Festgabe für Ernst Howald zum sechzigsten Geburtstag am 20 April 1947* (Eerlanbach: Eugen Rentsch, 1947), 11–29; and Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier, "The Early Beginning of the Notion of *Uomini Famosi* and the *De Viris Illustribus* in Graeco-Roman Literary Tradition," *Artibus et historiae* 3, no. 2 (1982): 97–115.

30. Local portrait collections, such as that of Isabella d'Este, already existed, but Giovio conceived of a worldwide archive of portraits. The portraits were eventually installed in Giovio's museum (which he referred to as *templum virtutis*) built in Borgo Vico near Lake Como in 1537–1543. He collected portraits of illustrious men of letters even before 1521, and by 1522 he was also collecting portraits of rulers, statesmen, and generals. He initially decorated his "Mercury and Pallas" room at Lake Como with the "true images of illustrious men of letters; so that through emulation of their example good mortals might be inflamed to seek glory." See Eugène Müntz, "Le musée de portraits de Paul Jove," *Mémoires de l'Institut National de France, Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres* 36 (1901): 249–343; and T. C. Price Zimmermann, *Paolo Giovio: The Historian and the Crisis of Sixteenth-century Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 158–62. See also Roberto Bartolini, "Paolo Giovio, Francesco Salviati and the portraits of famous men," *Prospettiva* no. 91–2 (July–Oct. 1998): 186. Giovio's interest in the device also bore fruit in his *Dialogo dell'Imprese*, written in Florence in 1551/52. It was reprinted in Venice in 1556, 1557, and 1560, and in Milan in 1559. A lavishly illustrated edition was published in Lyons in 1559 by Guillaume Rouillé; see Corbett and Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece*, 11–12.

31. Fulvio Orsini, *Imagines et eulogia virorum illustrium et eruditorum ex antiquis et nomismatib.* (Rome: A. Lafréry, 1570), and Paolo Giovio, *Elogia virorum literis illustrium . . . ex eiusdem Musaeo ad vivum expressis imaginibus exornata* (Basel: Petri Pernaë, 1577). Fulvio Orsini's iconographical work appeared in two books. The second carries the name of Theodore Galle (Theodorus Gallaeus), *Illustrium imagines . . . quae exstant*

Romae, major pars apud Fulv. Ursinum (Antwerp, 1598). See Eugene Dwyer, "Bellori as Iconographer: The Veterum illustrium . . . imagines," in *Art History in the Age of Bellori: Scholarship and Cultural Politics in Seventeenth-century Rome*, ed. Janice Bell and Thomas Willette (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 145–69.

32. The portrait is dated 1695. See Sigismondo Sicola, *La Nobilità Gloriosa nella Vita di S. Aspreno* (Naples: Carlo Porsile, 1696), frontispiece.

33. Bulifon's *Lettere memorabili, istoriche, politiche, ed erudite* (Pozzuoli: Antonio Bulifon, 1693) also carried an author-portrait frontispiece. See Rodney Palmer, "The Illustrated Book in Naples, 1670–1734" (D.Phil. thesis, University of Sussex, 1997), 1:10.

34. See Pietro Gisolfo, *Vita del P. D. Antonio De Colellis della Congreg. De' PP. Pij Operarij* (Naples: Giacinto Passaro, 1663); Pietro Gisolfo, *Vita del P. D. Carlo Carafa, fondatore della Congregazione de' PP. Pij Operarij di Napoli* (Naples: Luc'Antonio di Fusco, 1667), which bears a frontispiece portrait of Carlo Carafa wielding a cross, signed "Pesca F"; and Anon. [Father of the same order], *Compendio della Vita del Venerabile Cesare De Bus Fondatore della Congregazione della Dottrina Cristiana Scritta in Francese da un Padre della stessa Congregazione, e tradotta in Italiano da un Altro della medesima*, 4th Italian edition (Roma: Ivrea, 1797).

35. See Giovanni Antonio Cagiano, *Vita di Paolo Burali D'Arezzo* (Rome: Vitale Mascardi, 1649; Naples: Secondino Roncagliolo, 1650).

36. Burali was beatified in 1772.

37. The Italian reads "suoi amati tormenti"; see Anon. [Disclaled Carmelite her confessor], *Vita della Serva di Dio Suora Teresa Benedetta Vita della Serva di Dio Suora Teresa Benedetta* (Palermo, 1744), 198–9, 211. Teresa Benedetta Gerbio e l'Agras, a remarkable woman, experienced many direct visions of the divine, starting when she was twelve years old, with a visit to her sickbed from Saint Ciro, surrounded by angelic spirits. See *Vita della Serva di Dio Suora Teresa Benedetta*, 9, 14–15.

38. The Italian reads ". . . era sovente con funi, e ferri in mano flagellarsi il corpo, tenendo per sicuro mezzo la voluntaria vessazione della carne, nel metter senno allo spirito." See *Vita della Serva di Dio Suora Teresa Benedetta*, 115.

39. *Ibid.*, 116.

40. The case for solitude was articulated particularly by St. Basil (*Epistola ad Gregorium . . . de vita per solitudine*) and repeatedly advanced in devotional literature for all religious.

41. Ignazio Maria Vittorelli reminds his readers, for example, of St. Paul's exhortation, "Orabo spiritu, cioè flatu, orabo & mente. Ricordatevi di questa Dottrina principalmente nel Coro. Solamente vi avverto a non fare, come buona parte delle Donne, se oviare in compagnia di altre, cioè che non le disturbiate con la vostra voce," ("I shall pray with my spirit, that is with my breath, I shall pray with my mind. Remember this teaching above all in the choir. Only I warn you not to do, like a good many women, that is, if you go there along with others, not to disturb them with your voices"). See Vittorelli, *Lettere spirituali* (Naples: Stefano Abate, 1748), 18. The literature on solitude for a female readership was

extensive. See, for example, Girolamo Ercolani, *Le eroine della solitudine sacra* (Venice: Francesco Baba, 1664). Simone Bagnati's *La Solitudine*, Paul de Barry's *Solitudine di filagia* (Rome: Vitale Mescardi, 1659), and Andrea Caviati's *Ritiramento* were urged upon Neapolitan nuns as recommended reading; see Vittorelli, *Lettere spirituali*, 30.

42. These references are representative of the genre and come from *Vita della Serva di Dio Suora Teresa Benedetta Monaca Professa del ven Monastero di S. Gio. Battista detto lo Riglione nel secolo D. Caterina Gerbino, e l'Agras de' Baroni di Gulfnta, e Marchesi dell'Agonia Composta da un Carmelitano Scalzo suo confessore* (Palermo, 1744), 116–17.

43. Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), 180; Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 13.

44. In the texts, too, self-mortification is singled out as both dominant characteristic and justification for sanctity.

45. Elizabeth Petroff, "The Rhetoric of Transgression in the Lives of Italian Women Saints," in *Body and Soul: Essays on Medieval Women and Mysticism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 161–3. In my view, too much has been made of the supposed shift from a medieval sanctity demonstrated by the possession of supernatural powers to an early modern sanctity which emphasized moral and social virtues. Early modern *Vite* continue to describe supernatural and socially transgressive acts, even if they represent them always as performed by God through the saint. For the alternative view, see Gabriella Zarri, "'Vera' santità, 'simulata' santità, ipotesi e riscontri," in *Finzione e santità tra Medioevo ed età moderna*, ed. Gabriella Zarri (Turin: Einaudi, 1991), 12–15.

46. Petroff notes that male biographers used "a rhetoric that denied transgression at the same time that it depicted women saints in fact transgressing the limits of proper female behaviour" (Petroff, 176–7); Jodi Bilinkoff observes that "holy disobedience" was "mediated through Jesuit confessors" in "The Many 'Lives' of Pedro de Ribadeneyra," 188.

47. *Vita della Serva di Dio Suora Teresa Benedetta*, 40–1.

48. *Ibid.*, 80.

49. The portraits can be seen as attempts to alter bodily boundaries: "I abject myself within the same motion through which 'I' claim to establish 'myself.'" See Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: an essay on abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 3.

50. Michel Foucault, "A Preface to Transgression," trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, *Religion and Culture by Michel Foucault*, ed. Jeremy Carrette (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1999), 61.

51. See Petroff, *Body and Soul*, 166.

52. Foucault, "A Preface to Transgression," 60.

53. Reterritorialization is not a return to old territory. Even if a body similar to what was deterritorialized is reconstituted, it is not the same. The terms are from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*,

trans. Brian Massumi (London: The Athlone Press, 1988), 142–5, 174–91, 291–2, and 333–4.

54. It is unusual to find images of miracle-working or active female patron saints. See Helen Hills, “*The Face is the Mirror of the Soul*: Frontispieces and the production of sanctity in post-Tridentine Naples,” *Art History* (forthcoming, 2008).

55. Carmino Falcone, *L'Intera Storia di San Gennaro* (Naples: Felice Mosca, 1713). My discussion of this image will be developed in my forthcoming book, *The Forms of Holiness in Baroque Italy*.

56. The female venerables look directly out at the viewer in contrast to paintings of single female saints, in which the saint raises her eyes to Heaven even as she touches skull, crucifix, or her heart. Consider, for example, Guido Reni's *St. Mary Magdalene*, ca. 1630–1632. oil on canvas, 231x 152 cm, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Rome.

57. Roland Barthes, “The World as Object” (1953), trans. Richard Howard, *A Roland Barthes Reader*, ed. Susan Sontag (Oxford: Fontana, 2000), 63.

58. Luce Irigaray, “The Intimate Requires Separate Dwellings,” in *Key Writings* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 28–33.

59. Giuseppe Silos, *Vita del Venerabile Servo di Dio D. Francesco Olimpio dell'Ordine de' Cherici Regolari* (Naples: Salvatore Castaldo, 1685).

60. It is likely that some portrait frontispieces were available as independent prints. Portraits of venerables, Blesseds, and saints were readily available in seventeenth-century Italy: for instance, they were freely distributed during Jesuit missions in the Kingdom of Naples. See also note 16 above. For medieval female readership of books, see Susan Groag Bell, “Medieval women book owners: arbiters of lay piety and ambassadors of culture,” *Signs* 7 (1982): 742–68. For the intercessory quality of saints believed to materialize literally within domestic images and keep watch over households, see David Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch: The System of the Sacred in Early Modern Terra d'Otranto* (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1992), 184–6.

61. Roland Barthes, “The World as Object,” 70.

62. E. Ann Matter, “Interior Maps of an Eternal External: The Spiritual Rhetoric of Maria Domitilla Galluzzi d'Acqui,” in *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 73.

63. “One encounters one's own likeness only in the mirror of the other.” See Shuger, “The ‘I’ of the Beholder,” 37.

64. See Matter, “Interior Maps,” 66.

65. This was not new. Compare Venantius Fortunatus's comment in his *Vita sanctae Radegundis* that “a woman willingly received so many bitter torments for the sweetness of Christ” (“sic femina pro Christi dulcedine tot amara libenter exceptit”). For a discussion of this, see John Kitchen, *Saints' Lives and the Rhetoric of Gender: Male and Female in Merovingian Hagiography* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 118–20.

66. E. Ann Matter has shown how the spiritual life of Maria Domitilla Galluzzi

d'Acqui, Capuchin nun of Pavia, was dominated by her close identification with the body of the crucified Christ; see Matter, "Interior Maps," 60–9. See also Maria Grazia Bianchi, "Una 'Illuminata' del Secolo XVII: Suor M. Domitilla Galluzzi, Cappuccina a Pavia," *Bollettino della Società Pavese di Storia Patria*, n.s. 20, no. 65 (1968): 3–69.

67. By "privatized" I mean more than simply "private," but that which was deliberately advertised as such. The faith and suffering that had conventionally been publicly enacted in martyrs' gruesome deaths became interiorized by this date. Of course, it was performed socially, but it was represented as internal, individual, and apart.

68. *Trent, Session VI, Decree on justification*, ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), Hanover Historical Texts Project, <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/terent/ct06.html>, chap. 1.

69. *Ibid.*, chap. 5.

70. *Ibid.*, chap. 7.

71. *Ibid.*, chap. 10.

72. "Images, not unlike the seven sacraments as explained by Trent, were considered especially powerful means of transformation; they could do what they signified"; see Thomas Worcester, "Trent and Beyond: Arts of Transformation," in *Saints and Sinners: Caravaggio and the Baroque Image*, ed. Franco Mormando (Chestnut Hill, MA: McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, 1999), 87.

73. *Trent, Session VI, Decree on justification*, chaps. 10, 13. Thomas Worcester points out that the theme of ongoing "combat" with the help of grace is also the main theme of *Spiritual Combat*, first published in 1589, by the Theatine Lorenzo Scupoli (ca. 1530–1610), a text which enjoyed a very wide distribution, in multiple editions, and many languages. See Worcester, "Trent and Beyond," 87–106. See also *Theatine Spirituality: Selected Writings*, trans. and ed. William Hudson (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 42–8, and "Religion and Society in Early Modern Italy—Old Questions, New Insights," *American Historical Review* 101 (June 1996): 783–804.

74. Silos compares Olimpio's hands while performing Mass to the pure rays of the sun. See Giuseppe Silos, *Vita del ven. Servo di Dio D. Francesco Olimpio dell'Ordine de' Chierici Regolari* (Messina: Paolo Bonocotta, 1664; Naples: Salvatore Castaldo, 1685), 17.

75. "Rimotissimo è questo luogo, e acconcio altresí molto à silenzi della contemplatione: e quivi era solito Francesco di fermarsi lungo spatio in ferventissime orationi; parendogli, ch'accanto alle ceneri del Santo Abbate gl's'aumentasse l'interno fuoco della divotione. Tal volta mentre stava in Sorrento, tanto s'affissava con la mente in Dio, che tratto fuori de' propri sentimenti, pareva, che l'animo se ne volasse per lo Cielo." See Silos, *Vita del . . . D. Francesco Olimpio*, 37.

76. For Francesco Pavone, see Antonio Barone, S. J., *Della Vita del Padre Francesco Pavone della Compagnia di Giesu', Fondatore della Congregazione de' Chierici dell'Assunta nel Collegio del Giesu' di Napoli* (Naples: De Bonis, 1700), frontispiece.

77. The book by the Florentine Jesuit Antonio Maria Bonucci was published without the name of the printer in Naples in 1714 and financed by Onofrio Baldelli, a patri-

cian of Cortona and postulant in the cause for Veronica's beatification. It is dedicated by the author and the Laparelli family to the grand duke of Tuscany, Cosimo III. Designed by Antonio Podevin, a French painter-designer who lived in Rome, the engravings, in *taglia dolce*, are signed by Nicola Oddi, one of the most important engravers of the period; see Sallmann, *Santi barocchi*, 52. See also p. 159 and p. 209 n20.

78. Strictly speaking, *antiporta* refers to a plate immediately preceding the title page. For a full discussion of the term and its origins, see Rodney Palmer, "The Illustrated Book in Naples, 1670–1734," 1: 69–113.

79. Where the would-be saint is actually shown writing, as in the case with Maria Villani, the implication that she is the author is particularly stark. Maria Villani was an author of verse. See Mario Rosa, "La religiosa," in *Baroque Personae*, ed. Rosario Villari (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1995), 260.

80. For the ways in which Pedro de Ribadeneyra's *Vida de Da Estafania Manrique de Castilla* functioned as a guidebook for Jesuits' dealings with elite women, see Bilinkoff, "The Many 'Lives' of Pedro de Ribadeneyra," 188–9.

81. A striking example from Venice is the frontispiece portrait of sister Maria Eletta Antonia, Capuchin nun at S. Maria del Pianto in Venice, engraved by Isabella Piccini and Angela Baroni for *Raggi della divina grazia* (Venice: Bernardo Lodoli, 1703). Here the Countess of Sinzerdorf is depicted as a secular aristocrat, enrobed in velvets and silks, and gorgeous jewellery. Silvia Urbini has suggested that this was to convey vividly what the countess had been willing to forgo to adopt the religious life; see Urbini, "Sul ruolo della Donna 'incisore' nella storia del libro illustration," in *Gabriella Donna, disciplina, creanza cristiana*, ed. Gabrielle Zarri, *Temi e testi*, n.s., no. 36 (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1996), 382.

82. Certeau explores this idea in *The Mystic Fable*, 5.

83. Chiara Frugoni, "Saint Francis: A Saint in Progress," in *Saints: Studies in Hagiography*, ed. Sandro Sticca (Binghamton, NY: MRTS, 1996), 161–90. See also Patrick J. Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages*, 21–4.

84. The question of "proof" as to whether these models were or were not venerated misses the point. There is a clear change in representation.

85. Certeau, *Mystic Fable*, 5.

86. This is, of course, a reader-viewer. I call him/her "reader" here, because unillustrated *Vite* preceded those with frontispiece portraits.

87. An analogous shift occurred in early modern writing, which undermined example as the figure that tied past to future through the present. From Machiavelli to Lafayette, there is expression of increasing doubt that what has happened before will necessarily happen again, a doubt given a peculiar twist by Descartes and Pascal. See John D. Lyons, *Exemplum: The Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

Forum: The Rise of the Mercantile Economy and Early Modern Women

With this volume, *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal* introduces a new venue for discussion, the Forum. Here we will publish short contributions on a single topic written by scholars from diverse disciplines. This, the first Forum, explores how the rise of the mercantile economy affected early modern women, how they experienced, shaped, and adapted to their emerging roles as participants in the mercantile economy, and how men viewed these changes.

Contributed by scholars who study the art, literature, and history of Italy and England, these submissions demonstrate the richness of the issue. They explore the differing situations of elite and ordinary women, interrogate the contrast between women's fertility and the sterility of money, and examine both the idealization of the merchant's wife and her vilification. By studying wills, Kate Kelsey Staples reveals that women in London were active agents in the economy, inheriting cellars, bakeries, breweries, hostels, and other commercial properties from their husbands and fathers. By studying law cases, Jeanette Fregulia discovers that women in Milan, especially widows, gained control of commercial ventures by suing for restitution of their dowries and other inheritances. By examining the trade in second-hand clothes, textiles, and furnishings, which operated outside the guild system, Ann Matchette demonstrates that Florentine women were active in the marketplace to a much greater degree than previously thought. They even at times obtained "a degree of financial independence" despite the limitations placed on them. Ann Crabb's discussion provides a case

study of one woman, Margherita Datini, who helped run her husband's thriving business in Prato. Though some write macrohistory, Crabb focuses on one woman, sensitively analyzing her desire for honor and the effect of her childlessness on her economic activities.

Anne Christensen and Juliann Vitullo demonstrate that early modern Europe was ambivalent about women who were active in the mercantile economy. Nascent capitalism produced a merchant class with new gender roles, which, in turn, engendered anxiety. By studying English plays, Florentine family histories, and Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Christensen and Vitullo suggest that attitudes towards women's mercantile skills in the early modern period were at times admiring, at times critical. Some men felt threatened by women, projected their ambivalence about mercantilist ethics onto women, and were anxious about the tensions that the new mercantile economy initiated. A partial answer to Vitullo's concluding question, "what happens when the skills necessary to acquire and maintain power are more intellectual and emotional and women with educations can clearly perform them?" is found by Christensen in the denigration and stereotyping of women as ambitious, greedy, and acquisitive. But the idealization of some female merchants, outlined by Vitullo, suggests that a negative reaction was far from uniform. Vitullo and Christensen search for contradictions, rather than certainties, and find anxiety concerning the new role of the merchant, whether gendered male or female. National differences also emerge from their work. If English women generally did not learn accounting, some in Florence certainly did.

These essays cross traditional disciplinary boundaries. By examining archival documents in the light of literary texts, by exploring the trade in objects through social networks and gendered spatial topography, these authors shed new light on the problem of women's place in the mercantile economy. More than twenty years ago Merry Wiesner explored women as peddlers in Nuremberg and Judith Brown demonstrated the contradictions between the ideology and the reality of working women. The following pieces build on their work by demonstrating the complexity of the interactions between early modern women and the mercantile economy that permeated their lives.

Femininity in the Marketplace: The Ideal Woman in Fourteenth-Century Florence

JULIANN VITULLO

Mea was of ordinary height, with beautiful blond hair, a very fine figure, and so amiable that she dripped with charm. Her hands were like ivory, and so shapely that they seemed to have been painted by Giotto; they were long and soft, with tapering fingers and long, shapely nails, pink and clear. Her beauty was matched by her talents, for she could do any kind of women's work with her own hands; she was extremely adept in everything she did. Her speech was refined and pleasing her actions pure and temperate, her words effectual. She was a spirited, frank woman with the mettle of a man [d'animo verile], and abounded in every virtue. She could read and write as well as any man; she sang and danced perfectly and could have served men or women at table as adroitly as any young man used to serving at wedding banquets or similar occasions. She was expert at running a household, without a hint of avariciousness or stinginess. But she made the most of everything, admonishing and guiding her household with good teachings and her own good example, living a joyful, happy life. She wisely set about making all of the various members of her household happy, allaying every trouble, anger, or sadness that she might see in any of them. She handled everything wisely and with benevolence, and as you shall see, she had to deal with her husband's family, which was large and unruly.¹

This description of Bartolomea di Pagolo Morelli (1365–1387) was written with great love and respect by her brother, Giovanni, after

her death. The wise wife, mother, and household manager he describes was only twenty-two years old. At the beginning of Giovanni's *Ricordi* in which he relates the history of his family and the city of Florence, the merchant writer draws the reader into his own narrative by providing vibrant and detailed portraits of the ancestors and contemporaries who helped the family move from the countryside, the *Mugello*, to the city of Florence, where they were successful enough in the wool industry and financial dealings to become important citizens, even eligible to hold communal offices. Giovanni's heroic and idealized depictions of his family members' hard work, devotion, and intelligence are tempered by the descriptions of the constant conflict among his relatives and with other families. Although Giovanni depicts the family as a sacred institution and the most powerful reason to labor as a merchant, he juxtaposes these idealized descriptions with detailed explanations of the everyday tensions and politics of a large family living in a fifteenth-century center of commerce. Since Giovanni attributes both traditionally feminine and unconventionally masculine characteristics to Mea, the passage also expresses a certain tension about gender roles, and relates this anxiety to the development of a merchant class as well.

As the description of Mea illustrates, Giovanni paints heroic portraits of women as well as of men. Mea's depiction begins with the traditional emphasis on her beauty, especially the hands, which Morelli compares to those of a Giotto painting. This comparison immediately brings to mind the hands of the Virgin holding the baby Jesus, and it is reasonable to believe that Giovanni wanted the reader, at first, to envision his sister in that sacred role. Yet later in the description, he also describes her hands in other ways: involved in domestic work, serving guests as a host, and even writing. In all of these activities Giovanni describes his sister as outside of an idealized sacred space, which the reference to Giotto's painting would suggest, and negotiating the everyday life of Florentine culture with all its contradictions and tensions.²

Mea was pure, joyful, and benevolent, but also effective, spirited, and frank. At one point Giovanni even calls her "virile." He emphasizes her masculine traits by also commenting that her abilities to play the role of host, to read, and to write were equal to those of any man. Although one

could certainly read this statement as degrading most women by commenting on Mea's exceptional aptitude in these areas, I would like to focus on Giovanni's certainty that a woman *could* do these things well. Throughout this period, in advice manuals and in humanistic dialogues, writers emphasize the importance of learning to read and write, and of gaining the social skills necessary for creating a network of friends; these were considered necessary abilities for becoming a successful merchant and citizen.³ That Giovanni recognizes that a woman could also possess those same skills creates a problem. While the secular ideal for a man was a knight, men could justify their position because of their physical strength in combat, but what happens when the skills necessary to acquire and maintain power are more intellectual and emotional, and women with educations can clearly perform them? This change created an anxiety that we see in numerous literary texts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

In Boccaccio's tale of Bernabò da Genova and his virtuous wife Ginevra from the *Decameron* (II, IX), Bernabò is a Genovese merchant who enters into a conversation with other "grandi mercatanti italiani" in a hotel in Paris. While speaking about their own love affairs during long separations from their wives, they also imagine that their wives are doing the same. Bernabò disagrees, saying that his wife possesses more virtues than even a knight. He then describes his Ginevra in an idealized portrait of the perfect merchant's wife, which has much in common with Morelli's depiction of his sister:

She was physically beautiful, still very young, dexterous and handy with her hands—there was no type of woman's work (such as working in silk and the like) that she could not do better than anyone else. Besides this, he asserted that it was impossible to find any servant or page who could better or more skillfully serve at a gentleman's table than she could, since she was most well mannered, educated and most discreet. Moreover, he praised her for her ability to ride a horse, handle a falcon, read and write, and to keep accounts better than any merchant.⁴

Like Morelli's sister, the fictional character of Ginevra possesses the highest feminine virtues but also the skills of a merchant, and even some of a

nobleman; she has learned the art of accounting as well as falconry. Back in Paris, her husband foolishly wagers (against his better judgment) with another merchant, Ambrogiuolo, that his wife will remain faithful even if the other man tries to seduce her. Ambrogiuolo tricks Bernabò into believing that Ginevra has been unfaithful, and out of rage Bernabò asks a servant to take Ginevra to a deserted place and kill her. Following the narrative of many folk tales, Ginevra convinces the servant to abandon her in a vast wooded valley, and then is clever enough to disguise herself as a man. She has great success in the world of international trade and eventually works for the Sultan at Acri. With trickery and rhetoric, Ginevra manages to be accepted by both Christian and Muslim merchants. In the end, Ginevra reveals Ambrogiuolo's lie, seeks her revenge, and reunites with her husband, whom she forgives.

Ginevra returns to her earlier social status as the wife of an important merchant in Genoa and, in the end, all her skills, even those coded as masculine, support her domestic identity. Nevertheless, the story raises several important issues. It suggests that what really prohibits women from achievement in the world of international trade is the right costume—along with men's projection of their own vices onto women. It also suggests that the negative traits of the monetary economy, greed and trickery, as well as the positive traits, cleverness and rhetoric, could be equally acquired by both women and men. The powers of the "virtuous woman" are contained in this story, but they are also clearly described.⁵

Another short story by a later fourteenth-century writer, Giovanni Fiorentino, also describes a woman who possesses many of the same skills as the merchant with whom she competes.⁶ In the tale of Gianetto, which Shakespeare eventually rewrote as the *Merchant of Venice*, the Jewish usurer plays a very minor role, and the central conflict exists between the Florentine merchant living in Venice and a mysterious noble woman, a widow, who controls her own port city.⁷ Although Gianetto is twice tricked by the wealthy widow and almost loses an entire fortune, he is finally able to gain power over his cunning competitor. The noble woman, like Boccaccio's Ginevra, masquerades as a man, and, while wearing a judge's costume, teaches Gianetto and the other Venetians how to trick the Jewish usurer by focusing on the quintessential mercantile skill of measuring.⁸

This narrative clearly deals with fears about the power of Jews as money lenders in the Florentine monetary economy, yet it also suggests a strong anxiety about the potential power of women like Bartolomea Morelli to gain many of the same skills as their merchant brothers.

All of these narratives could be read as stories encouraging women to use their skills primarily for the benefit of their husbands and families. Yet, at the same time, these stories suggest that the ideal woman, who possesses many of the same skills as the ideal man in the developing mercantile economy of fourteenth-century urban centers, needs to be reminded that her “natural” role is the domestic one.

Notes

1. Vittore Branca, ed. *Merchant Writers of the Italian Renaissance: From Boccaccio to Macchiavelli*, trans. Murtha Baca (New York: Marsilio, 1999), 65. For the original text, see Giovanni di Paolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Le Monnier, 1969), 178–80: “Questa fu di grandezza comune, di bellissimo pelo, bianca e bionda, molto bene fatta della persona, tanto gentile che cascava di vezzi. E fra l’altre adornezze de’ suoi membri, ell’avea le mani come di vivorio, tanto bene fatte che pareano dipinte pelle mani di Giotto: ell’erano distese, morbide di carne, le dita lunghe e tonde come candele, l’unghie d’esse lunghe e bene colme, vermiglie e chiare. E con quelle bellezze rispondeano le virtù, ché di sua mano ella sapea fare ciò ch’ella voleva, che a donna si richiedesse; e’n tutte sue operazioni virtuosissima: nel parlare dilicata, piacevole, con atto onesto e temperato, con tutte effettuose parole: baldanzosa, franca donne e d’animo verile, grande e copiosa di tutte virtù. Leggeva e scrivea tanto bene quante alcun uomo: sapea perfettamente cantare e danzare, e arebbe servito a una mensa d’uomini o di donne così pulitamente come giovane uso e pratico a nozze o simili cose. Era saputa nella masserizia della casa, e non con punto d’avarizia o di miseria; ma traeva il sottile del sottile, ammunendo e dirizzando la sua famiglia con tutti buoni assegnamenti e buoni costumi, vivendo lieta e allegra. E così s’ingegnava con savi modi, secondo le condizioni delle persone della casa, contentare, riparando e co’ fatti e co’ detti a ogni iscandolo, ira o maninconia ch’avesse veduta in alcuno: a tutto saviamente e con benivolenza di tutti riparava, ché, come vedrete iscritto appresso, ebbe a conversare, vivendo col suo marito, in gran famiglia e sconcia.”

2. The letters of Margherita Datini, the wife of the great merchant from Prato, to her husband clearly illustrate that she was keenly aware of how both familial and communal politics affected her husband’s business; see Valeria Rosati, ed., “Le lettere di Margherita Datini a Francesco da Marco,” *Archivio storico pratese* L, I–II (1974), 4–93.

3. For a survey of the mercantile skills that justified earning a profit, see Giacomo Todeschini, “La riflessione etica sulle attività economiche,” in *Economie urbane ed etica*

economica nell'Italia medievale, ed. R. Greci, G. Pinto, and G. Todeschini (Bari: Laterza: 2005), 153–223. Several texts emphasize the importance of learning the skills of writing, reading, and networking for success in the mercantile society. See Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, ed. Ruggiero Romano and Alberto Tenenti (Turin: Einaudi, 1980); Paolo da Certaldo, *Libro di buoni costumi*, ed. Alfredo Schiaffini (Florence: Le Monnier, 1945); and Matteo Palmieri, *Vita civile*, ed. Gino Belloni (Florence: Sansoni, 1982).

4. Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. Mark Musa and Peter Bondanella (New York: Norton, 1982), 141–2. For the original text, see *Decameron*, ed. Vittore Branca (Turin: Einaudi, 1980), 285–6: “. . . ella era bella del corpo e giovane ancora assai e destra e atante della persona, né alcuna cosa era che a donna appartenesse, sí come di lavorare lavorii di seta e simili cose, che ella non facesse meglio che alcuna altra. Oltre a questo, nessuno scudiere, o famigliare che dir vogliamo, diceva trovarsi il quale meglio né piú accortamente servisse a una tavola d'un signore, che serviva ella, sí come colei era costumatissima, savia e discreta molto. Appresso questo la commendò meglio saper cavalcare un cavallo, tenere uno uccello, leggere e scrivere e fare una ragione che se un mercatante fosse.”

5. A similar female figure in the popular romance epic of the same period is the warrior woman. See the chapter on “Hybrid Identities: Monsters, Wild Men, and Warrior Women,” in my *The Chivalric Epic in Medieval Italy* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 51–73.

6. Giovanni Fiorentino, *Il Pecorone*, ed. Enzo Esposito (Ravenna: A. Longo Editore, 1974), 87–118.

7. Compared to Shylock, the Jewish usurer in Fiorentino’s tale “remains a completely flat character. He doesn’t even have a name.” See John Gross, *Shylock: A Legend and Its Legacy* (New York: Touchstone, 1992), 15–17.

8. For information about the importance of measuring in Florentine culture, see Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 86–102; and Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400–1600* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 79–81.

Merchant Wives, Agency, and Ambivalence in Early Modern Studies

ANN CHRISTENSEN

The dutie of the husband is to be a giver, and of the Wife to be a saver
—Dod and Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Household Government*¹

Recent studies by Phyllis Rackin, Wendy Wall, Lena Cowen Orlin, Amy Smith, and others offer a welcome corrective to tenacious assumptions that women lacked agency in early modern England.² Questioning the monolithic force of “unrelenting misogyny, patriarchy, and oppression,”³ these scholars have challenged our emphases on women’s institutional and familial containment and their subversion via grotesque, inferior, or transgressive sexuality—emphases that Rackin locates in “masculine anxiety” rather than in feminist agenda.⁴ My own aim in this forum contribution is to extend that commitment to finding women’s economic agency—in workshops, markets, streets, and households—while yet acknowledging the ambivalent (and often simply negative) ways that early modern writers (focusing here on dramatists) represented the matrix of women, work, and money. We know that women belonged to guilds and worked side-by-side with men, and that some possessed, controlled, and bequeathed money and property.⁵ Nonetheless, even when early modern writers represent women as economic (trans)actors, it is most often with a negative cast. The wives of tradesmen in drama and satire contradict the reality for women of this class in that, rather than being productive, they appear *either* idle and consuming *or* calculating, ambitious, and covetous. The former category (women as consumers) having been ably treated else-

where,⁶ I focus here on the double-bind of tradesmen's wives as "savers" in a newly capitalized economy: provident and frugal like the Proverbial good housewife, yet self-serving and covetous. Thus, wives' housewifery complements and supports husbands' commercial work, yet is seen in terms of distraction and competition. Merchants' wives appear in shops, ably engaging customers, but their work is mocked, sexualized, or dismissed. Wives' ambition for husbands' advancement is coded as female cunning and conflated with abstemiousness, usually taking the form of the denial of workers' privileges. The situations I discuss here show the unique ways in which tradesmen's wives could be alternately demonized, curtailed, victimized by, or protected from the requirements of emerging capitalism.

First, though no clear separation obtained between domestic and commercial life for tradespeople, wives could be a hindrance to the labor of merchants and craftsmen through their own domestic agendas—their need to be savers.⁷ The impact of mercantile capitalism on early modern English family life—or more accurately, the interdependencies, competitions, and conflicts between men's money-earning work outside the middle-class home and women's unpaid housewifery in it—is voiced with stunning clarity by a male householder and merchant in the anonymous *A Warning for Fair Women*, as he considers household and business expenditures:

She must deferre her market till to morrow,
I know no other shift: my great affaires
Must not be hindered by such trifling wares.⁸

This opposition of the husband's commercial obligations to his wife's domestic duties (or "trifling wares") begs key questions. Whose work supports the household? How should authority be defined, and what hierarchy should be supported, in the new, competitive mercantile economy?⁹ Other so-called "domestic tragedies" stage a similar set of internal competitions that hinge, I maintain, on a tension between commercial and domestic obligations, with wives threatening to undermine not only domestic hierarchy, but also domestic economy through their deployment of what Coverdale called their "Convenient Carefulness" over household goods.¹⁰ Keeping house affected running a business and vice versa. In a culture of

increased competition and a diminishing sense of commonweal(th), economic pressures increased tradesmen's anxiety.

In addition to housewifery's potential for competition with business, tradesmen's wives appeared to impede profit in other ways. Their skills and business acumen sometimes threatened commerce and competed with male workers' camaraderie, as city comedies often show. Thomas Middleton's *Anything for a Quiet Life* (ca. 1621) dramatizes a shop wife, Rachel, intimate with her husband's trade secrets, who threatens, when angered, to expose his (literally) shady business practices (displaying his wares under dim lights).¹¹ With an antagonistic relationship to the shop's workers, similar to Margery Eyre's in Thomas Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday* (1600),¹² Rachel is seen as an intruder into this male enclave; her husband asks, "How didst thou get forth?" (2.2.21), suggesting that she occupies the living-quarters side of the domicile. Yet simultaneously, Rachel performs myriad commercial roles: she feeds (or withholds food from) workers; her beauty is (possibly) a lure to customers (4.1.141–4); she keeps a "black book" inventorying her husband's wasteful business decisions, from loaning money with no assurances of repayment to supporting another man's children. At the same time, she desires her spouse's social advancement to alderman and is willing to starve the apprentices and journeymen to facilitate that rise. This wife is common in city comedy: crafty, skilled, and profit-minded, stingy yet supportive, and despised by male workers. Her vilification permits the merchant to appear magnanimous and companionable by contrast.¹³

While not mere scapegoats, mercantile wives nonetheless bear the brunt of negative associations with profit—covetousness and greed. Lorna Hutson locates the construction of the housewife as prudent saver in humanist education, whereby the more negative aspects of "capitalist calculation" were displaced onto women, freeing husbands to be available for business.¹⁴ So, tradesmen's wives' heartless profiteering offsets their husbands' largesse and camaraderie as seen in Thomas Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*.¹⁵ In this prose narrative charting the rise of Simon Eyre to Lord Mayor of London, a source for Dekker's play, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, the wife's good "counsell" is at once acknowledged and criticized. She concocts a scheme to be a "huge gainer" in a one-time trade opportunity, and her

association with questionable ethics leaves Master Eyre free from economic taint. Writers who created merchants like Simon Eyre also constructed wives who assume much of the negative aspects of capitalist success. These constructions help forge the exemplary myth of the self-made man, the benevolent master—at some cost to the mistress.

Attitudes toward social mobility via financial acquisitions and dealings conflicted, and this ambivalence is especially visible in the representations of tradesmen's wives who are made to bear the burden of the negative aspects of social ascent. In Deloney's *Gentle Craft*, the wife's contributions to the husband's advancement are fully acknowledged, but she is criticized for this mobility when accused of greed and covetousness: "as women are (for the most part) very covetous . . ." (143, ll. 33–4). In Dekker's retelling, in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, the wife's contributions to the family business are stringently subordinated (she is shunted from the shop, her business advice is discounted); yet she is satirized more extensively for the mercantilist attributes which worry the period—ambition, greed, affectation, acquisitiveness—qualities which were crucial to the transition to capitalism and which the textual representations of the husbands downplay. Margery questions Simon's magnanimous offer to supply the army with seven years' worth of boots as a payment to keep their apprentice Rafe out of service (1.1.136). She likewise frowns on Simon's hiring of Lacy, a new and foreign worker, whom the shop men prefer (1.4.50–4). Margery lacks sentiment, proposing to replace quickly the workers who threaten to quit (2.3.55–6) and begrudging the shoemaking staff its holiday: "she'll scold on my life for loitering this Monday" (2.3.27–9). Meanwhile, workers mock her putting on airs by means of new clothes and a pretentious vocabulary.

Alongside this negative representation of merchant wives—as overly ambitious like Deloney's Mistress Eyre, or as kill-joys withholding beer and holidays like Dekker's Margery—the practical contributions of tradesmen's wives are acknowledged in the common claim that good frugal wives were essential to economic success: "to thrive one must wive."¹⁶ Although this equation is voiced with regularity throughout the period, mercantile capitalism did exclude women from some of its local knowledge, such as accounting, and placed limitations on their independent travel.¹⁷ Even so, some male merchants argue for English wives' full participation in trade,

calling for women's education in business-related disciplines.¹⁸ Still, the ambivalent representations I am tracking depend neither on women's relative education nor skill, but instead reveal anxieties about mercantilist ethics by using established gender norms and gendered "duties" to build a safe haven for capitalism to expand. To paraphrase Tusser's famous aphorism, "To thrive, [capitalism] must wive."

Notes

1. John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Household Government; for the ordering of private families* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1612). Portions of this contribution are included in my essay, "Being Mistress Eyre in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*," *Comparative Drama* 42, no. 3 (fall 2008).

2. Lena Cowen Orlin, "A Case for Anecdotalism in Women's History: The Witness Who Spoke when the Cock Crowed," *ELR* 31, no. 1 (winter 2001): 52–77; Phyllis Rackin, *Shakespeare and Women* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Amy Smith, "Performing Marriage with a Difference: Wooing, Wedding, and Bedding in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Comparative Drama* 36, nos. 3–4 (2002): 289–320; and Wendy Wall, *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama*, Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

3. Orlin, 75.

4. Rackin, 14. Rackin's early chapters (1–47) provide probably the most concentrated of the "revisionist" arguments about feminist studies of the period. Smith questions critics' tendency "to pretend that early modern patriarchal ideologies are unified and static," 289.

5. Steven Orgel, *Impersonations: The performance of gender in Shakespeare's England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 73. See also K. D. M. Snell, "The Apprenticeship of Women," in *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660–1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 177.

6. See, for example, Karen Newman's discussion of the "feminization of fashion" and "a burgeoning consumer culture [that Ben] Jonson and his contemporaries identify as feminine" in *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 122, 137. See also Jean Howard, "Competing Ideologies of Commerce in Thomas Heywood's *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody, Part II*," in *The Culture of Capital: Property, Cities, and Knowledge in Early Modern England*, ed. Henry S. Turner (New York: Routledge, 2002), 163–82, and her essay "Shakespeare and the London of City Comedy," *Shakespeare Studies* 39 (2001): 1–21.

7. Wall aims to "rescue domesticity" from unhistoricized notions of "women's place," powerlessness, and other "retrograde values" sometimes assumed by feminist schol-

ars. She asks, "How could women be 'relegated' to the household at a time in which it had not yet even superficially withdrawn from economic life or from some yet unborn public sphere?" (9).

8. Anonymous, *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599), ed. Charles Dale Cannon (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), lines 577–9.

9. Wrightson's recent magisterial study of Britain's economy shows this tension concerning economic authority. On the one hand, Wrightson asserts that "women's economic contribution was indispensable" to households, as he summarizes the myriad meanings of housewifery (44–8). On the other hand, he adds: "The notion that a woman was economically supported by her husband was not alien to early modern society, as is sometimes alleged. There are references enough to the husband's duty to 'provide for,' 'maintain' or 'keep' his wife, indicating a privileging of the male role in resource provision. But the practical reality, nonetheless, was of mutual interdependence in the joint endeavor of sustaining their family." See *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 45.

10. Miles Coverdale, *The Christen State of Matrimonye* (London, 1541), translation of Heinrich Bullinger, *Der Christlich Eestand*, 1579, qtd. in Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter: Male Friendship and Fictions of Women in Sixteenth-Century England* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 19. In addition to Hutson, the following studies have informed my discussion of domestic economies: Ann Christensen, "Business, Pleasure and Household Management in Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*," *Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 9, no. 2 (October 1997): 315–40, and "Settling House in Middleton's *Women Beware Women*," *Comparative Drama* 29 (1995–96): 493–518; Frances Dolan, *Dangerous familiars: representations of domestic crime in England, 1550–1700* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Diana Henderson, "The Theatre and Domestic Culture" in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 173–194; Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter*.

11. Thomas Middleton and John Webster, *Anything for a Quiet Life* (ca. 1621), in *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, vol. 5, ed. A. H. Bullen (New York: AMS Press, 1964), 240–349.

12. Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, 2nd ed., ed. Anthony Parr (New York: Norton, 1990). Subsequent citations reflect scene and line numbers.

13. On the relationships among masters, mistresses, and apprentices, see Mark Thornton Burnett, *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997).

14. Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter*, 44–5.

15. Thomas Deloney, *The Gentle Craft, Part I*, in *The Novels of Thomas Deloney*, ed. Merritt E. Lawlis (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1961), 90–169. Citations include page and line numbers.

16. "Man, mine did for to thryve, / must wisely lay to wive." See Thomas Tusser, "A Comparison betweene Champion & Seuerall," in *Five hundredth points of*

good husbandry . . . (London: Richard Tottill, 1573), fol. 61, Early English Books Online, Peterborough Cathedral Library, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:19962778.

17. On women's access to accounting education, see Mary Poovey, "Accommodating Merchants: Accounting, Civility, and the Natural Laws of Gender," *differences* 8, no. 3 (1996), 1–20.

18. Roger Coke observes that "Dutch Merchants and their Wives generally, may govern their Trades better than the English" because women "are less ingeniously educated in England, than in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, or the United Netherlands." He calls the education of merchants' wives "a very great advantage both to the state and their Husbands and Families, and might be of as much or more to the King and Merchants here in England." See *A Treatise Wherein is demonstrated that the church and state of England are in Equal Danger with the Trade of it* (London, 1671), 140, 146, and 149.

Gaining Honor as Husband's Deputy: Margherita Datini at Work, 1381–1410

ANN CRABB

In 1376, in Avignon, Margherita Bandini, aged sixteen, married forty-one year old Francesco di Marco Datini of Prato, and as a married woman her economic activities would remain closely tied to those of her merchant husband.¹ Francesco, from a lower middle class background in Prato, had arrived in Avignon, the seat of the papacy in those years, and, starting as a young man, he had acquired a fortune by trading in armor, salt, jewels and other lucrative merchandise. Margherita's elite but dispossessed Florentine family had moved to Avignon after her father's political execution, and there they met the already successful Francesco.²

The young Margherita already participated in Francesco's business in a small way in Avignon, sewing helmets while, according to Francesco, other wives were amusing themselves. Francesco worked continually and expected her to do the same, which suited her serious temperament. Francesco paid her for her work, judging by her brother-in-law Niccolò's remark to Francesco: "You say that Margherita has 100 florins between money she earns and money for household expenses and that she does not want to give them into your care; I don't know where they would be better placed," suggesting Margherita's strength of will and competence. Then Niccolò goes on to say, "but I would rather see her become fatter by making children than in gathering in money . . . although I know that that comes from God and she should pray for it."³ Here Niccolò, a moralist, touches on the contrast often made between money, sterile and godless, and human fecundity, which came from God,⁴ and hints at a connection to the Datini's childlessness, already a source of worry.

Margherita and Francesco returned to Italy in 1383, where Francesco directed, often by letter, a network of merchant banking companies in Italy, Avignon, and Spain.⁵ Margherita, plagued by ill health, remained infertile, a canker at the heart of the marriage, since Francesco badly wanted an heir to establish a Datini family line; he had two illegitimate children during the marriage, but only a girl survived, and in Italy in this era even legitimate girls were rarely heirs.⁶ The couple moved between Prato, where Francesco had his principal residence and some businesses, and Florence, eleven miles away, where he had a lesser residence and his most important international companies. They often preferred to be apart, with one staying in Prato while the other was in Florence and vice versa, partly because of friction between them. However, they also wanted one of them present to oversee their properties, with Margherita acting as Francesco's agent in Francesco's absence—a "deputy husband" in household matters broadly defined.⁷

Their common concerns led to an extensive correspondence, the bulk of which has been preserved, with Margherita mostly dictating her letters. Literacy was a professional qualification for merchants, but was considered unnecessary for women in merchant families in the fourteenth and early-fifteenth centuries. Margherita was unusual in that, needing to send letters and inspired by merchant letter writers around her, she worked to improve her reading and writing skills as an adult.⁸

The Datini correspondence frequently uses the word "honor," to refer to a good reputation. It could mean overall reputation, as when Margherita, the good wife, asserted, "you have no one . . . who guards your honor better than I will."⁹ Honor was also something to be gained or lost through large and small deeds, and, for women, chastity. Margherita, her chastity taken for granted, strove to win honor through execution of her duties, telling Francesco, "I try to the best of my ability to do what . . . is for your pleasure and my honor, but I don't write what I do when it is unnecessary: you should find it enough that I do it."¹⁰

Margherita's activities had a stronger economic aspect in Prato than in Florence. The Prato firm centered on the family home, the *palazzo* Datini, and was a mixed enterprise that included business, farming, and building, with a paid manager, Barzalone, sharing responsibilities with Margherita.¹¹ A couple of times, Francesco wrote that Barzalone should

follow Margherita's decisions about the farms, and another time he told Margherita: "As for the harvest and everything else . . . do what brings you honor."¹² Margherita oversaw the young clerks who lived in the *palazzo* Datini, and she entertained visitors who passed through Prato. When Francesco compared her unfavorably to another man's wife, she fired back that the other man "keeps his wife like a lady and not like the wife of an inn keeper," indicating partly a desire for a more leisured life, but even more a desire for greater appreciation from Francesco.

Some of Margherita's business-related activities extended into the city of Prato and its countryside. Francesco had his hand in many concerns, one of which was acting as a broker in finding wetnurses, and the search fell to Margherita.¹³ Even in this, she showed her anxiety to do well. When an important Florentine sent a baby to Prato to be nursed, she wrote, "I gave him to that nurse until we can find a better one. God give me grace that it brings me honor—[not] shame . . . because of the many things that could happen."¹⁴ She was also involved in the collection of outstanding debts. Francesco, like other merchants, lent money, bypassing by various expedients the church's rules equating all interest on loans with usury.¹⁵ Following Francesco's instructions, Margherita organized collecting expeditions and received visits from debtors, although she did not go out to collect debts personally.¹⁶ Margherita was a religious woman who encouraged Francesco to be less worldly and more charitable, but she showed no qualms about the merchant profession, nor about making a profit on loans. Instead, Margherita worried about Francesco's lack of moderation in his approach to his profession (and Francesco himself had a strong if unspecified sense of sin).¹⁷

Writing letters and keeping accounts figured large in both household and business (which in Prato were not clearly distinguished). Even before Margherita improved her own skills, she managed the writing of business letters by young clerks when Francesco was away. Thus, she told Francesco in 1394: "The quality of my secretary's writing gets worse each day, but he doesn't care because a woman is in charge. . . . You have left me so much to do that it would be too much if I were a man and had the secretary of a lord."¹⁸ Margherita's comment, "it would be too much if I were a man," is an example of her pride in being the best sort of woman, while at the same

time expecting women to be less literate than men. As for her comment about the secretary or clerk's attitude to writing under the direction of a woman, it should be noted that she was here carrying on a conversation with her scribe, as well as with Francesco, successfully shaming the scribe into doing better.¹⁹

Francesco wanted meticulous accounts of expenditures, personal or business, and account-keeping in his absence formed part of Margherita's duties. In the early 1390s, when her skills were undeveloped, she had the clerks do the writing.²⁰ Later she could do it in her own hand, telling Francesco, for example, "I received this evening . . . from Masticia 30 lire and I wrote nothing in the main account book, but I entered in his book . . . that I had received the money . . . and I also put it in my notebook that I keep for expenses, so tell me if you wish to have [it] written in the main Libro."²¹

In Florence, where Margherita spent half her time, she had less contact with business because the specialized merchant banking companies were in separate buildings from the personal household. The personal household still included clerks who went back and forth between Florence and Prato, and she still oversaw a correspondence to others besides Francesco; indeed, it was in Florence that she wrote her surviving autograph letters to Francesco.²²

How did a merchant household like the Datini's (highly respected in Prato) fit into the more demanding social hierarchy in Florence?²³ In Florence, the big merchant families possessed great prestige, and Francesco Datini would have lost honor not for being a merchant, but for being a *nouveau riche* merchant. Margherita accepted without hesitation the common assumption that as a wife she had married into Francesco's way of life, whatever his status and in spite of personal quarrels with him.²⁴ She contributed to their honor as best she could by acting as Francesco's deputy, and through the standing of her well-born (although politically and economically weak) relatives, while Francesco contributed his notable success as a merchant. Margherita and Francesco's combined strengths allowed them to mix socially with upper-level patricians²⁵—although their exact social position remained untested, since they had no children to reveal it through the quality of marriages arranged.²⁶

Notes

1. For descriptions of married women's economic activities, see Merry Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 60–110. See also Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England 1650–1750* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), part 1. The roles of wives in early modern European and colonial societies were so similar over time and place that Ulrich's comments apply quite well to Margherita Datini. On Margherita and Francesco's wedding, see Francesco Datini in Avignon to monna Piera di Pratese in Prato, 28 Aug. 1376, Archivio di stato di Prato Datini, vol. 1114, 6101225; and Cesare Guasti, "proemio" to ser Lapo Mazzei's letters to Francesco Datini, in *Lettere di un notaro a un mercante del secolo XIV con altre lettere e documenti*, ed. Cesare Guasti (Florence: Le Monnier, 1880), XXXIV–VI.

2. On Margherita's family background, see, for her father's execution, Gene Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society, 1343–1378* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 185–7; and for her mother's magnate family, the Gherardini, see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Retour à la cité: Les magnats de Florence, 1340–1440* (Paris: Éditions École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociale, 2006), 316–19. The most accessible description of Francesco's family background and of the growth of Francesco's business in Avignon is Iris Origo, *The Merchant of Prato: Francesco di Marco Datini, 1335–1410* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1986), 1–33. Other information throughout this essay is based on letters and account books in the archivio Datini in the Archivio di stato di Prato, hereafter abbreviated ASPO Datini, and on published editions of these documents: Francesco Datini, *Le Lettere di Francesco Datini alla moglie Margherita (1385–1410)*, ed. Elena Cecchi (Prato: Società pratese di storia patria, 1990); and Margherita Datini, *Per la tua Margherita: Lettere di una donna del '300 al marito mercante*, (Prato: CD Rom, ASPO, 2002). This CD is particularly useful because it includes images of the letters' handwriting. When citing the published letter collections as a whole, I refer to F. Datini 1990 and M. Datini 2002, but for individual letters contained in these collections, I cite only the dates of the letters. Useful secondary sources include Origo, *Merchant*; Guasti, I–CXLIII; and Frederigo Melis, *Aspetti della vita economica medievale* (Florence: Olschki, 1962).

3. For the quotation, see Niccolò dell'Ammanato Tecchini to Francesco Datini, February, 28, 1382, ASPO Datini vol. 1103, 13334: "Tu di' che lla Margherita à fiorini .C. e tra guadagnati e d'uscita e che no lli ti vol più affidare; io no so dove lli stessonno meglio e più salvi; ma io piuttosto vorrei che la ingrassasse e facesse fanciulli che atendere a raghunare denari; e benso che ... vengha da ddio e ella ne prieghi." For Francesco's later description of Margherita's work, see Francesco to Cristofano da Barberino, s.d. [1401], ASPO Datini, vol. 1110, 9142552. I cite the index numbers of unpublished archival letters and when, in the case of Margherita's published letters, there is more than one letter from the same day.

4. See Ann Derbes and Mark Sandona, "Barren Metal and the Fruitful Womb: The Program of Giotto's Arena Chapel in Padua," *The Art Bulletin* 80 (1998): 274–91,

and their "Reading the Arena Chapel," in *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*, ed. Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 197–220.

5. On Francesco's companies, see Melis, *Aspetti della economica medievale*, esp. 295–335.

6. Margherita's principal ailment was endometriosis, which brings great pain around menstrual periods and inhibits conception, but she also had other bouts of ill health. For the boy baby born in 1387, who died soon afterwards, see ASPO Datini 198: 123v, 124v, 166v. Ginevra, born in 1392, is mentioned frequently in the Datini correspondence after she went to live with them in 1398. For the position of daughters in inheritance in Florence and Tuscany, see Ann Crabb, *The Strozzi of Florence: Widowhood and Solidarity in the Renaissance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 35–41.

7. Margherita's letters explicitly stating the need to set the household in order before going to join Francesco come from 1398 (Aug. 25, Dec. 1, 1401863, Dec. 2, Dec. 3) although she implies it at other times. Francesco frequently says that he has to finish business and building activities before joining her. For the idea of deputy husband, see Ulrich, *Good Wives*, 35–50. The term "subordinate agent" is used for the concept of "deputy husband" by Linda Pollack, "Teach Her to Live under Obedience: The Making of Women in the Upper Ranks of Early Modern England," *Continuity and Change* 4 (1989): 231–5 and by Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450–1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), but "deputy husband" is more descriptive.

8. For Margherita's letters to her husband, see M. Datini, and for Francesco's to her, see F. Datini. On Margherita's literacy, see Ann Crabb, "If I could write: Margherita Datini and Letter Writing, 1385–1410," *Renaissance Quarterly* 60 (2007): 1170–1206.

9. Margherita to Francesco, March 31, 1387: "N'abi niunoche ... che ghuardi melglo l'onore tuo che farò io."

10. Margherita to Francesco, Sept. 1, 1395: "O atendo giusta mia posa a fare quello ch'io credo che sia di tuo piacere e di mio onore e no mi churo di scriverti ciò che io fo perché no mi pare sia di bisogno: parmi che ti deba abastare ch'io [lo] faccia."

11. On the Prato company, see Melis, *Aspetti della economica medievale*, 281–94.

12. Francesco to Margherita, July 23, 1395, Feb. 6, 1394, pp. 144, 61 and 22; and July 1395, p. 142: "Di quanto ai seguito de fatti della richolta e di tutte l'altre chose ... fai quello ché di tuo onore."

13. There are, for example, nine letters to Francesco in M. Datini describing her searches during the month of August 1398.

14. Margherita to Francesco, Aug. 23, 1398: "Abiallo mandato a quella femina che ce [lo deve] tenere tanto che noi n'abiamo una buona. Idio mi dia grazia ch'io n'abia onore ... [e non] verghona ... per molti chasi che posono avvenire."

15. For a concise and clear discussion of merchants' money lending, see Raymond de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397–1494* (New York: Norton, 1966), 10–14.

16. On Margherita and debt collection, see Margherita to Francesco, March 17,

1394; March 27, 1394; March 31, 1397; April 3, 1397 and Francesco to Margherita, Feb. 19, 1394; March 20, 1394; April 3, 1394; March 19, 1397; April 13, 1397, pp. 68, 88, 98–99, 151, 186.

17. For her pleas that he improve his attitudes and behavior, see, for example, M. Datini: Jan. 16, 1386; April 5, 1386; March 31, 1387; Sept. 2, 1389; May 12, 1394; Jan. 23, 1394; Aug. 13, 1395; June 29, 1396; Dec. 3, 1398. Francesco's sense of sin, probably including financial sins and sexual ones, is expressed most forcefully in his letter of May 13, 1394, pp.120–3.

18. Margherita to Francesco, April 15, 1394 1401751: "Del chanceliere mio iscrivio pegio l'un di che l'atro: me ne grava, ma no'si disdicie, perché stane a ghovemamento di femina; ma tu m'ài bene lasciata a fare più faciende, che s'io fosi uno huomo basterebe, ché non ebe mai sì fatta faccienda, il chancelere de' Signori."

19. Her previous letter, written by the clerk called Fattorino earlier the same day, had been carelessly done. This letter and subsequent letters were well written. For the handwriting of the previous letter of April 15, see M. Datini 1401750.

20. Francesco to Margherita, Feb. 20, 1394; May 22, 1397, pp. 70, 192.

21. Margherita to Francesco, Oct. 16, 1398, 242: "Io si o auto questa sera ... dal Mastricia, lire trenta piccoli, e non n'ò fatto iscritura niuna a Libro, se nonne ch'io o iscritto a libro suo a pie della ragione, chom'i'ò ricevuti I detti danari, chome s'usa di fare, ed ogni mesi ad entrata al quadernuccio ch'io tengo per ispese; se che dite per la prima se volete ch'io achonci a Libro." See also Nov. 20, 1398.

22. The twenty autograph letters she wrote between February and November 1399 show clearly the effort she made to improve her letter writing and her resultant progress, and also the separation of residential and business quarters in Florence. On the autograph letters, see Crabb, "If I could write..."

23. On the Florentine social hierarchy, see Lauro Martines, *The Social World of the Florentine Humanists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); and Anthony Molho, *Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

24. For the assumption that wives took on their husbands' identities, see Ulrich, *Good Wives*, 35–50.

25. Jérôme Hayez, "Le rire du marchand. Francesco Datini, sa femme Margherita et les 'gran maestri' florentins," in *Les femmes et le quotidien (XIVe–XVIIIe siècle): Textes offerts à Christiane Klapisch-Zuber*, ed. Isabelle Chabot, Didier Lett, and Jérôme Hayez, (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2006), 407–58.

26. For the social ramifications of Florentine marriages, see Crabb, *Strozzi*, chap. 8.

Widows, Legal Rights, and the Mercantile Economy of Early Modern Milan

JEANETTE M. FREGULIA

When Clementia Castelli's husband, Dionisio Maderno, died in late 1589, the couple had been married only three years. Nevertheless, it appears from the data that Maderno had already spent the *Lit*2,200 dowry that Clementia had brought to the marriage, and to which she was legally entitled in the event of widowhood.¹ Likely in need of the money to support herself and the couple's young daughter, Vittoria, Clementia was left to seek control of her husband's property in lieu of her dowry.² Thus, in June 1590, Clementia hired the Milanese notary Ferrando Dossena to plead her case for ownership of her husband's stone quarry (*lapidibus et cemento*), located outside of the city.³ Moreover, the documents indicate that Clementia planned to assume ownership of the business, at least for the immediate future.⁴

This story from Milan's *Archivio di Stato* (State Archive) raises an important but little explored issue surrounding women's participation in the early modern economies of such mercantile cities as Milan: the legal capacity that made it possible for women, particularly as widows, to participate in commercial pursuits. With Clementia's story as a point of departure, I argue here that Milanese women enjoyed a certain legal capacity that facilitated their involvement in the city's busy urban marketplace, and without which entrepreneurial ventures may have been impossible. For the present, I will limit my discussion of women's legal capacity to widows, and to the pivotal role played by either the dowry or other forms of inheritance in the business activities of several widows in early seventeenth-century Milan.

Although women in Milan, like those all over early modern Italy, were denied many of the legal rights enjoyed by men, including the ability to hold both civic and public office and to act as witnesses to a contract, this does not mean that they were necessarily helpless victims of laws made by and for men. Rather, it appears that they enjoyed what Thomas Kuehn has called legal personhood.⁵ More specifically, the legal system in cities throughout much of Italy was based on Roman law, specifically Justinian's *Corpus Iurus Civilis*, a code that included important legal rights for women.⁶ Most importantly for this contribution, according to Justinian's *Corpus*, women were entitled to full restitution of their dowries in the event of a husband's predecease. In addition, as we saw in the story of Clementia Castelli, women had the ability to petition for restitution of their dowry out of their husband's estate in the event that the money was not available at the time their husbands died. The document filed in this eventuality was called an *apprehensio*, in essence a legal claim or lien against the property of another, such as a husband, or his estate in the event that he was deceased. As a legal statement of a woman's share of her natal family's wealth, as well as her primary means of support in widowhood, it is not surprising that cities all over the Italian peninsula had statutes that upheld a woman's right to her dowry and affirmed her as its legal owner, despite the right of husbands to use their wives' dotal wealth during the marriage.⁷ In some instances a woman was permitted to take control of her husband's property, personal items, and even business while still married, provided she could prove her husband was mismanaging his financial affairs and thereby putting the family at risk of poverty.⁸ Women could also inherit money and property from both kin and non-kin, and were free to petition the court to ensure receipt.

Such rights raise important questions: once in control of their dowries or inheritance, how did women use their wealth in the pursuit of commercial ventures? In some cases, a widow might continue the operation of her deceased husband's business, as Clementia did. This was also the case for two other women, Antonia Merulia and Hortensia Borri. Antonia filed an *apprehensio* in 1605 in an attempt to take control of her husband's shop (in which it appears that he sold beef [*manzo*] and pork [*porco*] and the Italian luncheon *mortadella*), the tools of his trade (*strumenti*), and the house

attached to the business in which the couple had lived.⁹ Similarly, five years later, Hortensia Borri brought suit against her husband's estate to reclaim her *Lit*6,000 dowry, plus a *Lit*1,000 dowry augmentation that her husband had promised her.¹⁰ In February of this same year, we find that Hortensia was successful in her suit, and was awarded her husband's shop (*apotheca*) as compensation for her dowry.¹¹ Although the documents suggest that Clementia, Antonia, and Hortensia all gained ownership of a business, the exclusion of women from guild membership means that they may well have hired men to manage the daily operation of these enterprises.¹²

It appears from the evidence that all three of the widows discussed above used the *apprehensio* to gain control of a husband's business and subsequently to begin their own involvement in Milan's urban economy. If we accept that this was, indeed, what happened, it is possible to argue that the *apprehensio* was an important legal tool by which some widows of means acquired the resources they needed to begin their commercial pursuits. In addition, it reaffirms the centrality of the dowry as a source of capital for women wanting, or needing, to involve themselves in business activities.

The dowry was not, however, the only source of wealth for widows. In some instances, the resources a woman needed for participation in the urban economy were provided by an inheritance. The document used to lay claim to an inheritance was called an *aditio*, and an example of this comes from Caterina Pirogallo. The widow of a Milanese bookseller and printer, Caterina, in 1610, made a legal claim on her deceased husband's estate as compensation for her *Lit*10,000 dowry.¹³ Over the next twenty years, Caterina, in partnership with her husband's former business partner, continued the operation of her husband's book business. It appears that Caterina also had an entrepreneurial side, and used her inheritance to pursue other commercial interests. For example, in 1615 she purchased one part of a residential building in the parish of San Nazaro in Brolo for just over *Lit*2,000.¹⁴ Similarly, we find that in 1618 Caterina made money by selling the water rights to a series of irrigation canals she owned. The canals were located on the land that Caterina had acquired when she assumed control of her deceased husband's estate, and she sold the water rights to her three brothers, Camillo, Marco, and Francesco.¹⁵

As the evidence presented here suggests, some Milanese widows relied on the legal right to restitution of their dowries, and/or an inheritance to provide the resources they needed for involvement in the mercantile economy of early modern Milan. Although they did not have the same legal status that men had,¹⁶ it appears that the limited rights they did enjoy made it possible, in some instances, to pursue commercial goals. This short essay, then, sheds new light on how some Milanese women in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries used their limited legal capacity to gain the money and capital they needed to support themselves and, often, their families in a variety of ways, including operating a deceased husband's existing business, investing in property, and managing resources they owned outside of the city. While the right to pursue her goals in the urban marketplace did not bring with it a corresponding change in a woman's ability to make the laws that affected her, we can no longer argue that these restrictions were always an impediment to women's commercial ambitions.

Notes

1. ASMi, not. Ferrando Dossena, June 1, 1590, f. 22031. (the abbreviation "ASMi" stands for Archivio di Stato, Milano, "f." for notary file number, and "not." for notary). For a discussion of women's rights to their dowries see Julius Kirshner, "Wives Claims against Insolvent Husbands in Late Medieval Italy," in *Women of the Medieval World, Essays in Honor John H. Mundy*, ed. Julius Kirshner and Suzanne F. Wemple (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 258. Discussion of the dowry can also be found in Monica Chojnacka, *Working Women in Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Stanley Chojnacki, "Dowries and Kinsmen in Early Renaissance Venice," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 5, no. 4 (1975): 571–600; Anthony Molho, *Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); Laura Deleidi, "Donne Milanesi della Prima Metà del Cinquecento: La Memoria degli Atti Notarili," *Società e Storia* 18 (1994): 279–314; and Diane Owen Hughes, "From Brideprice to Dowry in Mediterranean Europe," in *The Marriage Bargain: Women and Dowries in European History*, ed. Marian A. Kaplan (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1984), 13–58.

2. The information on Clementia's daughter comes from the Archivio della Curia Arcivescovite di Milano (ACAM), *Status Animarum*, S Alessandro XIV (1589), for the parish of San Giovanni in Conca. This same book of the *Status* also includes the years 1633 and 1637.

3. ASMi, not. Ferrando Dossena, June 1, 1590, f. 22031.

4. Ibid.

5. Thomas Kuehn, "Person and Gender in the Laws," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith Brown and Robert C. Davis (New York: Longman, 1998), 103–6. See also Thomas Kuehn, *Law, Family, and Women: Toward a Legal Anthropology of Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 233–5. Diane Owen Hughes makes a similar point that under Roman law women had a "legal personality," although women's essentially private nature, according to Hughes, meant that they did not have an equivalent "civil persona." See Diane Owen Hughes, "Invisible Madonnas? The Italian Historiographical Tradition and Women of Medieval Italy," in *Women in Medieval History and Historiography*, ed. Susan Mosher Stuard (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 25.

6. George Mousourakis, *The Historical and Institutional Context of Roman Law* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 423–33.

7. Kirshner, "Wives' Claims," 257. Kirshner offers an excellent description of the remedies available under Roman law (particularly the *Corpus Iurus Civilis* of Justinian) to wives whose husbands were teetering on the brink of insolvency. For a discussion of this same right to protection of the dowry in Venice, see Joanne M. Ferraro, "The Power to Decide: Battered Wives in Early Modern Venice," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (1995): 495. See also Eleanor Riemer, "Women, Dowries, and Capital Investment in Thirteenth-Century Siena," in *The Marriage Bargain*, ed. Marian A. Kaplan, 63–64; Chojnacka, *Working Women in Early Modern Venice*, 134–135; and Kuehn, *Law, Family and Women*, 242.

8. Kirshner, "Wives' Claims," 257–259. For an example of this, see Kevin Stevens, "New Light on Andrea Calvo and the Book Trade in Sixteenth Century Milan," *La Bibliofilia*, no. 1 (2001): 25–54.

9. ASMi, not. Paolo Pusterla, March 17, 1605, f. 23541.

10. ASMi, not. Giulio Borri, February 15, 1610, f. 24740.

11. ASMi, not. Paolo Pusterla, March 17, 1605, f. 23541.

12. Yan Thomas, "The Division of the Sexes in Roman Law," in *A History of Women in the West, from Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*, ed. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 89–97. See also Anthony Black, *Guild and State, European Political Thought from the Twelfth Century to the Present* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 14; and Sharon T Strocchia, "Gender and the Rites of Honor in Italian Renaissance Cities," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith Brown and Robert C. Davis (New York: Longman, 1998), 47–8. It is worth noting that the Milanese book trade did not come under the regulation of a guild until 1589. Prior to this time, it was much easier for a woman to pursue a livelihood in the Milanese book business. For a discussion of one woman who supported herself, with the assistance of her brother, in the book industry after she took control of her husband's shop in 1547, see Stevens, "New Light," 52–3.

13. ASMi, not. Virgilio Silla, July 7, 1610, f. 26770. For information on Caterina

Pirogallo's husband, see Kevin Stevens, "A Bookbinder in Early Seventeenth-Century Milan: The Shop of Pietro Martire Locarno," *The Library* 18, no. 4 (1996): 306–27.

14. ASMi, not. Antonio Francesco Crivelli, March 24, 1615, f. 25450.

15. ASMi, not. Antonio Crivelli, March 13, 1618, f. 25453.

16. Kuehn, "Person and Gender in the Laws," 97–105; Elizabeth S. Cohen, "Evolving the History of Women in Early Modern Italy: Subordination and Agency," in *Spain and Italy, Politics, Society, and Religion*, ed. Thomas James Dandeleet and John A. Marino (Boston: Brill, 2007), 327.

Identifying Women Proprietors in Wills from Fifteenth-Century London

KATE KELSEY STAPLES

Fifteenth-century London pulsed with mercantile activity. London had a population of about 40,000 at the start of the century,¹ and women were a crucial part of this burgeoning city. These were widows active in the trades of their husbands, married women pursuing livelihoods independent of or complementary to that of their husbands, and single women in the service industry. Despite the existence of strong patriarchal structures and a male-dominated culture in early modern England that limited women's control of property and certain freedoms, these women were active agents in a diverse marketplace.

London in the fifteenth century was a city dominated by male mercantile activity in which women nonetheless filled a crucial niche in the marketplace, and thus it fits the model of Bruges explained by James Murray.² Many studies of urban women rely on such valuable city documents as accounts that record fines and rents of commercial property, regulations on prostitution, guild records, and apprenticeship contracts. Testaments, often considered expressions of piety, are another type of document that can inform modern audiences about expectations for women as proprietors. Through testaments, we can see wives and daughters possibly designated as managers of the various types of commercial property that lay at the heart of the early modern mercantile economy.

Most Londoners lodged their *post obit* requests with the Husting Court, the county court of London.³ The testators were primarily wealthy artisans and merchants, since one needed to possess a substantial amount of property in order to register the details of the division of that property.⁴

Between the years 1400 and 1500, 515 wills were enrolled in the Court of Husting in London.⁵ Of these, 73 wills (14%) involve bequests of commercial property, specifically labeled as such. Other bequests include tenements, which may have been used as commercial property depending on the building, dwelling spaces, and houses, and other types of property including halls, wharves, farmland, and granaries. In addition to real estate, the Husting wills also include bequests of movable property.

The commercial property included in these fifteenth-century wills is diverse. In most cases (43 wills), the predominantly male testators (only 50 of the 515, or 10%, were women) left a shop or shops to their heirs. Testators specified the location, but they did not often note the purpose of the shop. For example, in 1400, Richard Blounville, a dried fish salesman, left his wife Emma two shops in the parish of S. Michael de Crokedlane, to pass to his son John and John's heirs after his wife's death.⁶ At the end of the century, Thomas Bayen, a vinter, left his married daughter Cecilia his tenements with shops, cellars, and solars ("cum shopis celariis solariis") apparently to support her for her lifetime while she repaired the said buildings.⁷ Such shops frequently faced the street and were sometimes attached to houses or tenements and rented to artisans or traders.⁸

In some wills, testators were more specific, and the reader does not need to infer the purpose of the property from the testators' occupations, which can be misleading. Eighteen wills include bequests of breweries or brewhouses, and sixteen of those were left to women (fourteen to widows, one to a daughter, and one to another female whose relationship is unclear). In 1400, Katherine inherited a brewery called "le Glene" along with tenements from her husband Henry Yevele, a mason;⁹ in 1405, Matilda inherited a brewery called "le Horsheued," shops, and a tenement called "le horn on the hoop" from her husband Thomas Atte Haye, a goldsmith;¹⁰ in 1408, Johanna inherited a brewhouse called "le Cok on the hoope" in the parish of S. Leonard from her husband John Appulby, a brewer by trade.¹¹ Such bequests of breweries may reiterate the relative commonality of women in the ale business even in the fifteenth century.¹²

These wills mention four bakehouses and six hostels, six of which were left to women (five wives and one daughter), and two wills mention a hostel and brewery combination (one left to a wife, the other to a grand-

son). In 1434, Agnes inherited a bakehouse, with shops, from her husband Thomas Coffyn, a baker, and likely she carried on the couple's business.¹³ Earlier, in 1415, Henry Rokulf left his hostel called "le swan on the hoop" to his wife Agnes and her sons from her first husband.¹⁴ Similarly, in 1435 an embroiderer named John Caundissh left his hostel called "Yvihalle" to his wife Alice.¹⁵ In some wills it is clear that testators did not own these commercial buildings outright, but bequeathed part of their ownership. For example, vinter John Stile left his son and daughter-in-law together his leasehold interest in a hostel called "Pouleshede" near St. Paul's cathedral.¹⁶

Testators predominantly left commercial property to members of their immediate family. As we see in these wills, wives likely carried on the family business, pursued a side-income within these spaces, or rented the property to others. Although it would seem to have been more difficult for a single woman than for a married woman—or a man—to manage commercial property in fifteenth-century London, out of the twelve total daughters who inherited some type of commercial property (either directly or after their mothers and brothers died), only three are married daughters and one a daughter-in-law.¹⁷ In other instances, daughters benefited more indirectly from the bustle of trade in London. For example, Katherine and Margaret inherited twenty marks from the sale of houses and shops of their brewer father James Knyght in 1417,¹⁸ and Elizabeth stood last in line to inherit the shops her father owned after they first were used by her grandmother and then her six brothers.¹⁹

All of the six female testators who bequeathed commercial property in this selection were widows.²⁰ Five of the six bequeathed shops, sometimes along with other buildings, and one bequeathed a hostel, called "le Swanne on the hoop."²¹ The recipients of these female testators were various, including unrelated individuals, a female servant, a son, a daughter, and grandchildren. The bequests of commercial property by these widows suggest that these women were managing or receiving income from these properties and were therefore a part of the mercantile activity of London.

The practice of partible inheritance commonplace in northern European towns, whereby daughters and sons could inherit equally and in which one heir was not privileged,²² was crucial for mercantile activity by

women. What becomes evident from this brief exploration of the Husting wills is that, as the city expanded economically over the fifteenth century, Londoners expected wives and daughters to play crucial roles. From these wills we obtain a glimpse of early modern women as shopkeepers, brewers, bakers, innkeepers, and commercial property managers, either as business partners with their husbands, as autonomous traders or artisans who enhanced their family's income, or as independent proprietors.²³ These women all contributed to making London an important center of trade and commerce in the world over the next three centuries.

Notes

1. Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4.

2. James Murray, *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism, 1280–1390* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), chap. 8.

3. Reginald Sharpe, *Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting, London, A.D. 1258–1688*, 2 vols. (London: John C. Francis, 1889), 1: iii, x–xi.

4. A testator had to possess property of £10 or more. Jeremy Sumner Gibson, *Probate Jurisdictions: Where to Look for Wills* (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1997), 7.

5. In 1889, Reginald Sharpe compiled a calendar of the wills which summarized each will enrolled with the Court between 1258 and 1688. This paper considers the wills included in his calendar for the fifteenth century, some of the original wills that appear on a microfilm collection, and a few of the originals held in the Corporation of London Records Office at the Guildhall, London, namely those enrolled between 1485 and 1500 that were not reproduced in the microfilm collection. In the late fifteenth century, London testators began to enroll their wills in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury rather than in the Husting Court with more frequency. Only 76 of the 515 wills of the fifteenth century were enrolled after 1475. The Prerogative Court of Canterbury began to enroll wills in 1383. See Peter Walne, *English Wills: Probate Records in England and Wales with a Brief Note on Scottish and Irish Wills* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1964), 37.

6. Sharpe, 2:343–4.

7. Corporation of London Records Office, Husting Rolls 224 (16). Sharpe includes this will in his index, yet uncharacteristically he leaves out certain details concerning the buildings involved. See Sharpe, 2:595–6.

8. See Derek Keene, "Landlords, the Property Market and Urban Development in Medieval England," in *Power, Profit and Urban Land: Landownership in Medieval and Early Modern Northern European Towns*, ed. Finn-Einar Eliassen and Geir Atle Erstrand (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1996), 93–119.

9. Sharpe, 2:346.

10. *Ibid.*, 2:377.

11. *Ibid.*, 2:383, Appulby's was not the only "le Cok on the hoop" brewery in town. Three other breweries of the same name are mentioned in the wills, but in different areas of the city. See Sharpe, 2:385, 2:409.

12. Judith Bennet, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300–1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

13. Sharpe, 2:472.

14. *Ibid.*, 2:411.

15. *Ibid.*, 2:472–3.

16. *Ibid.*, 2:503.

17. The testators in their wills are not consistent in mentioning the marital status of their heirs, making it risky to make assumptions about whether the daughters of these testators were married. However, if they were single, it is even more notable that they received such real estate, perhaps in addition to their dowries.

18. Sharpe, 2:419.

19. *Ibid.*, 2:407–8.

20. Married women in London at this time needed their husband's permission to make a will.

21. Sharpe, 2:528.

22. More specifically, Londoners followed the custom of burgage tenure in contrast to other inheritance schemes in the rural areas, like primogeniture, where the division or non-division of land was crucial because of the services due to the lord whose land the tenant held. As Caroline Barron explains, Londoners "held their lands directly of the king in free burgage (or socage) tenure: these lands were free of the obligation of military service and so could be freely devised, just as if they were chattels." See Caroline M. Barron, "The 'Golden Age' of Women in Medieval London," in *Medieval Women in Southern England*, ed. Keith Bate, Anne Curry, Christopher Hardman, and Peter Noble (Reading, England: Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Reading, 1989), 35–58. See also Frederick Pollock and Frederick Maitland, *History of English Law before the Time of Edward I*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), 330–1; Michael M. Sheehan, *The Will in Medieval England: From the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to the End of the Thirteenth Century*, vol. 6 (Toronto: Pontifical Institution of Mediaeval Studies, 1963), 274–8; and Morley de Wolf Hemmeon, *Burgage Tenure in Mediaeval England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914).

23. Barbara Hanawalt recently examined women's business activities in London: see *Wealth of Wives: Women, Law, and Economy in Late Medieval London* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), esp. chap. 8. Married women could petition in England to trade on their own as *femme soles* or they could remain *femme couvertes* and operate their own business with their husband's consent or collaboration. Marjorie McIntosh argues that women in late medieval London more often did the latter, as it gave them more legal flexibility in various situations. See McIntosh, "The Benefits and Drawbacks of *Femme Sole* Status," *Journal of British Studies* 44 (2005): 410–38.

Women, Objects, and Exchange in Early Modern Florence

ANN MATCHETTE

When visiting Florence in the 1590s, the English traveller Robert Dallington observed that “the husband (for the most part) when he goeth abroad, locketh vp his wife (not because he is ieaalous, [he protests] but because it is the custome).”¹ Dallington was repeating a common trope: in Italy, virtuous women stayed at home and attended to matters of the family, not to the market. The stereotype had numerous precedents, not least in treatises on household management where the domestic economy was given full attention. In one of the best-known examples of this genre, Leon Battista Alberti viewed not just the home but also urban spaces as highly gendered. The interlocutor in his famous *Libri della famiglia* explained that “it would hardly win us respect if our wife busied herself among the men in the marketplace, out in the public eye.”² Alberti was drawing on a long tradition that imparted a decidedly lascivious connotation to women’s activities in the market.³ Earning money was the realm of men; honorable women were charged with merely conserving it.

These are ideals, of course, and taken alone they present us with a very particular picture, one which has dominated our ideas about women’s economic capacities and access to the market. According to this view, even in Florence, a city whose fortunes were built on mercantilism, women had extremely limited—if any—room to manoeuvre financially. Such limitations can also be found in documents like family memoranda (*ricordanze*), which privilege patriarchal ideals of family honor.⁴ However, using these ideals as indicators of all social practice both privileges elite preoccupations over ordinary women’s lived experiences and places more emphasis

on transactions that occurred in the public spaces of the market square or shop over ones of equal importance that occurred in more private spaces.⁵

My purpose here is to raise questions about the relationship between women, status, space, and the nature of exchange. The decorum expected of women—particularly elite women—might have discouraged them from trading more publicly, but it did not necessarily prevent them from engaging in commercial activities. By broadening the range of economic transactions worthy of study to include transactions based on objects, we find many more enterprising women engaged in the market through buying, selling, and pawning used goods.⁶ Whether the exchanges involved household furnishings, garments, or lengths of cloth, women's commercial transactions played vital roles in maintaining the economic well-being of the household and in some cases may even have provided a degree of financial independence.⁷ Women's association with the home, and their responsibility for managing and maintaining domestic possessions, gave them a high level of expertise in the objects that filled it and a knowledge of their value. Circulating objects between household and market was not only normal but also economically significant, since in a pre-industrial era objects, especially textiles, retained much of their worth, and their recirculation contributed to supply chains. What distinguishes the practices of women of higher status from those lower down the scale is the degree to which they circulated these goods publicly. This analysis focuses on women who participated in these activities via the guild, as well as those who pursued less formal routes.

The names of women appear in the earliest surviving membership records of the guild concerned with the trade in used goods beginning in 1407.⁸ By the early sixteenth century, their numbers increased significantly, and by mid-century, after the guild reorganized under the ducal government, they represented ten percent of the membership.⁹ They were a varied group, representing a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. As we might expect, some female members came from families within the trade, or from other families connected to the trade through existing commercial networks. Female dealers were occasionally related by birth or marriage to merchants of higher status than artisans, using titles such as "ser" or "messer." After membership widened in the mid-sixteenth century, the guild also included Jewish as well as Christian traders.¹⁰ Although female

dealers represented only a fraction of the guild, many women who were not members of the guild exchanged used goods unofficially, working as street peddlers, buying, selling and trading within homes, or operating more discreetly through intermediaries. It is not always easy to gauge the status of these women, and it may be impossible to quantify them or the overall scale of their operations. However, evidence from household account books, shop ledgers, and brief notices recorded in guild minutes points to greater female involvement than we have previously assumed.

Numerous women worked the streets, buying and selling old clothes and fabrics as itinerant vendors (*rivenditrici*). Like all peddlers, they were considered a threat to the established guilds since their mobility made them harder to oversee, and some accused them of swindling their customers with fraudulent goods.¹¹ However, there was diversity within this group of traders, too. They ranged from married women to poor widows living at the Orbatello (the asylum that provided free communal lodging for large numbers of older laywomen).¹² It is difficult to imagine that all people viewed them with equal suspicion.

Evidence from household account books suggests that *revenditrici* not only were trusted, but also became valuable members of female supply networks that enabled elite women to buy and sell from home. Camilla Capponi, the widow of Filippo di Antonio Magalotti, turned to female second-hand dealers to sell off her garments in the years following her husband's death. The silk gowns that had once lavishly adorned her became a new means to raise ready cash. Camilla engaged the services of at least five women who purchased old clothing belonging to her and her children, or supplied her with material and haberdashery; transactions went both ways.¹³ Camilla's exchanges with the dealers were not chance encounters, because she transacted with them repeatedly.¹⁴ In one case, a trader named Bitia was even hired to work temporarily as a servant in the family's kitchen.¹⁵ Why was Camilla operating in this way? Elizabeth Currie, who has analyzed the family's spending patterns on clothing, has observed that the sales of Camilla's garments raised several hundred florins and suggests a desire to safeguard her inheritance. They also occurred within a period of shifting financial priorities, as she was spending money on the renovation of a chapel in the family's palace.¹⁶ Camilla, not necessarily profiting from

the sales of these goods, was realizing assets that she preferred to redirect elsewhere.

Women who preferred not to operate in the open market also engaged the services of male second-hand dealers to act as intermediaries. By selling off unwanted furnishings and clothing, they could raise large sums which were then redeployed. Funds were used to establish credit accounts with the dealer for new purchases, redirected to creditors, employed to refurbish rental properties, or even invested into savings accounts in their own names. When women opted for cash proceeds, they collected the money themselves, or a male relative or servant went on their behalf. Whoever signed for the cash, the records make clear exactly to whom it belonged, even if a woman's husband also held an account with the same dealer. One dealer seems to have been particularly active as an intermediary, especially on behalf of women.¹⁷ For example, in 1511, a woman named Diamante di Giovanni da Castello Fiorentino sold over 200 *lire* of goods to a male used goods dealer. The objects included a large quantity of red fabric, a cloth tester, black velvet sleeves, brass candlesticks and basins, and a pair of silver knives with mother-of-pearl handles.¹⁸ She was paid installments, while, at the same time, the dealer assisted her in a legal dispute with another woman by assisting with a notary.¹⁹ For women like Diamante, an agent provided access to markets and services while allowing them to remain well within accepted norms of female decorum.

These are only a few examples from the archives in Florence, yet many more like them survive for this period. While the evidence is fragmentary, one thing is clear: women from across the social spectrum were active in the exchange of used goods, an activity that gave them greater economic opportunities than contemporary ideals lead us to believe. We may not know the overall impact of these exchanges, but they appear frequently enough to suggest that there were significant advantages to the women involved. Trading used goods not only allowed them to access cash and consumables directly, but also allowed them, by using objects of exchange, to reserve cash for other purposes, such as investment. Most importantly, the trade allowed women to transact more covertly, demonstrating how readily women could participate in the market for used goods without having to physically enter it. Women may not have been major players in

long-distance trade, but they were still active in the economy in important ways, performing roles closer to home that were far more subtle than pre-occupations with major guilds and high finance reveal.

Notes

1. Robert Dallington, *A Survey of the Great Dukes State of Tuscany, in the Year of Our Lord 1596* (London: Edward Blount, 1605), 64. I am grateful to Elizabeth Currie, Flora Dennis, and Sally McKee for their valuable comments on this topic.

2. Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, ed. Ruggiero Romano and Alberto Tenenti (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1969), 264: “. . . sì come sarebbe poco onore se la donna traficasse fra gli uomini nelle piazze, in publico, così a me parrebbe ancora biasimo tenermi chiuso in casa tra le femine, quando a me stia nelle cose virili tra gli uomini, co' cittadini, ancora e con buoni e onesti forestieri convivere e conversare”; the English translation is taken from *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. Renée Neu Watkins (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), 20.

3. On the gendered nature of market spaces, see Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance* (London: Yale University Press, 2005), 32–41; Dennis Romano, “Gender and the Urban Geography of Renaissance Venice,” *Journal of Social History*, 23, no. 2 (1989): 339–53; and Robert C. Davis, “The Geography of Gender in the Renaissance,” in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith Brown and Robert C. Davis (London: Longman, 1998), 19–38.

4. There is a significant bibliography addressing women's limited agency in financial matters in Florence based on notarial records and memoranda (*ricordanze*); see principally Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, “The Griselda Complex: Dowry and Marriage Gifts in the Quattrocento,” in her *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 213–46; Isabelle Chabot, “Widowhood and Poverty in Late Medieval Florence,” *Continuity and Change* 3 (1988): 291–311; and Thomas Kuehn, “Understanding Gender Inequality in Renaissance Florence: Personhood and Gifts of Maternal Inheritance by Women,” *Journal of Women's History* 8 (1996): 58–80. See also Merry Wiesner-Hanks, “Storia delle donne e storia sociale: sono necessarie le strutture?,” in *Tempi e spazi di vita femminile tra Medioevo ed età moderna*, ed. Silvana Seidel Menchi, Anne Jacobson Schutte, and Thomas Kuehn (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999), 25–48.

5. Over twenty years ago, Judith Brown stressed the need to reassess the relationship between ideology and behavior in her study of female labor; see “A Woman's Place Was in the Home: Women's Work in Renaissance Tuscany,” in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourse of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 206–24, esp. 207. For studies of working women, see also Samuel Cohn, *Women in the Streets: Essays on Sex and Power in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), and especially his “Women and Work in Renaissance Italy,” in

Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy, ed. Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis, 107–26. Beyond Florence, see Sally McKee, “Women Under Venetian Colonial Rule in the Early Renaissance: Observations on Their Economic Activities,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 51 (1998): 34–67; and Monica Chojnacka, *Working Women of Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

6. The importance of the second-hand trade has received increased attention in recent years. On objects as an alternative means of exchange, see especially Patricia Allerston, “L’abito come articolo di scambio nella società dell’età moderna: alcune implicazioni,” in *Le Trame della Moda*, ed. Anna G. Cavagna and Grazietta Butazzi (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1995), 109–24, and “The Market in Secondhand Clothes and Furnishings in Venice circa 1500–1650” (PhD diss., European University Institute, Florence, 1996), 63–113. See also Evelyn Welch, “New, Old and Second-Hand Culture: The Case of the Renaissance Sleeve,” in *Revaluing the Renaissance*, ed. Gabriele Neher and Rupert Shepherd (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000), 101–20; Ann Matchette, “Unbound Possessions: The Circulation of Used Goods in Florence, ca. 1450–1600” (PhD diss., University of Sussex, 2005).

7. On used goods and the domestic economy in Florence, see Ann Matchette, “To Have and Have Not: The Disposal of Household Furnishings in Florence,” *Renaissance Studies* 20, no. 5 (2006): 701–16.

8. Archivio di Stato, Florence (hereafter ASF), Arte dei Rigattieri, 10, fol. 136v onwards. These women are discussed at greater length in Matchette, “Unbound Possessions,” 114–22. More than twenty years ago, Merry Wiesner highlighted the importance of female second-hand dealers in Nuremberg where women dominated that sector of the market; see her “Paltry Peddlers or Essential Merchants? Women in the Distributive Trades in Early Modern Nuremberg,” *The Sixteenth-Century Journal* 12, no. 2 (1981): 3–13. Women dealers in Florence did not enjoy as much autonomy as those in northern Europe, but we know much less about their activities.

9. See the records of the reformed guild in ASF, Università dei Linaioli, 5.

10. For the range of women joining the guild, see Arte dei Rigattieri, 10 and Università dei Linaioli, 5.

11. On negative attitudes toward female peddlers, see Carole Collier Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families, Fortunes, and Fine Clothing* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 38–39; and Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 34–37. Brown, “A Woman’s Place,” argues that the stereotype perpetuated restrictive guild policies on female vendors.

12. See, for example, Linaioli, 7, entries on Mar. 23 and Apr. 8, 1553 (not foliated). Richard Trexler has listed two women living at the Orbatello in the early 1500s who were themselves adult daughters of second-hand dealers (*rigattieri*); see his “A Widows’ Asylum of the Renaissance: The Orbatello of Florence,” in his *Dependence in Context in Renaissance Florence* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1994), 415–48, esp. 433.

13. ASF, Venturi Ginori Lisci, 341, fols. 35^r, 36^v, 53^v, 138^v, 141^v. I am extremely

grateful to Elizabeth Currie for sharing her work on this source with me. She has studied the Magalotti at length in her dissertation "The Fashions of the Florentine Court: Wearing, Making and Buying Clothing, 1560–1620" (PhD diss., University of Sussex, 2004).

14. See, for example, the entries for the dealer named Maria, in Venturi Ginori Lisci, 342, fol. 28.

15. *Ibid.*, fol. 34^v.

16. Currie, "Fashions of the Florentine Court," 108.

17. This practice of women liquidating objects and setting up credit and deposit funds through a second-hand dealer serving as a middleman in transactions is discussed more fully in Ann Matchette, "Credit and Credibility: Used Goods and Social Relations in Sixteenth-Century Florence," in *The Material Renaissance*, ed. Michelle O'Malley and Evelyn Welch (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 2007), 233–4.

18. Archive of the Ospedale degli Innocenti, Florence, Domenico del Commandatore, Estranei, 406, fol. 23^r.

19. *Ibid.*, 400, fols. 23^v, 25^v; cf. 406, fols. 109^v, 110^r, 124^r.

The Society for the Study of Early Modern Women 2007
Prize for a Graduate Student Conference Presentation

**Rembrandt's *The Death of the Virgin*, Cartesianism,
and Modernity in the Dutch Republic**

ELISSA AUERBACH

Rembrandt's etching, *The Death of the Virgin*, 1639, deviates radically from the traditional pictorial conventions of Mary's death. A solemn doctor, the only figure to have direct bodily contact with Mary in the print, authoritatively monitors her pulse in the center of the composition, while a throng of male and female witnesses mourn, pray, and observe her condition. Rembrandt lightly renders the contours of Mary's figure with a faint sketch in contrast with how he renders those of her attendants. The sketch suggests the imminent bifurcation of her body and soul in her conversion from a corporeal being into an unearthly, immaterialized entity at the moment of her death, or, in Roman Catholic terms, her Dormition (or "falling asleep"). In no other image of Mary's death do we find such an ethereal portrayal of Mary; nor do we see anywhere else a contemporary doctor, whose role as a medical practitioner is incongruous in a biblical narrative.

Theologically, the division of Mary's body and soul in her Dormition and their subsequent reunification in her Assumption validate the orthodox Roman Catholic position on the nature of Christ and his incarnation. Yet, Rembrandt de-Catholicizes the theme's overall meaning by transforming the appearance of liturgical objects and vestments that artists typically include in Dormition scenes into strange, unfamiliar articles. By substituting a secular doctor for the traditional officiating priest at Mary's deathbed, the artist also omits the requisite Catholic sacrament of extreme unction from the scene. Conversely, the print's readily identifiable subject of Mary's apocryphal death and the outward displays of mourning by her attendants do not conform to



Rambrandt van Rijn. *The Death of the Virgin*. Rosenwald Collection, Image courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

Protestant doctrine. I posit that the conspicuous absence of a Catholic or Protestant confessional allegiance in the work's iconography captures and reflects ideologies of modernity: secularism, rationalism, open debate, and the increased gender equality surfacing in the early seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.

Rembrandt produced *The Death of the Virgin* at the beginning of a tumultuous period in the Dutch Republic, as the long-held Scholastic Aristotelian and Christian foundation of Western civilization gave way to groundbreaking scientific and philosophic ideas put forth by Francis Bacon, René Descartes, and others. Women in particular were consciously integrated into the Republic's fertile intellectual and artistic milieu. Descartes wrote his transformative treatise, *Discourse on Method* (Leiden, 1637), in French rather than Latin so as to appeal to a mass audience that included women. Rembrandt shared Descartes's wide, disparate audience, underscoring the likelihood that a large market of his print buyers, receptive to new views on death, religiosity, and the soul, sought impressions of his print of Mary's death.

The recognizable religious subject of Rembrandt's *The Death of the Virgin*, common in medieval and Renaissance pictorial tradition, epitomizes a premodern world that was preoccupied with Christian theological doctrine, superstition, and religious faith. Rembrandt's depiction of a doctor, a signifier of science and rationalism, together with a faint portrayal of Mary, which articulates the Cartesian epistemology that the primacy of the mind/soul reigns over the physicality of the body, suggests the ideologies of modernity. The seeming contradiction in the print between Rembrandt's choice of a pre-Reformation, that is, Roman Catholic, theme and his unconventional iconographic treatment of the subject reflects the conflicts inherent in modernity between society's demand for progress and its nostalgia for a time-tested past.

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Linda Stone-Ferrier of the Kress Foundation Department of Art History at The University of Kansas. It will be published under the title "Taking Mary's Pulse: Cartesianism and Modernity in Rembrandt's *The Death of the Virgin*" in the conference proceedings volume, *Power and Image in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jessica Goethals, Valerie McGuire, and Gaoheng Zhang (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008).

Mujeres que saben latín:
**Publications in Spanish in
Early Modern Women's Studies, 2004–2007**

ANA KOTHE

“*Mujer que sabe latín*” [“woman who knows Latin”] refers to a Spanish-language idiom for being highly educated. It is the title of an anthology of creative writing by Rosario Castellanos, a contemporary Mexican woman poet and short story writer.

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“*Je nomme ceci votre proumenoir*”:
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STÉPHANE PILLET

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Exhibition Review

Images of Women in Old Master Prints and Drawings / Images by Women in Old Master Prints and Drawings, Spaightwood Galleries, Upton, MA, March 8 through June 29, 2008.

Almost twenty years ago, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. organized the exhibition, “Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints.”¹ Curated by H. Diane Russell in 1990, the show explored the discursive structures of gender in iconographic categories that were predominant in the early modern representations of women in graphic media. Images of heroines and worthy women, the Virgin, Eve, and Venus, among others, provided opportunities for considering the significance and function of these prints within the context of reception and social history and without explicit regard for aesthetic criteria. With its thematic structure and emphasis, the exhibition exemplified one of two approaches that characterized, and to some extent still characterizes, many curatorial projects involving gender and early modern objects. The other approach, of exhibiting artworks by women artists, was most recently enlisted for the 2007 exhibition on “Italian Women Artists from Renaissance to Baroque” on view at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D. C.²

The exhibition at the Spaightwood Galleries in Upton, Massachusetts, enlists both of these perspectives—women as producers, women as depicted—in their selections of early modern prints and drawings. The gallery, located in a converted and restored church outside of Boston, displays a rotating selection of over one hundred prints and drawings of images of women, including Northern and Southern images of biblical, legendary,

and allegorical female figures, and several prints by women artists, such as Diana Scultori (fig. 1), Elisabetta Sirani, and Magdalena de Passe. The grouping of the images loosely follows these thematic divisions, but the display in an open, undivided space also encourages connections across these categories.

Given the methodological changes experienced in the fields of women's studies, art history, and history in the past two decades, the Spaightwood Galleries' exhibition offers the opportunity to consider how these objects might be exhibited and discussed in art museum and gallery settings to reflect the expanding discourses about and around early modern women in the visual arts.

The curatorial tendency to focus on material production—"who made this?"—and on identifiable subject matter—"what is depicted?"—reflects perhaps the institutional requirements expected of a museum by a general public, but it also returns us to the kinds of questions first raised by some of the most influential feminist art historians. Linda Nochlin's well-known 1971 article, "Why Are There No Great Women Artists?" initiated feminist inquiry into art history by calling into question patriarchal structures of canon formation and their elimination of female artists from historical consideration.³ Art historians responded to her call with monographs on women painters, such as Artemisia Gentileschi, Sofonisba Anguisola, and Lavinia Fontana, that consciously or unconsciously reinforced the hierarchic dyads of male/female, high/low, genius/apprentice, history/genre that feminist scholars were trying to eliminate. Critical efforts to consider women in representation, by contrast, profited from the contemporaneous importation and adoption of theoretical approaches from disciplines outside of art history that articulated the constructedness of the visual sign and the politics of interpretation and reception. Early modern depictions of women could be read, for example, as reflecting an apparatus of power, as empowering women, as reinforcing traditional roles, or as engendering some form of transcendence from those very same strictures. The growing interest in the intersection between representation and social history—rather than its earlier critical manifestation as artworks as illustrations of social history—has significantly furthered our understanding of how these images could be used and viewed by both women and men.



Figure 1: Diana Scultori. *Helen's Servants Carrying her Belongings to Troy*, early seventeenth century. Engraving, 136 x 164 mm. Photo courtesy of Andrew Weiner and Sonja Hansard-Weiner.



Figure 2: Giulio Romano (Giulio Pippi). *Judith and Her Servant with the Head of Holofernes*, late sixteenth century. Pen and brown ink, heightened with white wash on cream laid paper. 262 x 363 mm. Photo courtesy of Andrew Weiner and Sonja Hansard-Weiner.

Despite the productivity of these discourses in expanding our consideration of women in early modern art, they remain closely connected to text-based models of interpretation that privilege the subject over the signifier and inevitably separate the form from the materials. This detachment of the subject from the medium becomes especially apparent in an exhibition of prints and drawings in which we are reminded of the obvious participation of the artist's hand. For example, in the drawing of *Judith* by Giulio Romano (fig. 2), or in Luca Cambiaso's sketch of the same subject, the artist's hand is made clear by the broad inky puddles. Similarly, in many of the passion engravings by or after Albrecht Dürer, and in the woodcut of *Judith* by Jean Cousin the Younger, the artist's hand is seen in the controlled cages of lines. The exhibit reminds us of the transience of printed media that change appearance with every inked stage, as exemplified by the two engravings by Diana Scultori of *The Continnence of Scipio*. At the same time, we are reminded of the close engagement of past and present viewers with diminutive prints—some no larger than two by three inches (those by Georg Pencz)—and with images that were handled and often pasted into and rearranged in collection books according to the collector's preference. The consideration of these aspects of facture might seem, at first, to take us back to concerns central to connoisseurship and aesthetics, or it might lead so far from the text-based extreme that we, in effect, return to an approach from which feminist and gender studies scholars especially, and understandably, have been trying to distance themselves in an effort to avoid privileging these artworks as "beautiful objects of intrinsic merit."⁴

Despite the seeming polarities between approaches to texts and images, there are historical ways of rethinking the traditional philosophical detachment of form and matter that first structured the earliest art histories and has continued even now to structure most approaches, whether academic or curatorial, to early modern art. The consideration of matter as threatening, especially in the context of Italian Renaissance art, reflects one of the central metaphysical antinomies governing early modern thought.⁵ However, early modern viewers often acknowledged the potentially phenomenological dimension of the visual arts, even if the objects under view were limited to those found in myth, metaphors, and folklore. Beginning with Petrarch, lyric poets—both male and female—developed ancient

tropes of the speaking portrait, that image so vivid that it deceptively incites the lover to act as though the beloved is actually present.⁶ But most literary accounts reinforce responses divided by gender: women reacted only emotionally and men, when they occasionally abandoned their rational restraint, manifested their pleasure in looking through sexual domination.⁷ There are, however, other stories that present a less polarizing and gendered account of an emerging articulation of a paradigm of embodied response, including Leonardo's observation that viewers will assume the depicted poses and motions of represented bodies.⁸ Similarly, in the later cinquecento there arose an appreciation of senses other than vision in experiencing the visual arts.⁹ (Whereas theorists in the early cinquecento criticized sculpture as an art that appealed to the tactile sense, Benedetto Varchi, as an advocate for sculpture, praised the plastic media for precisely this quality;¹⁰ and Marco Boschini later celebrated Titian's paintings and those by contemporary Venetian painters because they appealed to the senses of touch, smell, and taste.¹¹ And these are just examples from Italian sources).

The concept of embodied subjectivity as a historical phenomenon shaping reception and creation of artworks seems to me to be a productive way not only to bridge the text/image (or linguistic/aesthetic) dialectic that underlies most critical approaches to representational art, but also to reconfigure how we interpret and characterize representation and viewer response in terms of gendered associations. A drawing, such as Federico Zuccaro's *Lamentation* (fig. 3) on view at Spaightwood Galleries, with its obvious signs of facture and materiality, conveys through its own handmade corporeality the emotional experience of death, loss, and grief. Christ's body appears beaten by the very strokes of pen, ink, and chalk that figure him, and the Virgin withdraws into the marks that made her. Zuccaro, like many later cinquecento artists, functions as the medium in his performance of making. In suggesting an active, even violent, interaction between artist, materials, and depicted subject matter, many of these prints and drawings present a dynamic of creation and destruction that both reinforces and challenges the Renaissance creation myth of divine mastery, in which the artist is the authoritative, heroic male protagonist.¹² Once the fundamental technical and formal hierarchies dissolve—as, for



Figure 3: Federico Zuccaro (attributed). *The Lamentation*, late sixteenth to early seventeenth century. Pen and reddish brown ink and gray wash and red chalk with white heightening on cream laid paper. 232 x 165 mm. Photo courtesy of Andrew Weiner and Sonja Hansard-Weiner.

example, figure and ground exchange roles or fail to be distinguishable from one another as in the Pippi and Cambiaso drawings mentioned above—the possibilities for viewer response similarly seem to expand beyond the prescribed, divided roles of viewing subject and viewed object. Such elision between subject and object significantly recasts how we think of depicted women as not solely the object of the male gaze, but also as a source of pleasure for female viewers; as not only virtuous exemplars for female viewers, but also as a revalorizing of femininity—desire, pleasure, corporeality—that patriarchal culture found so threatening when writing about the visual arts.

Regardless of whether all early modern prints and drawings will respond to these questions (and many will not), it seems important to me to raise their possibilities (and limitations) alongside the standard categories of exhibition for this material that I mentioned at the outset (woman as subject, woman as maker). I am not suggesting that these categories are insignificant or unproductive in and of themselves. But many recent approaches to exhibiting early modern objects, including exhibitions that involve aspects of material culture (such as the 2006–7 exhibition, “At Home in Renaissance Italy,” at the Victoria and Albert Museum), could be brought to bear on images of women in the graphic media. Bringing these images into conversation with a wider field of objects—whether historically circumscribed or extended beyond historical periods—would deepen our understanding of gender in relationship to both material production and reception without confining ourselves to “who” and “what.”

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Notes

1. H. Diane Russell with Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, Catalogue for Exhibit in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990).

2. *Italian Women Artists: From Renaissance to Baroque*, Catalogue for Exhibit in the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D. C. (Milan: Skira, 2007).

3. Linda Nochlin, “Why Are There No Great Women Artists?” in *Woman in*

Sexist Society. Studies in Power and Powerlessness, ed. Vivian Gornick and Barbara Moran (New York: Basic Books, 1971); reprinted in a special issue of *Art News*, January, 1971, as "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?"

4. Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 8.

5. See David Summers, "Form and Gender," *New Literary History* 24 (1993): 243–71; Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), 27–34; Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 60–5; and Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 93–9. Caroline Bynum questioned the presumed body/spirit division with examples from medieval theology; see "Why All the Fuss about the Body? A Medievalist's Perspective," *Critical Inquiry* 22 (1995): 1–33.

6. For Petrarch's sonnets on the portrait of Laura, see *Petrarch's Lyric Poems: The Rime Sparse and Other Lyrics*, trans. and ed. Robert M. Durling (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), Rime 77–8, 176–9. The ancient heritage of the topos is collected in James Hutton, *The Greek Anthology in Italy to the Year 1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1935). For the role of the topos in Renaissance painting, see Fredrika H. Jacobs, *The Living Image in Renaissance Art* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), esp. 109–10; John Shearman, *Only Connect... Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 112–14; and Jodi Cranston, *The Poetics of Portraiture in the Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 50–5.

7. Compare, for example, Michelangelo's reported comments that Flemish painting (an art of sensuous color) elicited tears among women and the elderly to the oft-cited ancient myths and stories of young men who seduced lifelike sculpture (an art underpinning *disegno*). For Michelangelo's remarks, see Francisco de Hollanda, *Three Dialogues on Painting* [1540], trans. in Charles Holroyd, *Michael Angelo Buonarroti, with Translations of the Life of the Master by His Scholar, Ascanio Condivi, and Three Dialogues from the Portuguese by Francisco Hollanda* (London: Duckworth, 1911), 240. We think, for example, of Pygmalion and Galatea and of the youth who stained the Cnidian Venus by Praxiteles. On Pygmalion, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller (London: William Heinemann; and Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 10:247, 253. On the Cnidian Venus, see Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 36:21. See also Lucian, *Eikones*, trans. A. M. Harmon (London: William Heinemann; New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1925), 4: 263. For the larger issue of gender and Renaissance style, see Philip Sohm, "Gendered Style in Italian Art Criticism from Michelangelo to Malvasia," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (winter 1995): 759–808.

8. Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*, trans. A. Philip McMahon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 1: 147–8.

9. David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense. Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 32–110.

10. Leonardo, *Treatise on Painting*, 32–45; Benedetto Varchi, “Della maggioranza delle arti—Disputa II,” in *Trattati d’arte del Cinquecento, fra manierismo e Controriforma*, ed. Paola Barocchi (Bari: G. Laterza, 1960), 1: 43. I discuss both senses in relationship to the trope of vividness in “The Touch of the Blind Man: The Phenomenology of Vividness in Italian Renaissance Art,” in *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 224–42.

11. Marco Boschini, *La carta del navegar pitoresco*, ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1966), 47, 191, 204, 206, 221, and 576.

12. For the trope of the artist as divine, see Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, *Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist: A Historical Experiment*, trans. Alastair Lang (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 38–59. Alternative models of the artist are suggested by Patricia A. Emison, *Creating the “Divine” Artist: From Dante to Michelangelo* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004); and Stephen J. Campbell, “Fare una cosa morta parer viva: Michelangelo, Rosso, and the (Un)Divinity of Art,” *Art Bulletin* 84, no. 4 (December 2002): 596–605.

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Book Reviews

Early Modern Women and the Genesis of Modern Science: A Review Essay

Men, Women, and the Birthing of Modern Science. Edited by Judith P. Zinsser. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005. 215 pp. \$38.00. ISBN 978-0-87580-340-1.

Childbirth and the Display of Authority in Early Modern France. Lianne McTavish. Aldershot, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005. 257 pp. \$89.95. ISBN 0-7546-3619-4.

Secrets of Women: Gender, Generation, and the Origins of Human Dissection. Katharine Park. New York: Zone Books, 2006. 419 pp. \$36.95. ISBN 9-781890-951672.

The history of science and, especially, the history of the Scientific Revolution have been notably slow to address both the history of women's participation in early modern science and the ways in which the language of science might itself be gendered. As late as 1994, for example, H. Floris Cohen in *The Scientific Revolution: A Historiographical Inquiry* (1994), confined his response to the study of gender and the Scientific Revolution to one footnote in a book of over 500 pages, remarking only that the story of women and the origins of modern science remains to be written. Other examples make the same point. Of 108 articles published between 1970 and 1996 on early modern science in *Isis*, the premier journal of the

history of science in the United States, only one deals in any way with women's participation in scientific activities. Similarly, despite the claim to emphasize "a diverse array of cultural practices" in the production of early modern scientific knowledge, Steven Shapin in *The Scientific Revolution* (1996) does not consider the possible role of women and, in an extended bibliographic essay, cites only one book relating to women.

As grand narratives of the Scientific Revolution as the source and expression of modernity began to erode in the 1980s, however, the practices of early modern science began to be seen as not only varied, fragmentary, and heterogeneous, but also as gendered. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, a broader, more nuanced and critical approach, which integrated women's history and gender theory, became the norm, as shown, for example, in the 2006 *Cambridge History of Science, Volume 3: Early Modern Science* (edited by Katharine Park and Lorraine Daston), which includes articles on women as investigators of nature in a range of venues and on gender as an ideology framing understandings of nature and scientific inquiry. As Dorinda Outram points out in the Cambridge volume, however, the history of changing definitions of gender, the history of the gendering of nature and knowledge about nature, and the history of women's participation in scientific activity followed different trajectories in the early modern period, and notions of both gender and nature were unstable (814). The three books under review here provide additional confirmation of the complexity of the interactions between gender and early modern science and point the way toward filling in some of the still "missing chapters" in the history of women and science.

Judith Zinsser's edited collection of ten essays by well-known, international scholars from a range of disciplines covers a broad range both geographically (Sweden, France, England, Italy, Germany, and Russia) and chronologically (from the sixteenth century through the eighteenth, with one essay extending into the nineteenth). This important book begins the hard work of fleshing out the mechanisms of how and why early modern elite women came to be excluded from the process of producing scientific knowledge by the mid-eighteenth century, despite their deep involvement in various aspects of natural philosophy. The case studies included here support the view that a large part of the answer lies in the changing social

and institutional frameworks within which science was practiced, a shift which could be generalized as a shift from the household to the professional society and the academy as sites of scientific activity. The essays, however, also point to the importance of disciplinary boundaries and the language that framed them; when “natural philosophy” was redefined as “science,” the latter became the exclusive prerogative of male knowledge and reason, while women’s activities were marginalized as mere empirical skill or literary diversion. Several of the essays deal with individual well-known figures and illustrate both the independence that elite status could confer and its limitations. Susanna Åkerman’s study of Queen Christina of Sweden documents Christina’s persistent interest in alchemy and suggests that Christina presented herself as a philosopher-queen and alchemical adept who not only aspired to a masculine identity but, perhaps, hoped for metamorphosis into a man through alchemical processes. Hilda L. Smith explores Margaret Cavendish’s attempts to blend her own utilitarian bent with a thoroughgoing skepticism and desire for personal fame. Forced to admit that as a woman she would not be taken seriously as a thinker, she tried out various rhetorical strategies which both flattered men of science and criticized them from the point of view of an informed, common-sense outsider, even while she systematically donated her own works on natural philosophy to Oxford and Cambridge. Judith Zinsser situates the success of the Marquise du Châtelet within the fluid character of natural philosophy and scientific learning still current in the early decades of the 1700s in France; Châtelet’s acceptance as an authority for over a decade stemmed not only from her own considerable knowledge and skills as a writer and networker, but from the continued acceptance in France until around 1750 of theological and philosophical speculation as intimately connected to the pursuit of knowledge of the natural world. The latter point is reinforced by J. D. Shank’s study of the social and cultural context of Fontenelle’s *Les mondes* (1686), which, he argues, “models a fully dialogic approach to natural inquiry, one that assumes an essential place for both men and women in the production of knowledge,” and incorporates both literary and philosophical approaches to the discovery of truth about nature (106). Similarly, Franco Arato argues that the Italian writer Francesco Algarotti, friend of Voltaire and Châtelet, successfully packaged

Newtonian philosophy in a “genteel dialogue” in his *Newtonianismo per le dame* (1737) to appeal to a female audience.

The marginalization and appropriation of women’s scientific activities take center stage in essays on women’s culinary, medical, and astronomical work in England and Germany. A densely-argued essay by Lynne Hunter delineates social and rhetorical differences between women’s and men’s practice of science in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England; the communal, hands-on, informal and private character of women’s activities, widespread as they were, ultimately disadvantaged them as science came increasingly to emphasize public, replicable visual display as an exclusive means of authenticating truth. Stephen Clucas documents how the medical knowledge of Joanna Stephens, who discovered and tested a medicine for the “stone” in the 1730s, was devalued as mere happenstance and empirical skill by a succession of male physicians who claimed intellectual authority over her discovery and become the authenticators of its efficacy. Monica Mommertz reveals how women’s contributions to scientific work might last long past the point at which they were officially excluded. She traces how several generations of the women of the Winkelmann-Kirch family supplied indispensable astronomical observations and calendar-making to the Berlin Academy of Sciences, despite the Academy’s attempts to “avoid, hide and deny” any collaboration with these female scientists. As Mommertz convincingly argues, the household continued to function, albeit in an invisible way, as a site of scientific work in Germany into the late eighteenth century.

Articles by Margaret J. Osler and Grigory A. Tishkin are somewhat outside the dominant emphasis of the volume. Osler focuses on gendered metaphors of nature through a critique of the pioneering work in the 1980s of Carolyn Merchant and Evelyn Fox Keller as insufficiently rigorous and overly focused on the internal language of science as the cause of women’s exclusion from science. Osler’s criticisms are well-taken, but should be read alongside the 2006 volume of *Isis* that reassesses Merchant’s *Death of Nature* in the light of recent scholarship on gender, science, and nature, and including a reply by Merchant to some of the issues raised by Osler. Tishkin’s study of the Russian Princess Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova (1743-1810) and her support of views emphasizing women’s intellectual

equality, while interesting, stretches the topical and chronological limits of the collection.

Katharine Park's *Secrets of Women* and Lianne McTavish's *Childbirth and the Display of Authority in Early Modern France* deal only tangentially with women's active participation in scientific activities and instead show how women's bodies were used to serve the interests of scientific inquiry. Thanks to the pioneering work of Monica Green, Helen King, Nina Rattner Gelbart, Alison Klairmont-Lingo, Adrian Wilson, Park herself, and others, we now know far more than we did even two decades ago about the history of gynecology, midwifery, and medical texts on "female" diseases and women's bodies in the early modern period. These two works build on this knowledge, and demonstrate yet again how gender was an integral part of the development of early modern science.

The contestation for authority in medical practice is a central concern of Lianne McTavish's meticulous study of twenty-four early modern French obstetrical treatises printed between 1530 and 1730. Midwifery, of course, was a traditional arena for female expertise. McTavish is especially interested in the rhetorical strategies, both visual and written, used by male surgeon man-midwives to gain recognition and address the incongruity of a masculine figure in a traditionally female space. Although the broad outlines of the displacement in childbirth attendance of the female midwife by the male physician have long been well-known, McTavish successfully complicates our understanding of this process by calling attention to the complexity of man-midwives' self-representation and the internal politics of the lying-in chamber in early modern France.

Taking a thematic rather than chronological approach, McTavish dissects a series of cultural meanings embedded in the texts and their accompanying images. She suggests that male surgeon man-midwives jockeyed for professional identity not only against female midwives, but also against male physicians, who could claim superior theoretical knowledge, and female patients, who themselves scrutinized the bodies and performance of male practitioners. In accommodating these contradictory demands, surgeon man-midwives employed a variety of strategies and self-representations which were diverse and unstable, and often appropriated gendered characteristics across conventional gender lines. Male authors, for example, presented

the ideal man-midwife as modest in dress, as having a gentle, agreeable persona and small, slender hands, while simultaneously representing him as possessing the specialized knowledge and physical endurance necessary for safe births. If, unlike female midwives, they could not draw upon their own personal experience of giving birth, they could invoke their close involvement in the birthing experiences of their sisters, wives, and mothers. If decorum prevented them from looking at women's bodies, they could argue for touch as a superior mode of knowing. At the same time, McTavish argues, Louise Bourgeois, the celebrated royal midwife to Marie de Médicis, appropriated the masculine roles of the writer and courtier. McTavish concludes that "obstetrical treatises were sites for the display of identity, producing and contesting understandings of obstetrical authority," but that this process cannot be construed as a war between men and women (218). Rather, both men and women midwives shifted between gendered roles, and men, as well as women, had to accommodate the scrutiny of their bodies and abilities.

McTavish's interdisciplinary approach, drawing upon cultural studies, semiotics, and the history of visual culture, as well as the history of medicine, presents a persuasive case for situating childbirth within the "display culture" of early modern France. Her analyses of the frontispiece self-portraits of five prominent man-midwives and the visual depictions of unborn babies common in early modern obstetrical treatises, in particular, are thoughtful, original and provocative. Despite McTavish's pitching of her account as an exploration of male insecurities, however, the overall impression is that man-midwives were successful in staking out a claim of medical expertise at the expense of both female midwives and mothers.

Katharine Park's rich study of the opening of women's bodies in late medieval and Renaissance Italy refocuses the history of anatomy by showing how from 1300 on, human dissections took place outside of the university in a variety of religious and domestic settings. Park not only demonstrates that the special emphasis given to the opening of women's bodies led to the female body becoming a model for knowing human bodies in general, but also that religious practices were far more central to the early history of dissection than previously recognized.

Park offers the reader a series of wonderfully realized case studies, beginning with the story of Chiara of Montefalco, a holy abbess whose

body was opened in 1308 by her nuns looking for corporeal signs of sanctity, and ending with an extensive analysis of the images of the unnamed woman whose body is anatomized in the title page of Vesalius's *De humani corporis fabrica* (1543). Not only were holy women opened, but, as in the case of Fiametta Adimari, wealthy Italian husbands might have their wives anatomized to establish cause of death. Drawing on a wide range of sources, Park shows how understanding the secrets of women's bodies, exemplified by the uterus, became increasingly important to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century medical writers; by 1520, the body of Elena Duglioli, believed to lactate miraculously after her death, was examined not by other holy women, but by a bevy of male physicians whose collective expertise yielded inconclusive results. The progression of this trend was reflected in the shift from the representation of female dissected bodies as engaged in "active self-display" in some early sixteenth-century anatomical illustrations to the utterly passive and subjugated corpse in Vesalius's title page.

The power of Park's book lies in the way it situates the practice of dissection in a wide range of gendered cultural practices and beliefs, dissolving what have come to be seen as increasingly artificial divisions between social, religious, and medical practices and between late medieval and early modern culture. Demonstrating a profound and sensitive knowledge of its material, Park's book exemplifies how fresh approaches can deepen our understanding of the birthing of modern science.

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***Witchcraft and the Act of 1604*. Ed. John Newton and Jo Bath. Leiden: Brill 2008. 248 pp. \$129.00. ISBN 978-90-04-16528-1.**

The Jacobean Witchcraft Act of 1604 in England has traditionally been thought of as an important factor that affected the English and Scottish witch craze. The Act of 1604 supposedly turned interest in England and Scotland away from *maleficium* and traditional harmful magic against neighbors or political enemies toward covenants with the Devil and famil-

iar spirits. *Witchcraft and the Act of 1604*, edited by John Newton and Jo Bath, places the Act in the cultural, social, and political contexts before its enactment, during its enforcement, and at the time of its repeal. As a consequence, the collection questions traditional readings of the history of English witchcraft.

The idea that the Act was a personal quest of King James VI/I is countered by P. G. Maxwell-Stuart. According to Maxwell-Stuart, James's interest in witchcraft grew markedly after the North Berwick affair, when he personally was the target of murderous witchcraft. However, before his ascension to the throne of England, he was already withdrawing from the zeal he had expressed in *Daemonologie* and leaning towards the opinion that several cases of reputed witchcraft were frauds. Together with the article by Clive Holmes—which presents the rationalist explanations of witchcraft in Samuel Harsnett's *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* as a political strategy for gaining the King's attention by arguing against his supposed ideas—Maxwell-Stuart makes a convincing case that the Act and the trials following it were not the policy of the King. Rather, they were the workings of others—lawyers, legislators and clerics—who were pursuing their own agendas, thinking that the King would not object but rather would be pleased by endeavors that seemed to fit his previous interests.

Early modern cultural diversity in England and Scotland is emphasized in the collection. Roy Booth concludes that *Macbeth* did not fully reflect the King's beliefs (as represented in *Daemonologie*). Tom Webster juxtaposes Harsnett's opinions with those of John Darrel, who genuinely believed in possession and witchcraft. Together, these two essays form an intriguing pair, evidence that elite members of society thought similarly during the long pre- or early modern period, and that political and social discourse was as full of competing opinions as it is today. The theme of multiple opinions, competing for cultural acceptance and complementing each other in practice, continues throughout the book. Jo Bath adds a consideration of the range of practical responses to suspicions of witchcraft during the latter half of the seventeenth century, claiming that only some cases of suspected witchcraft were taken to court at all, while most were dealt with unofficially. Instead of bringing about a "more severe punish-

ment," the Act placed limits on the kinds of suspicions of witchcraft that could be dealt with legally. Jonathan Barry highlights the various contrasting politics—anti-Catholicism, anti-Puritanism, republicanism, and anti-republicanism—in the *Pandaemonium or the Devils Cloyster* (by the Bovet family, 1684). Owen Davies considers the 1604 Act and the law that in 1736 repealed it. The 1736 law sought to punish pretenders and conmen. Davies traces the history of the social skepticism and belief in witches that led to and followed the repeal.

The collection is arranged chronologically. Even though the contributors emphasize the distinct differences that emerge from specific cultural circumstances, the essays also give glimpses of the ways the concept of witchcraft changed from the early seventeenth to the late eighteenth century. In one of the most interesting essays in the collection, Marion Gibson reads contemporary pamphlet accounts of the trials before and after the Act in order to assess the actual changes the Act made in legal and cultural practices surrounding witchcraft in England. She concludes that there was little change that might suggest a different conceptualization of witchcraft. Already before 1604, trouble was taken to record and prove the existence of familiar animals or spirits or covenants with either spirits or the Devil. The indictments, examinations, and sentences described in pamphlets after the Act show relatively little interest or severity on the part of the legal system; the pamphleteers themselves seem to show more interest in these matters than the judges. The cultural changes in attitudes towards witchcraft therefore, were not uniform, nor did they seem to be directly due to the Act. However, Chris Brook traces the change in how witches were portrayed in drama, from the fear and loathing of witches viewed as criminals just after the Act, to the incredulity and pity given witches in the 1630s.

Using the English Civil War as context, Malcolm Gaskill connects the changes within the period of the enforcement of the Act to postmodern psychological explanations. Gaskill places the combination of religious concern for sin and salvation, emotional concern for love and sexuality, and problems of vengeance and poverty on social and individual psychological levels in the background of witchcraft confessions in the 1640s. In a brief return to the thesis of changing social values presented by Alan Macfarlane

and Keith Thomas in the 1970s, he places the 1640s confessors between a “medieval morally reflexive universe and the demands of a changing economic world” (177). Interestingly for gender historians, Gaskill draws from his earlier claim that many women became witches because they lacked the economic and emotional security of a household. This may be true for the Hopkins trials, and it is certainly a widespread hypothesis, but it does not seem equally true in all parts of Europe. Here may be a deficiency of the book in general: it is a thoroughly English one, with little interest in comparisons overseas. The collection also reflects the interest of current English research in culture, shunning traditional social and legal or judicial history—approaches that one would expect in a collection titled after a law.

RAISA MARIA TOIVO

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Women, Gender and Radical Religion in Early Modern Europe. Ed. Sylvia Brown. Leiden: Brill, 2007. 319 pp. \$129.00. ISBN 978-90-04-16306-5.

This collection of essays, edited by Sylvia Brown, examines women’s radical religious activities in (mainly) post-Reformation Europe. Although what counts as “radical” is constantly changing and always context-dependent, as Brown acknowledges in her introduction, the Reformation and the events that followed it created a climate of epistemological uncertainty that was particularly favorable for individuals who sought new ways of engaging in religion. Contributors to this collection highlight the writing and activities of some of these individuals, primarily women. Most of the essays focus on mid- to late seventeenth-century England. The chief strength of the volume, however, is that it reaches frequently beyond this narrow field of study to make connections across time periods, political borders, languages, faiths, and genders.

The collection is organized into three theme-based sections of four essays each. The first section explores the activities of Quaker women.

Kirilka Stavreva considers Quaker women's public speaking, arguing that their words must be regarded not only as texts, but also as acts, and showing how these women exploited such rhetorical elements as setting and sound. Sylvia Brown writes of Mary Fisher's travels across England, the Atlantic, and Europe—all the way to Turkey, to address Mehmed IV, ruler of the Ottoman Empire. She discusses Fisher's use of the theology of universal light and shows how this concept both abolishes difference and, paradoxically, relies upon it. Stephen A. Kent studies lists of women who signed petitions opposing tithes in 1659, finding not only Quaker women but many others as well and concluding that women may be more likely than men to disregard sectarian divisions. Sheila Wright raises the issue of the theoretical equality of women and men in Quaker thought and suggests that women used this concept in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as an opportunity to put their spiritual calling above earthly obligations.

The second section deals with women prophets, that is, women who claimed to have received direct communication from God. Naomi Baker analyzes similar portrayals of the body in published accounts of the suffering of two Fifth Monarchists, Anna Trapnel (*A Legacy for Saints*, 1654) and John James (*A Narrative of the Apprehending, Commitment, Arraignment, Condemnation and Execution of John James*, 1662); she proposes that doctrine may go further than gender in explaining the shape these narratives take. Sarah Apetrei, on the other hand, argues that a recognition of gender is essential for understanding the enigmatic "M. Marsin," who published theological tracts between 1694 and 1701. Julie Hirst provides a rich analysis of maternal imagery in Jane Lead's writing in the last decades of the seventeenth century, noting her inventive use of the figures of Mary and Sophia. Bo Karen Lee ends this section with an eloquent presentation of Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), reflecting on her biography and her theology, her decision in the last decades of her life to give up intellectualism and deny the self, and the limits and paradoxes of this choice.

The third, and most eclectic, section perhaps best exemplifies the "crossing" of the women examined in this book, bringing together essays that illustrate women who were active outside of England or whose work transcends nations and/or confessions. Marion Kobelt-Groch, in an essay

translated by Dennis L. Slabaugh, uses a reference, in a text published in 1526 in Zürich, to the imprisonment of pregnant Anabaptists as a point of departure for investigating the treatment of such women. Her evidence indicates that treatment varied widely, that some pregnant women were granted special rights, gentler punishment, or a suspension of penalties (at least until after childbirth), while others languished in prison, were pressured to renounce their faith during the pains of labor, and were occasionally even executed. Pamela Ellis offers a clear and compelling presentation of the life of Mary Ward (1585–1645): her dedication to the Catholic Church and to girls' education, her activities in England and on the continent, and her attempt to establish a new, unenclosed order for women. José Manuel González comments on Luisa de Carvajal (1566–1614), linking her Spanish poetry and her work as a missionary in England. Finally, Ruth Connolly analyzes the life and letters of Katherine Jones, Viscountess Ranelagh (1614–1691), and the hopes she held out for the reunification of Protestant churches throughout Europe and for the renewal of the church in England.

Through these essays, readers discover women's wide-ranging and innovative involvement in religion in the early modern world, involvement that tests the limits of both orthodoxy and gender. If, at times, contributors present their subjects a bit too admiringly or ascribe too much to gender—signs of our modern preoccupations and interests—the measure and diversity of the activities they uncover show that their regard for these women is not misplaced. A few authors would do well to consider more explicitly the unstated motivations of the women they study. By attributing too much to divine inspiration, they may miss some of the deliberateness of these women's actions and the significance of the choices they made.

Section themes are somewhat disparate, but the essays in each section form a solid and coherent whole. Indeed, the variety of themes addressed is rather a strength than a weakness because contributors to the volume—from fields that include history, religious studies, theology, sociology, and literature—cross boundaries, just like the women they study. A current focus in the larger scholarly project is to effect another kind of "crossing," that is, to look beyond gender, just as Baker and other authors in this volume do, in our quest for a fuller understanding of the complexities of

the lives and work of early modern women. This book, which approaches these women from the angle of “radical” religion, is a useful step in that direction.

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Women, Reading, and the Cultural Politics of Early Modern England.
Edith Snook. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005. 188 pp. \$110.00
ISBN 0-7546-5256-4.

By the middle of the first chapter, it becomes apparent that Snook’s book is imprecisely named. Indeed, her project does examine what the title designates, but the crucial insights regarding the active role women played despite the typical masculine politics of early modern reading and learning would be better served by inserting an action verb somewhere in the appellation. Snook furthers the emerging scholarly investigation of early modern woman readers by pushing beyond the well-defended facts that some women were in fact literate and that women’s literacy was surrounded by masculine prescription. Through careful historicization of diverse texts and female writers in appropriate politicized contexts, the author reveals the potentially dynamic changes that literate women effected as readers while negotiating a typically masculinized literary culture.

Snook’s readers will appreciate the concision of her introduction, which works to place her argument of active participation within the legacy of recent efforts that locate and describe early modern women’s literary culture. Mary Ellen Lamb, Helen Wilcox, and Heidi Braymen Hackel, among others, have done much to expose how women did not necessarily read according to the devout, passive, and obedience-insistent guidelines recommended to them. Snook insists further that the ways that women read or claimed to read—perceptible to us now through their written descriptions of the reading act as well as their marks of reading, such as marginalia—were part and parcel of the process of self-representation, a way of fashioning the self, “a way of speaking, a technique for authoritative self-invention” (3). Writing women frequently

adopted the more acceptable role of reader to construct an identity that could speak to community and national concerns. The laudable diversity of texts examined—from religious writings and maternal advice tracts to commonplace books and prose romances—suggests that women writers worked specifically within genres appropriate to their sex in order to create lively feminine engagement with other women as well as with men, to transform religious and learned discourses to fit women readers' particular situations, and to allow women to engage actively in state politics. So savvy were women writers on the expectations of female literacy in the period that they could authorize dynamic change regarding the way women's reading should be practiced while claiming to act otherwise.

Each chapter recovers these tactics of practice by examining different case studies of women writers engaged directly with exploring and exploiting the act of reading as a trope. The first three chapters consider the religious and maternal writings of learned women who embedded their investment in religious and political concerns within acceptable guises of simple and appropriate female reading behaviors. Katherine Parr and Anne Askew, for example, both don the disguise of simple, uncomplicated female readers in order to make palatable their unwarranted engagement with debates of religious reform. Similarly, in the mothering manual, *The Mother's Blessing*, Dorothy Leigh's evangelical "activism" is demonstrated by passing on explicit instructions for vernacular reading that are (thinly) veiled in her speaking as a mother expected to school her children as part of her household labor. The last chapters focus on more traditionally "literary" texts by Aemelia Lanyer and Mary Wroth, who directly address the ways in which women's writing should be read and understood by a greater reading public, as well as the effects reading has on the reader generally. Although each woman Snook explores engages in transforming her culture in different ways—some more covertly than others—each believes that this can be done explicitly through the act of reading. As Snook affirms, "[t]he history of reading should not be written without reference to women" (7).

By reading early modern women's ways of understanding the conventions of feminine literacy practices, Snook gives us a way to appreciate the important and covertly insubordinate ways that women authored in their culture. This work is a provocative resource for those interested in women's literacy, as well as

the sociopolitical roles expected from, and practiced by, early modern women more generally. Snook's application of sophisticated textual and rhetorical analysis within historical context invites further study of the ways in which audiences other than elite male readers actively garnered and created meaning from written texts, despite expectations of following explicit convention.

KATHERYN GIGLIO

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Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England. Gina Bloom. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007. 288 pp. \$59.95. ISBN 978-0-8122-4006-1.

Voice in Motion provides a welcome addition to a number of distinguished recent studies on sound and performance in early modern England by authors such as Bruce R. Smith, Wes Folkerth, Kenneth Gross, Leslie Dunn, and Linda Phyllis Austern. As she explores "the material conditions involved in the communication of voice in an effort to theorize the relation between voice and agency" (5), Gina Bloom covers a rich array of material, placing dramas by Shakespeare and Marston in dialogue with nondramatic sources ranging from pedagogical treatises on training the voice, to philosophic and scientific writings on sound, to Protestant sermons, to George Sandys's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

Previous studies of voice can be divided loosely into two camps: those that consider voice in terms of language, and those that insist on its material, embodied nature. While retaining the emphasis on gender that has been an important component of the latter approach in studies by Leslie Dunn and Nancy Jones, Bloom argues that some of the most powerful manifestations of voice on the early modern stage are both material *and* disembodied. In examining the elusiveness and eerie power of the disembodied voice, *Voice in Motion* questions the prevalent feminist model of vocal agency with its focus on ownership and control. Bloom argues that early modern male speakers are threatened by their lack of control over their own voices, which are made of unstable air, produced by undepend-

able physical processes, and then released into an environment of distances, winds, and inattentive hearers. On the other hand, women and other marginalized figures can use this vocal instability to their advantage. The material voice, detached from the speaker, can take on the insistent, elusive power of an echo; it can linger in the form of a warning or curse even when the speaker's body is absent. Perhaps most important, when voice is dissociated from a speaking subject, it proves almost impossible to regulate.

Bloom's refusal to conflate the material with the tangible and visible provides a helpful corrective to prevailing ways of thinking about materialism. In addition, where previous studies on sound have tended to focus either on hearing or speaking—or to elide important distinctions between sound as spoken, and sound as heard—Bloom's focus on the disembodied voice helps to reveal the intimate connection between vocal and auditory agency. As Bloom explains, "the echo's capacity to 'speak' is precipitated by its capacity to 'hear,' as hearing and speaking become two sides of the same disembodied vocal process, virtually indistinguishable from each other" (161). In Bloom's account, speakers as well as hearers can become agents as they choose to open or close their ears to certain sounds. Unlike previous critics who have written on the receptive and vulnerable ear, such as Smith, Folkerth, and Gross, Bloom draws a distinction between male and female listeners. Whereas the men in Shakespeare's romances must learn to be receptive to sound, she argues, the women must learn to close their ears to dangerous and disruptive voices. Yet she goes on to show that these women can also undermine patriarchal order by remaining "deaf" to figures of authority as well as to seducers.

Bloom's search for "alternate readings of female agency" (183) allows us to see ways in which women can destabilize social systems by embracing ideas that might seem to rob them of authority and power: the impossibility of "owning" the voice, the patriarchal demand for deafness. Nevertheless, some of Bloom's examples require a dangerously wide definition of "agency." If the unconscious Desdemona's "balmy breath" almost "persuade[s]" Othello to spare her life, can we describe its power in terms of the sleeper's agency without emptying the word of meaning? Bloom's account of *The Tempest* raises similar questions. She writes that Prospero has been successful in "training the curiosity out of Miranda. . . . But [his] interest

in keeping Miranda blissfully ignorant and unmotivated to overcome ignorance creates a challenge for him when he decides to educate her. . . . He cannot trust her capacity to listen, to understand, and as a consequence, to obey" (150). In this narrative, Prospero's project may be endangered by his own choices in child-rearing—but hardly in a way that grants his daughter agency. Miranda may threaten to undermine the social order, but she can do so only by remaining as her father has formed her: ignorant, incurious, and unresponsive to the new or strange. (Whether the Miranda that we see in the play fits this description is another question). Male demands and expectations of women do prove dangerously contradictory; yet I feel that these contradictions leave less space for female agency than Bloom sometimes suggests. Nevertheless, this book gives a lucid and provocative account of the dangers and possibilities inherent in the voice, and it should be required reading for everyone interested in sound and audition on the early modern stage.

ERIN MINEAR

COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World: Memory, Place and History, 1550–1700. Kate Chedzoy. Cambridge University Press, 2007. 280 pp. \$95.00. ISBN 052-1-8809-8X.

This book, a triumph of scholarship, sets itself multiple challenges. These include rescuing forgotten women from the archives; disrupting insular notions of Britishness by exploring the "Atlantic archipelago"; and rejuvenating cultural studies of memory by applying a wide range of theoretical works from Frances Yates to Maurice Halbwachs, from Pierre Nora to Diana Taylor. Because Renaissance and modern theorizations of memory share an emphasis on space and geographical place as an organizing framework, both help illuminate women's attempts to make sense of a changing political landscape. From trauma theory to traditional mnemonic techniques, from *lieux de mémoire* to performance-based modes of memorial transmission, memory work in its

many guises enables Kate Chedzoy to look at how early modern women negotiated their tumultuous times.

As if the book itself were a chorographic project, it maps an intellectual trajectory that moves (at least for this reader) from the familiar to the unknown, passing through ignorance to knowledge. It opens with a thought-provoking juxtaposition of two famous women, one at the periphery and the other at the imperial center: Anne Bradstreet and Anne Clifford. It then records forgotten or neglected voices from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, before returning to better-known English women, such as the Cavendish sisters and Lucy Hutchinson. Finally, the book closes with another defamiliarizing juxtaposition: a wonderful chapter setting Mary Rowlandson's account of her captivity in Narragansett territory beside Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*. The book's geographical perambulations replicate this reader's experience from home to *terra incognita* and back again. Chedzoy teaches us about women we do not know and asks us to reconsider works we think we know, urging us to reevaluate them.

One of the book's chief strengths is the way it repeatedly gestures towards research that has yet to be done, pointing to areas trailblazing scholars might explore. Chedzoy issues these invitations to further investigation with a generosity in keeping with her sense that her book participates "in the collective project of feminist memory work" (8). The middle chapters, in particular, are rich with evocations of women whose writing merits more study. For example, who can forget Caitlín Dubh's elegy on the death of Donnchadh, fourth Earl of Thomond now that Chedzoy has brought it to our attention? It is astonishing in part because she envisions King James and his entourage in London keening in grief over Donnchadh's passing. As Chedzoy explains, "Imagining the court's mourning, Caitlín reveals the way in which such customs were caught up in power relations, turning back on the English the quasi-ethnographic gaze they had directed at Irish funerary customs" (84). The reversal whereby James is at the margins lamenting the loss of Donnchadh at the center upends our expectations. Similarly, who can forget the Highland women who don the bardic mantle to celebrate the heroic deeds of the warriors in their clan? One oral tradition relates that Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh (Mary McLeod) was forbidden from singing both outside and in, so that she straddled the doorsill, belting out her songs. Although Chedzoy does not vouch

for the story, she points out that it “tells a symbolic truth about women poets’ uncomfortably liminal role” (75). Furthermore, she directs us to J. Carmichael Watson’s modern edition of Mairi’s works: sixteen poems, totaling 1,200 lines (106). Likewise, who can forget Magdalen Lloyd? Lloyd was from a village in North Wales, but migrated to London to look for work as a domestic servant. Between July 1674 and March 1682, she wrote letters to Thomas Edwards, an older cousin who held a senior position on the household staff of Chirk Castle. These missives offer a window into the seldom glimpsed world of a barely literate single woman trying to survive the hustle and bustle of London’s patronage networks for servants. Chedgzoy comments, “The need to sustain and nurture her relationship with her primary patron, a Welshman called Mr [sic] Thomas who was a friend of her cousin and occupied a senior role in service in a London household, is a recurrent theme in the letters” (123). Because of Magdalen’s economic insecurity, it is satisfying to learn that in one letter she discusses taking out a loan so as to buy some farmland near her hometown.

These examples show how Chedgzoy manages the problematic relationship between individuality and exemplarity. As she herself puts it, “I have tried to interweave critical attention to the specificities of her [Magdalen’s] location and the uniqueness of that voice, with a sense of how these remarkable documents can stand in for the voices of a much larger group of women whose emotional lives, memories and hopes have been almost entirely hidden from history” (124). Indeed, all the women Chedgzoy discusses seem poised to become representative figures, in part because the discourse of memory has a structural tendency to elide differences. The terms of this discourse have a way of homogenizing the varieties of experience, blending them into a soup dominated by the flavor of its chief ingredients—mourning, regretting, recollecting, witnessing—and its accompanying seasoning—occlusion, repression, erasure, oblivion. The danger of plaintiveness introduced by the theoretical terms of analysis can be averted in several ways. One is to consider the bracing effect of skepticism on memory in the early modern period. Another involves identifying the genre implicit in different kinds of memory. For example, typology (mentioned only in reference to Anne Bradstreet) can be seen as a form of collective memory that, generically, veers toward comedy rather than tragedy, since the subject of typological memory ponders salvation. A third strategy, which Chedgzoy uses, is to focus on texts that engage in forms of political activism,

intervening in contemporary debates and hoping thereby to shape the future. Despite the occasional plangent note, Chedzgoj's book celebrates the voices of the women she studies, voices that are often grieving and nostalgic, but also by turns witty, brittle, defiant, erudite, eccentric, and full of pluck. *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World* is a dignified and elegant monument and memorial to them, even as it encourages us to pursue similar memory work.

ANITA GILMAN SHERMAN
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The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies. Ed. Dympna Callaghan. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. 346 pp. \$74.95. ISBN 1-4039-9212-6.

This excellent collection provides a timely assessment of the relationship between feminism and Renaissance studies and should especially interest those working in the fields of women's studies, English literature, and history. In her introduction, Dympna Callaghan explains in detail the differences between early ("exclusionist") and later ("revisionist") feminist approaches to the Renaissance (5-13). Highlighting what is valuable and what is oversimplified in each, Callaghan asserts the need for a new "post-revisionist" feminism that retains the critique of patriarchal institutions central to exclusionist feminism and the attention to exceptions to the rules characteristic of revisionist feminism. *The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies* "argue[s] that feminism is far from over, but it is much altered" (Callaghan, 13). The volume includes contributions by a diverse assembly of important scholars whose essays effectively model strategies for thinking critically about and reinvigorating the relationship between feminism and Renaissance studies. Including fifteen essays (plus Callaghan's introduction) and divided into three main sections—"Theories," "Women," and "Histories"—this interdisciplinary book foregrounds multiple directions from which to consider how feminism intersects with Renaissance studies today.

While all of the essays are excellent, a few are especially illuminating. Jonathan Gil Harris's refreshingly creative essay exposes affinities, or compelling contiguities, between Margaret Cavendish's early modern meditations on bodies and matter, and Hélène Cixous's French feminism in order to reflect upon theoretical oversights in recent studies of early modern material culture, to challenge simplistic notions of "adversarial alterity," and to resist "the assumption of an absolute temporal difference between past and present" (35). Harris's essay is particularly compelling because it shows how putting early modern women writers into dialogue with theoretical concerns central to Renaissance studies highlights the value of those women writers' contributions during their own time and ours. Sasha Roberts, meanwhile, analyzes both Renaissance literary criticism addressed to women and Katherine Philips's letters to Sir Charles Cotterell to make a brilliant case for the mutual significance of formalism and feminism. Roberts's essay, which shows how Puttenham "articulat[es] [women's] exclusion from humanist literary culture while assuming their participation and interest in it as writers and readers," corresponds closely to Callaghan's call for a postrevisionist feminism that critiques patriarchal limits imposed upon women while acknowledging some exceptions to those limits (72).

Jean E. Howard's fascinating discussion of whores in comedies in early modern London is noteworthy for its nuanced demonstration of how merging feminist and historical approaches continue to produce significant new readings of Renaissance drama. Howard argues that "whore plays partly reference the actual social problem of prostitution in early modern London," while they also use the whore "to examine troubling or novel aspects of urban life, such as the quickening and expansion of the market economy" (118). The clarity with which Howard explains her methodology is especially valuable, given the volume's goals:

If feminism leads me to ask why this particular female icon appears so often in the London plays of the period, it also prompts me now to seek out answers that go beyond a preoccupation with subversion and containment or victimhood and empowerment to examine how discourses of the feminine, whether or not they directly address the condition of historical women, can speak to the stress points of the age in which they were produced. (118)

Frances E. Dolan similarly highlights the ways her feminist approach addresses today's theoretical concerns. Her essay linking "undead Catholicism and undead women" (focusing upon Hermione in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*) is innovative in its methodological debt to revisionist histories that interrogate the so-called vanishing or last Native American (216). Dolan shows how feminist attention to intersections between the feminine and Catholicism exposes the historical process by which "Catholics did not vanish from the cultural landscape" but became fodder for "stories that erased them." She also insightfully foregrounds how an analogous theoretical erasure threatens feminism itself (230):

The premise of this collection is that feminism is now so fully integrated into other knowledge-making projects that it is no longer as sharply defined or isolatable. This would make feminism like the Indians and Catholics who appear to have vanished but have instead intermarried, metamorphosed, adapted, and survived. Survival is a good thing; invisibility and dispossession are not. Rather than mourn, we need to seek out, herald, and demand space for feminism's new manifestations. (231)

Finally, the collection concludes on a promising note with Gail Kern Paster, who proposes, "hesitantly because heretically," that we consider "early modern female hormones in order to suggest the possibility of a new utility for the twinned ideas of the universal and the natural in a reconstructed feminist practice" (327). Paster thus confronts binaries between nature and culture, essentialist and constructionist perspectives, by focusing on how hormones—as an example of the biological—are "strongly affected" by "highly variant and class-specific cultural practices in birthing, wet-nursing, and contraception" (328). She rightly advocates for feminist scholarship that would "allow for the fluid interaction of biology and cultural practice in identifying emotional specificities for early modern women" (331).

As Callaghan admits, to illustrate effectively the precise differences between exclusionist and revisionist feminism, she caricatures each to some degree (5). Some of the traits she assigns to the postrevisionist feminism that her edition models have already appeared in other recently published works. Thus, a few of the collection's essays might strike the reader as interesting

and valuable but not necessarily as new or different in relation to other recent feminist scholarship as the introduction would claim. Nonetheless, the volume clearly “demonstrate[s] beyond the shadow of a doubt that Feminist Renaissance Studies is more alive than ever” (Callaghan, 15).

PAMELA HAMMONS
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Medici Women: Portraits of Power, Love, and Betrayal from the Court of Duke Cosimo I. Gabrielle Langdon. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006. 372 pp. \$85.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-8020-3825-5.

The culture and politics of the newly-established Medici duchy in sixteenth-century Florence have long fascinated scholars, and Gabrielle Langdon's new book underscores not only the complexity of the portraits of its women but also their importance within the court of Duke Cosimo I. Cosimo well understood that women played a significant role within the family, and they figured prominently within his agenda to situate his court among the most powerful in Europe. He ordered an unusually large number of paintings from Jacopo Pontormo, Agnolo Bronzino, and Alessandro Allori to display the virtues of his mother (Maria Salviati), his wife (Eleonora di Toledo), his daughters (Bia, Maria, Lucrezia, and Isabella), and his wards (Giulia d'Alessandro de' Medici and Eleonora "Dianora" di Toledo de' Medici). Their carefully formulated portraits contain numerous emblems and references that refer to feminine ideals, cultural prowess, and, above all, Medici hegemony and dynasty. Langdon offers a thorough formal and iconographical analysis of the paintings and uses archival materials and other pertinent primary sources to build a nuanced context for her interpretations. In the spirit of Michael Baxandall's "period eye," Langdon tries to reconstruct what the sixteenth-century spectator would have understood from these portraits. A faithful reconstruction of the past is a difficult endeavor, as Langdon herself admits, but her in-depth study makes a determined effort. To set the stage for her interpretations, she

draws upon contemporary theories regarding portraiture, female beauty, and decorum (by Giorgio Vasari, Benedetto Varchi, Agnolo Firenzuola, Vincenzo Danti, Francisco de Hollanda, and Gabriele Paleotti, among others), and ideas on female virtue found in the literature and poetry read within the Medici court (by such authors as Petrarch and Cosimo's courtiers Bronzino and Laura Battiferri). Langdon thus provides a picture of a lively and intellectual court well-versed in contemporary and historical ideas and issues. Within this elite milieu, the Medici and their peers and courtiers presumably understood the many subtle allusions to literature, history, and contemporary events and ideas found within the portraits, allusions which Langdon revives for her readers.

The Medici women's portraits had numerous functions. The best known, such as Bronzino's painting of Eleonora of Toledo and her son Giovanni (1545), were official state portraits. Other images were meant for a more private audience, such as Allori's miniature pendant of Dianora di Toledo de' Medici. Most of these portraits marked some sort of rite of passage, whether it was to negotiate the marriage market, or to commemorate a wedding, motherhood, widowhood, or even death (with a posthumous tribute taken from a death mask). Langdon examines each image with a keen eye, and considers every last detail as significant, from its style and pose, to choices in color scheme, costume, jewelry, and other accoutrements and emblems. She makes a strong case for a new identification or date of some images; for instance, she argues that Bronzino's early portrait of a *Woman Seated with a Dog* is a portrait of Maria Salviati before she was widowed in 1526, and identifies Isabella de' Medici as the sitter in a number of Allori's female portraits. She also suggests that Bronzino painted his later portrait of Maria after her death (ca. 1544/45), just as he painted Cosimo's natural daughter Bia after her early demise.

As court portraits, the paintings of Medici women are more about Cosimo's self-fashioning than they are about these women's personal interests, and they did not necessarily benefit their sitters. Langdon argues that the idealization that masked aspects of the women's individuality in their portraits continued to obscure their histories for centuries. She is fully aware that portraits "can subtly or inadvertently deceive," and so she seeks to explain the women's actual lives as a counterpoint to the myths

presented in their images (10). She grounds her discussion of the portraits with biographies of the women that, when possible, refer to their own words and ideas taken from personal letters and other documents. Taken together, the biographical information and the portraits demonstrate how Cosimo and his immediate successors constructed the official, idealized presentations that elided significant components of the women's personalities. The goal to maintain proper appearances was so strong within the Florentine court that, Langdon suggests, the portraits of women who had incontrovertibly transgressed social decorum were probably destroyed in an attempt to erase their presence for posterity (*damnatio memoriae*).

Langdon organizes the book into chapters that each focus on an individual woman with an additional chapter that examines the childhood portraits of Cosimo's female wards and daughters, including those of Bia and Maria, who both died at a young age. A brief epilogue outlines the women's fates beyond Cosimo's lifetime as well as aspects of their legendary status after death. The book is well illustrated, with sixteen high-quality color plates of the primary works discussed and another sixty-five black and white photographs of supplementary works and details from the paintings. Three appendices include a genealogical table of the Medici family and a selection of poetry by Bronzino and Bernardino Antinori that Langdon draws upon in her interpretations. In sum, this book makes an important contribution to the study of not only early modern female portraiture, but also court culture in general and the visual statecraft of Cosimo I in particular.

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The Marian Catholic Revival: A Review Essay

The Church of Mary Tudor. Ed. Eamon Duffy and David Loades. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006. xxxi + 348 pp. \$99.99. ISBN 0-7546-3070-6.

The Theology and Spirituality of Mary Tudor's Church. William Wizeman, S.J. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006. x + 291 pp. ISBN 0-7546-5360-9.

In his classic but problematic work, *The English Reformation*, 2nd ed. (University Park, PA, 1989), A.G. Dickens in essence ends his account with the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559. In this schema, the Reformation began to be established officially in England, even if tentatively and piecemeal, under Henry VIII. Following the death of the awe- and fear-inspiring king, a more thoroughgoing Protestantism was laid out by the Edwardian regime, and, with the accession of Elizabeth, a moderate Protestant settlement, the so-called *via media*, became the basis of the Anglican Church of England. There was, of course, a brief and ostensibly aberrational interlude—the Marian years—between the otherwise progressive ascendancy of Protestantism under Edward and then Elizabeth. In this version of the English Reformation, the growing power and popularity of Protestant Christianity was only briefly interrupted by the last-ditch attempt of Mary and her supporters to re-impose Catholicism on the country. Yet, despite the repressive measures of “Bloody Mary,” her regime failed to prevent the ultimate triumph of Protestantism under Elizabeth, the Protestant Deborah.

Revisionist and even postrevisionist writings of recent years have overturned a great deal of this idea of the Protestant Church of England's supposedly inexorable and inevitable triumph over a moribund late medieval Catholicism revived only briefly by the Marian church and state through force and fear. The two works under review here are but a part of the extensive and creative reinterpretations of many aspects of the religious, social, and cultural history of Tudor England. Perhaps no period has needed and received as much recent attention as the mid-Tudor era,

especially the Marian years. In *The Church of Mary Tudor*, Eamon Duffy (a leading proponent of the considerable vitality of Catholicism well into the Elizabethan era) and David Loades (an expert on the life and reign of Mary) have gathered together the essays of about a dozen scholars on various aspects of the Marian Catholic revival. These essays are of a generally high quality and, while they are by no means uniform in their approaches or interpretations, they tend to support a much more innovative and, in varying degrees, successful view of what Queen Mary and her church tried to and in some measure did accomplish.

In the introductory essay, David Loades discusses "The Personal Religion of Mary I." This discussion is in a number of ways a nuanced one based on a significant amount of data, but the reader is still left with the question as to whether or not we have reached the heart of Mary's "personal" life and religion. To some extent this is an understandable problem because a similar assessment could be made concerning much of the writing about Elizabeth's "inner" life and beliefs. Whereas Henry VIII wore his heart on his sleeve, so to speak, his daughters, for a whole host of reasons, not least of which was surviving in the midst of the dangerous Henrician court and its machinations, had to learn to hide or dissemble some of their personal views concerning religion and other matters. Even so, Loades argues that, "in spite of her enthusiasm for the Mass, [Mary] was not ostensibly a Catholic at all, but what her father had made her—a conservative humanist with an extremely insular point of view" (18). While Mary was in some ways her father's daughter, she was even more so her mother's, at least in her fundamental devotion to the old faith, despite the public conformity that Henry all but forced on her. According to Loades, in Mary's religious hierarchy, devotion to the Eucharist was paramount, compared, for example, to papal prerogatives, but that did not make Mary in any way unorthodox or out-of-sync with other monarchs, including her husband, Philip of Spain, the Most Catholic King.

As with the Queen, Loades sees a similar religious ambiguity surrounding many of "The Marian Episcopate." It is true that most bishops had conformed to the Henrician religious changes, but a number of them were far less willing to go along with what they considered to be a dangerous religious revolution during the Edwardian years. This was certainly

true of Edmund Bonner and Stephen Gardiner. Yet, in addition to considering their religious stance, Mary also chose a number of candidates for their learning; Reginald Pole clearly fit both of those bills. If reforming bishops were crucial to a Catholic revival, the centers of learning were also fundamental to any long-term strategy. In an article on "The English Universities," Claire Cross points out that all of the Tudor regimes realized that the universities were key to their goal of creating an educated elite who could staff the offices of church and state. Both Oxford and Cambridge under Mary benefited from royal bounty, and, while a Catholic resurgence had commenced at both institutions, it had proceeded at a faster pace at Oxford. But, as in other regards, Cross concludes: "More than any other single factor, time frustrated the plans of Mary and Pole for Catholic higher education in England" (76).

Whereas Henry VIII had dissolved the monasteries, Mary began what turned out to be a brief revival of religious houses. C. S. Knighton writes about the most famous one in "Westminster Abbey Restored." It is debatable how much of a role religious houses and orders might have played over the long-term. As it was, Mary refounded seven religious houses, five for men and two for women. Before Mary's reign, the Benedictines had played an important part in English religious history for close to a thousand years and presumably could do so again. The revival of Westminster, however, lasted less than three years. Regrettably, there is neither in this essay nor elsewhere in the book a more extended discussion of the topic of religious life. In particular, there is virtually no examination of the revival of religious life for women under England's first queen regnant. As to the Catholic revival in various locales, Ralph Houlbrooke examines "The Clergy, the Church Courts and the Marian Restoration in Norwich." Although Norwich was a relatively early and strong center of Protestantism, the city's Protestant leaders either submitted to the Marian church or went into exile, and it did not exhibit the degree of overt or covert opposition found, for example, in Colchester. Nevertheless, Norwich had its Protestant martyrs, including some women. One of them, Elizabeth Cooper, went to her death over her resolute interpretation of the Lord's Supper.

Cardinal Pole was obviously a central figure in the church of Mary Tudor and, appropriately, this collection has three related articles: Thomas

Mayer on Pole as legate, Eamon Duffy on Pole as preacher, and John Edwards on the degree of Spanish religious influence. The old canard was that, having been so long an exile, Pole was out of touch with the religious realities and changes that had occurred in England, and that he was more reactive than proactive in his program for a Catholic revival. These essays are part of a “rehabilitation” of Pole—and the Marian church—that paints a very different and far more flattering portrait. Collectively, these essays demonstrate that Pole had no illusions about the challenges he faced, nor was he neglectful or insular in dealing with them. Whether in terms of administration, finance, discipline, preaching, publishing, or instruction, Pole and others began to make some very creative reforms and recommendations, not the least of which was the proposal concerning diocesan seminaries. In light of all the efforts of the Marian church, Mayer’s dramatic conclusion appears to be well founded: “That England did not remain a Catholic country must be accounted much more of an accident than we have been readily prepared to admit” (174-5).

The classic centerpiece of Catholic spirituality was the Mass, and, as Lucy Wooding stresses in “The Marian Restoration and the Mass,” its restitution was paramount for Mary and her leading churchmen. That does not mean that there was not ongoing theological reflection on the understanding of the Eucharist and transubstantiation. In other words, in this regard as elsewhere, Marian Catholicism looked both backward and forward. Wooding mentions that some of the bishops, such as Thomas Watson and Edmund Bonner, encouraged more frequent communion, i.e., more frequent than the medieval norm, which, due to an exaggerated sense of awe, often resulted in reception of the Eucharist very infrequently, perhaps only once a year. It would have been helpful, however, to place the bishops’ position within the context of early modern Catholicism, in which more frequent communion became a growing spiritual practice, as, for example, among Jesuits. In addition, if it is true (as Loades suggests) that Mary herself, while devoted to the Mass, apparently only received communion at Easter, how did the queen react to this call for more frequent reception of the Eucharist?

Concerning contemporary accounts, Gary Gibbs provides an insightful reinterpretation of “Henry Machyn’s Manuscript.” Gibbs argues that,

although it has traditionally been labeled as a “diary,” it would be much more accurate to view it as a “chronicle,” that is, not as something personal and anachronistic, but rather as a historical account with subtle political, social, and religious commentary. In this context, Machyn lauds the Marian regime’s use of ceremony and spectacle to garner and shore up support. Such a chronicle is a helpful counterbalance to the traditional historiographical emphasis on the Marian martyrs and exiles. Still, martyrs there tragically were. Patrick Collinson focuses his discussion of this issue on “The Persecution in Kent.” With regard to exiles, he points out that, in addition to those who fled to various Swiss and German cities, there were also a number of “internal” exiles. As for the martyrs, Kent produced more of them than anywhere except London, and this included many women as well as men. Particularly interesting is Collinson’s treatment of John Foxe who, in his so-called “Book of Martyrs,” not only preserved but also transformed the memories of many of the Protestant martyrs. While Foxe’s work is invaluable, we must take his “hagiographical agenda” into account.

There is one further essay in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, William Wizeman’s “The Theology and Spirituality of a Marian Bishop: The Pastoral and Polemical Sermons of Thomas Watson.” This essay dovetails with Wizeman’s important monograph, *The Theology and Spirituality of Mary Tudor’s Church*, in which he examines a wide range of Marian Catholic texts, through which he discerns a fairly consistent theology and spirituality designed to win over “heretics” and reform and strengthen the Catholic faithful. In successive chapters, Wizeman investigates Marian Catholic texts concerning Revelation, Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, Sacraments, Spirituality, Piety, and Eschatology. Various Marian Catholic writers, a number of whom were bishops, addressed almost all of the major theological controversies of the day, including the role of Scripture and its interpretation, Patristics and church councils, the faith/good works debate, and the related issue of predestination.

Marian theologians wrote relatively little about the controversial issue of the royal supremacy. Wizeman argues that many writers were likely embarrassed by their previous acquiescence, but, between the extremes of completely independent national churches and thoroughgoing ultramontanism, the question remains as to what the fundamental ecclesiology of

certain bishops was—Stephen Gardiner, for example. With regard to “the burnings,” there were ongoing debates, with writers on both sides of the religious divide arguing that a “heretic” could not be a true “martyr.” While very few relished persecution, some believed that, in combination with a program of reform and re-education, some degree of persecution, especially of more radical opponents, would bring about a long-term Catholic revival. In any event, was not much more lost than gained in this trial by fire?

In a number of ways, and with strong counterarguments to the alleged insularity of the Marian church, its writers supported practices that were becoming more common in early modern Catholic Europe, including more frequent confession and communion, the examination of conscience, and engaging in various methods of prayer through “Spiritual Exercises,” whether those of Ignatius Loyola or the Englishman William Peryn, the latter being in no small part a translation and adaptation of those of Loyola and Nicholas Van Ess. Wizeman argues persuasively that Marian spirituality was christocentric, sacramental, ecclesial, and penitential—all of which linked it to the international Catholic Reformation. The Marian church also contributed to contemporary and future Catholic spirituality and reform by replacing the traditional hanging pyx for the Eucharist in churches with a tabernacle on the main altar, and by promoting seminaries for the clergy as well as religious instruction for the laity. Yet, as creative as it was, it is probably going too far to argue that “the Marian church invented what is often called the Counter-Reformation” (251). The scholars examined in this review essay argue convincingly that the church of Mary Tudor was much more creative, forward-looking, and international in its theology and spirituality than its many critics have acknowledged. At the same time, the Marian church was but a part of a multifaceted and widespread movement of reform and renewal in early modern Catholicism, to which many individuals, groups, institutions, and countries contributed, the latter including Italy and Spain, as well as England.

ROBERT SCULLY
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Classical Medicine and the Origins of Gynecology: A Review Essay

Midwifery, Obstetrics, and the Rise of Gynecology: The Uses of a Sixteenth-Century Compendium. Women and Gender in the Early Modern World Series. Helen King. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007. 218 pp. £55.00. ISBN: 978-0-7546-5396-7.

Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves: The Rhetoric of Reproduction in Early Modern England. In Vivo: Cultural Mediations of Bio-Medical Science. Eve Keller. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007. 232 pp. \$30.00 ISBN: 0-295-98641-7.

Helen King's latest book, *Midwifery, Obstetrics, and the Rise of Gynecology*, and Eve Keller's *Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves* follow entirely different trajectories despite the fact that both of them try to come to grips with what constitutes a "woman" in the early modern period, and as part of their larger argument, both investigate the gendered implications of the rise of the man-midwife in the late seventeenth century. King's argument focuses in particular on the transmission of classical and sixteenth-century knowledge of gynecology encapsulated in *Gynaeciorum Libri*, a compendium that went through three editions in 1566, 1586, and 1597, and into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; in the process it relocates the establishment of gynecology as a separate medical discipline in the sixteenth century rather than in the nineteenth century. Keller, on the other hand, is more interested in the emergence of a gendered notion of subjectivity in the early modern period and argues that the man-midwife, "born in rhetoric from the body of the childbearing woman . . . emerges as the paradigmatic Enlightenment hero, a self-directed, rationally ordered, thoroughly modern individual" (17). King reads medical texts, annotations, marginalia, lecture notes, catalogues of individual libraries, and multiple other sources to ground her analysis; Keller's primary intent is to delve deeply into the texts to lay bare their ideological and philosophical assumptions. Where the texts do converge—as they do, for instance, in

their attention to the rhetoric comparing the female body to a machine in the male midwifery discourses—the questions they ask are still very different. King is interested in interrogating the possibility of historical antecedents for this objectification while Keller uncovers the ideological move that grants subjectivity to the fetus, gendered male, at the same time that it denies it to the mother. However, both are hugely ambitious in scope and both much needed in their own ways. King's book covers a truly breathtaking chronological range from classical times through the early modern period right down to the nineteenth century, without losing the specificity and precision which makes any analysis convincing. Keller's has a narrower focus by comparison, but in its attempt to give close readings of texts ranging over one hundred and fifty years, it is also encyclopedic.

King's erudite analysis begins with a detailed look at the content and textual histories of the three editions of the *Gynaeciorum Libri*. The investigation allows King to correct some current scholarly misunderstandings about the non-existent role of male physicians in childbirth before the eighteenth century. As she argues, "what was new in the sixteenth century was not the male physician treating the diseases of women, but rather this image of Hippocrates as a gynecologist" (19). As the argument about the constructions of gender unfolds, it takes care not to conflate midwifery and gynecology. Sensitive to the role played by menstruation in the early modern understanding of the female body, King counters the bias towards reproduction in scholars' discussions of early modern gynecological texts—witnessed even in Keller's analysis.

The same sophistication is visible when King shifts her attention to the "correct use of history" in the eighteenth-century debates about obstetrics, especially those involving William Smellie (1697-1763), one of the most famous male-midwives, and his rival, John Burton. The intense focus on Smellie's practice, his use of instruments and machines, his lecture notes, his training techniques, his medical works, his sources, his library holdings, his annotations of books, as well as the context within which he operated allows King to elaborate successfully on the claim that "medical history gave those involved in disputes ... a different way of validating their practice" (114), a claim seen pre-eminently in the new title granted to Hippocrates in the eighteenth century as the first male-mid-

wife. Throughout the analysis, King shies away from simplistic statements about male/female midwife rivalries.

If King's discussion of Sir James Young Simpson and his advocacy for the use of chloroform in childbirth is not as extensive, it is still as rigorous. She analyzes Simpson's use of *Gynaeciorum Libri* in countering theological and medical objections against the use of chloroform as a pain-reliever during childbirth and more importantly, in support of his claims for the establishment of Gynecology and Obstetrics as an important single branch of specialization for male medical practitioners.

Keller's history of gynecology and midwifery begins with a fascinating comparison between recent developments in robotics and neurophilosophy and the Galenic system of medicine, both of which foreground, according to her analysis, "embodiment, embeddedness, and distributed function" (20). The premodern concurs with the posthuman in refusing to grant a subjectivity to the human that would override the efficient coworking of the parts. In contrast, Keller sees the self that emerges from early modern models of subjectivity as constituted by exactly this nonmechanistic, unifying, and extrasensible capacity—what she calls a "supervenient self." She then traces the gendered implications of this model of selfhood and posits that the emergence of the normative Man in the biomedical discourses of the early modern period is dependent on the reduction of the female to matter, to a womb. Like King, Keller attempts not to reduce the inconsistencies and disjunctions within the discourse to a coherent model of early modern femininity; as she explains, "the female is a participatory, possessive, agential subject, but not always, and never completely" (11).

However, some reductionism does creep into Keller's argument as she tries to work closely with a large range of early modern medical texts, ranging from *The Byrth of Mankynde* (1540), Crooke's *Microcosmographia* (1612), Culpeper's *A Directory for Midwives* (1651), Harvey's *De generatione animalium* (1651), as well as the theories of Theodore Kerckring, Kenelm Digby, and the case histories of George Chapman and Sarah Stone from the 1730s. Keller has obviously profited from Gail Paster's ground-breaking scholarship on early modern medicine, which delineates the rhetorical strategies of biomedical texts with the same care that has traditionally been lavished on fictional or poetic texts. In her analysis of each of the texts foundational to

her argument, Keller examines the competing notions of selfhood embedded within; for instance, she uncovers that, in contrast to Galen, Crooke asserts that “men, not stomachs, concoct their meat” (60). However, it is hard to do justice to the complexities of Crooke’s thousand-page anatomy or any of the early seventeenth-century texts in fewer than twenty-five pages each, especially since those texts are, as Keller admits, seriously derivative. While it is obviously crucial to chart out Crooke’s differences from Galen’s, Crooke’s text borrows from a range of earlier texts, specifically Casper Bauhin’s and Andreas Laurentius’s, identified as sources in Crooke’s title page. Similarly, Culpeper recognizes Riverius, Bartholin, and Riolan, among others, as his influences. The medical tradition that comes down to Crooke and Culpeper and other early modern medical practitioners is Galenic but not univocally so, and it is important to look at a range of historical and contemporary sources to trace the changes in notions of subjectivity. The problem is less severe with the more original works of Harvey and the case histories from the 1730s, but the reduction of the polyvalence of the early modern medical tradition remains an issue in Keller’s work. The Galenic tradition co-existed with and was nuanced by Aetius, Paul of Aegina, Avicenna, Albucasis, the multifaceted Hippocratic tradition, Vesalius and many others for early modern practitioners, and it behooves us to keep in mind the richness of this heritage even as we recognize the important contribution of Keller’s study.

Both Keller’s and King’s books will prove insightful readings for scholars in the history of medicine, the history of ideas, and the history of gender, as well as for literary scholars and historians studying the early modern period, particularly the eighteenth century. While I enjoyed reading both books and learned much from them, I found myself close to concurring with Monica Green’s superlative praise on the back cover that King’s is the “best book ever written on the history of early modern women’s medicine.” We trust that it will soon inspire more such expert and needed scholarship.

RACHANA SACHDEV
SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY

Contributors

Cristina León Alfar, Associate Professor in the Department of English at Hunter College, CUNY, is the author of *Fantasies of Female Evil: The Dynamics of Gender and Power in Shakespearean Tragedy* (University of Delaware Press, 2003). Her new book project, *He Said, She Said: Shakespeare and Narratives of Marital Betrayal in Early Modern England*, comes out of her work on *The Tragedy of Mariam* and examines men's and women's conflicting narratives about marital betrayal in the period and in Shakespeare's cuckoldry plays.

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Ann Crabb teaches history at James Madison University. Her publications include *The Strozzi of Florence: Widowhood and Family Solidarity in the Renaissance* (University of Michigan Press, 2000); "If I could write': Margherita Datini and Letter Writing, 1384–1410," *Renaissance Quarterly* 60 (winter 2007), as well as other articles on early modern women. She is co-editor with Jane Couchman of the essay collection, *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400–1700: Form and Persuasion* (Ashgate, 2005), which won the Best Collection Award from the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women.

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Jane Donawerth, Professor of English and Affiliate in Women's Studies at the University of Maryland, is author of *Shakespeare and the Sixteenth-Century Study of Language* (University of Illinois Press, 1984), co-translator of the EMW-prize-winning *Selected Letters, Orations, and Rhetorical Dialogues of Madeleine de Scudéry* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), and co-editor of two volumes of essays on early modern women. She has held NEH and Wisconsin Humanities Center fellowships, is a University of Maryland Distinguished Scholar-Teacher, and recently won both the EMW and Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference Bainton prize for her essay on Margaret Fell. She also publishes on science fiction and rhetorical theory by women.

Jeanette M. Fregulia, currently Assistant Professor of History at Carroll College in Helena, Montana, teaches courses in premodern European History, and the History of the Middle East. She completed her PhD in Renaissance History from the University of Nevada, Reno in May 2007.

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Adele Seeff directs the Center for Renaissance & Baroque Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, home to the *Attending to Early Modern Women* symposium series and, since 2005, to *Early Modern Women*:

An Interdisciplinary Journal. For the College of Arts and Humanities, she serves as director of School/University outreach programs. She has co-edited seven *Attending to Early Modern Women* symposium proceedings; has published on Shakespeare production and reception, and on higher education; and has written scripts for public television. She is currently researching a book-length manuscript on the history of Shakespeare in South Africa from nineteenth-century garrison theater to post-apartheid productions.

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EMW welcomes scholars and teachers from any discipline who study women and their contributions to the cultural, political, economic, or social spheres of the early modern period or whose interest in it includes attention to gender and the representation of women. For further information on the history of the organization, its officers, links with other websites, calls for papers, upcoming programs, and information on how to subscribe online, see the EMW website at www.ssemw.org.

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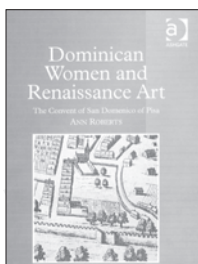
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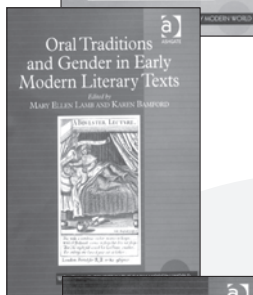
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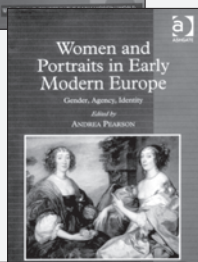
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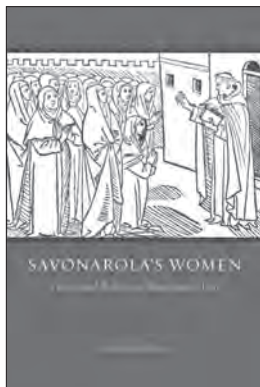
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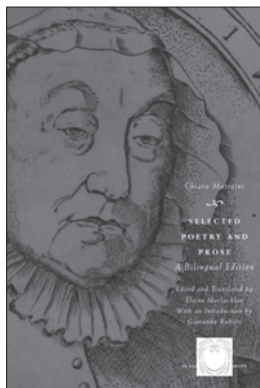
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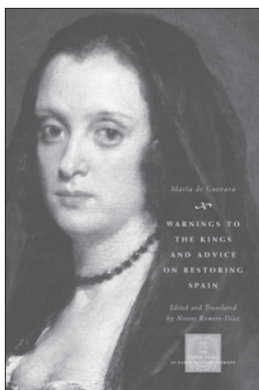
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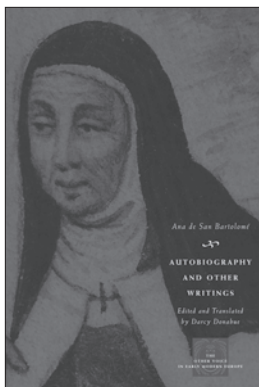
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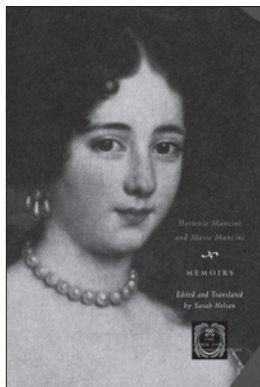
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