

Chastity on the Early Modern
English Stage,
1611-1649

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Abstract

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‘Chastity on the Early Modern English Stage’ seeks to explain the relationship between tragicomedy’s brief and short-lived English popularity and the royal cult of chastity which spanned exactly the same historical time-frame. This study attempts to define a cultural movement which influenced the political, religious, social, intellectual, aesthetic, and medical fields in the first half of the seventeenth-century and argues that the narrative tropes which structured, and assisted the spread of, the post-Elizabethan cult of chastity were the same tropes governing the tragicomedies so popular in the period.

The arguments made for tragicomedy are speculatively extended to all generic forms, with the intention of expanding an area of scholarship still dominated by formalist analysis. By focussing on narrative tropes and locating them within both fictional and non-fictional texts and in the presentation and discussion of significant events (from medical discoveries to liturgical arrangements and royal birthing rituals) this thesis aims to illustrate that the human and cosmic visions articulated by different dramatic genres were as relevant to early modern lives outside the theatre as they were to those within it. Genre is thus less a description of a text’s formal characteristics and more a set of truths governing certain human experiences both in texts and in life.

Focussing on Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale*, two plays by John Ford, Caroline court masques and birthing rituals, Milton’s *A Maske* and a number of non-professional performances (from the Earl of Castlehaven’s trial to William Harvey’s demonstration of the circulation of the blood), ‘Chastity on the Early Modern English Stage’ describes the four tropes of chastity and their place in tragicomic experience from the death of Elizabeth I to the beheading of Charles I. While Charles’s death and the closure of the theatres are crucial reasons for the abrupt end of the cult of chastity and tragicomedy, this thesis argues that cause must also be attributed to the efforts of pro-Parliamentary and Puritan writers who, throughout the 1630s and 1640s, sought to claim the tropes of chastity for their own rhetoric and cause. Their success resulted in a redefinition of chastity as masculine, individuated, Parliamentary, Protestant, intellectual, civic and prosaic instead of Catholic, royal, spectacular, feminised, Marian, pietised, and theatrical.

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Introduction

Why did tragicomedy have such a short-lived period of intense popularity in England during the first half of the seventeenth-century? And is it simply a coincidence that the genre's popularity spanned the same time frame as did the theological, political, cultural, and aesthetic cult of chastity which eventually reached its fullest expression in the court masques, Laudian devotional temperament, and continental baroque of the 1630s? It is the contention of this thesis that the two English movements, the one occurring onstage and the other touching a broad range of fields outside the theatre, were more than simply coterminous. Rather, they were both products of the period's complex but pervasive investment in the virtue of chastity.

To test this hypothesis, I will be arguing that in the first half of the seventeenth century chastity was evoked by early modern writers from a range of different traditions through four separate but related tropes. I am using this rather loose term to categorise the phenomena I want to describe because each of the four sites in which chastity appears to be operating incorporates such a range of human experiences and expressions that any term more specific would be too limiting. The four tropes of chastity each have a narrative form within texts and also a non-narrative counterpart within the lives of those who evoke them in non-professional modes of performance. These tropes were as much the cornerstones of tragicomedy and the royal masque as they were the essential modes of argumentation through which political and theological controversialists won the hearts of their readers. For historical reasons over which this thesis can only speculate, the seventeenth century inherited a belief that acts of unchastity, both actual and figurative, were, to an extent beyond the other vices, powerfully destabilising to a community's cohesion and moral stability. The period's aversion to unchastity appears to run deep in England's collective moral consciousness. By assessing the virtue of chastity through the main tropes by which it was understood and disseminated, we come to understand how far-reaching its influence was and how much tragicomedy's interest in the preservation of its characters' sexual chastity was in fact part of a much wider debate touching questions of nationhood and government, liturgy and doctrine, medicine, morality and sanctity.

The tropes of chastity I will be assessing are what I am calling 'bodily boundaries and somatic integrity', 'legitimate union and issue', 'sanctity and correctly oriented relationships' and 'the return of the lost'.

Bodily boundaries, somatic integrity

In 1975 David Hale observed that the ‘analogy between society and the human body ... is used more than any of the correspondences’ which compose the early modern ‘world picture’.¹ In the three decades since Hale’s study, new historicist and materialist scholarship has explored with extraordinary range the importance of bodies, both figurative and actual, to early modern literature and culture. We can now say with confidence that the body figure was applied to a good deal more than the early modern body politic. As Hillary Nunn recently argued: ‘the human body not only served as the ideal by which all earthly proportions should be gauged, but its physical makeup also constituted the perfect means of measuring, constructing, and evaluating intellectual concepts whose immensity proved difficult to imagine otherwise’.² I am interested in a question which has not yet been addressed within this field of inquiry: to what extent was early modern England’s tendency to render somatic those institutions and concepts most valuable to it shaped by the complex and evolving system of virtues by which the moral and physiological integrity of actual bodies was managed and maintained? When early moderns applied the body figure to the body politic, the Church, the nation, the Eucharist, Parliament, the people, the world of the theatre, a text, or any number of other sites, their descriptions were not neutral but intensely value-laden, and the virtue which enabled them to so describe the relative health or disease of figurative bodies was chastity. Building on the Galenic view of the body as a container, and of women’s bodies as especially ‘leaky vessels’, early modern thinking about chastity routinely focussed on images of the chaste body as a sound container and of chaste relationships as the exclusive province of properly shared fluids.³ The image of a chaste union as one that can secure legitimately mingled fluids was also informed by the practice of primogeniture, the popularity of which grew rapidly across the period of this study,⁴ and changing theories of the one-flesh model of

¹ David George Hale, *The Body Politic* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 11.

² Hillary Nunn, *Staging Anatomies: Dissection and Spectacle in Early Stuart Tragedy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 27.

³ Gail Kern Paster, *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004).

⁴ Joan Thirsk, ‘Younger Sons in the Seventeenth Century,’ *History* 54 (1969), 358-77; Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 87-88; Louis Adrian Montrose, “‘The Place of a Brother’” in *As You Like It: Social Process and Comic Form*, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 32 (1981), 28-54.

marriage.⁵ For many characters in the plays of Shakespeare and his successors the fear of an erroneous mingling of blood was so extreme it led to despair, suicide, and murder. However, the trope of unchastity as a broken body was also applied liberally outside the theatre by controversialists warning against the breaching or breaking of figurative bodies such as the Church, the Nation, the Crown, and the Eucharist.

The culture of chastity which emerged in the first half of the seventeenth century was quite different from the Elizabethan chastity which preceded it,⁶ though it was in many ways a reaction to,

⁵ Scholarship on the family in early modern Europe is extensive and, in response to Lawrence Stone, a good deal of interest in theories of marriage focus on the emergence of Protestant contractual and companionable models. Less attention has been paid to the remnants of sacramental theories of marital union in England. Ralph J. Lawrence, *Sacramental Interpretation of Ephesians 5:32 from Peter Lombard to the Council of Trent* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1963); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977); Mary L. Shanley, 'Marriage Contract and Social Contract in Seventeenth Century English Political Thought,' *Western Political Quarterly* 32 (1979), 79-91; Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction of the Sacraments in the Catholic Church* (New York: Image Books, 1982); Theodore Mackin, *Marriage in the Catholic Church: Divorce and Remarriage* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984); Ralph Houllbrooke, *The English Family 1450-1700* (London: Blackwell, 1986); Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction 1300-1840* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986); James Grantham Turner, *One Flesh: Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988); Eric Josef Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994); Mary Beth Rose, *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); John Witte Jr, *From Sacrament to Contract: Marriage, Religion, and Law in the Western Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Know Press, 1997); Natasha Korda, *Shakespeare's Domestic Economies: Gender and Property in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Naomi Tadmor, 'Women and Wives: the Language of Marriage in Early Modern English Biblical Translations,' *History Workshop Journal* 62 (2006), 1-27; Frances E. Dolan, *Marriage and Violence: The Early Modern Legacy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

⁶ Frances Amelia Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975) and Frances Amelia Yates, *Elizabethan Neoplatonism Reconsidered: Spenser and Francesco Giorgi* (London: The Society for Renaissance Studies, 1977); Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (London: Methuen, 1987); Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Diana E. Henderson, *Passion Made Public: Elizabethan Lyric, Gender, and Performance* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995); Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman, *The Myth of Elizabeth* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Julia M. Walker, *The Elizabeth Icon, 1603-2003* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Louis Adrian Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Annaliese F. Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, *Goddesses and Queens: The Iconography of Elizabeth I* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Philippa Berry, *Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen* (London: Routledge, 1989). See also: Anne Ferry, *The 'Inward' Language: Sonnets of Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1983); Catherine Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Heather Dubrow, *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and its Counterdiscourses* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); James J. Paxson and Cynthia Gravlee Selinsgrove, *Desiring Discourse: The Literature of Love, Ovid Through Chaucer* (London: Associated University Presses, 1998); Louis Adrian Montrose, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream and the Shaping Fantasies of Elizabethan Culture: Gender, Power, Form', in Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (eds.), *Rewriting the Renaissance: the Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 65-87; Leah S. Marcus, 'Shakespeare's Comic Heroines, Elizabeth I, and the Political Uses of Androgyny,' in Mary Beth Rose (ed.), *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 135-172; Katherine Eggert, *Showing Like a Queen: Female Authority and Literary Experiment in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Richard Helgersson, *Forms of Nationhood: the Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Claire McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590-1612* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). For an analysis of the importance of women's sexuality to state formation in Western Europe more generally, see Ulrike Strasser, *State of Virginity: Gender, Religion and Politics in an early Modern Catholic State* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

or processing of, Elizabeth I's reign. Under Elizabeth, and long after the end of her reign, images of unchastity proved as deeply affecting to citizens as they were useful to polemicists when deployed in the service of England's official policy of anti-Catholicism.⁷ The trope of chastity as actual and figurative bodily integrity was one aspect of Elizabethan chastity which continued into the seventeenth-century, taking on new and more elaborate forms. Under Elizabeth, the chaste body of the Queen matched the impenetrable borders of the English maps on which she was depicted: a tradition which carried over into Drayton's Jacobean *Poly-Olbion*.⁸ After Elizabeth's death, images of chastity as a moral and material shield which protected bodies, and England's borders, from assault—be it sexual penetration, invading armies, erroneous worship, dangerous pathologies—continued to proliferate and were no longer fixed in the single and very prominent body of the Queen. The trope of bodily boundaries grew increasingly popular as disputes between emerging avant-garde theologies splintered the English Church into opposing sects. It proved one of the most common tropes through which controversialists promoted their own view of proper Church government and warned against schism. By making full use of the image of unchastity as a breached vessel, all sides in the debate over the nature of the visible Church accused their opponents of reducing the Church and Christ to broken bodies whose precious fluids mingled erroneously.

In a period so beset by schism at various institutional levels, concern for the integrity of boundaries emerged as a pervasive anxiety. In turn, many elements of early modern English society that were deemed threatening to the integrity of individual and collective bodies were identified as unchaste: women, Catholics, foreigners, heretics, traitors, tyrants. Consequently, images of unchastity, when applied to any one of these threats, summoned by an associative logic many or all of the others: as the first half of the seventeenth-century progressed toward its culminating event, the regicide of 1649, the trope of unchastity as breached bodily integrity was enough to summon in the minds of readers and audiences thoughts of all these threats at once.

Legitimate unions, legitimate issue

In its most conventional form, this trope was expressed onstage by characters such as *The Winter's Tale's* Leontes who suddenly doubts that his children are in fact sprung from his body. In both its actual, conventional form and in its many figurative formulations, the trope of legitimate union and issue was

⁷ Alison Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination 1558-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Michael O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theatre in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Arthur F. Marotti et. al. (eds.), *Catholic Culture in Early Modern England* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007); Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005); Frances E. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon, Catholicism, Gender and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Indiana: Notre Dame University Press, 2005).

⁸ Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*; Jodi Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea: Gender and Nation in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1998); Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*; Peter Stallybrass, 'Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed' in Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy Vickers (eds.), *Rewriting the Renaissance: Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 123-144.

closely tied to that of bodily boundaries. As Leontes and the controversialists with which this thesis is concerned all make clear, early modern identity existed very much in the blood and depended for its safety and purity on the sharing of blood only through legitimate unions. To share blood in non-legitimate unions was to breach or break not only the adulterer's body but the body of his or her spouse.

The interconnectedness of the two tropes was most apparent in the writings of theological controversialists. For example, writers of all liturgical persuasions brought great force to their arguments when they accused opponents of not only dealing unchastely with the body of Christ—either by prostituting the Eucharist through idolatry or sullying it through negligence—but of making an adulterer of the Church herself. These accusations were built upon the dual image, which can be traced back to Paul and Augustine, of the Church as both the body and bride of Christ. Pamphlets concerned with defining the nature of the visible Church relied heavily on what were clearly very affecting images of breached nuptial bonds between individuals and Christ, individuals and the Church, England and Christ, Christ and the King, or Christ and the true Church. In its anxiety to distinguish between the true Church as chaste bride of Christ and the Roman Church as the Whore of Babylon, this body of writing tells us much about how early moderns thought about and feared institutional schism—even while, perhaps especially while, they were in the process of bringing it about.

The early modern vision of institutional bodies bound together in nuptial bonds whose chastity needed to be protected did not stop at discussions of the visible Church. It was also a favorite in arguments about the relationship between the Crown, Parliament and people and it was in this context that memorialising Elizabeth's virginity became particularly useful. In the 1630s and 40s, Elizabeth was held up by Parliamentarians as an example of a monarch whose desire for Church reform was only surpassed in merit by her ability to marry herself to both her Parliament and her people. Where to many Charles' chaste relationship with his Parliament or people was compromised by his marriage to a foreign Catholic and his allegiance to Popish bishops, Elizabeth's chastity was remembered as certain and complete. Elizabethan images of the Virgin Queen's body as a sound container in legitimate union were recalled by Parliamentarians and, combined with humoral imagery, used to argue that a monarch in loving chaste union with her Parliament was a chaste vessel for the nation's blood or a 'true gate' which could both shut out unwanted influences from abroad and open up the flow of grace between heaven and earth.

Correctly oriented relationships

Where the trope of legitimate union and issue articulates how chastity structures human and figurative unions in terms of bodily purity, this trope describes the way chastity operates as a moral and spiritual compass to all relationships. It is chastity as sanctity: a conception of the virtue perhaps most distant to

current thinking but the one most familiar to early moderns and possessing the longest pre-modern history. In their seminal anthropological study of medieval saints' lives, Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell have shown that 'no other virtue—not humility or patience or charity—was so essential to either the performance or the perception of a holy life'.⁹ Chastity was the only virtue that was consistently correlative with the degree of a saint's fame and with all aspects of their reputation, especially their propensity to visionary experience.¹⁰ What is very apparent in the dramatic and non-dramatic works which I will be treating is that chastity was understood by early moderns to govern all forms of relationship: between spouses, siblings, parents and children, neighbours, princes and subjects, and especially between God and all believers. Onstage this awareness was expressed most insistently through tragicomedy's movement toward the restoration and sanctification of all human bonds and, in the final tableaux of both tragicomedy and the masque, through the depiction of a providential alignment between the divine will and the reformed desires of all those onstage.

The trope of correctly-orientated relationships expresses chastity not only as the opposite of concupiscence and lust, adultery and incest, but also of pride. The most heinous of sins—the rejection of God—pride was routinely depicted by early moderns as a form of unchastity. The central tragicomic characters who have separated themselves from God and from their community through pride—Leontes, Prospero, Posthumus—are recalled to perfect divine and human union at the plays' conclusion just as the royal masquers at court are shown to embody God's providence when they overcome the rebellious pride of the anti-masque. Outside the theatre, writers as prominent and divergent in their opinions as William Prynne, Archbishop Laud, and John Milton depicted a tyrant's pride as quick to spill over into idolatry, lust and bloodlust.¹¹ Warnings against the unchastity of tyranny and pride were of course widespread in political writings but also occurred within disputes

⁹ Donald Weinstein & Rudolph Bell, *Saints and Society: the two worlds of western Christendom 1000-1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 73.

¹⁰ Weinstein & Bell, *Saints and Society*, 73.

¹¹ On the tyranny of the passions, see Johannes Jonstonus, *The Idea of Practical Physick, in Twelve Books*, Nicholas Culpeper (trans.) (London, 1657). Stephen Pender uses this text in his 'Subventing Disease: Anger, Passions, and the Non-Naturals,' in Jennifer C. Vaught (ed.), *Rhetorics of Bodily Disease and Health in Medieval and Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), 194-218. Some studies on health and the passions: Anthony Levi, *French Moralists: The Theory of the Passions, 1585-1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); Nancy G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: an Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Andrew Wear, *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine, 1550-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), esp. 154-209; Victoria Kahn, Niel Saccamano and Daniela Coli (eds.), *Politics and the Passions 1500-1850* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). For the emerging field of inquiry into early modern emotions, see Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe and Mary Floyd-Wilson (eds.), *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Penelope Gouk and Helen Hills (eds.), *Representing Emotion: New Connections in the Histories of Art, Music and Medicine* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Daniel Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion: From Aristotle's Rhetoric to Modern Brain Science* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

over the nature and function of the Eucharist and the role of Church ornament¹² and in discussions of the new anatomical and therapeutic technologies, which many believed had gone too far in their attempts to know and see the secret interiors of the body.¹³

The return of the lost

This trope is perhaps one of the most recognisable formal elements of tragicomedy: the return of the lost child, lover, spouse or friend. Onstage, it is a trope concerned with return and reunion, with the healing of breached relationships and the recreation of communities and families.¹⁴ The trope has much in common with the other three but I am treating it separately because, though it is most identifiable as a tragicomic convention, it was also utilised offstage: most prominently by Queen Henrietta Maria when she named her second child (the future King) Charles: the same name she had given to her first and still-born son. The trope of return was also a powerful means by which polemicists could argue for their particular view of England's sanctity and stability by calling English subjects 'back' from their error and wandering. John Milton made extensive use of this trope in his masque of chastity.

One of the reasons why it is useful for the purposes of my argument to consider the trope of return—a formal, dramatic trope which began to emerge in the language and lives of early moderns offstage—is because it, even more than the other three tropes, illustrates how much those elements we identify as dramatic conventions were also commonplaces, shaping human experience offstage. The line of influence ran in both directions. Just as the theatre shaped the way audiences saw their world, so political, theological, and cultural movements shaped the vision of the world offered by the theatre.

¹² Lori Anne Ferrell, 'Kneeling and the Body Politic' in Donna Hamilton and Richard Strier (eds.), *Religion, Literature and Politics in Post-Reformation England 1540-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 70-92; Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Graham Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2008); Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993).

¹³ Lesel Dawson, *Lovesickness and Gender in Early Modern English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Deborah Harkness, 'Nosce Teipsum: Curiosity, the Humoural Body and the Culture of Therapeutics in Late Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century England' in R.J.W. Evans & Alexander Marr (eds.), *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 171-192; Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Gail Kern Paster, 'Purgation as the Lure of Mastery: Early Modern Medicine and the Technologies of the Self,' in Lena Cowen Orlin (ed.), *Material London ca. 1600* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 193-205.

¹⁴ See Mimi Still Dixon, 'Tragicomic Recognitions: Medieval Miracles and Shakespearean Romance', 56-79; Verna Foster, 'Ford's Experiments in Tragicomedy: Shakespearean and Fletcherian Dramaturgies', 97-111; Lois Potter, "'True Tragicomedies" of the Civil War Period', 195-216; and Nancy K. Maguire, "'The Whole Truth" of Restoration Tragicomedy', 217-240, all in Nancy K. Maguire (ed.), *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics* (New York: AMS Press, 1987). Robert Henke, *Pastoral Transformations: Italian Tragicomedy and Shakespeare's Late Plays* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997), 121; *Il Pastor Fido, Tragicommedia Pastorale ... con un compendio di poesia* (Venice, 1602). Fletcher's description of tragicomedy in 'To the Reader' was one of the only early modern justifications of the genre in English. For a summary of more recent critical approaches to 'To the Reader' see McMullan's and Hope's introduction to Gordon McMullan and Jonathan Hope (eds.), *The Politics of Tragicomedy: Shakespeare and After* (London: Routledge, 1992), 1-20; and Chapter Three of Rosalie Colie, *The Resources of Kind: Genre Theory in the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 76-102.

The tragicomic moment during the first half of the seventeenth-century encompassed all areas of English life. One of the arguments of this thesis is that early modern scholars need to start interpreting genre in ways other than the strictly formalist approach which has predominated for most of the twentieth century. I propose instead that genre demands to be understood in terms of the cosmic and human truths it reveals and enacts and the effects it has on those who participate in it. The truths revealed by tragicomedy, the tragicomic 'knowledge' or world view, and the spiritual and physiological effects of tragicomedy on those who participate in it both within the theatre and without, are revealed by the four tropes I will be investigating.

Without wanting to dismiss the wealth of sophisticated scholarship on genre in the last four decades, including Rosalie Colie's 1973 *Resources of Kind* and its respondents,¹⁵ I will say that despite its many efforts to expand our understanding of genre, work in this field tends to continue approaching the problem of genre in terms of textual categorisation: placing texts within a variety of modes, kinds, and forms. There is, of course, very good reason for approaching genre from a formalist perspective: many early moderns did so. Fletcher himself appears to begin his definition of the genre by denying a formalist description only to immediately assert one: 'A tragicomedy is not so called in respect of mirth and killing, but because it wants deaths, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy'.¹⁶ And many early modern readers of Aristotle's *Poetics* were keen to describe generic differences in strictly formal terms.¹⁷ However, there exists some compelling early modern materials which do not approach genre from a formalist perspective. Guarini is one very significant figure in this regard, and, importantly, the plays themselves can be read as very much aware that they are expected to perform particular functions rather than fulfill particular formal patterns.

This is not to say that my own approach is not to some extent schematic, but I intend to propose an attitude to genre more in line with that of Dorothea Krook, whose study of tragedy describes the genre as an interlocking sequence of four units, which range from formal considerations to the effects the play has on the audience. For Krook, tragedies encompass 'the act of shame or horror', the 'suffering which it causes', the special 'knowledge generated by this suffering', and the 'affirmation or reaffirmation of the dignity of the human spirit' which the new and special knowledge produces.¹⁸ Important here is the work of Hans Robert Jauss in the late-1970s, which has had little impact in Western Europe. Challenging formalist genre theorists to take account of audience experience, Jauss proposes what he terms an 'aesthetics of reception'. While Jauss reaches conclusions

¹⁵ Colie, *The Resources of Kind*; Alistair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); Jacqueline Pearson, *Tragedy and Tragicomedy in the Plays of John Webster* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980).

¹⁶ Fletcher, 'To the Reader', preface to *The Faithful Shepherdess* (1609).

¹⁷ Sarah Dewar-Watson, 'Aristotle and Tragicomedy' in Subha Mukherji and Raphael Lyne (eds.), *Early Modern Tragicomedy* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007), 15-27.

¹⁸ Dorothea Krook, *Elements of Tragedy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 8-9.

different from my own, his uneasiness with formalist theories is succinct and useful for the purposes of this thesis:

The Formalist theory ... disregards the function of literary genres in quotidian history and dismissed the questions of their reception by and influence on the contemporary and later audiences as mere sociologism and psychologism. ... Since literary genres have their 'locus in life' and therefore their social function, literary evolution must also ... be determinable through its social function.

Jauss considers texts in this model as 'signs' and 'carriers of meaning for a social reality' whose aesthetic is defined as 'a principle of mediation and a mode of organisation for extra-aesthetic meanings'.¹⁹ In one sense, I do not think Jauss's theory goes far enough: I will be considering the markers of a given genre, both in life and in texts, as more than signs and carriers of meaning but as modes of human experience and visions of divine order which have a direct effect on the physiological and spiritual state of participants (in the case of drama, both actors and audiences). Indeed, by approaching what I am arguing are 'tragicomic truths' from the perspective of chastity it is possible to see how the genre's providential vision sought to close the gap between sign and meaning, drawing participants directly into communion with the divine. However, in another sense, my own approach will place limits on Jauss's theory by seeking to understand a particular historical moment rather than to formulate a theory of genre that can be applied to texts in any moment in history.

Following Marvin Herrick's 1955 summary of Renaissance tragicomedy and its sources, recent studies of this most difficult to define genre have sought to explain its rise in England. Herrick claims that Fletcher's description of the genre in the preface to his *Faithful Shepherdess* was Guarini's description and that his use of it altered the then standard three-genre English classification (comedy, tragedy, history) to include tragicomedy. In their 1992 collection, Gordon McMullan and Jonathan Hope question this view,²⁰ which had by then become something of a critical assumption, and their collection opened up the study and definition of the genre by recognising the difficulty both of classifying tragicomedy and of treating it critically. These difficulties stemmed largely from the sheer variety of critical interpretations of, and approaches to, the genre and were still plaguing Verna Foster in 2004. Foster's *Name and Nature of Tragicomedy* nonetheless observes that, despite the lack of scholarly agreement over definitions of the genre, there remains considerable agreement over which plays from

¹⁹Hans Robert Jauss, *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception*, Timothy Bahti (trans.) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982). The text cited here is from the truncated version of this book in David Duff (ed.), *Modern Genre Theory* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2000), 127-147: 142.

²⁰ *The Politics of Tragicomedy*, 3. See also Lois Potter's "'True Tragicomedies" of the Civil War and the Commonwealth' in Maguire's *Renaissance Tragicomedy*, which notes the reluctance on the part of playwrights to recognise that what they were writing was tragicomic, since the term appeared to have undesirable courtly connotations (page 197). Three authors in Raphael Lyne and Subha Mukherji's *Early Modern Tragicomedy* return to the problem. Henke, Treherne and Dewar-Watson all suggest that although Guarini did influence Fletcher himself, the assumption that Fletcher was the key disseminator of the genre in England needs to be modified through recognition of the importance of local and 'practice-driven theatrical cultures' in France, Italy and Spain, and of popular modes such as the *commedia dell'arte*.

the period belong to it.²¹ Foster's own approach to genre theory foregrounds audience reception and is thus in a number of ways in sympathy with my own. While recognising that Guarini's influence on English tragicomedy, and Fletcher's role in it, is more complicated than Herrick initially argued, Foster nonetheless acknowledges that Guarini's arguments for the effect of tragicomedy on the audience's body is crucial to our understanding of Shakespeare's late plays and the tragicomic traditions they shaped.²² She also seeks to describe the genre in terms of the human and divine experiences it embodies and to thus locate its operations outside the theatre: 'The tragicomic is the basic pattern of human experience. It fits both the individual's experience of life's daily ups and downs and the human community's broader perception of its own existence'. She notes Susanne Langer's view that 'society is continuous through its members, even the strongest and fairest live out their lives and die; and even while each individual fulfills the tragic pattern, it participates also in the comic continuity' and recognises the broadly divine pattern in this picture (the dismemberment and resurrection of Dionysus, the death and rebirth of the year, and the specifically Christological pattern 'as recognised explicitly in medieval and Renaissance drama').²³

One last recent work on genre needs to be considered here: Zachary Lesser's recent argument that tragicomedy was more populist and politically aware than has been granted by scholars for most of the last century. Lesser makes the point that, rather than solely representing the lives of the aristocracy (as tragedies did) or those of the common man (as comedies did), tragicomedies included both common and elite characters and ought thus to be understood as a dramatic exploration of the mixed mode of constitutional monarchy in response to the particular economic conditions in the 1620s.²⁴ Lesser's point is an important intervention in how we read the place of tragicomedies and masques in the politics of the Caroline reign and it must be said that, while my own study draws a line between two social, political, and religious 'camps' and their appropriation of chastity's tropes, the writers from each did so in order to influence popular opinion. That is, they were actively engaged in the practice of values and beliefs aimed at reforming and strengthening England as a whole and the take-up of their respective values crossed all social barriers. While the cult of chastity grew to immense popularity at court in the 1630s, it was in no way limited to courtiers and the gentry; some recent scholarship has highlighted the growth beyond the court of those religious and social practices which I

²¹ Verna Foster, *The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy*, (Aldershot: Ashgate 2004), 3.

²² Foster, *The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy*, 19.

²³ Foster, *The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy*, 9; Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), 363.

²⁴ Zachary Lesser, 'Tragical-Comical-Pastoral-Colonial: Economic Sovereignty, Globalisation, and the Form of Tragicomedy' *English Literary History* 74.4 (2007), 881-908. See also the debate between Kevin Sharpe and Martin Butler over the Caroline masque's relative criticism of court practices. Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and Martin Butler, 'Courtly Negotiations', in David Bevington & Peter Holbrook (eds.), *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 83-114.

am attributing to the cult of chastity.²⁵ By associating tragicomedy with a cultural movement popular at court, I do not intend to continue that critical trend, which Lesser rightly seeks to overturn, of identifying the genre as merely absolutist. Equally, by arguing that the Parliamentary and Puritan re-appropriation of chastity's tropes sought to remove them from their association with baroque spectacle and the vision of a single, unifying and often femininised divine authority, I do not mean to suggest that the anti-court version of chastity as masculine and individualist is in any way more democratic than that envisioned by the cult of chastity. The Commonwealth vision of social and political inclusiveness was limited indeed and in the trenchant form taken by a number of zealously Puritan English churchmen, the Calvinist doctrine of predestination was elitist in the extreme.

In *As You Like It*, Jacques' 'seven ages of man' speech offers a model for the relationship between drama and life in which the structure of drama, its acts and scenes, its entrances and exits, are a metaphor for the progress of a life. But Jacques' model was not the only one operating in Shakespeare's theatre, which was still profoundly shaped by the liturgical roots of its medieval predecessor. I propose that the Shakespearean theatre continued to be more a process of instantiation than imitation. Amongst medievalists there is a small but lively debate over theories of performance in the liturgical drama which emerged in the last third of the twelfth century, engagement with which would benefit early modern scholars immensely.²⁶ Built around and incorporating the presentation of the host, early forms of English liturgical drama were themselves expressions of, instances of, the Real Presence of Christ.²⁷ Even when liturgical performances lost this close association with the host they remained an enactment of Christ's life, incorporating prayers and hymns, and as such, were 'intended to function as a kind of sacrament, which is able to have a magical effect on those who participate in it'. Participation in the theatre was throughout the late-medieval period a potentially sanctifying activity for both actors and audiences who were granted indulgences for their presence and left the theatre free from sin.²⁸ Clearly, much of the medieval theatre's understanding of sacramental participation was lost in the professional Elizabethan theatre, but I am interested in the vestiges that

²⁵ Diana Barnes explores the letters of women who built female communities based on chastity, piety, refinement in art and manners, and the beauty of holiness in 'The Secretary of Ladies and Feminine Friendship at the Court of Henrietta Maria' in Erin Griffey (ed.), *Henrietta Maria: Piety, Politics and Patronage* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 39-56. In Chapters Six and Seven of *Glory, Laud and Honour* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2008), 113-156, Graham Parry explores the communities of prayer who were inspired by the reintroduction of Marian piety in London. While the texts which these communities produced were written by those close to the court, their popularity suggests a wider audience. And Father Cyprian's account of the popular response to the new Carthusian monasteries in London in *Court and Times of Charles I* suggests that the appeal of the new monasticism crossed social boundaries.

²⁶ For a discussion of the scholarly history of the theatre/ritual debate and the processes by which participants were transformed into spectators (or were not) see Erika Fischer-Lichte, 'The Medieval Religious Plays—Ritual or Theatre?', in Elina Gertsman (ed.), *Visualising Medieval Performance: Perspectives, Histories, Contexts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 249-261: 249-251. See also Pamela Sheingorn, 'Performing the Illustrated Manuscript: Great reckonings in Little Books' in Gertsman (ed.), *Visualising Medieval Performance*, 57-82.

²⁷ Pamela Scheingorn, *The Easter Sepulchre in England* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), especially Chapter Two, 'The Rites in England', 26-32.

²⁸ Fischer-Lichte, 'The Medieval Religious Plays—Ritual or Theatre?', 254.

remained, especially as they pertain to the participation of the audience and the effects which the drama had on them.

As I will argue more fully in Chapter One, Shakespearean tragicomedy drew on the medieval understanding of the ‘liturgical channeling of spectator responses’ and the medieval theatre’s explicit expectation that spectators not be detached consumers of an aesthetic process but rather prayerful participants.²⁹ Even from a formalist perspective, tragicomedy shares much with medieval liturgical drama. Mimi Still Dixon notes that ‘medieval religious drama is tragicomic: it is a serious drama that threatens suffering or death but ends happily; a providential drama, whose plots discover a beneficent order in misfortune and injustice; a miraculous drama whose improbabilities reveal a suprarational logic’.³⁰ As I hope to show, it is confidence in the providentialist view that this suprarational logic will fulfil those deepest and longest-held of earthly wishes that constitutes the ‘tragicomic knowledge’ exemplified by Shakespeare’s late plays and which, in time, was exploited by court masques. It was in the masques of the 1630s especially that this confidence flourished. Under Charles and Henrietta Maria, the masque grew into an expression of the divine will’s sanctification of precisely those aspects of early modern life most cherished by the monarchs and their supporters.

In her study of *The Winter’s Tale*’s role in local debates about predestination, Alison Shell suggests that the ‘displacement of tragedy by tragicomedy in the English dramatic mainstream over the 1620s and 1630s’ may have occurred ‘in tandem with the rise of Arminian thought’ and that tragicomedy would have ‘resonated with the pro-Catholic theological moods within the court’ and with the tastes of Henrietta Maria.³¹ Through my assessment of the tropes of chastity, I hope to prove that Shell’s suggestion is correct and that the Caroline cult of chastity was as influential and pervasive as it was because it utilised the same moral tropes which governed the period’s most popular genre. So influential were the tropes of chastity—as expressed in the 1630s through masques, tragicomedies and a theological, political and aesthetic cult of chastity that was feminine, Catholic, baroque and spectacular—that only a text as brilliant and subversive as John Milton’s masque of chastity could begin to recode the tropes into a culture that was Protestant, masculine, prosaic and individualist.

This thesis offers a contribution to the study of early modern genre, chastity and gender, and to scholarship on the period’s religious controversies, especially its culture of anti-Catholicism. It is a genre study, but in arguing that we ought to consider genre in more than formal terms, I will be drawing on a range of scholarly approaches, primarily feminist analysis and a historicist analysis of texts within their socio-political, medical, and theological contexts. In order to demonstrate how tragicomedy and the tropes of chastity operated outside the theatre I will, in Chapters Three and Four, depart from literary analysis almost completely, working instead with cultural materials before

²⁹ a Fischer-Lichte, ‘The Medieval Religious Plays—Ritual or Theatre?’ 251-236.

³⁰ Dixon, ‘Tragicomic Recognitions’, 61.

³¹ Shell, *Shakespeare and Religion*, , 202.

returning to a textual focus in my final chapter on Milton's masque. While my chapters move chronologically, they do not wholly describe the linear development of the period's use of the tropes of chastity. Each chapter functions as a case study of the tropes working in various fields throughout the first half of the seventeenth century. Yet, a certain line of progression can be drawn from the death of Elizabeth I to the death of Charles I, since the first event coincided with the production of Shakespeare's late plays and the beginnings of tragicomedy's immense popularity and the second event with the closing of the theatres and the triumph of that anti-court opinion which had for decades been suspicious of Charles' and Henrietta Maria's cult of chastity.

In order to set out in detail how each of the four tropes of chastity operated in Shakespearean tragicomedy, Chapter One of 'Chastity on the Early Modern English Stage' reads *The Winter's Tale* within the context of the emerging class of printed gentleman poets, whose gendered use of the trope of legitimate union and issue as a figure for textual production so informs Leontes' madness. It will also address Leontes' fear of 'sluicing' with regard to Galenic theories of the body in order to show how integral the trope of chastity as bodily integrity was to Shakespeare's depiction of psychological distress, spiritual solace, and the vexed process of maturation. Chapter One will also assess *The Winter's Tale's* use of the biblical stories of women's chastity (Eve and Mary), the nuptial imagery used in early modern theologies of the visible Church, and the one-flesh model of marriage in order to demonstrate how Hermione and Paulina draw Leontes out of his limited, misogynist, and immature understanding of chastity as a defense against mingled blood and, via the trope of correctly-orientated relationships, into a mature knowledge of the moral and spiritual dimensions of chastity. Finally, this chapter will assess English tragicomedy's debt to medieval liturgical drama, which shaped the providential vision of *The Winter's Tale's* final tableau, enabling all four tropes to realise their goal in the statue scene's return of lost loved-ones.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes' chastisement is a movement out of his limited conception of chastity as a virtue located solely in the body and into an understanding of the virtue as moral practice. In the plays of John Ford, however, chastity as moral practice is allied closely with chastity as bodily boundaries. For Ford, the chaste body was not a contained but a purged vessel: a body that finds its true self, and its true place in relationship to others, through the release of penitential tears and blood. Utilising the tropes of bodily boundaries and correctly-orientated relationships, Ford's plays submit their characters to experiences which, constructed within the imagery and language of an inordinate range of conflicting philosophies about chastity and purging, ensure it is almost impossible for them to be delivered of their sin. Chapter Two of this study examines the highly emblematic death scenes in Ford's *The Broken Heart* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* within the context of Ford's sacred verse, *Christes Bloodie Sweat*, the emblem tradition, and local debates about the new medical technologies and changes to Church ornament and liturgy. These plays are usually classified as tragedies, but through my analysis of their use of the tropes of chastity, I will be arguing that they ought to be considered tragicomedies—*The Broken Heart* most especially. While the

1620s offer numerous tragicomedies with which I might have explored the period between Shakespeare's late plays and the masques of the 1630s, I have chosen Ford precisely in order to show how prevalent the tropes of chastity were within plays which from a formalist perspective appear tragedies and how, through an understanding of the tropes, we can see the extent of chastity's influence in the period.

Chapters Three and Four, with their focus on cultural rather than literary materials, seek to demonstrate the role of the tropes in the growing polarisation between advocates of Henrietta Maria's cult of chastity and the pro-Parliamentary, low-Church controversialists who wished to claim chastity for their own anti-court, anti-Laudian arguments. Assessing the letters and commentaries of court observers alongside Caroline masques and the pamphlets of political and religious controversialists, Chapter Three examines figurative uses of the trope of bodily boundaries, legitimate union and correctly-orientated relationships in debates about the nature and function of the visible Church and the political after-life of Leontes' fear of 'sluicing'. By doing so, Chapter Three will posit a model of interpersonal selfhood in response to those models offered by Stephen Greenblatt, Gail Kern Paster, and Nancy Selleck, in order to show how the tropes of chastity were working at the level of personal and communal identity.³²

The early modern view of interpersonal identity was thrown into particular relief when in 1625 plague deaths reached alarming levels.³³ Analysing the convergence of anxieties over infectious disease and the arrival of the new young Queen, Chapter Four reads the tropes of chastity as they operated in the commentaries of court observers throughout Henrietta Maria's life in England. Assessing the figurative use of the trope of bodily boundaries in Caroline perceptions of the movement of religious and sexual unchastity throughout London, Chapter Four develops Chapter Three's assessment of the role of chastity's tropes in personal and communal identity by

³² Nancy Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom in Shakespeare, Donne and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980). Also, Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England*, 5; Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr (eds.), *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); John Sutton, *Philosophy and Memory Traces: Descartes to Connectionism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Cynthia Marshall, *Shattering the Self: Violence, Subjectivity, and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Elizabeth H. Harvey (ed.), *Sensible Touch: On Touch in Early Modern Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Timothy Reiss, *Mirages of the Self: Patterns of Personhood in Ancient and Early Modern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

³³ Nicole Greenspan, 'Religious Contagion in Mid-Seventeenth-Century England,' in Claire L. Carlin (ed.), *Imagining Contagion in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 212-242. See also Margaret Healy, *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England, Bodies, Plagues, and Politics*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001). William G. Naphy treats some of the religious implications of plague in sixteenth-century Geneva, in *Plagues, Poisons and Potions: Plague-Spreading Conspiracies in the Western Alps 1530-1640* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

investigating their place in early modern perceptions of architectural and topographical space.³⁴ To do so reveals the degree to which Henrietta Maria and her supporters were, through their use of the royal palaces, their building projects and their assertion of the Queen's chastity in her masques, directly combatting the anti-Catholic fear of prostituted space which eventually led to the violent assault by Cromwell's army on the Queen's chapel at Somerset House.³⁵ Chapter Four considers Henrietta Maria's many births throughout the 1630s as performances which, built from her cult of chastity and its use of the tropes, made similar claims for the Queen's virtue and her chaste influence on England's subjects as did the decade's many masques.³⁶

Returning to historicist literary analysis, my final chapter concentrates on representations of the Throne of State, the Mercy Seat of Christ, and a number of other chairs which featured in prominent disputes to which chastity's tropes were integral—including the royal birthing chair and the chair in which Harvey demonstrated his circulation of the blood³⁷—in order to expose the extent to which chastity was deployed in arguments about the dangers of princely tyrants. From criticism of the high ceremony at Charles's court and in Laudian liturgy to anti-Catholic depictions of the throned 'Purple Whore' in Rome, the unchastening of the Throne and its paraphernalia occupied a deeply affective place in the literature of the 1630s and 1640s, drawing as it did on

³⁴ See Healy, *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England*, 93-4 and Vaught's introduction in *Rhetorics of Bodily Disease*, 1-24, especially 21. For the history of the plague, its effect, movement and representation, see Paul Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985); Ernest B. Gilman, *Plague Writing in Early Modern England* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009). Two excellent collections are Carlin (ed.), *Imagining Contagion in Early Modern Europe* and Rebecca Totaro and Ernest B. Gilman (eds.), *Representing the Plague in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 2011). For a historical perspective of plague from the middle ages to the sixteenth century, primarily in Italy, see Samuel K. Cohn, Jr, *Cultures of Plague: Medical Thinking at the End of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Hale, *The Body Politic*; Jonathan Gil Harris, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); William Spates, 'Shakespeare and the Irony of Early Modern Disease Metaphor and Metonymy,' *Rhetorics of Bodily Disease*, 155-170; Frances E. Dolan, 'Gender and the "Lost" Spaces of Catholicism,' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 32:4 (2002), 641-665. Nicole Greenspan notes the seventeenth-century awareness that Catholicism was a particularly dangerous form of contagion because it was pleasurable, physically intoxicating and offered Protestants a sensual enjoyment. It could also be caught abroad and brought back to England where the carrier might infect others. Nicole Greenspan, 'Religious Contagion in Mid-Seventeenth-Century England', in Carlin (ed.), *Imagining Contagion in Early Modern Europe*.

³⁵ Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Clare McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage* (Manchester University Press, 2002); *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Sophie Tomlinson, *Women on Stage in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Karen Britland, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria* (Cambridge University Press, 2006); Erin Griffey (ed.), *Henrietta Maria, Piety, Politics and Patronage* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); Rebecca A. Bailey, *Staging the Old Faith: Queen Henrietta Maria and the Theatre of Caroline England, 1625-42* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

³⁶ Julie Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Christopher Haigh, 'The English Reformation: A Premature Birth, a Difficult Labour and a Sickly Child,' *Historical Journal* 33 (1990), 449-59; Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religion and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: Macmillan, 1988); Eve Keller, *Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves: The Rhetoric of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 2007).

³⁷ Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1996); John Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 16; Christopher Hill, 'William Harvey and the Idea of Monarchy', *Past and Present* 27 (1964), 54-72.

figurative formulations of the tropes of bodily boundaries, legitimate union, and correctly-orientated relationships. Within this context, John Milton's masque, with its chaste maiden trapped in Comus' unchaste throne, offered a particular argument about the need to overcome both the unchaste tyranny of princes and, within the individual heart, the tyranny of pride.

Milton's vision of chastity saw spiritual combat enacted through the processes of textual production and a complex deployment of the humility topos which placed the submission of the self to authority within a framework of political opposition. Chapter Five offers a comparative reading of the performed and printed versions of *A Maske at Ludlow Castle* because in each text Milton drew the line between chastity and tyranny very differently. This chapter will argue that Milton's individualism is most apparent in his interrogation of the human heart's unchaste propensity to pride and that for Milton the heart was therefore not only the crucial site of moral and spiritual combat but the place of the greatest human achievement and the closest proximity to the divine will. As the breach which ruptures the bond between God and individual believers, the unchastity of pride was not only the greatest of all sins in Milton's theology of virtue but the hardest to overcome—much harder than the overthrowing of tyrannical princes. In Milton's masque we see the eclipse of chastity's trope of bodily boundaries as a figure for the moral protection of communal bodies by the trope of correctly-orientated relationships as an individualist moral struggle.

Strengthened by those anti-court and anti-Laudian arguments laid out in Chapter Three, Milton deftly claimed for his own position the tropes of chastity by explicitly denying the court's hold on them. In this sense, his masque constitutes a major intervention in the Caroline cult of chastity and needs to be considered as a significant marker of change in the turning of public opinion against the King. Against the recent critical assertion that Milton's masque is evidence of his own early Laudian tendencies, my reading of the masque finds it to be firmly anti-court and anti-Laudian.³⁸ By wresting chastity's tropes away from the court, Milton and the other oppositional writers whom this thesis treats not only put an end to the court's version of chastity—whose feminine, baroque and Laudian/Catholic agenda can be traced back to Shakespeare's late plays—they also, by eventually closing the theatres, put an end to the kind of tragicomic performance so popular in the 1630s and 1640s. Why was the tragicomedy which returned to the English stage at the end of the interregnum so markedly different, both formally and thematically, from that of the early part of the century? As I hope this thesis will demonstrate, it was so because the interpretation of the tropes of chastity on which the genre depended was no longer in circulation. Milton's reconceptualisation of chastity's tropes in the service of a Protestant and individualist moral struggle embedded them in cultural and textual processes that represented a

³⁸ Gordon Campbell and Thomas Corns, *John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 83-4.

definitive break with the medieval theatre and an earlier tragicomic vision of the divine will instantiated through communal participation.

Chapter One

Forming Chastity in *The Winter's Tale*

In this chapter, I will be examining how the four central tropes of early modern chastity operate in *The Winter's Tale* in order to establish their role in Shakespearean tragicomedy before moving outward in subsequent chapters to explore their place in areas of early modern English life beyond the theatre. I am in this way treating *The Winter's Tale* as exemplary of Shakespeare's late plays. While a consideration of how the tropes of chastity operated in *The Tempest*, *Pericles*, and *Cymbeline* would come to some different conclusions, and would certainly richly repay closer analysis, my attention to *The Winter's Tale* is intended to illustrate the more general cultural preoccupations which the late plays articulated and the plays' influence on a wider cultural movement in which chastity played such a crucial part. I therefore do not mean to assert that *The Winter's Tale* was itself the key influencing factor in the broad social history I am attempting to describe, but rather that it can be taken as indicative of a more general contemporary mood. Through its analysis of how the four tropes of chastity shape *The Winter's Tale*, this chapter will assert two main arguments about genre. The first is that, following Guarini, the early modern understanding of genre had more to do with the spiritual and physiological effects of the performance on those who participated in it—both actors and audiences. The second is that certain aspects of tragicomedy important to formalist definitions of the genre—structure, plot, action—did not merely constitute the structure of a dramatic representation but in fact instantiated in the lives of the plays' participants certain 'tragicomic' or 'chaste' truths about humanity's place in the cosmos: what I will be referring to as 'tragicomic knowledge'. I have chosen *The Winter's Tale* over Shakespeare's other late plays because it provides the most concentrated examples of the four tropes of chastity with which this thesis is interested. I have also chosen *The Winter's Tale* because its final tableau evidences more fully than the other late plays just how feminist was the early modern 'tragicomic' knowledge, and how rooted in the Marian traditions of medieval liturgical drama.

Each thread of *The Winter's Tale's* exploration of chastity finds its ultimate realisation in the play's final statue scene.³⁹ The statue tableau, steeped in wonder and the joy of union and reunion, of creation and recreation, is one of the imagistic centrepieces of the early modern investment in chastity which this thesis will explore. These emblematic signs for the stability of God's providential love of his creatures, for the perfection of the human body and soul, and the continuance of life in legitimate unions, were by the end of the Caroline reign transformed into signs of contest and dispute. One reason for this is that the statuesque emblem of the *The Winter's Tale's* final tableau, which went on to influence tragicomic and masque tableaux in subsequent decades, remained steeped in the traditions of medieval liturgical drama. Although the emblems were images of royal families restored to unity and continuance, their spiritualisation of lost bodies returned, and of the wonder of sanctity and women's chastity, recalled common medieval liturgical tableaux such as the three Maries at the tomb. Well into the 1630s, tragicomedy and masque were invested in a spiritual and aesthetic framework very much gendered feminine, one in which the bodies of chaste women were crucial. This can, in good measure, be attributed to the Marian theatrical roots of Shakespearean tragicomedy, and of *The Winter's Tale* in particular.

The Winter's Tale's Marian focus does not mean it is necessarily more Catholic than Protestant. The large body of recent criticism that reads *The Winter's Tale* for proof of the play's confessional allegiance has understandably focussed a good part of its attention on the play's statue

³⁹ The moment of animation in the statue scene has attracted considerable attention from scholars, who recognise it as the dramatic and figurative culmination of the play. Lynn Enterline has read the animation of the statue through the Ovidian sources of the play and a number of critics have described Hermione's re-animation within psychoanalytic and feminist frameworks. Lynn Enterline, "'You speak a language that I under stand not': The Rhetoric of Animation in *The Winter's Tale*", *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48 (1997), 17-44; Susan Snyder, *Shakespeare: A Wayward Journey* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002); Valerie Traub, 'Jewels, Statues, and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare's Plays', *Shakespeare Studies* 20 (1987), 215-238; David Schalkwyk, "'A Lady's Verily' is as Potent as a Lord's": Women, Word and Witchcraft in *The Winter's Tale*', *English Literary Renaissance* 22 (1992), 242-72; Peter Erickson, *Patriarchal Structures in Shakespeare's Drama* (California: University of California Press, 1985); Abbe Blum, "'Strike all that look upon with mar[b]le": Monumentalizing Women in Shakespeare's Plays', in Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (eds.) *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon* (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990), 99-118; Lori Humphrey Newcombe, "'If That Which is Lost be not Found": Monumental Bodies, Spectacular Bodies in *The Winter's Tale*', in Goran V. Stanivukovic (ed.) *Ovid and the Renaissance Body* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2001), 239-59. In arguments for the play's confessional allegiance, the statue scene is usually taken as evidence of a given confession's awakening. See Ruth Vanita, 'Mariological Memory in *The Winter's Tale* and *Henry VIII*', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 40:2 (2000), 311-337; O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and the Theatre in Early Modern England*, 139-142; Phebe Jensen, 'Singing Psalms to Horn-pipes: Festivity, Iconoclasm, and Catholicism in *The Winter's Tale*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55.3 (2004), 279-306; Aaron Landau, 'No Settled Senses of the World can match the Pleasure of that Madness': The Politics of Unreason in *The Winter's Tale*', *Cahiers Élizabéthains* 64 (2003), 29-42; Darryll Grantley, '*The Winter's Tale* and Early Religious Drama', *Comparative Drama* 20 (1986), 17-37; Julia Reinhard Lupton, *Afterlives of the saints: hagiography, typology, and Renaissance literature* (California: Stanford University Press, 1996), 175-218; David Kaula, 'Autolycus' Trumpery', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 16:2 (1976), 287-303.

scene.⁴⁰ Paulina places the statue of Hermione in a chapel where it is unveiled before a kneeling Perdita, who implores the statue's blessing and specifically asks bystanders not to interpret her devotion as superstition (5.3.50). The miracle by which the statue is animated is, Leontes claims, 'lawful as eating' (5.3.111), and Paulina requires those in attendance to 'awake' their 'faith' (5.3.95). My own analysis of the play's conclusion finds the division of Protestant and Catholic sympathies too narrow: if the play is to bring about what I am arguing was its generically expected effect on the audience—the purgatory and chaste wonder of realigned divine and human relationships—its final happiness must be relevant to everyone in the audience, not limited to the restitution of one particular confessional vision. Indeed, the sheer variety of theologically-inflected interpretations of the play in recent decades would seem itself to attest to the fact that Shakespeare has embedded his late romance with the sufficient degree and variety of religious imagery to make this final moment of reunion appeal with the fullest divine glory to each member of his audience. While the early modern tropes of chastity which shape *The Winter's Tale* would go on to become deeply intertwined within the theological and doctrinal controversies of subsequent decades, Shakespeare's engagement with them remained confessionally neutral.

Shakespeare was as keenly aware of chastity's crucial role in the tragicomic world view as he was of its dramatic potential onstage: he put the virtue's four central tropes in contest with each other so that each of *The Winter's Tale*'s numerous movements toward chastity had available a form of unchastity to work against as its foil. To illustrate this, I will be assessing chastity's four tropes in the two pairings most prominent in the play. *The Winter's Tale* embeds the trope of chastity as sanctity and correctly orientated relationships within its exploration of chastity as bounded bodies in order to interrogate how rigid and diseased Leontes' pursuit of chastity as bodily integrity becomes when it is not united with that mature understanding (embodied by Hermione) of chastity as the moral and emotional compass for all relationships. Yet, the rewards of pursuing fully sanctified and justly orientated relationships is, for audiences and actors alike, the gift of perfectly restored somatic equilibrium and integrity: in *The Winter's Tale*, these two tropes of chastity instigate each other's initial damage and loss but ultimately perfect each other. In a similar fashion, Shakespeare embeds the trope

⁴⁰ For arguments for the play's Catholicism, see David N. Beauregard, 'Shakespeare Against the Skeptics: Nature and Grace in *The Winter's Tale*' in Stephen W. Smith and Travis Curtright (eds.), *Shakespeare's Last Plays: Essays in Literature and Politics* (New York: Lexington, 2002), 53-72; Aaron Landau, 'No Settled Senses of the World can match the Pleasure of that Madness': The Politics of Unreason in *The Winter's Tale*, *Cahiers Élizabéthains* 64 (2003), 29-42; Frances E. Dolan, 'Hermione's Ghost: Catholicism, the Feminine, and the Undead' in Dymphna Callaghan (ed.) *The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 213-237; Darryll Grantley, 'The Winter's Tale and Early Religious Drama,' *Comparative Drama* 20 (1986), 33; Vanita, 'Mariological Memory in *The Winter's Tale* and *Henry VIII*,' 311-337; Velma Bourgeois Richmond, *Shakespeare, Catholicism, and Romance* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 191-201; O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and the Theatre in Early Modern England*, 140-1. For arguments that the play asserts a Protestant perspective see Kaula, 'Autolycus' Trumpery', *Studies in English Literature*, 287-303; C. L. Barber, 'The Family in Shakespeare's Development: Tragedy and Sacredness' in Murray M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn (eds.), *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980): 188-202; 198; C. L. Barber and Richard Wheeler, *The Whole Journey: Shakespeare's Power of Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 333.

of chastity as legitimate union and issue within that of the-return-of-the-lost and the restoration of broken relationships. I will assess each pair of tropes in turn before concentrating on the statue scene, in which the resolution of the play's multivalent interest in chastity is achieved through its translation of medieval liturgical drama's Marian tableaux.

Porous Body, Porous Self: Physiological Chastity on Trial

Leontes' pathological anxiety over Hermione's chastity is expressed most vividly in his 'barricado' speech, a speech which has understandably attracted the attention of those scholars who are interested in early modern Galenic and humoural perceptions of the body.⁴¹ Leontes gives full expression to his horror at women's leakiness, and his own inability to contain it, when he enlists the men in the audience to share his anxiety. The speech is extraordinary. I will quote it in full:

And many a man there is, even at this present,
Now, while I speak this, holds his wife by th'arm,
That little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence
And his pond fished by his neighbor; by
Sir Smile, his neighbor—nay, there's comfort in't,
Whiles other men have gates, and those gates opened,
As mine, against their will. Should all despair
That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind
Would hang themselves. Physic for't there's none:
It is a bawdy planet, that will strike
Where 'tis predominant; and 'tis powerful, think it,
From east, west, north, and south; be it concluded,
No barricado for a belly. Know't
It will let in and out the enemy
With bag and baggage: many thousand on's
Have the disease and feel't not.⁴²

Leontes' vivid descriptions of unchastity as liquid uncontained—a pond fished, and body sluiced, a gate opened, a belly without barricado—reveals his fear of the effect his wife's incontinence will have on his own body and his desire for that total somatic rigidity through which he might protect himself from her.⁴³ As Gail Kern Paster has noted, Leontes' fear that there is 'no barricado for a belly', that 'it will let in and let out the enemy' refers 'not only to his conviction of his wife's infidelity but also to fears

⁴¹ Paster, *Humoring the Body*; David Hillman, 'Visceral Knowledge: Shakespeare, Skepticism, and the Interior of the Early Modern Body,' in David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (eds.), *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporality in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1997), 81-106.

⁴² Stephen Orgel (ed.) *The Winter's Tale* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1.2.190-205. All subsequent citations will be quoted in text.

⁴³ The term 'barricado' has a purely Jacobean life, featuring in three other plays: *All's Well That Ends Well* (1607), Middleton's *The Lady's Tragedy* (1611), and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (1607). In the first two of these three instances, the term is used in a sexual manner similar to Leontes' use. The term 'sluice', however, took on an important Caroline afterlife, as Chapter Three will detail.

for his own bodily integrity'. Similarly, David Hillman has remarked that 'Leontes' refusal to acknowledge his wife's integrity is akin to a repudiation of his own interior, a ... feeling that the 'centre' of his body is in need of protection from encroachment'.⁴⁴ How Leontes came to have this view of his wife's body says much about why the image of unchastity as somatic solubility causes him such alarm.

The Winter's Tale opens with the public celebration of a court apparently abundant in happiness and good fortune.⁴⁵ Hermione's heavily pregnant body, and her young son, signal the monarchs' love and the stability of the Sicilian court, just as the deep bond between Leontes and Polixenes is initially a sign of concord between their two realms. Within moments, however, Polixenes refers to the fact that his visit to Leontes and Hermione has spanned a whole nine months and Leontes' sexual jealousy is sparked. Yet, as Carol Thomas Neely has argued, Leontes' suspicion that he may not be foremost in his wife's affections is not the sole reason for his torment.⁴⁶ He is as much disturbed by his apparent loss of Polixenes. Leontes' crisis emerges from his conflicted investment in both his marriage and the homosocial bond he shares with his friend. Hermione may be the most visible point of focus in the scene—because of her advanced pregnancy, her central and mediatory role within the dialogue, and because Leontes so insistently draws our attention to these two qualities—yet the emotional focus of the celebrations is the bond between the men.

Amid the many declarations of kindness and love offered among the company, the object of the scene's most lyrical rapture is Polixenes' and Leontes' boyhood friendship. Polixenes recalls that 'We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i' the sun, / And bleat the one at the other'. The men's shared early life, recalled as a place of edenic innocence, is set apart in their memories as an experience prior to the onset of sexuality and sin. 'What we changed / Was innocence for innocence; we knew not / The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd / That any did'. They imagine, however jokingly, that their prelapsarian life together was a mode of existence in which they could have remained: 'Had we pursued that life / And our weak spirits ne'er been higher reared / With stronger blood, we should have answered heaven / Boldly, 'not guilty', the imposition cleared / Hereditary ours' (1.2.67-72). Had they so chosen, they might not have betrayed each other by allowing the onset of sexuality to transform

⁴⁴ Paster, *Humoring the Body*, 71; Hillman, 'Visceral Knowledge: Shakespeare, Skepticism, and the Interior of the Early Modern Body', 95.

⁴⁵ The short introductory 1.1 is usually omitted from staging and although the First Folio calls only for the entrance into 1.2 of Leontes, Hermione, Mamillius, Polixenes and Camillo, editors since Lewis Theobald (1733) have included 'attendants' in the list of entrants. Motivated by Archidamus' high praise of Sicilian hospitality in 1.1, often taken as a cue to stage 1.2 as a public banquet, Sicily's hospitality has been staged in the full courtly extravagance of Charles Kean's production (the Princess's Theatre, London, 1856), which included a hymn to Apollo and a Pyrrhic dance, to the more relaxed twentieth-century aristocratic dinner party at both the National (Nicholas Hytner, 2001) and the RSC (Dominic Cooke, 2006). Trevor Nunn's 1969 RSC production staged 1.2 in the private space of a nursery. See Dennis Bartholomeusz, *The Winter's Tale in Performance in England and America, 1611-1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), and productions directed by Herbert Beerbohm Tree (His Majesty's Theatre, London, 1906-7), Peter Brook (Phoenix Theatre, London, 1951), Trevor Nunn (RSC, Stratford-Upon-Avon, 1969), James Lapine (NYSF, Public Theatre, New York, 1989), and Irene Lewis (Centre Stage, Baltimore, 2002).

⁴⁶ Carol Thomas Neely, 'The Winter's Tale: Women and Issue', in Kiernan Ryan (ed.), *Shakespeare: The Last Plays* (London: Longman, 1999), 169-86.

them nor by marrying their respective wives. As Neely has argued, Leontes' and Polixenes' fantasy of shared boyhood innocence is an imaginary experience which continues 'unchanged across time and space' and 'is a protection against women, sex, change and difference'.⁴⁷

Unable to pass over into full maturity, Leontes is threatened by the variety of adult human relationships, the reality of childbirth and a female world, and the physical, psychological, and emotional vulnerability demanded by sexuality. He lacks the moral and emotional maturity to participate in a full range of relationships, maintaining the correct orientation of each. Instead, he has retreated into an almost exclusive identification with Polixenes and his own son and as a result can only interpret his wife's chastity in terms of her bodily capacity to contain the right fluids and barricade against the wrong fluids. Leontes' failure to pursue the sanctity of multiple chaste relationships is exemplified by his blasphemous denial of God, whose decree, in the form of the oracle's text, Leontes' later refuses to acknowledge. Throughout the middle ages and into the early modern period, the pursuit of chastity in all human relationships was at root a pursuit of that sanctity which is found in a chaste love of God: a love which does not deny God through pride, concupiscence or, indeed, through any of the vices. To early modern audiences, Leontes' failure to mature out of his rigid and self-orientated identification with Polixenes would have been the logical precedent to his eventual blasphemy. Leontes attests to this himself: when his blasphemy, by his own admission, results in the immediate deaths of his son and wife, he realises his mistake and begins his long penance, in which he seeks forgiveness, not just for his crimes against God but against everyone he had wronged.

Before this redemptive transformation can begin, however, Leontes destroys his family when he is consumed by a passion which is sparked by his wife's ability to influence Polixenes when Leontes himself could not. Despite Leontes' and Polixenes' shared haven of moral and psychological enclosure, Leontes cannot convince his friend to remain at the Sicilian court any longer than his initial nine months. Hermione, however, can convince him. With her capacity to relate properly and chastely to all men and women, Hermione possesses an articulacy which her husband lacks and by which he is threatened. When Hermione speaks to Polixenes, and speaks well, Leontes' panic begins. He refuses to acknowledge Hermione's talent for speaking to 'purpose' and can only interpret his wife's influence over Polixenes in sexual terms (1.2.26). Leontes accuses Hermione of 'never but once' having spoken so well. That once was 'when / Three crabbèd months had soured themselves to death / Ere I could make thee open thy white hand / And clap thyself my love; then didst thou utter, / 'I am yours for ever' (1.2.88-104). To Leontes, Hermione's open hand is a sign of her general openness. He can only read her extension of her hand to Polixenes as the sexualised 'yes' she first shared with himself: the same 'yes' which decisively turned Leontes and Polixenes out of their innocent enclosure.

Frightened by his wife's capacity to maintain a range of different but correctly-oriented relationships, and burdened by his own desire to return to a place of pre-sexual innocence with

⁴⁷ Neely, *The Winter's Tale: Women and Issue*, 172.

Polixenes, Leontes is in fact rigidly obsessed with the absolute policing of the body's borders. The vision which becomes ever more fixed in his mind is of the Galenic body, and women's bodies in particular, as leaky and unsound containers.⁴⁸ Leontes' reading of Hermione's invitation to Polixenes reveals his belief that if she can so unclasp her heart in her words, she will most certainly unclasp her entire person to him. Even Hermione's hand, which, when closed had once felt to Leontes as cold as death, becomes too open, 'too hot' (1.2.108).⁴⁹ He imagines that by so opening herself to the wrong man, Hermione has breached the enclosure which their marriage ought to have placed around their shared blood, allowing it instead to 'mingle':

To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods.
I have *tremor cordis* on me: my heart dances,
But not for joy, not joy. (1.2.108-10)

Leontes' 'fear of mingling',⁵⁰ and his concomitant obsession with enclosure, becomes the pattern of his madness. He is disarmed by the presence of his son, in whose body Leontes' blood is mingled with Hermione's. Taking Mamillius from his mother, he announces: 'I am glad you did not/ nurse him ... / Though he does bear signs of me, yet you / Have too much blood in him' (2.1.56-8). Later, having ejected Hermione and his new 'bastard' daughter from the court, Leontes surrounds himself with only his male attendants and is violently dismissive of Paulina's attempts to enter with the baby and argue on Hermione's behalf. 'Out', he cries repeatedly. Calling Paulina a 'mankind witch' and an 'intelligencing bawd' (2.3.67-8), Leontes tells Antigonus that his wife is 'Lady Margery, your midwife' (2.3.159). 'Lady Margery', both a midwife and 'margery-prater' (a hen), is heavily loaded with connotations of bawdy, corruption, and secrecy. The insult collapses all of Leontes' most conventional fears about women's porousness and deceit into one formulation: women talk, give birth, are licentious, lascivious, they lie, steal and keep from men the truth of their sexual activity and the paternity of their babies. The watery threat of women's unchastity completely overwhelms him: 'inch thick, knee-deep, o'er head and ears a forked one!' (1.2.184).

Laurie Maguire has detailed one of the most common early modern methods of testing virginity, which involved giving a woman a diuretic in order to see if she could hold her urine. 'The

⁴⁸ Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, 23-63.

⁴⁹ For an analysis of the culture of female speech and gesture in early modern courts see Martine Van Elk, "'Our praises are our wages': Courtly exchange, social mobility, and female speech in *The Winter's Tale*", *Philological Quarterly* 79.4 (2000), 429-58.

⁵⁰ Huston Diehl, "'Does not the stone rebuke me?': The Pauline Rebuke and Paulina's Lawful Magic in *The Winter's Tale*" in Patricia Badir and Paul Yachnin (eds.), *Shakespeare and the Cultures of Performance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 69.

chaste woman was sealed, impermeable; the unchaste woman was porous, incontinent'.⁵¹ This understanding of how the female body is altered after intercourse informs the 'sieve' portraits of Queen Elizabeth. Like Chastity in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1611) and following the legend of the Vestal Virgin, Tuccia, who proved her chastity by carrying a sieve filled with water from the Tiber to the Temple, Elizabeth holds a sieve in her hand in a series of portraits from 1579-83. In his discussion of the first 'sieve' portrait of Elizabeth in 1579, Roy Strong notes that the motto written around the sieve (A terra il ben mal dimora insella: The good falls to the ground while the bad remains in the saddle) follows the emblem tradition's interpretation of the sieve as discernment. Referring to Elizabeth, Strong notes that 'the English Vestal is thus not only chaste but wise'.⁵² I suggest instead that the dual signification of the sieve need not produce a reading of Elizabeth as chaste *and* wise. Rather, the sieve, in signifying chastity, already signifies the wise discernment and separation of good from bad. In this, it also signifies sanctity and the trope of chastity which governs the correct orientation of all 'good' relationships between humans and between humans and God, and the eschewing of (leaving in the sieve's saddle) all 'bad' or unchaste relationships. The Vestal Virgins were themselves considered wise: because of their sexual purity and sanctity, they had a special monopoly on the truth. They were regularly sought to give testimonies (which they alone could provide without the customary oath), and to oversee the care of state documents, and they could pardon or punish any civilian with merely a touch or glance.

At the heart of *The Winter's Tale's* dramatic and psychological action is precisely this confusion over the meaning of chastity. Leontes' anxious obsession with the soundness of his wife's body as a container for his blood matches the misogynist and reductive boundary-conscious vision of chastity that informed early modern commonplaces about women's sexuality, of which the sieve virginity tests and the mistrust of midwives are prime examples. The more generous and expansive conception of chastity as the wisdom, sanctity, and discernment of correctly orientated relationships—whose place in Elizabethan portraiture evidences its early modern existence outside the theatre—is that form of moral chastity with which *The Winter's Tale's* women eventually heal and reform Leontes.

The point of tension between the two understandings of the virtue is revealed most in Leontes' disagreement with everyone else about whose unchastity is the real source of the court's disease. It is clear to everyone on the stage and in the audience that Leontes is suffering from a violent

⁵¹ Laurie Maguire "Virginity tests", *The Oxford Companion to the Body*. Edited by Colin Blakemore and Sheila Jennett. Oxford University Press, 2001. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. University of Oxford. 9 October 2009

<<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t128.e999>>

In order to pass the virginity test, women would cover the sieve with fat to stop water passing through it, a 'cheat' which contributed to commonplaces about the secrecy, dishonesty, and unchastity of midwives to whom the technique was attributed. This same attribution informs the legend of Agnes Sampson, one of the 'Berwick witches' charged with plotting against the life of James and her dramatic counterpart in *Macbeth*. She was said to take to the ocean in a sieve, her ability to stay afloat—while also drunk and in a storm—was taken as a sign of her diabolical powers but also of her unchastity. See John Dover Wilson, *Life in Shakespeare's England: A Book of Elizabethan Prose* (New York: Cosimo, 2008), 34.

⁵² Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 97.

distemper which has caused him to destroy all of his relationships, but he instead diagnoses unchastity as the source of an infection moving from Polixenes to Hermione and then himself. 'Who does infect her? / Why, he that wears her like a medal, hanging / About his neck, Bohemia' (1.2.303-5). Leontes believes his diagnosis of the court's rot is justified by his own symptoms: his blood thickening and struggling to pass through his chest is a pain that 'stabs the centre'; 'I have *tremor cordis* on me' (1.2.137/109). The very symptom he takes as proof that he has 'caught' in his blood the unchaste infection planted there by Hermione's and Polixenes' 'mingling' is to everyone else the cause of the disease which infects first Leontes' body and then all those he abuses. When Camillo reports Leontes' suspicion of Polixenes' infectious unchastity to Polixenes himself, his cautious language reveals his awareness that it is in fact Leontes who is not 'well'. 'There is a sickness / Which puts some of us in distemper, but / I cannot name the disease, and it is caught / Of you, that yet are well'. Like Camillo, Polixenes knows that his innocence is plain since his blood has not thickened, where Leontes' has. Were he guilty, he claims: 'O then my best blood turn / To an infected jelly ... Turn then my freshest reputation to / A savour that may strike the dullest nostril / Where I arrive, and my approach be shunned, / Nay, hated too, worse than the great'st infection / That e'er was heard or read' (1.2.375-418).

Paulina is the first to introduce into the play the view of Leontes as tyrannous, a charge which Hermione then takes up when defending herself on trial and which the oracle finally confirms. However, Paulina's first use of the word describes both Leontes and his disease in one formulation: 'fear you his tyrannous passion, more, alas,/ Than the Queen's life?' (2.3.27-8). Leontes' passion causes him to torment his wife and subjects tyrannically, but he is also himself subject to a tyrannical passion of pride—the physiological symptom of which is his 'tremor cordis' and his rigid obsession with self-enclosure and self-protection.⁵³ Paulina offers Leontes and his tyrannous passion her own counsel as medicine and physic. Announcing herself Leontes' 'physician' and 'most obedient counsellor' (2.3.54-5), she promises to heal his 'rotten' and 'weak-hinged' opinions (2.3.88/17). By reminding Leontes that his wife is chaste, Paulina brings him 'cordial comfort' and 'words as medicinal as true,/ Honest as either, to purge him of that humour/ That presses him from sleep' (5.3.77/2.3.37). When on trial, Hermione defends her 'integrity' by pointing to the absence of any proof of her infidelity, save that which Leontes' 'jealousies awake' (3.2.111). His jealousy and her trial are, she says, 'rigor, not law' (3.2.11-2). Modern editors gloss the opposition in this phrase as tyranny versus justice or order. In modern staging Hermione's speech is sometimes altered for clarity, and 'rigor' is replaced by 'tyranny'.⁵⁴ However, in losing rigor, we lose also the physical image of a tyrant's body rigid with fear, anger, distress. That is, we lose the image of Leontes' body under the tyranny of his own distress. It is his rigid self-enclosure that enables Leontes to protect himself against his vision of contagious and

⁵³ Margaret Healy treats early modern images of tyrannical bodies as 'glutted, unvented' from over-consumption in *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England*, 214.

⁵⁴ Most recently in the 2001 production at the National.

uncontained fluids, even to the point of committing heresy against the oracle. Obsessively focussed on the chastity, the integrity and impenetrability, of bodies, Leontes becomes trapped in the rigor of his own body, subject to his own tyrannical fear of contamination and tyrannically unable to recognise any opinion or form of power other than his own. 'You're liars all' (2.3.145). By suspecting Hermione of unchastity, Leontes calls into question the integrity not only of her body but of all bodies: of his friends, and of the state. He even heretically refuses to recognise the institutional body of Delphi when he denies the truth of its assertion that Hermione is innocent. What Leontes cannot see in his rigidity is that the rot emanates from him alone, from his own fear and rigor.

Leontes' and Polixenes' shared fear of a heterosexual and adult world of change, sexuality, women, and somatic instability has, prior to the play's opening scenes, caused Leontes to retreat into the idealised and infantilised world of homosocial nostalgia and physical impenetrability. Motivated by the same fears, Leontes' distressed response to his suspicion of Hermione's unchastity is to enfold himself in an even more isolated rigidity. When Camillo questions the veracity of Leontes' suspicion, he defends himself with yet another division between muddled and contained waters: 'dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled / To appoint myself in this vexation?' (1.2.321-3). Through Leontes' distortions, Hermione's pregnant body ceases to signify the robust health of both their marriage and the court and becomes instead a grotesque sign of sexual, moral, and political inversion and contamination. Her body and her manners—her speech and gesture—previously enjoyed and desired by Leontes, becomes excessive, too-sensual, too hot and too open, too capable of letting in and out fluids and disease. Subsequently, Leontes' desperate attempts at border control extend beyond his and Hermione's bodies to his estate. When he hears of Camillo's and Polixenes' escape, his first concern is how the 'posterns' came 'so easily open'. The Lord Leontes is interrogating reminds him that Camillo has always enjoyed that 'great authority / Which often hath no less prevailed than so / On your command'. 'I know't too well' is Leontes' reply (2.1.52-5). He now doubts everyone: his wife and friend and his most loyal servant have all breached the barriers he so rigidly worked to maintain around both his body and his buildings. Yet, in its rigidity, Leontes' body is the only truly diseased body in the play. His tyrannical distemper is itself the motivation for Camillo's and Polixenes' escape and the alienation of Leontes' relationships with everyone except his guards. In this, his violent 'rigor' is closer to the 'rigour pitiless' of Spenser's Bower of Bliss, which brutally destructs organic integrity.⁵⁵

If *The Winter's Tale* is to provide its audience with the experience of perfect organic integrity—perfect moral and physiological equilibrium—which I am arguing is a fundamental aspect of tragicomedy, then its characters must undergo the experiences which will bring this integrity about in both themselves and their audience. Viewed from this perspective, Leontes needs to pass from his tyrannical rigour into a moral maturity in which the chastity of multiple relationships can be maintained and through which virtue can be understood as signifying sanctity rather than merely the

⁵⁵ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*. Ed. A. C. Hamilton, (London: Longman, 2007), 297: book 2, canto xii, line 2.

defense of somatic borders. Yet, the result of doing so is a form of bodily integrity more perfect than that of which Leontes' diseased mind was able to conceive. As he learns to relinquish his physical and psychological rigidity and, through Paulina's instruction and care, move into a mature chastity, the play enacts its generically-required therapeutic effect on the audience, instilling in them the same spiritual and bodily integrity—the same chastity—as that achieved by those on stage.

However conscious Shakespeare was of Italian tragicomedy's dramaturgy and its theoretical justifications, his late plays demonstrate even more fully than the self-consciously theoretical plays of Tasso and Guarini the therapeutic function which Guarini attributed to the genre. For Guarini, tragicomedy sought to influence its audience by deploying the effects of both tragedy—which in his formulation has a centripetal effect on the audience, drawing inward and tightening the overly relaxed soul—and comedy, which works centrifugally, loosening the soul that has become overly rigid and restrained.⁵⁶ Tragicomedy's therapeutic agenda instead sought a gentle middle road between those of comedy and tragedy, neither altering the soul definitively one way or the other, but rather encouraging it repeatedly each way: a palpation from centre to circumference and back again, which restored its optimum equilibrium.⁵⁷ Guarini's vision of tragicomedy's therapeutic effect on the audience demands that plays move back and forth between opposing actions of grief and joy in order to massage watching bodies into their perfect state of equilibrium. This is achieved in *The Winter's Tale* by shifts between court and pastoral, and between loss and gift, but one of the most important means by which the play brings about the expansion and contraction of the audience's bodies and souls is by putting its characters through the same physiological trajectory. Leontes must pass over from his rigid and tyrannical self-enclosure into a state of solubility, achieved by his sixteen years of penance, in which his 'tears' are his 'recreation' (3.2.237-8).

Unless sufficient meaning is discovered in the inordinate length of Leontes' sixteen-year penance, it can seem little more than a convenient piece of plotting, allowing Perdita to grow up enough that she can return to court at a marriageable age. For the ultimate effect of the play's statue scene to work, Leontes is required to experience precisely that somatic solubility he once so feared: he must spend sixteen years weeping. In penance, he is also undergoing that moral and psychological change through which he can reorientate himself within each of his relationships: cleaving to Paulina who once he spurned, mourning for his daughter, Polixenes, and Camillo, all of whom he wronged, and supplicating himself to Hermione, his son, and God, where once, in his blasphemy, he condemned all three. He passes each day in prayer at the chapel where 'the dead bodies' of his 'Queen and son' lie with the cause of their death written upon their grave 'to our perpetual shame'. Leontes' language turns immediately from the bitterness and tyranny of the trial to the quiet resolve of religious

⁵⁶ Henke, *Pastoral Transformations*, 122.

⁵⁷ 'The playwright, then, resembles a doctor, who does not remove an entire humor but, "sol quella parte che traboccando fuor dei termini naturali, corrompe la simetria degli umori" [only that part which, passing beyond natural limits, corrupts the symmetry of the humors]' Guarini, *I Verato*, 2:250 in Henke, 121.

commitment: he ‘vow[s]’ to ‘daily’ use his new ‘exercise’ of tears, and commits himself to be directed by his accuser, Paulina, ‘come, and lead me / To these sorrows’ (3.2.230-240).

Importantly, the audience must also pass through this sorrowful stage of the play if the therapeutic effects of the statue scene are to work on them. For the play’s final scenes to ‘recreat[e]’ physiologically all those present, Leontes needs to be considered worthy of Hermione’s forgiveness and the length and degree of his penance must reach that furthest extreme from his initial rigid self-protection. Cleomenes’ first words on Act Five’s return to the Sicilian court after the Bohemia episode argue that, having ‘performed / A saint-like sorrow’, Leontes has ‘done enough’. Indeed, he has done too much. He has ‘paid down / More penitence than done trespass’ (5.1.1-4) and ‘redeemed’ his ‘fault’. He has earned his right to behold the statue of Hermione, and the audience has invested enough in his deserving to share in the physiological effects of his wish-fulfillment.

Just as Leontes is required to move from rigidity to solubility and back again, so must Hermione be physiologically changed. Her movement into extreme leakiness—later conjured in Antigonus’ dream by her ghost’s ‘spout[ing]’ eyes—is forced upon her by Leontes with devastating violence and is often made visually evident by modern productions which have her enter the trial scene still covered in blood from her labour in prison. Hermione’s obscure description of being hurried to her trial ‘before I have got strength of limit’ (3.2.103-4) has long confused editors. When read with reference to chastity as somatic integrity, her need of ‘limit’ for strength could be understood as a description of the containment necessary for her to maintain the requisite composure to defend herself during her trial—to not dissolve into tears. When she subsequently enters her life of solitude, Hermione has sixteen long years to foster somatic integrity, a state perfected by her performance as statue. That the pure equilibrium achieved by both characters is understood as a chastening of the body and soul is made explicit by the play’s construction of unchastity as a state experienced by those onstage as either excessive rigidity or excessive solubility.

When Leontes beholds the statue, his own initial somatic conception of the virtue, which so enthralled him, is recuperated through Paulina’s miracle. She enables the very body whose sexuality, porousness, and capacity for change had once so alienated Leontes to stand before him as a statue, fixed, sealed, and elevated to the position of holy veneration. The monumentalised Hermione in fact fulfills the implicit hopes of Leontes’ earlier immaturity: stone, sealed, silent, her body no longer represents the threat it once did. The statue not only gives back to Leontes the body on which he so concentrated his attention each day of his sixteen years of contrite prayer, it does so in a form that fulfills the fantasy of his youthful ‘rigor’. However, by the end of his long mourning, Leontes, together with Perdita who kneels before the statue, longs for the living woman. Hermione’s reanimation would enable the family’s broken relationships to be restored: a happiness whose sanctity is marked explicitly by its culmination in the chapel. When his wish (which is the audience’s wish also) is fulfilled, the physiological and moral—that is to say—the generic requirements of the play are fulfilled.

At first glance, Hermione might seem to be the only statuesque but living body onstage in the play's final tableau, but the perfect somatic equilibrium, the affective transfixion of 'joy-in-sorrow', achieved and represented by the paradoxical state of a body both monumentalised and alive, is in fact enjoyed by everyone onstage and in the audience.⁵⁸ By fulfilling the wish of all participants, Hermione's movement from statue to living woman sets the pattern for everyone else to be so overcome by wonder and the paradoxical feelings of joy and mourning, that their bodies also become statuesque. Paulina instructs the theatre to 'partake to everyone ... your exultation' (5.3.130-1). The two Gentlemen, whose task it is to prepare the audience for the experience of wonder they will embody in the statue scene, depict vividly the many forms of statuesque transfixion they have already witnessed in the reunions of Leontes, Camillo, Paulina and Perdita. 'There was casting up of eyes, holding up of hands'. 'Their joy waded in tears'. And 'O, the noble combat that twixt joy and sorrow was fought in Paulina!'

As only a stone statue could, Paulina's swooning body is said to fix in a contorted posture, her eyes moving in an inhuman manner which replicates her paradoxical feelings of joy and sorrow: 'one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle was fulfilled' (5.2.71-4). When viewed through the lens of chastity, the statue scene's paradoxical experience of wonder is able not only to grant chaste equilibrium to the play's unchaste bodies and the spiritual bliss of relationships restored miraculously, it can also deliver its generically-expected purgation of the audience. Immediately prior to the statue scene the Two Gentlemen invite the audience to give their bodies to the chastity on offer, and to enter into a wondrous statuesque swoon: 'Who was most / marble there changed colour; some swooned, all sorrowed'. His own heart having 'wept blood', the Gentleman is sure that 'if all / the world could have seen' the family reunion, their sense of wonder would have 'been universal' (5.2.85-90).

'A Copy out of Mine': the Body as Text Reproduced, Retouched and Redressed

Just as Shakespeare embedded chastity's tropes of bodily containment and sanctity together in order to produce the therapeutic effects enabled by tragicomedy, he also put into conversation those tropes which are perhaps most recognisable as a cornerstone of the genre: legitimate bloodlines (chaste sexuality and 'issue') and what I am calling 'the return of the lost': the finding of lost loved ones, and the recreation and resurrection of broken relationships. Although this second trope may appear similar to that of sanctity and properly-orientated relationships (and indeed the two do share some important characteristics) they differ significantly in their structure and application. The orientation of

⁵⁸ Dixon, 'Tragicomic Recognitions', 57.

relationships relates to how human beings manage the moral challenge of maintaining the chastity of multiple and differently-coded relationships with each other—and, primarily, with God—in order to pursue chastity’s long-standing medieval and early modern function as a path to sanctity. However, the return of lost loved-ones and the restoration of broken relationships is fundamentally structured around actions and events marked by repetition, resurrection or recreation, and wish-fulfillment. The two tropes also describe quite different modes of interaction between the heavenly and earthly spheres. While the challenge of maintaining correctly-oriented relationships was very much a human pursuit of virtue, the pursuit of God, the trope of chastity as recreation and return functioned in early modern literature and culture as a sign of God’s providential love for his creatures.

In *The Winter’s Tale* the interdependence of chastity as legitimacy and as return is made explicit in the text of the Delphic oracle, which decrees that ‘Hermione is chaste ... Leontes a jealous tyrant, his innocent babe truly begotten, and the King shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found’ (3.2.130-4). From the the reading of the oracle in the trial scene to the play’s final tableau, *The Winter’s Tale* moves steadily toward the recreation of unity in Sicilia’s first family, a fortuitous conclusion which depends on the correct identification of the legitimate bloodline in the King’s lost offspring. Shakespeare exploits this most generically important of the play’s problems by continuously playing on the capacity for legitimate ‘issue’ to figure not just true bodies but true texts: a figure present from the moment of the oracle’s decree when Leontes’ doubts the legitimacy of the textual record just as he doubts his daughter is his own. The text’s legitimacy continues to be bound with that of Perdita, since finding and properly identifying her becomes the only means by which the text’s truth can be finally fulfilled.

Having argued above that approaching tragicomedy through the lens of chastity enables us to see the important degree to which genre was defined by its therapeutic effect and not simply by questions of form, it remains for me in this section to assert my second goal by arguing that early moderns in the first half of the seventeenth-century sought a ‘tragicomic knowledge’, which both represented dramatically and instantiated in the lives of participants a confidence in divine providence. Of all the late plays, *The Winter’s Tale* exemplifies the importance of chastity to this vision, and the importance of its trope of legitimate sexuality in particular, because it makes the most inventive use of the central biblical narratives of sexual chastity by which the genre was shaped in the early-seventeenth-century: the account of the Fall in Genesis and the Virgin Birth in Luke and Matthew.

More than comedy and tragedy, tragicomedy is markedly christological, in that it encompasses both loss and return, crucifixion and resurrection, and fall and redemption.⁵⁹ *The Winter’s Tale* is particularly interested in the pattern of fall and redemption, which it genders in such a way that it lays the ground for what would become the seventeenth-century (feminised) cult of chastity: the play explores human fallenness through the unchastity of its male characters and redemption through the

⁵⁹ Dixon, ‘Tragicomic Recognitions’, 61; Foster, *The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy* 127.

chastity of its women. That is, it aligns Leontes and Polixenes with Adam and Eve and Paulina and Hermione with Mary and Christ. *The Winter's Tale's* deeply Marian vision builds on the early modern interest, exemplified by the epic poetry of Spenser and Milton, in the Fall as a breach, at once sexual and epistemological, whose effects were felt in, and expressed in poetry through, fallen language. Wishing to know too much, the first parents were punished by separation from God and each other: morally through the vices and linguistically and epistemologically through their inability to know him completely. Redemption came in the form of Word made flesh: a unity of God's will and human matter that constituted an absolute form of chastity, one in which God was no longer opaque to humans nor his language fractured and filtered through humanity's fallen signs and symbols. Importantly for *The Winter's Tale*, this total chastity came into the world through the Virgin Birth.

As I hope to show, 'tragicomic knowledge' was a confidence in God's providentialism that was fundamentally bound up in familial unity and strength, and the unity of royal families in particular. While this most fortuitous and confident of visions was socially conservative, it was also feminist. *The Winter's Tale* makes clear that redemption depended on women's procreative capacity. The play's men exemplify the breach which the Fall caused between signs and their true meaning because they continually misread both texts and bodies and seek, however unwittingly, to undermine women's procreative capacity, while the women work to protect the legitimacy of their sexuality and the truth of divine decree. Their efforts are rewarded in the statue scene when, through Paulina and Hermione's tableau of Marian chastity, the words of the oracle are fulfilled and everyone, both onstage and in the audience, experiences the wonder of being granted that for which they most hoped but least expected: the return of the family's lost members.

The Winter's Tale makes full use of those tropes of reproduction and creation through which early modern authors depicted the processes of textual production.⁶⁰ The play uses the word 'issue' fifteen times: just over half of these uses refer to biological issue, the rest to actions and speech acts. The trope is crucial to the play's central action: while doubting the parentage of his children, Leontes also doubts the veracity of the textual record of the oracle's decree that Hermione is chaste. In the trial scene he denies the conditions of the scroll's publication, having himself just 'published' Hermione as an adulteress (2.1.98), proclaiming her 'on every post' 'a strumpet' (3.2.99-100). As Ann Thompson and John O. Thompson have shown, the development of the printing press introduced into early modern language a cluster of metaphors which yoked together the pressing of ink onto paper (producing textual copies of varying legitimacy) with the pressing of the sexual act and its production of legitimate and illegitimate offspring.⁶¹ Shakespeare himself knew well the problems which the early modern publishing culture posed for the professional writer and dramatist. Like his peers, he had to watch his work—especially the prodigiously popular love lyrics from *Romeo and Juliet*—circulate in a

⁶⁰ Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), especially Chapter Six: 'A Womb of His Own', 182-209.

⁶¹ Ann Thompson & John O. Thompson, *Shakespeare: Meaning and Metaphor* (Sussex: Harvest Press, 1987), 177-183.

variety of bastardised forms. Paulina employs the figure when trying to convince Leontes that he is the baby Perdita's father: 'Although the print be little, the whole matter / And copy of the father—eye, nose, lip' (2.3.98-99). Leontes also uses it when he first sees the adult Florizel: 'Your mother was most true to wedlock, Prince, / For she did print your royal father off, / Conceiving you' (5.1.120). And earlier, about his own son: 'They say it is a copy out of mine ... Art thou my calf? ... women say so, / That will say anything' (1.2.200-210).

Reading his son for signs of his own blood, Leontes' mind turns on images of coupling and, his suspicion of Hermione and Polixenes growing, he begins to describe the rising of his own jealous distemper as though it were the offspring of his affections copulating with the fancies his mind builds out of the 'too hot' hands and words exchanged between his wife and his friend:

Affection! thy intention stabs the centre.
 Thou dost make possible things not so held
 Communicat'st with dreams—how can this be?
 With what's unreal thou coactive art
 And fellow'st nothing. Then 'tis very credent
 Thou mayst co-join with something, and thou dost,
 And that beyond commission, and I find it,
 And that to the infection of my brains
 And hardening of my brows. (1.2.137-44)

Leontes' affection enters his heart and there couples with his dreams, which are 'nothing'. His crisis lies in his inability to interpret decisively whether the 'nothing' of his imaginings is Hermione's and Polixenes' adultery or the love they once both shared with him, since both are mutually exclusive. What is certain is that coupling produces offspring and his affection, meeting with the 'something' of his 'nothing', breeds suspicion and makes credible ('credent') further coupling, both within Leontes' mind and in the images he projects onto his world. His affections and his dreams together communicate, 'co-act', 'co-join', 'fellow', and do so beyond the acceptable or 'commissioned' limits. His suspicion is thus the product of an illegitimate union, yet its offspring, his disease, is very real. The offspring/infection seizes his brain and hardens his brows with horns at the same time: he is made both mad and a cuckold. In his doubt, Leontes produced one legitimate and one illegitimate twin, though he does not yet know which is which. If Hermione and Polixenes are chaste, then the offspring of Leontes' affections coupling with the 'nothing' of the adultery they did not commit is his madness, the infection of his brain. However, if they are unchaste and the 'nothing' with which his affections coupled is Hermione's and Polixenes' lack of love for him, then the legitimate offspring is his cuckold's horns. Polixenes later picks up this figure when in counsel with Camillo over the King's 'disease': 'What is breeding' he asks, 'That changes thus his manners? ... How should this grow?' 'I know not', Camillo answers, 'but I am sure 'tis safer to / Avoid what's grown that question how 'tis born' (1.2.370-428). Most interesting is Paulina's use of the text/sex trope in relation to Leontes. She claims to have come to cure him of 'that humour/ That presses him from sleep' (2.3.38-9). In this construction, Leontes is penetrated—pressed—by his own tyrannical humour. Figured both as paper

and a feminised body, Leontes receives his humour's imprint: both pierced and suffocated by it, both raped and written upon, he cannot sleep.

In *The Winter's Tale*, the body, like the oracle's text, is constantly being read for signs of legitimacy.⁶² When Leontes suspects Hermione of adultery, he begins obsessively to scrutinise her gestures and exchanges with Polixenes. He then reads his son's face for signs of his own 'copy'. On the birth of the baby Perdita, Emilia deems her 'a daughter, and a goodly babe,/ Lusty and like to live' (2.2.25-6). Emilia's reading sees the goodness of Perdita's soul reflected in her 'goodly' body. The lack of any stain or mark on the baby's outer form is itself a sign of her legitimate parentage. However, this reading is reversed by the Shepherd when he finds the baby. Wrapped up and abandoned with letters and a box, Perdita instead comes to signify sexual misconduct. The Shepherd, though he is 'not bookish' can 'read' in the baby's abandoned condition 'some scape'. 'This has been some stair-work, some trunk-work, some behind-door work; they were warmer that got this than the poor thing is here' (3.3.67-71). When grown, Perdita's beauty and the degree of its fame—its 'report'—are read as signs that she does not belong to the house of the Shepherd. This is not only because her beauty and form do not match the Shepherd's but because they have been so widely circulated: her fame itself does not match her humble household. 'The report of her is extended more than can be thought to begin from such a cottage' (4.2.42-3). When Polixenes meets her he thinks she is 'too noble for this place' (4.4.159).

As the audience's anticipation of Perdita's prophesied return to Sicilia grows, the play deepens its exploration of biological legitimacy through its complex and comedic use of disguise. Act Four's pastoral is the play's chance to satirise and relax what is ultimately treated with great seriousness: the restoration of bloodlines. The pastoral satirises the assumption that nobility is plainly represented in the body and its apparel. In so doing it develops the play's feminist critique of disguised 'issue' as a form of unchastity particularly suited to serving men's sexual licentiousness and the abuses of a nobility willing to offer legitimacy where there is none. This line of development is ultimately realised in the statue scene's assertion of female creative and procreative capacities as a chastening influence which, by lifting the veil of illusion, enable all present to recognise legitimate bloodlines with the clarity of divine grace and wonder at the miracle of both Hermione and Perdita's return.

Everyone at the Bohemian feast is in disguise. Perdita, however, is uncomfortable with being 'pranked up' as a Queen while her royal lover's 'high self' and 'gracious mark' are 'obscured' by the lowly clothes of a swain (4.4.5-14). She is conscious that one's appearance should do justice to one's true form and blood, which is, or should be, a reproduction or copy of one's parents. She fears

⁶² Manfred Pfister, "Reading the Body: the corporeality of Shakespeare's text" in Hanna Scolnicov and Peter Holland (eds.), *Reading Plays: Interpretation and Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 110-12:120. See also Chapter One, "Playing by the Book: early Tudor drama and the printed text" in Greg Walker, *The Politics of Performance in Early Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 6-50; William W. E. Slights, "Bodies of Text and Textualized Bodies in *Sejanus* and *Coriolanus*", *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 5 (New York: AMS Press, 1991), 181-194; Tanya Pollard, 'Spelling the Body' in Floyd-Wilson and Sullivan Jr. (eds.), *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England*, 171-186.

Polixenes' response should he see his son disguised, his 'work, so noble,/ Vilely bound up' (4.4.21-2). Perdita's concern that children not make themselves bastard copies of their parents but rather keep true to form is expressed most explicitly when she refuses to bestow upon her guests flowers which have themselves been 'pranked up'. Welcoming the disguised Polixenes as a guest to the feast, Perdita offers him flowers and explains to him that her gifts are not the most attractive flowers which the season can provide. She does not 'care' to get 'slips' of the best flowers (carnations and streaked gillyvors) because 'some call' them 'nature's bastards' and 'Of that kind / Our rustic garden's barren'. She does not wish to pursue the 'art' by which others mock or try to claim a 'share' in 'great creating nature'. Polixenes does not share her scruples. He replies:

Say there be;
 Yet nature is made better by no mean
 But nature makes that mean; so over that art
 Which you say adds to nature, is an art
 That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
 A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
 And make conceive a bark of baser kind
 By bud of nobler race. This is an art
 Which does mend nature—change it rather—but
 The art itself is nature ...
 Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,
 And do not call them bastards. (4.4.88-99)

Perdita resists Polixenes' seduction and his logic, responding: 'I'll not put / The dibble in earth to set one slip of them; / No more than were I painted I would wish / This youth [Florizel] should say 'twere well, and only therefore / Desire to breed by me' (4.4.-79-103). As Frances Dolan observes: 'aligning great creating nature with her own ability to breed, Perdita disdains those who prefer the gillyflower and the painted face, denouncing their taste as corrupt and insulting to nature, here symbolized by the body of a woman who asserts that she will not be improved on'.⁶³

Dolan's reading places Polixenes' and Perdita's debate about bastard flowers in the context of early modern arguments over the relative chastity of face-painting—an important reading given that Perdita references the debate explicitly. However, by focussing instead on Perdita's 'dibble' and 'slip' and on her firm dismissal of Polixenes' definition of 'improve'—to procreate outside the bounds of marriage—we can see a picture begin to emerge in which Perdita, together with the play's other women, becomes a protector of legitimate bloodlines. The women do so not for reasons like those of Leontes, whose diseased fear of mingling extended from his moral immaturity and psychological self-enclosure, but because 'aligning great creating nature' with their own 'ability to breed', the play's women understand that to defend legitimate bloodlines means properly respecting women's

⁶³ Frances E. Dolan, 'Taking the Pencil out of God's Hand: Art, Nature, and the Face-Painting Debate in Early Modern England,' *PMLA* 108 (1993), 228.

procreative capacity and disallowing precisely the sexual license expressed by Polixenes' arguments for bastardy. Polixenes' flirtatious suggestion that Perdita's simple beauty could 'mend' his royal line evidences the hypocrisy of the noble and gentle investment in patrilineal legitimacy, which knows it has the authority to grant biological legitimacy where there is none in order to cover over slips in chastity.

Act Four's play on bastard bodies and texts finds its full expression in the figure of Autolycus. When he first enters the pastoral feast to sell his trinkets and songs, the first ballad he offers his audience is 'a very doleful tune, how a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden, and how she longed to eat adders' heads and toads carbonadoed' (4.4.251-3). This grotesque depiction of a birth fitting its parentage is comedic because it exposes the gullibility of those who not only believe Autolycus but believe him enough to agree that the tale is doleful. Autolycus then jokes with the audience, again at his customers' expense, when proving the veracity of the tale: 'here's the midwife's name to't, one Mistress Tale-Porter, and five or six honest wives that were present. Why should I carry lies abroad?' (4.4.257-9). Through his 'carry' pun, which associates pregnancy with extortion and the publishing of lies 'abroad', Autolycus jokingly defends the honesty of his textual production by publishing instead under the authority of the midwife Tale-Porter, who by both her name and profession is recognisably a liar. Autolycus affirms the misogynist view, earlier expressed by Leontes, that the culture surrounding childbirth and midwifery is one of deceit, secrecy, lies, and bawdy. Yet, both Autolycus and Leontes, when expressing such views, are themselves 'knee deep' in lies and misinterpretation (1.2.184).

The play's male characters may be liberal with their use of commonplaces about women's reproductive culture as an unchaste printing house, whose bastard issue do not properly match their source, but the play itself continuously attributes chastity as legitimate union and issue to its women. Perdita's belief that disguise is a form of bastardy which must be avoided aligns her with Hermione and Paulina, who repeatedly challenge what the play presents as a male compulsion to disguise, disfigure, and misread. Through the women's efforts to maintain chastity, the play's exploration of the virtue as legitimate birth and the return of lost loved-ones finds its resolution in the final act, where Hermione and Perdita 'return' to court and Perdita's legitimacy, once doubted by Leontes (though without visual proof) is confirmed by more evidence than the Third Gentleman can even report:

the mantle of Queen Hermione's; her jewel about the neck of it; the letters of Antigonus found with it, which they know to be his character; the majesty of the creature in resemblance of the mother; the affection of nobleness which nature shows above her breeding; and many other evidences proclaim her, with all certainty, to be the King's daughter. (5.2.29-34)

Just as the lost child is returned through the successful reading of her body, which had been misread as that of a bastard, so also the oracle's text—which promised the return of lost loved-ones and confirmed Hermione's chastity—can finally be read as true when Perdita and Hermione return.

Before his remorse began, Leontes was deeply threatened by Hermione's fertility, forcing her to give birth in scandalously debased conditions and then ordering the murder of her child. Violently

attacking her reproductive capacities while ‘publish[ing]’ her ‘on every post’ ‘a strumpet’ (2.1.98/3.2.99-100), Leontes then doubts the scroll’s proclamation of her innocence. His assertions of the ‘true’ text, which writes his wife as unchaste, coincides with his savaging of those female processes of biological creation and circulation which he feels he cannot control. In the play’s final scenes, however, the frequent anti-feminist slurs against women’s sexuality and midwives become instead figures for birth as chaste and wondrous. In reporting the court’s joy at finding Florizel and Perdita, Paulina’s steward is described as able to ‘deliver’ more news, the truth of which is ‘pregnant by circumstance’ (5.2.23-8). Mimi Still Dixon notes that in the providential final scenes of Shakespearean tragicomedy ‘metaphors of rebirth ... collect naturally’.⁶⁴ With the restoration and recreation of the court’s ‘unity’, integrity, and chastity, reproductive imagery suddenly departs from the misogynist language of feminine deceit. Instead, it draws closer to the paradoxical language of divine grace associated with the Virgin Birth. In *Pericles*: ‘Thou beget’st him that did thee beget’ (5.1.195); in *The Winter’s Tale*, truth becomes pregnant with more truth, goodness breeds goodness and wonder ‘beget[s] wonder’ (5.1.132).

Over the sixteen years of Leontes’ penance, Paulina cares for both the King and the Queen, overseeing the physical, moral and spiritual health of both. The symbol for this deeply maternal and creative act is the statue, which everyone at court believes Paulina has been whittling away at over the sixteen years she has lived in retirement in her chapel. Through the ‘issue’ of Paulina’s creation, the violence with which Leontes destroyed his family in the trial scene is finally redeemed. The statue scene has often been read from a feminist perspective as an inefficient form of vindication for Hermione.⁶⁵ However, when approached from the angle I have been developing, it instead offers a most satisfying reversal of the trial scene, succinctly correcting the imbalance caused by Leontes’ disease and returning Hermione to the dignity and agency she enjoyed before she was accused.

In the sixteen years of her apparent death, Hermione has lived in cloistered female community with Paulina. She effectively retreats into a holy life of silence, dignity, and independence while she waits in hope for the return of her daughter. ‘For a woman to opt out of a marriage that has humiliated her is not necessarily implausible, and many medieval as well as Renaissance women made such choices.’⁶⁶ Hermione and Paulina contrive the statue scene so that Leontes might evidence how he has changed: ‘O, thus she stood, / Even with such life of majesty—warm life / As now it coldly stands—when first I wooed her. / I am ashamed’ (5.3.34-7). However, in an important sense, the statue scene is not about Leontes at all. Hermione has primarily been waiting for the return of her heir:

⁶⁴ Dixon, *Tragicomic Recognitions*, 57.

⁶⁵ Traub, ‘Jewels, Statues, and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare’s Plays’, 215-238; Lori Humphrey Newcombe, “‘If That which is Lost be not Found’: Monumental Bodies, Spectacular Bodies in *The Winter’s Tale*” in Stanivukovi (ed.) *Ovid and the Renaissance Body*, 239-59.

⁶⁶ Vanita, ‘Mariological Memory in *The Winter’s Tale* and *Henry VIII*’, 314.

'knowing by Paulina that the oracle / Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserved / Myself to see the issue' (5.3.126).

What is brilliant about the deceit of the statue is that it enables Hermione's return to life to be optional. Were it not for the discovery of her daughter, she might have stayed in her monastic-style existence indefinitely. Even considering the fact of Perdita's return, Hermione might still find, while poised in the chapel for examination by her husband and child, that she does not desire to return to him or to the life of the court. Paulina spends five lines calling Hermione from her stasis: her awakening may be the 'issue' of Paulina's long gestation but it is also an act which only Hermione herself can bring about. By granting Hermione the chance to willingly emerge from stasis, the statue scene is a just reversal of the earlier trial scene, in which Hermione was forced into physical confinement and psychological, emotional, and spiritual circumscription. Hermione's silence at the end of the play needn't be taken as evidence that her agency remains diminished.⁶⁷ In fact, it can be understood as a return to the dignity she was initially refused: part of her humiliation in the trial scene is that she is forced to speak. Listing all that is degrading about her accusation, imprisonment, and trial, she includes that she was forced 'here standing/ To prate and talk for life and honour' (3.2.29).

In both the trial and the statue scene, Hermione's body is the central focus of attention, and of Leontes' scrutiny in particular. In the trial scene, her body is denigrated; in the statue scene, venerated. In the one she is silenced, loses her children, and dies, in the other she returns to life and eventually to speech (though on her own terms and in her own time), and discovers her child. Where once Hermione's body was 'too hot', the statue appears woefully cold for Leontes who exclaims joyfully when he touches it: 'O, she is warm!' In his madness, Leontes condemned Hermione's hands for being too open to both himself and to Polixenes; in the statue scene, he gladly receives the queen's offered hand (5.3.109). In the trial scene, all agency is Leontes'; in the statue scene, it is Hermione's. When performing the statue in 1998/9, Alexandra Gilbreath found just such agency in Hermione's stillness:

Of course Paulina has, during the years, told me how he has changed, but the last time I saw him he was destroying everything around me. Would you trust him? [I decided that] if I stand perfectly still, I can see for myself and it's my choice. I might not want to move; I might remain just where I am. So for me the scene wasn't about standing as still as I possibly could until the allotted time in the script for me to move. I was living and breathing through every painful moment: I could see my daughter standing in front of me, a beautiful young woman; I could see my husband standing in front of me, a changed man. And so the moment when Hermione 'comes to life' was, for me, a moment of choice.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Traub, 'Jewels, Statues, and Corpses'; Schalkwyk, "A Lady's 'Verily' Is as Potent as a Lord's": Women, Word and Witchcraft in *The Winter's Tale*", , 242-72; Erickson, *Patriarchal Structures in Shakespeare's Drama*; Blum, s"Strike all that look upon with mar[b]le": Monumentalizing Women in Shakespeare's Plays'; Van Elk. "Our praises are our wages", 429-58.

⁶⁸ Robert Sallwood (ed.), *Players of Shakespeare* 5, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006), 88.

There is a very satisfying irony to Hermione's own experience of playing herself as a statue, which is overlooked in scholarship which reads Hermione's stillness and silence as constrained, prescriptive and limiting.⁶⁹ After her own sixteen years of waiting, Hermione is able to stand and observe Leontes' great remorse. She is literally able to receive the contrite prayers with which he has spent his years of mourning.

In each of Hermione's other scenes, her body is the focus of Leontes' suspicion and scrutiny. During these three central moments—the public celebration in which Hermione's body apparently transgresses the necessary distance between it and Polixenes' body, the violent assault of her body in the nursery scene, and the public trial of her degraded body—Leontes' constant reading of Hermione's body as unchaste asks the audience to also read it for signs of her guilt or innocence. On the surface the statue scene seems to be a continuation, even an exaggeration, of this visual orientation, of Leontes reading Hermione. Where before he read her body for evidence that it was adulterous and no longer the body of his wife, in the statue scene he instead reads it for signs that it is his wife. He remarks to Paulina that 'Hermione was not so much wrinkled, nothing/ So aged as this seems' (5.3.28-9). However, as Gilbreath discovered when playing the statue, the orientation of observer and observed is in fact reversed. The fact of Hermione's being a statue contrives for her conditions not ordinarily available: she is able to read her husband's behaviour toward herself as though she were not present. That is, she is able to make a trial of his contrition and love, to read his body for evidence of a devotion that is not staged or affected for her, but rather a fact even in her absence. Understood this way, it is Leontes' body under assessment in the statue scene and Hermione's 'return' to life is her response to her identification of her daughter. She does not return in order to defend her sexual purity, as she was forced to do in the trial scene, but rather to fulfil the family's near-perfect return to unity and, more importantly, its continuance. Hermione's 'return' resurrects the play's opening scenes of unity and futurity. Mamillius might be absent, but Perdita and Florizel signal the family's continuance.

The significance of the statue scene as an affirmation of the redemptive capacity of women's procreative ability becomes clear when we recognise that Leontes initially sought to align Hermione with Eve. I want to spend a moment considering here the importance of *The Winter's Tale's* exploration of the doctrines of the Fall and the Virgin Birth. By considering the relevance of these doctrines to the play's interest in the gender politics surrounding the new print culture's body/text figure reveals a crucial area in which the play enacts its combined exploration of the tropes of legitimate issue and the return of the lost.

On suspecting Hermione of adultery in 1.2, Leontes imagines that her 'issue/ Will hiss me to my grave' (1.2.187). As though confirming his suspicion, Hermione, like Eve, then leads Polixenes into the garden. Even before this moment, the two men's nostalgia for the shared childhood they interpret

⁶⁹ See note 61.

as prelapsarian immediately registers Hermione and all women as sexually dangerous. The play makes it clear, however, that the real threat to Leontes' and Polixenes' souls is not their wives but their desire to imagine themselves as fellows in a vision of innocence built on a dangerously prideful denial of original sin. Eden was not a purely male world containing 'two lads that thought there was no more behind/ But such a day tomorrow as today/ And to be boy eternal' (1.2.62-5), and error cannot be avoided by imagining a world in which the Fall never occurred. Convinced by this misconception, Leontes can only interpret Hermione's and Polixenes' exit into the garden as confirmation of the human fallenness he has attempted to elide. However, watching his wife and friend going into the garden, he also experiences his absence from it. Not only is he not there with his wife (as, in keeping with Christian ontology, he should be), but he is not there with Polixenes, whom he had imagined was his pre-lapsarian partner. Leontes thus experiences isolation from both his imagined relationship with Polixenes and his real relationship with his wife: the former because it is by nature unstable and the latter because he has always been afraid of fully participating in it. Leontes' fear and his fantasy walk together into the garden without him and he feels precisely that rejection from Paradise from which both were designed to protect him. When detailing what he perceives as evidence of Hermione's and Polixenes' adultery, Leontes registers the feeling of loss as expulsion: 'O, I am out!' (2.1.72). When on trial, Hermione refuses Leontes' charge of treason and his interpretation of her as Eve, arguing that the only 'disobedience' she might have committed would have been her negligence of duty had she not shown Polixenes the affection due him as her husband's friend (3.2.68). Denying the action through which Eve first erred, Hermione refutes the charge of 'conspiracy', claiming 'I know not how it tastes, though it be dished / For me to try how' (3.2.70-71).

If for Leontes Hermione is like Eve, the play is at pains to depict her instead as Mary. Heavily pregnant for the first two acts of the play, Hermione then, on the loss of her child, becomes the mother of sorrows in Antigonus' dream:

To me comes a creature,
Sometimes her head on one side, some another;
I never saw a vessel of like sorrow
So filled and so becoming, In pure white robes
Like very sanctity, she did approach
My cabin where I lay; thrice bowed before me,
And, gasping to begin some speech, her eyes
Became two spouts. (3.3.20-5)

Hermione's transformation into one of the leaky figures to whom generations of Englishwomen and men had dedicated their devotions shocks Antigonus into ignoring the King's instructions and preserving her second child's life.⁷⁰ Finally, in the tableau, Hermione takes on the statuesque quality of the many Marian icons which had been systematically defaced by 1611.

⁷⁰ See Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, 'Chaste Bodies: Frames and Experiences,' in Sarah Kay and Miri Rubens (eds.), *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 24-42.

Leontes' admiration of Hermione as Marian effigy is the culmination of his reform from a jealous husband violently destroying female sexuality, which he pathologically misread as unredeemably fallen. Importantly, his publication of Hermione 'on every post' as 'a strumpet' (3.2.99-100), and his concomitant denial of the divine text which defends her chastity, are acts in keeping with the gendered traditions emerging in the new seventeenth-century print culture and their similar depiction of women and texts as Eve. Katharine Eisaman Maus has assessed the reproductive tropes which early modern authors appropriated in order to describe authorship. Maus argues that male use of reproductive imagery was an early modern rhetorical maneuver that ensured textual creation remained the province of men. From her view, the maneuver worked by maintaining the goodness and femininity of reproduction but claiming it for non-biological and male acts of creation, thereby circumscribing and denigrating female biological creation by associating it only with cynical images of midwifery, secrecy, bawdy and deception.⁷¹ In *The Imprint of Gender*, Wendy Wall details the more specific early modern culture of 'prefatorial disclosures' in which reproductive imagery was used in order to disavow authorial responsibility. Taking advantage of the burgeoning economy and technology of the printing press, early modern authors justified their decision to depart from the gentlemanly tradition of manuscript circulation by prefacing their works with elaborate disclaimers. Denying any consent in the unseemly act of pressing and circulating, the prefaces figure the text as an unruly, wanton, or reluctantly debased daughter/lover who willingly or forcibly goes into the arms of another man (the reader) against the authors' wishes.⁷² Neither Maus nor Wall take account of the relevance of the Fall and Virgin Birth narratives to early modern tropes of biological and authorial creation. However, by doing so, the use of reproduction metaphors by early modern authors can, like Leontes' condition, be understood a little differently.

Despite the zealous degree of anti-Marian sentiment in English acts of iconoclasm, theologians and divines, who wrote profusely about the Fall, remained relatively silent on the doctrine of the Virgin Birth—most likely because its scriptural documentation was clear and difficult to refute. Despite commentators' relative silence on the issue, the doctrinal and scriptural truth remained that Mary conceived a child by God. The potential for this fact to undermine the anti-feminist agenda of those writers who adopted reproductive imagery for their own authorial creations while denigrating women's biological capacities demands attention, even if it is something over which we can only speculate. The female act of biological creation from which authorship takes its reproductive tropes is a constantly occurring event, but only once in biblical history did someone produce issue by God, and that person was a woman. Early modern authors might 'create' but the foundation of Christendom rests on the unprecedented act of a woman begetting a child without a man. We can say that Joseph was, in this sense, the greatest of all cuckolds. His status as observer to an act involving only a woman

⁷¹ Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance*, 193.

⁷² Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 169-226: 169.

and God is an experience Adam also knew. In both of the central biblical moments pertaining to chastity and the origins of human life, men were passive: Adam followed Eve into temptation and humanity, and Joseph stood by Mary as she gave birth to the son of God. Female sexuality may have been presented in early modern commonplaces as threatening on the grounds that it was secretive and contaminating but we can speculate that behind these defamatory images hovered the real and much greater threat to early modern masculinity: given that the most important birth in Christendom occurred without a man, female sexuality, reproduction, and creation (both biological and authorial) forever had the potential to render negligible male biological and authorial virility. Since Mary, female reproduction has the capacity to be of greater significance, both divine and human, than anything men can bring into the world.

Leontes exemplifies a common early modern masculine desire to fix Eve as the biblical figure for women and deny them the potency of Mary. To emphasise the earlier story is to emphasise the creative capacity of Adam/man from whose rib God created Eve/woman. Certainly the structure of *The Winter's Tale* requires that Leontes relinquish his view of his wife as Eve and acknowledge her status as a chaste exemplar worthy of precisely the veneration granted her by Paulina in the statue scene, and by Antigonus, whose dream of Hermione's leaky ghost accords her Marian status. However, the play can be read as arguing that it is not enough for Leontes to grant female sexuality its Marian capacity. Instead, it calls for him (and the early modern authors whose philosophy he replicates) also to acknowledge that through Mary's begetting, women's creative abilities were not only rescued from Eve's curse but in fact far outstripped Adam's creative capacity. When God created Eve from Adam's rib, Adam was in 'soporem': an unnatural or supernatural sleep, which the King James Bible translates as 'a deep sleep'.⁷³ Adam's/man's creative act was in fact God's act; the unconscious Adam was completely passive. He woke from his dream to find Eve fully formed beside him. English churchmen had a good deal to say about Eve's creation, though they tended to avoid analysing the fact that Adam slept through it. One popular interpretation of Adam's sleep, which accorded him agency in absence, was taken from Saint Augustine. It reads the scene as a prefiguring of Christ's creation of his spouse, the Church, through his death on the cross.⁷⁴ However, the authorial tradition, documented by Wall, in which authors deny responsibility for their unruly (female) texts does evidence its proponents' awareness that Adam's absence from the creative act is a potential source of anxiety. Figuring themselves as Adam, the new publishing authors defended themselves against the repercussions of circulating their creation by pretending they were asleep or absent during the act of pressing/conception.

⁷³ Genesis 2:21.

⁷⁴ George Abbott, *An exposition upon the prophet Ionah Contained in certaine sermons, preached in S. Maries church in Oxford* (1600), 164. For Augustine's exposition on Psalm 127 see *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, Vol. 8. Edited by Philip Schaff. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1888.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1801127.htm>>.

Leontes' delusion of an edenic world shared with Polixenes rather than his wife can thus be read as a similar act of self-protection through a 'dream' of absence. In their shared prelapsarian fantasy, Polixenes' and Leontes' refusal to acknowledge original sin is a refusal to 'dream' of heterosexual maturity: 'we knew not / The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd / That any did' (1.2.68-70). And in a curious exchange between Hermione and Leontes in the trial scene, she accuses him of delusion: 'my life stands at the level of your dreams'. The narrative of her life has been reduced to the ugly fancies his paranoia has conjured. Leontes responds: 'your actions are my dreams' (3.2.79-80). Does he mean that her actions are too awful for him to accept as real? Or is he refusing responsibility for her actions, denying her charge that he has created or 'published' them illegitimately? (2.1.98). We have seen that when Leontes' jealousy first took hold of him, he described the procreative act by which his affections united with his paranoia as his heart 'communicat[ing] with dreams'. His own shifting assessment of where the line between truth and fancies ought to be drawn is a symptom of his feelings of chaos, his sense that he 'is out'.

Early modern authors' prefatorial sympathy with Adam may have exposed their anxieties about female sexuality and their potentially transgressive or embarrassing 'issue' but, as Leontes' condition suggests, to do so was the lesser weakness. To have taken as a trope for production the chastening and providential narrative of creation—Mary's—might have written men out of the picture completely. It is precisely this sacrifice which *The Winter's Tale* demands of Leontes. The play ultimately requires him to stand and admire Paulina's creation, a work of art so good it appears life-like. It also demands that he be transfixed by wonder when the statue does come to life. While his wonder stems largely from his joy that Hermione is in fact alive, he is also, together with the audience, invited to respond with awe to a creative act which exemplifies and celebrates the female capacity to beget life as much from stone as from flesh. Leontes' admiration marks the resolution of the tropes of legitimate issue and the return of the lost as they operate through the narratives of the Fall and Virgin Birth. The supremely chaste and legitimate issue of the Virgin Birth, the Word made flesh, brought about the ultimate healing or return of humanity to the fullness of sign and meaning which had been lost in the Fall.

The Winter's Tale's celebration of chaste female creation in the statue scene is also fundamentally shaped by the play's roots in medieval liturgical drama, a point which must be considered if the scene's Marian elements are to be fully acknowledged. Without wanting to oversimplify the complexities of scholarship on English liturgical drama's depictions of the three Maries at the tomb, I will say that the discovery of Christ's resurrection by the Maries presented women as central to the revelation of Christ's divinity and humanity's redemption.⁷⁵ By changing from a statue to

⁷⁵ Caroline Walker Bynam has observed that women, or rather femininity, was given far more agency in the play's depiction of Christian mysteries than this observation allows. For her, physicality was the feminine contribution to Redemption. See *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 261-9. For an analysis of tomb scenes in early modern drama, see Elizabeth Williamson, *The Materiality of Religion in Early Modern English Drama* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), 33-70.

a living woman, Hermione enacts the play's transition from an unchaste world, in which Leontes' rigor demands of his wife's body an impermeable stillness and silence and in which his only means for dealing with the threat of her sexuality is to suspect her of adultery, into a truly chaste 'recreation' of the play's relationships. In this, the play confirms Hermione's status as Marian exemplar.

Like their predecessors, the Maries at the tomb, Hermione and Paulina witness divine revelation: 'knowing by Paulina that the oracle / Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserved / Myself to *see* the issue' (5.3.126, italics mine). But Hermione's decision to come back to life in order to witness the miraculous return of her child from apparent death is also the play's most miraculous and divine action itself. As Alexandra Gilbreath discovered, Hermione's decision was a deliberate assent of the will which, like Mary, provided the one seemingly small act of consent on which hangs the play's ability to bring divine wonder into the theatre space. Teresa Coletti has observed that the female body in medieval drama was a crucial material link between popular devotions—the personal, affective acclamations—and the scriptural mysteries of the Passion and Resurrection, enabling a tangible engagement with what is otherwise a textual description of divine and wondrous corporeality. 'As it interrogates Christianity's founding corporeal mysteries, medieval English drama highlights the physical, feminine presences that enabled or attended them, drawing upon exegetical, apocryphal, legendary, and devotional resources to fill in the fragmented picture that Scriptures sketched of these presences'.⁷⁶ Even in liturgical performances in which Christ's body was central, such as the Passion, the body of Mary looking on at him with unremitting devotion was the pattern for all other participants. This feminised embodiment of devotees' experience of the divine will was a form of Marian piety fading from English liturgy in 1611 and, perhaps more slowly, from private devotions. Shakespeare's depiction of the women in *The Winter's Tale*'s statue scene manages to conjure elements of the audience experience described by Coletti while still draining the scene of a too-controversial alignment with the devotions to which its medieval predecessors appealed.

'Christian drama in the West begins with the recognition of a lost body' and the capacity for that body's return.⁷⁷ In *The Winter's Tale* Paulina, Hermione, and Perdita stage and participate in a resurrection scene in which the lost body is not Christ's but that of mother and daughter, and the wonder enacted by the return-of-that-which-was-lost extends not from the mystery of Christ's divinity revealed to his mother, but the revelation of Hermione's humanity, her living body, to her husband and child. By enacting the scene's great mystery among themselves, the play's women bring about the wonder of both a resurrection and a Marian act of chaste begetting. Paulina instructs her work of art, Hermione, to: 'Strike all that look upon with marvel—come, / I'll fill your grave up' (5.3.100-1). She is not only calling Hermione back from the dead—filling up her grave and the graves of those who look

⁷⁶ Teresa Coletti, *Mary Magdalene and the Drama of the Saints* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 204. See also Mimi Dixon, "'Thys Body of Mary": 'Femynyte' and 'Inward Mythe' in the Digby Mary Magdalene,' *Mediaevalia* 18 (1995), 221–44.

⁷⁷ Coletti, *Mary Magdalene and the Drama of the Saints*, 190.

upon the miracle—she is also begetting her from stone by calling life into her. In so doing, Paulina and Hermione embody the divine source of the play’s providential love, drawing into the theatre space an experience of providence as female creation and recreation. By drawing divine truths into a depiction of human experience and creation the play attributes divinity to human acts and relationships: it attributes all the wonder of divine revelation to the women’s restoration of the play’s multivalent pursuit of chastity. Hermione’s reanimation brings the play’s broken relationships back into alignment, but the most crucial of the relationships healed in the moment of the statue’s animation is that between the divine truth spoken in the oracle and the play’s events. By deciding to return to life, Hermione is the agent of this ultimate chaste union. She brings divine truth and providential wisdom into the theatre space with a single movement of her body, with the same ‘yes’ of physical assent which initially so threatened Leontes but which he and all in attendance have by the end of the play come to desire and to wish for against all probability.

The play may feminise the divine will through its agents—Hermione and Paulina—but the miracle produced by the final tableau’s Marian acts of creation are ultimately only human. In *The Winter’s Tale*, the male body which remains absent at the close of the narrative is that of the young Mamillius and the providential gift of a figurative body, the Church, which the absence of Christ’s corporeal body made available to audiences of medieval liturgical drama, becomes instead the near-perfect restoration of a family. *The Winter’s Tale*’s refiguring in its final scenes of the mysteries at the heart of the Resurrection and Virgin Birth is exemplary of Shakespeare’s ability to maintain confessional indeterminacy. His presentation of a Marian statue would have appealed at once to those who still adhered to, or yearned for, Marian piety and those more thoroughly reformed. Shakespeare’s presentation of Marian imagery would have spoken to this latter group because his final scene displaced Marian acts of creation onto, on the one hand, Paulina and Hermione (neither of whom are the mother of God) and, on the other, onto God himself, whose status as the source of providential gift was a truth universally shared among Christians.

Even after English liturgical drama moved out of the sanctuary and away from its initial purpose as ritualised glorification of the host, it continued to have a sacramental function.⁷⁸ For participants, it was a drama in which the divine will was instantiated within their lives and souls. This kind of ‘real presence’ understanding of drama enabled participants to imitate Christ by making the word flesh: it is a kind of drama that united fallen humanity with God’s will. This unity of sign and meaning, of word and flesh, is the perfect realisation of all four tropes of chastity which tragicomedy moves toward in its final tableaux. We can only speculate on the degree to which participants understood their communion with the divine will in the professional Jacobean theatre but it is worth noting that the move indoors, the candle light and soft music, would all have contributed to a greater

⁷⁸ Fischer-Lichte, ‘The Medieval Religious Plays—Ritual or Theatre?’; Sheingorn, ‘Performing the Illustrated Manuscript: Great Reckonings in Little Books’ and *The Easter Sepulchre in England*; Beatrice Groves, *Texts and Traditions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 26-59.

sense of tragicomedy's liturgical glory. In the early modern professional theatre the unchastity of fallen humanity's inability to return to a fullness of sign and meaning, of word and flesh, may have been impossible to heal liturgically but, at the level of its plot, *The Winter's Tale* comes very close to just such chaste reunification in the final tableau. There, the breach between the truth of the play's most important text, the oracle, and the understanding of the oracle's recipients is united not only in a near-perfect unity between the divine will and the comprehension of all creatures, but, through Leontes' successful interpretation of Hermione's sexuality, in the perfect restoration of the relationships whose chastity the oracle affirms. Of all the modes of chastity realised by the play's closing tableau, this unification of heavenly and earthly comprehension, which restores all relationships, is the most powerful and the wonder through which it effects the play's physically and spiritually therapeutic action on the audience is the most direct because it relies not on sophisticated verbal or visual tropes but simply on a providential piece of plotting.

All four tropes of chastity contribute through their final resolution in the statue scene to the tableau's capacity to produce wonder in all present. *The Winter's Tale*, perhaps more than Shakespeare's other late plays, is at pains to describe the feeling of wonder through its effect on the bodies in the theatre space: a transformation which is realised by the movement of spirit into Hermione. The statue 'moves', 'transport[s]', 'stirs', 'amaz[es]', 'breathes', and 'awake[ns]' the 'faith' of onlookers (5.3.88/68/73/87/78). This climactic experience of divine wonder is foreshadowed in the trial scene, when Dion and Cleomenes, returning to court with the oracle's scroll, discuss their experience of Delphi. They marvel at the temple's 'grave' and 'reveren[t]' liturgy, its 'celestial', 'solemn', 'ceremonious' and 'unearthly' acts. The two messengers report that amid all these wonders they were most transfixed by the 'ear-deaf'ning voice o'th'oracle, / Kin to Jove's thunder'. It 'so surprised' their 'sense' that, as Cleomenes says, 'I was nothing' (3.1.1-11). Dion's and Cleomenes' description of the transformation they underwent when in the presence of the divine is as elevated as it is because it immediately precedes Leontes' rejection of the oracle's truth and creates the conditions under which his blasphemy can be experienced as most shocking. M. M. Mahood has noted of Cleomenes' 'I was nothing' that 'the seventeenth-century listener would have recognised in the phrase the self-surrender that was the right prelude to the operation of divine grace'.⁷⁹ Himself so moved by the oracle, Dion is convinced that it will have the same effect on those who hear it read and that Hermione's sullied name will be cleared 'violently':

The violent carriage of it
Will clear or end the business when the oracle,
Thus by Apollo's great divine sealed up,
Shall the contents discover; something rare
Even then will rush to knowledge. (3.1.17-21)

⁷⁹ M. M. Mahood, *Bit Parts in Shakespeare's Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 80.

‘Carriage’ here could refer to Dion’s and Cleomenes’ bearing of the oracle’s text itself, but perhaps also to the manner in which all those present will carry or bear the knowledge of its content in their own minds and bodies. This second reading of ‘carriage’ is in keeping with Dion’s description of the way divine truth is experienced as ‘something rare’ which ‘rush[es] to knowledge’. He depicts knowledge as the result of an interior bodily movement caused by hearing the oracle’s truth, a movement which, like the ‘violence’ of his own reaction to the oracle’s original decree, ‘surprised’ the ‘sense’ as though it were air or breath—or the same animating spirit that Paulina calls into Hermione—rushing into the bodies of those present and altering their carriage.

‘Violent’, ‘surprise’, and ‘nothing’: the somatic experience of awe and wonder is paradoxical. Divine grace is a movement of such degree that it stills the body. When Leontes and Camillo reunite their ‘passion of wonder’ is built even more explicitly from this paradox. ‘There was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture’. In their transfixed state, they ‘seemed almost with staring one on one another to tear the cases of their eyes’. This statue-like state is caused by such a mingling of paradoxical emotion that the emotion itself cannot be named: ‘the wisest beholder that knew no more than seeing could not say if th’importance were joy or sorrow’ (5.2.14-5). In this state, the reunited Leontes and Polixenes are described as having abandoned their features (‘favour’) and have become themselves the transfixed participants of a Delphic rite.

There might you have beheld one joy crown another, so in such manner that it seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their joy waded in tears. There was casting up of eyes, holding up of hands, with countenance of such distraction that they were to be known by garment, not by favour. (5.2.43-9)

Crucially, Leontes is given over to this wonder when he beholds Hermione’s statue. At first he is a stunned and motionless observer, as still as the statue itself. ‘I am ashamed. Does not the stone rebuke me/ For being more stone than it?’ (5.3.37-8).⁸⁰ But when the statue comes to life, Leontes is wholly taken over by a different statuesque experience, one of wonder, and it is left to Paulina to narrate his and Hermione’s embrace.

Wonder is almost always described in the play by an onlooker. Even Dion and Cleomenes, who discuss their own experience, do it once they have returned to court with the distance of time between them and the event. One reason for this is that the intensity of the experience by nature robs those whom it overtakes of their ability to articulate what is happening. Yet, even the onlooker’s descriptions of wonder register his or her inability to describe what they see, such as the Third Gentleman’s uncertainty over which emotion is being expressed by the reunited Kings. The experience of wonder produces a body whose capacity to signify the emotion it embodies diminishes as the extremity of the emotion itself increases. ‘There was speech in their dumbness, language in their very

⁸⁰ For an analysis of textual constructions of the body in states of trance and wonder throughout the middle ages, see Walter Simons, ‘Reading a Saint’s Body: Rapture and Bodily Movement in the Vitae of Thirteenth-Century Beguines’, *Framing Medieval Bodies*, 1-23.

gesture.’ Although the Third Gentleman detects a richly expressive language in ecstatic bodies he cannot decipher its meaning. Wonder is something that must be experienced, that ‘cannot be spoken of’ (5.2.43). It is as close as fallen human beings will get to the chastity of sign and meaning. The play makes this point quite clearly when, at the fulfillment of the oracle, ‘such a deal of wonder is broken out within this hour that ballad-makers cannot be able to express it’ (5.2.20-2).

When it is first read aloud in Act Three, the record of the oracle’s decree does not impress Leontes, who is convinced that his own reading of events is the most true. This is despite Dion’s and Cleomenes’ certainty prior to the trial scene that the moment they read aloud the words of the oracle, something as ‘rare’ as the experience they themselves had at Delphi will ‘rush’ to the knowledge of the king. By so playing on the conceptual pairings of body/text and sex/knowledge, both of which are central to the narrative of the Fall, Leontes’ blasphemous refusal to recognise the legitimacy of the oracle’s divine decree extends from his insistence on the unredeemable fallenness he is ascribing to Hermione, whom he can only read as Eve: a pathological misinterpretation which signals his own need for redemption. However, at the conclusion of the play, when events most suddenly conform to the words of the oracle, the universal experience of wonder is such a ‘rush’ of knowledge that no textual reproduction (by ballad-makers) could be equal to the experience of the event itself. In this typically tragicomic scenario, the wonder of divine grace is enabled by the sudden and unmediated communal comprehension, in both body and soul, of divine truth. In this way, the genre’s providential vision replicates divine order through the tragicomic plot. Both the tragicomic plot and the divine will have their own logic which, though it is usually opaque to human awareness, does break through in signs such as the oracle. When the divine will ultimately reveals itself in the fullness of providence, bringing into being the very outcome most wished for by all in the theatre, it can only be experienced as miraculous. The genre offers its audience a paradoxical and simultaneous cultivation of the inevitability and impossibility of that grace which brings enlightenment to those who did not have faith in it and reward to all those who did.

By putting chastity’s four tropes into conversation with each other—the most prominent pairings being those of bounded bodies and correctly orientated relationships on the one hand and those of legitimate union/issue and the return of the lost on the other hand—Shakespeare enabled *The Winter’s Tale* to benefit from numerous areas of narrative friction between chastity and unchastity. By steadily moving toward its resolution of the conflicts created by each pairing of chastity and unchastity, the play is able to enact what I am arguing were its generically-expected effects on those in the theatre space: a total physiological and spiritual integrity and equilibrium, as described by Guarini, and a wondrous unification of the human and divine wills in the providential events of the statue scene. These two experiences, made directly available to all those present, constituted the ‘tragicomic knowledge’ which the play so successfully realises. As I will go on to show, this tragicomic knowledge was not limited to the stage (though it could perhaps be produced most comprehensively and brilliantly

onstage by a dramatist as adept as Shakespeare); it was a knowledge that also structured the way early moderns understood their world outside the theatre.

The Winter's Tale's roots in medieval liturgical drama meant that its providential vision was, though confessionally neutral, informed by Marian piety and its creation of wonder in the statue scene brought the divine into the theatre space through spectacular and affective means. These qualities appear to have become so associated with the tropes of chastity as to ensure that throughout subsequent decades the tropes continued to be expressed and explored through a political, religious and aesthetic sentiment marked by Catholic or Laudian piety, femininity, an affective apprehension of the divine, and communal participation in the spectacular. This cult of chastity reached its height under Charles and Henrietta Maria in the 1630s, but, as I shall argue in my next chapter, it can be seen operating throughout the 1620s in sometimes unexpected areas.

Chapter Two

Chaste Passions in John Ford's *The Broken Heart* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*

By chastising physiological and spiritual excesses, ruptured relationships, and linguistic and metaphysical disjunctions, *The Winter's Tale*'s cleansing effects on its audience drew them back into that wondrous unification with the divine will which for Shakespearean tragicomedy was the most true and perfect form of chastity available in the earthly realm. Shakespeare's management of this feat is exemplary of his particular kind of humanism: Christian, but neither identifiably Protestant nor Catholic. The chastening effects of *The Winter's Tale* were thus not unlike Shakespeare himself: available and appealing to all but inscrutably resistant to confessional definition. The same cannot be said of John Ford, whose drama gives a little more away. For this reason, I will turn to Ford's *The Broken Heart* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* in order to explore the tropes of chastity within the context of local controversy over doctrine and liturgy. I will also examine Ford's exploration of chastity's relevance to the cultures of medical therapeutics which were developing outside the theaters in the 1620s and 1630s. These two debates were, I think, thrown into especial relief in the plays of John Ford because his interest in highly emblematic stagings of the body—whose baroque presentation far outstrips the tableaux of Shakespearean tragicomedy and the bloody deaths of Jacobean sensationalism—demonstrate an acute awareness of both the medical and the liturgical acts of cleansing expected of tragicomic tableaux. The Ford plays I am treating are currently classified as tragedies but I will be comparing them to Shakespearean tragicomedy rather than Jacobean sensationalism because my analysis of their concern with chastity suggests to me that they in fact share a good deal more with the former category than with the latter.⁸¹ Indeed, when we read *The Broken Heart* through the lens of chastity's key tropes, Bassanes—the jealous husband and, ostensibly, the play's most ridiculous figure—emerges instead as its morally triumphant hero. By approaching Ford's work from a consideration of

⁸¹ Verna Foster also argues that Ford's drama is more indebted to Shakespeare, though in making this claim she refers only to Ford's tragicomedies and not his tragedies, which are my focus. 'Ford's Experiments in Tragicomedy: Shakespearean and Fletcherian Dramaturgy', *Renaissance Tragicomedy*, 97-111: 98. And Marvin Herrick recognised the tragicomic elements of Ford's three great tragedies. Herrick, *Tragicomedy: its origin and development in Italy, France, and England*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), 294-5.

the fact that he wrote his emblematic scenes for both Blackfriars and the Phoenix Theatre, I will be raising questions about how the potentially different spatial arrangements of each were themselves engaging with the spatial implications of local controversies over the new orientation of churches and the anatomy theaters and bear pits which the Phoenix so closely resembled.

The concern this thesis has with locating, through the early modern perception of chastity, the impact of genre on bodies in the audience and the role of tragicomic experience beyond the theatre means that questions about the spatial implications of performance will continue to be important to it. Why, therefore, am I moving straight from Shakespeare's early-Jacobean tragicomedy to the end of the 1620s and not taking into account, for instance, the work of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, whose fraught but prodigious collaboration on court masques produced some of the period's most refined thinking about the differences between image and word and their coordinated effect on those within the performance space? I have done so primarily because the many questions this thesis has about the masque, its role in early modern society, and its relationship to tragicomedy and chastity, will be posed in subsequent chapters' exploration of the Caroline masque. In the 1630s, the decade in which the English court masque realised its most elaborate form, we begin to see 'tragicomic knowledge' or 'chaste knowledge' (seeded in *The Winter's Tale's* reworking of medieval liturgical drama) develop under the influence of Henrietta Maria's Counter-Reformation spirituality into an aestheticised and pietised cult of feminine chastity in which each of the tropes of chastity emerge most clearly as a shaping influence over life beyond the theatre. The other reason for treating Ford immediately after Shakespeare is that in order to trace a line of development from Shakespeare's late plays to the 1630s and 1640s, it is important to demonstrate that aspects of early modern drama and life in the 1620s which might not appear to belong to the tradition of chastity were in fact deeply invested in it. I will therefore be demonstrating that even those plays usually deemed high-tragedy were in fact steeped in chastity's providential vision.

When read as a tragedy, *The Broken Heart* appears to negate each of chastity's tropes: the lovers who throughout the play are obsessed with controlling bodily borders ultimately destroy each other and themselves through ritualised forms of bodily penetration. Their pathological inability to pursue correctly-orientated relationships with each other and with God has devastating consequences. No union is legitimate nor produces legitimate issue since all the play's lovers are thwarted. And the series of deaths at the conclusion of the play seem to cancel any possibility of return or resurrection. However, in its investigation of new medical and liturgical approaches to the staged body, Ford's theatre made considered use of the bodily boundaries trope and in particular that figurative reworking of the trope which was already pervasive in early modern language and culture: the body as incorporated persons within the nation, the Church, and the body politic. Within the period's Eucharistic controversies, the bodily boundaries trope was used to worry the repercussions for Christ's body of sharply divergent Eucharistic doctrines and their liturgical expression. These arguments also

informed Ford's exploration of his lovers' chastity and, through it, of the unity and integrity of the community's incorporation within the Church, the body of Christ.

When it was used figuratively for incorporated communities, the bodily boundaries trope always drew on the trope of chastity as correctly orientated relationships because the vices, which were thought by all branches of early modern English moral theology to derail the integrity of relationships between people and God, were also the cause of division within incorporate bodies. In this sense, lust, adultery, and jealousy in personal relationships had direct repercussions for the integrity of the communal body. As this and subsequent chapters will reveal, the early modern investment in the figure of the body for incorporated peoples shaped the period's tendency to represent all the vices as forms of unchastity, since all personal error unchastened the corporate 'body' in which everyone claimed a moral stake. The most heinous of all errors, and the one depicted in early modern literature and drama through the most vivid images of unchastity, was pride. The unchastity of Leontes' tyrannical pride is an early example of this, but in Ford's theatre the unchastity of pride becomes a very significant problem, which reflected the language being used in those political, theological, and medical controversies developing outside the theatre and which would eventually contribute to the conflicts surrounding Charles I's trial and beheading. Ford's investigation of unchaste passion as a form of pride drew on chastity's trope of bodily borders: both actually, through his lovers' violent bodily assaults on each other, and figuratively through his exploration of how pride damages the integrity of corporate bodies. In what I see as *The Broken Heart's* 'tragicomic' conclusion, Ford also draws on chastity's trope of return. In the same way as we might conclude that Leontes' return from his inordinate penance was a return-of-the-lost initiated by the miraculous return of Hermione and Perdita, so after Bassanes has observed his long penance he is reincorporated into the body of the community: a return-of-the-lost which signals the way forward for Sparta.

Ford's theatre offers a devastating portrait of thwarted human passion and thus of chastity as the virtue governing the correct orientation of relationships and legitimate unions. At first glance, *The Broken Heart* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* place an extraordinary value on chaste nuptial union as an absolute truth. The characters in *The Broken Heart* especially are incapable of existing without their beloved and only death ensures the continuation of their thwarted unions. The play mourns the destruction of passionate, requited love in a world capable of throwing up innumerable obstacles to peaceful unions, and recognises the loss such destruction presents not just for individuals but for the institutional structures by which individuals are incorporated. Ford treats this vision of absolute chaste union tragically in *The Broken Heart* and his treatment has prompted critics to read the play in light of the generic demands of Greek tragedies, which clearly influenced Ford.⁸² Yet the language with which

⁸² Dorothy M. Farr, *John Ford and Caroline Theatre* (London: Macmillan, 1979); Michael Neill (ed.), *John Ford: Critical Re-Visions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Gilles D. Monsarrat, *Light From the Porch: Stoicism and English Renaissance Literature* (Paris: Didier-Érudition, 1984); Reid Barbour, 'John Ford and Resolve,' *Studies in Philology* 86 (1989), 341-366.

the play pursues its ideal of chaste union is also saturated with Christian images of nuptial union, loss, and passion. As such, the play offers a second vision of happiness, which acknowledges that human passion has the propensity to run to extremes: suicide, revenge, envy, possessive jealousy, and the greatest of errors, pride: the elevation and sanctification of human passion to such heights that it is experienced as divine. This second vision recognises that there is only one passion whose extremity increases the happiness of human beings: the passion of Christ. Earthly unions which detract from this knowledge and focus solely on their object prove dangerously misdirected. The play asks such lovers to relinquish their possessive desire, suffer their losses with penitential integrity, and, in hope, seek individual and institutional reparation, unity and continuity.

As critics have noted,⁸³ this second vision owes a great deal to the language of stoicism, with which *The Broken Heart* is familiar, yet the play is also steeped in the somatic and religious imagery of the seventeenth-century baroque and its sources in the Christian vocabulary of penance. When chastity is the lens through which we approach *The Broken Heart's* two visions of happiness, it is possible to see how clearly the one is being asked to convert to the other. Only one character fully awakens from possessive desire to a knowledge of how imperative to the health of the whole community and to God is the just and pure orientation of his heart. His successful conversion is enough to secure the future stability and health of Sparta and through it the play takes on a tragicomic dimension. It is one vision of chastity that propels *The Broken Heart's* tragic trajectory; it is another which allows the play enough comic renewal that 'if words have cloth'd the subject right', the audience 'may partake a pity with delight'.⁸⁴

Gilles D. Monsarrat has observed that Ford's contribution to the Renaissance project of exploring the compatibility of Christian and classical modes of thought, representation, and morality was his keen awareness of the differences between the two traditions. Ford published two non-dramatic works simultaneously in 1613: *Christes Bloodie Sweate* and *The Golden Meane*. The first was a purely Christian poem whose margins were 'studded with nothing but biblical references, while the prose pamphlet borrows silently from Seneca and never quotes the Bible.' Yet Ford deploys the two distinct traditions to similar ends: 'true repentance' in *Christes Bloodie Sweate* and 'self-reformation' in *The Golden Meane*.⁸⁵ Ford's plays were written considerably later but they bear the mark of both the moral and literary traditions he explored in his early non-dramatic work. While the classical roots of Ford's plays have received considerable attention, their debt to the Christian tradition remains under-explored.⁸⁶ As

⁸³ Monsarrat, *Light from the Porch*; Barbour, 'John Ford and Resolve'.

⁸⁴ Prologue, 18-19. All subsequent references will be cited in text and refer to the Oxford edition of the plays: Marion Lomax (ed.), *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁸⁵ Monsarrat, *Light from the Porch*, 236.

⁸⁶ Two studies of the Christian tradition in Ford are Lisa Hopkins, *John Ford's Political Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994) and Bruce Bohrer, "'Nice Philosophy": 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and the Two Books of God', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 24 (1984), 355-371.

this chapter will argue, it is only by examining Ford's drama within the context of Caroline religious disputes and the tropes of chastity that we come to see its difference from that of the Jacobean Sensationalists. It is Ford's particular presentation of highly stylised deaths built from liturgical ritual which sets him apart as a playwright interested in challenging the early modern audience's hunger for the noble suicides of passionate lovers.

In his introduction to the Revels edition of the play, T. J. B. Spencer begins his own interpretation of *The Broken Heart* as though he were intending to investigate its Christian relevance. He notes that the modern interpretation of the phrase 'broken heart'—disappointment in love—occludes the seventeenth-century's 'more solemn meaning': 'utterly oppressed by grief'.⁸⁷ Spencer lists a number of biblical references to broken-heartedness, each of which describe both the human suffering which God relieves and the redemptive gift God gives to humans of his own broken heart. Both forms of suffering deepen the relationship between God and humans. Ford makes an important distinction among the characters of *The Broken Heart*: those who suffer passionate sorrow in such a way that brings them closer to God and the heavenly realm, and those whose passion remains earth-bound and circumscribed within the limits of possessive and self-seeking desire. This distinction emerges most fully in *The Broken Heart* when we understand the crucial theological link between the play's exploration of desire (and its orientation) and the image to which its title refers. Counter-Reformation theologies of the Passion, which were systematised most fully in the iconographics of Jesuit spirituality and grew in popularity throughout the baroque seventeenth century, asserted that when Christ's heart burst for sorrow he sweat blood from his skin. This is, of course, the central image of John Ford's poem *Christes Bloody Sweate*.

The holy and inviolate decree,
In his unchaunging wisdom had appointed,
That true way to happines should bee
Found out in blood, and blood of his annointed:
Whose pure vermilion red, did fairely guild,
Sinn's blacke as night, for whom this lambe was kild.

...

Christes bloody sweate, was that distilling river,
The comfortable *Jordan*, whose faire streames
Did cleanse the *Syrian Naaman*, and deliver
His body from the leprosy extremes:
We all are Naamans leprosy, but more foule,
Till in his bloody sweate he purge our soule.⁸⁸

The violation of Christ's body (both from without, by his accusers, and from within, by his own blood and sweat) produces a 'decree' which is 'inviolable'. This unchanging and indestructible truth is that

⁸⁷ T.J.B. Spencer (ed.), *The Broken Heart* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 32-4.

⁸⁸ *Christes Bloody Sweate*, in Judith M. Kennedy et al (eds.), *The Nondramatic Works of John Ford* (New York: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1991), 109-14, 545-6. All subsequent references will be cited in text.

happiness is 'found out' in Christ's blood. Christians are called to know that most internalised substance of Christ because it 'fairely guild[s]' the same black sins by which he was killed: Christ's blood beautifies the very error which sought to destroy him.

Two ideas crucial to Ford's thinking are contained in the stanzas above. One takes the contemporary medical vocabulary of dissection and Galenic therapeutics—which argue that to violate and inspect the interior of the body is to know the self—and embeds it within the Christian vocabulary of penance and salvation. In so doing, Ford argues that to truly know the self is to know 'Christ our physition' (1115). His reference to the Naaman story from 2 Kings 5 argues that the knowledge gained by searching Christ's blood and waters is greater than that found in the search of one's own bodily excretions because such knowledge brings more than health; it brings salvation. The Syrian Naaman is cured of his leprosy by Elisha, who tells Naaman to bathe in the Jordan. Refusing to believe that the waters of Israel have a greater healing power than those of his own country, Naaman initially rejects the treatment. When he does eventually bathe in the Jordan he is not only cured but converted. Believing our own waters—our own bodies and selves—to be the most important, we are all diseased like Naaman. Ford calls the disease 'leprous extreames' and the healing river 'distilling'. Naaman's pride, a disease even more 'foule' in us than in him, is an extreme that must be distilled, or tempered. Like Naaman, our conversion is a form of chastisement by which we must acknowledge how much greater are Christ's waters (his blood, sweat, tears) than our own, for though our own sweat may purge our bodies, it is Christ's 'bloody sweat' that will 'purge our soule' (369-74).⁸⁹

The stanza's second argument is about Christ's capacity to beautify sin, to transform the sins of those who seek him into 'guild[ed]' virtues. Here Ford adopts a vocabulary which was gaining prominence in the first decade of the seventeenth century when he wrote *Christes Bloody Sweate*, but which came to dominate religious controversy in the following decades when Ford turned to the theatre. In the escalating disputes of the 1620s and 1630s between those Christians who valued the beauty of holiness and the Calvinist iconoclasts who refuted it, the image of gilding was far from innocent. Just as controversial amid the disputes is the suggestion that conversion is available through the search for Christ's blood. On two points this claim is noticeably anti-Calvinist: it assumes that conversion is available to all who seek Christ's blood, rather than to the godly alone, just as it depicts faith developed through works in its description of seeking and finding.

In the decades after he wrote *Christes Bloody Sweate*, Ford explored further in his dramatic works these two vocabularies, the medical and the liturgical/doctrinal. Importantly, his London audiences would have been alerted to the relevance of both vocabularies even before the first act of his plays began. Beeston's Phoenix theatre, where a number of Ford's plays were performed in the late 1620s and early 1630s, evoked in its architectural arrangement alone the capital's most prominent non-

⁸⁹ Later in *Christes Bloodie Sweate*, Ford lists the sins of those 'searching the rules of Phisicke, to disclose/ The treasure that the helpe of Art could yeeld ... Much mischiefe and abuse', line 369-373.

dramatic performance cultures. The Phoenix Theatre was a rebuild of John Best's cockpit, which Beeston acquired in 1616. Under Jacobean building regulations, Beeston was required to retain two thirds of the original structure. His theatre therefore contained the circular, tiered seating and central stage of the original: a structure also being developed at the time as the new model for the anatomy theaters in Leiden and London.⁹⁰ The spatial arrangement of the new theatre drew on the spectator cultures of both dissection and cockfighting: two forms of performance whose bloodiness resonates with Ford's plays.⁹¹

What has not been given sufficient critical attention is the similarity between the new theatre design and the rapid changes to English churches during the Stuart reigns. This dispute is of particular interest to Ford's theatre, not only because his visual tableaux so vividly recall Eucharistic doctrine and ceremony but because he was writing for both Blackfriars and The Phoenix. The orientation of the stage to the audience in these two theatre spaces—the one fixed to the far wall (perhaps even the East wall) and the other in the centre of the playing space—mimicked the two orientations of the altar in what was one of the fiercest seventeenth-century Reformation disagreements.

Moves to restore the decency and order of the country's churches were begun by James I and accelerated under his son, especially after Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury. Throughout Elizabeth I's reign altars had been moved away from their pre-Reformation location—fixed against the east wall—and into the body of the choir or nave. Sometimes, in the most non-conformist Calvinist parishes, the tables were dispensed with altogether. Stuart efforts to beautify liturgy and Church fabrics saw communion tables moved in increments back toward the east wall. However, only in the most Laudian of parishes were the tables fixed to their pre-Reformation place and railed in. Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke have recorded the compromises that were struck at the parish level in order to avoid controversy over the location and dressing of communion tables.⁹² Their findings suggest that by the time Beeston's Theatre was being built, communion tables were often aligned east and west and placed at the centre of the chancel for communicants to gather on all four sides. In the

⁹⁰ John Orrell and Christian Billing have both separately and convincingly argued that the extant plans for Inigo Jones' unnamed theatre are his plans for the Phoenix. Hillary Nunn has followed in the same argument. However, Gordon Higgot, though he has not yet published his findings, has overturned his earlier claim that the designs are Jones', asserting instead that they are by Webb, though signed and approved by Jones. Christian Billing, 'Modelling the Anatomy Theatre and the Indoor Hall Theatre: Dissection on the stages of early modern London', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, Special Issue 13: Computer Modelling of Theatre Spaces, Gabriel Egan (ed.), 1-17; John Orrell, *The Theatres of Inigo Jones and John Webb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Nunn, *Staging Anatomies*, Chapter One.

⁹¹ Billing has argued further that it is plausible Beeston chose the location for his new theatre with the explicit intention of attracting the elite audiences already frequenting the increasingly fashionable area between Covent Garden and Lincoln's Inn Fields, audiences who were familiar with the inside of anatomy theatres. Beeston may well have been 'cashing in on the bourgeois desire to witness anatomical demonstration and hear neo-Platonic, Paracelsian, Catholic, Protestant, Vesalian, Harvean and Cartesian views of the dissected body pitted against one another.' Billing, 'Modelling the Anatomy Theatre', 5.

⁹² Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*, Chapter Five. See also Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour*, Chapters Three and Four and Peter Lake, 'The Laudian Style' in Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, 161-186.

new churches this central stage, surrounded by observers, is notable for its similarity to the new centralised spaces of the Phoenix Theatre, Beeston's cockpit, and the anatomy theaters in Protestant Leiden and London.

By the late-1620s, when Ford's plays were being performed, the spatial arrangements of communion had become highly controversial, with increasing royal support for east-facing railed altars (the spatial arrangement similar to Blackfriars) and a mixed response at the Parish level, with some congregations welcoming, and others resisting, the removal of communion tables from their place amid the congregation.⁹³ In such an environment, the Eucharistic and anatomical tableau played out on either the fixed or centralised stages of the theaters for which Ford wrote can only have accrued more meaning in the minds of his audience. In this context, Ford's consummate use of emblematic staging manages to yoke—not least via the physical space of Blackfriars and the Phoenix theatre—the spectacles of cockfighting and anatomy, and the changes to Church interiors with their attendant interpretations of the Eucharist. Each are performances concerned with assaulting, opening, investigating and defining the nature of the body: the body of the anatomised patient, the savaged gamecock, and the crucified Christ.

'Divorce betwixt my body and my heart': Divisive Passion as Unchastity in the Medicalised body

In his meditation on Jesus' agony in *Christes Bloody Sweat*, Ford describes the Church in Pauline terms as one body which through Christ's suffering receives the greatest of all graces: forgiveness for sins. He asserts that Christ's agony takes away the agony of each communicant and that the destruction of his physical body creates in its place the sanctified body of his incorporated Church: the passions which 'dissolve[d] the frame/ Of his mortallity, the curse and scourge/ He was to beare, from sinners sinne to purge'. Christ's death was a death 'of one' but its effect was to make him, '*all one with all*' (172-4/14-15, italics Ford's).

The Broken Heart does not at first appear to express this joyful vision of spiritual unity and purity extending from the suffering and dissolution of the physical body. For the majority of the play, Ford's characters are beset by fears of division. Lisa Hopkins has noted the anxiety with which the language of Ford's plays express somatic dismemberment and fragmentation, producing 'a terrifying vision of the human body, and indeed the human personality, as no longer integrated but as a potential war zone, in which different parts of the body grapple for mastery ... a Ford character becomes little

⁹³ Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*, Chapters Four and Five.

more than a field of conflict'.⁹⁴ In *The Broken Heart* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* this terrifying vision is constantly expressed through highly emblematic images of the human heart and blood, whose separation from the body articulates the characters' dislocation from their world because of a rupture in the chastity of their relationships. The melancholy Penthea muses on the treachery of fashionable men:

Have 'ee seen
A straying heart? All crannies! every drop
Of blood is turnèd to an amethyst,
Which married bachelors hang in their ears. (4.2.128-31)

Contemplating the cause of her madness, Penthea sees the unchaste, straying heart as an object removed from the body, dried out and emptied of its life-giving, loving, and redemptive functions. From the crannies of such a heart, drops of blood harden so much they turn to amethyst and are worn as trophies by unchaste 'married bachelors'. The most internal spaces of the human body—the deep, internal cavities of the heart—are in this image fragmented into jewels to be worn externally on the ear for all to see. The most secret place is displayed most publicly and gratuitously; the unchaste mode of adornment exacerbates the cold and hard betrayal of love which the jewel signifies. Ronald Huebert is right to point to the Jesuit influence in Ford's image-making: the heart and the ear are the only traces of the human body in Penthea's emblematic vision.⁹⁵ The dominance of sense organs functioning in this image without any reference to the body to which they are attached is striking.

In *'Tis Pity*, Soranzo imagines each drop of his wife's unchaste blood as an entire human body in order that he might kill her endlessly:

Come, strumpet, famous whore! were every drop
Of blood that runs in thy adulterous veins
A life, this sword (dost see't?) should in one blow
Confound them all. (4.3.1)

In both of the above figures the externalised blood is both evidence of a truth contained within the body (its unchastity) and a fantasy of destruction, in which the lover's body is punished for its unchastity. Noting Brian Morris' critically influential observation that the word 'blood' features so prominently in *'Tis Pity*, Lisa Hopkins points to the fact that the word 'knowledge' appears just as frequently. Hopkins rightly argues that the play equates blood with identity and presents the sharing or gaining of blood as knowledge of another. The play's characters express 'an overwhelming need to see the heart, and the conception of it as the repository of truth and identity.' However, 'as Giovanni

⁹⁴ Hopkins, *John Ford's Political Theatre*, 125.

⁹⁵ Ronald Huebert, *John Ford: Baroque English Dramatist* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977), 37.

discovers, to reveal the heart is simultaneously to destroy it.⁹⁶ Hopkins is referring here to the play's final scene, when Giovanni enters with his sister's heart on his blade. But the claim holds true for the siblings' relationship more generally, since their knowledge of each other's blood is so destructive.

The correlation between unchaste knowledge of the body and its destruction is a truth of which early moderns had become more acutely aware since the development of dissection. Before the popularisation of dissection, one only ever glimpsed the interior of the body when violence had been done to it. To know the interior of the cadavers on dissecting tables only exacerbated this awareness, both because the act of dissection is itself an assault on the body and because, as cautious observers of the new medical spectacle argued,⁹⁷ the ogling by spectators is an assault that values their curiosity above the decorum of the body anatomised. Annabella equates knowledge of the body with its destruction in her wry refusal to believe Soranzo loves her:

SORANZO: Did you but see my heart, then would you swear

ANNABELLA: That you were dead. (3.2.23)

Soranzo later returns the image maliciously: 'Not know it, strumpet! I'll rip up thy heart,/ And find it [the truth] there' (4.3.53). In fact it is Giovanni who removes his sister's heart and bears it on the tip of his sword. Giovanni's final rape of Annabella's body exemplifies the extremes of unchastity which the siblings knew in life. His final and literal claim over her heart is both a statement that he knew and destroyed her best and a defense against any other man—especially her husband, Soranzo—knowing or killing her as he has done.

The disassembling of the female body had a powerful literary precedent in Petrarchan love poetry and in the gendered culture of dissection popularised by the anatomised woman on the *Fabrica* title page,⁹⁸ but the cuckold's fixation on his wife's bodily boundaries as a sign of her adultery or chastity also has roots in the theology of vices and their early modern popularisation in the emblem tradition. When Soranzo first confesses his love to Annabella, Annabella's lover/brother, Giovanni, hovers above looking down at them. His gaze is one of possessive jealousy, a gaze Soranzo himself directs toward Annabella, and both Orgilus and Bassanes toward Penthea. In Ford, the cuckold's desire to know and to destroy his wife's or lover's body takes on a particular significance because it is so

⁹⁶ John Ford's *Political Theatre*, 148. See also Lisa Hopkins, 'Knowing Their Loves: Knowledge, Ignorance, and Blindness in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *Renaissance Forum* 3.1 (1998), online: <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/2554/1/Knowingtheirloves.pdf>; John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*', edited by Brian Morris (London: Ernest Benn, 1968), introduction, pp.xxiv.

⁹⁷ See page 60 and 61 below.

⁹⁸ For a discussion of this tradition, see Richard Sugg's "'So Irregular a Passion": Dissection and Female Sexuality' in *Murder After Death* (London and Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 111-129.

situated in his looking upon the woman he wants. The vice of envy, whose Latin root is *Invidia*, means to look upon maliciously. Certainly, the cuckold's gaze is malicious, even murderous. And, as Orgilus himself observes, it 'waste[s]' him (1.3.38). The heart iconography in *'Tis Pity* links the play to envy in the emblem tradition: Ripa's personification of envy is a sallow old woman, looking out at the scene before her, while eating her own heart. Her leanness suggests she can take no other sustenance but feeds instead on her own malicious emotions, her desire for what is not hers. The theological link between looking and bitter self-consumption is one Milton would later articulate in his Satan. The 'devilish engine', through whom all God's good 'wrought but malice', 'back recoils upon himself' and looks maliciously upon the happiness Adam and Eve share in Paradise and the special favour God has shown them. Plotting his temptation 'aside the devil turned for envy ... Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plained. / Sight hateful, sight tormenting!'⁹⁹ Fittingly, the crime into which Satan drew Adam and Eve was excessive knowledge, making them commit his own error so that they, like him, will be self-consumed and envious of that good they can no longer know as entirely as they once did. In Milton, envy of God's greater knowledge led the first parents to pride, to the elevation of their own desires above God and his injunctions. In Ford, Giovanni's envious desire to know and destroy his sister leads him to reject God and elevate his passion and its object to divine heights. Incest fixes sexuality within a closed circulatory system: in wanting to possess his sister and to literally know her blood (both figuratively through intercourse and literally through piercing her body), Giovanni is demonstrating the pride of self-orientated desire.¹⁰⁰

The pride which leads to a belief that one knows that which only God can know was of particular relevance to the new fields of medical knowledge in which Ford's plays are interested. Envy led the first parents to desire erroneous knowledge; Grace led them to yearn for knowledge of God. Early modern defenses of the new medical fields represented the greater knowledge of the human body as a means of increasing one's knowledge of God and his cosmic design and thus basically virtuous.¹⁰¹ Its critics, however, cited the theological link between looking, knowing, and self-consumption. Such criticism usually argued that the craze to know more about the body was dangerously excessive and too much turned toward the self, or rather: in paying excessive attention to the human body, one loses sight of the real and crucial self. The moral argument over the value of the new knowledge was built into its popular materials. English anatomy broadsheets depicting male and female figures whose exterior torsos were drawn on a flap of paper which, when lifted, revealed their

⁹⁹ Book Four, lines 17, 49, 502-5. John Shawcross (ed.), *The Complete Poetry of John Milton* (New York: Anchor Books, 1971), 95, 111. All subsequent references to Milton's poetry will be cited in text and will refer to John Shawcross' edition.

¹⁰⁰ The siblings perform a mock Christian marriage rite in which they vow to love each other faithfully or to die, but this totalising vision is particularly extreme for Giovanni. Bruce Boehrer has noted that he falls into a kind of totemism in which the universe is centered on his sister's body ('Nice Philosophy', 365).

¹⁰¹ For a discussion of this body of work see Chris Laoutaris, *Shakespearean Maternities*, 48 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008) 48.

anatomised interiors, were popularly known as Adam and Eve books. The figures sometimes bore in their hands a sign which read *Nosce Teipsum* (Know Thyself).¹⁰²

Sir John Davies' *Nosce Teipsum* (1599), a poem deeply indebted to the emblem tradition and critical of new fields of knowledge, argued that God's hand had 'written in the hearts' of our first parents 'all the rules of good'.¹⁰³ This complete good was a 'skill infused' which 'did passe all arts' man has developed since the fall. Davies continues with heart imagery, drawing out the connections between the heart, seeing, and knowledge, when he describes Satan's influence on Adam and Eve:

Even then to them the Spirit of Lyes suggests
That they were blind, because they saw not ill ;
And breathes into their incorrupted breasts
A curious wish, which did corrupt their will. (1)

He then describes the mind's search for erroneous knowledge as self-oriented:

No, doubtlesse; for the mind can backward cast
Vpon her selfe, her vnderstanding light;
But she is so corrupt, and so defac't,
As her owne image doth her selfe affright. (5)

This horrifying encounter with the self in turn sends concupiscent man further out into the world in search of ever more erroneous knowledge:

And as the man loues least at home to bee,
That hath a sluttish house haunted with spirits;
So she, impatient her own faults to see,
Turns from her selfe and in strange things delites. (6)

Here, an unchaste curiosity is a kind of envy for those delights which are longed for as a means of avoiding what is most ugly and unchaste in oneself. Such strange delights thus take one out of one's best self while at the same time continually affirming what is erroneous in one's desires. Davies' ambiguous construction, 'So she, impatient her own faults to see', captures the double pull which directs erroneous desires both away from and toward the self. Like Ripa's Envy, the man in Davies' passage eats out his own heart while looking fondly at, and seeking to know, what is not his. So caught between his worst self and all the good things he perceives in the world, he fails to know what is most

¹⁰² Laoutaris, *Shakespearean Maternities*, Chapter One.

¹⁰³ John Davies, *Nosce teipsum this oracle expounded in two elegies, 1. Of humane knowledge, 2. Of the soule of man, and the immortalitie thereof* (London, 1599), 3. All subsequent references cited in text by page number.

good in himself: that best of inventions, which Davies refers to as the heart, the 'clocke within our breastes' (5):

And while the face of outward things we find,
Pleasing and faire, agreeable and sweet;
These things transport, and carry out the mind,
That with her selfe her selfe can never meet. (6)

The envious desire for excessive knowledge of another's (actual or figurative) heart, which ultimately devours the self, is epitomised by Ford's incestuous and anatomising lover, Giovanni. *'Tis Pity* opens with the Friar warning Giovanni that 'better 'tis/ To bless the sun than reason why it shines' (1.1.10), and ends with Giovanni collecting on his blade the hearts of his sister, his rival, and himself.

Giovanni had once been the Friar's best pupil, yet now he has 'left the schools/ Of knowledge, to converse with lust and death' (1.1.57-8). Davies' understanding that the true self is located in the human heart is something *'Tis Pity* also knows well. The play's interest in knowledge and the body is such that, even more than *The Broken Heart*, it figures the disassembling of the body, the breaching of the body's boundaries, not just as a sign of unchastity but as a means of gaining knowledge more generally. Giovanni is shocked when the Friar condemns his incestuous lust, believing that his utter frankness should meet with greater sympathy. He complains that he has 'unclasped' himself and 'emptied the storehouse of my thought and heart' (1.1.14), a claim that Soranzo will later make to Annabella when he too does not receive the sympathy he expects (3.2.25). In their error, they believe that what they feel the most, their passion for erroneous knowledge, is the truth written on their hearts and therefore is necessarily good. Having been exposed to the 'truth' of Giovanni's incestuous heart, the Friar instructs his pupil to engage in a different kind of self-assault:

Hie to thy father's house, there lock thee fast
Alone within thy chamber, then fall down
On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground;
Cry to thy heart, wash every word thou utter'st
In tears, and, if't be possible, of blood;
Beg heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust
That rots thy soul. (1.1.69-75)

This penitential vision of opening the body in order to cleanse it of disease and to unlock its most fundamental and chaste knowledge relies on a belief in the salvation made possible by Christ's blood and tears. In the penitential vision of the body, its porousness—which in early modern commonplaces about women is a sign of their unchastity—becomes instead the means by which one purges sin and gains knowledge of God. That is, for the penitent, the body opened becomes a sign of chastity as correctly orientated relationship with God rather than its opposite. When she comes to confess, the Friar gives Annabella the same instructions he gave her lover: 'I am glad to see this penance; for believe

me,/ You have unripped a soul so foul and guilty ... But weep, weep on;/ These tears may do you good. Weep faster yet' (3.6.1-5).

We have seen in *Christes Bloody Sweate* Ford's early vision of how erroneous the search for physical health through purgation can be when the greater healing of Christ's purged body is forgotten. Externalising the interior body through the study of one's fluids was particularly popular in England. Jonathan Sawday's *The Body Emblazoned* has in the last decades directed critics of early modern literature to the importance of what he terms the 'culture of dissection': developments in medical knowledge and technologies, the growing popularity of public dissection, the explicit renderings of the inside of the body by artists like Rembrandt, and anatomical texts filled with vivid illustrations of anatomised bodies.¹⁰⁴ Yet, as Deborah Harkness has pointed out, this culture was most pronounced in the city of Padua and there is little evidence to support the claim that a comparable culture of dissection existed in England.¹⁰⁵ Public anatomies did take place in Oxford, Cambridge and in London at the College of Physicians and Barber-Surgeons' Hall, but they were not as regular or spectacular as those in Padua and did not attract Padua's staggering numbers. Harkness argues that the 'body curiosity' in Protestant England expressed itself through a culture of therapeutics 'that was centred on a subjective study of one's own body rather than a nominally objective eye-witnessing of the dismemberment of someone else's body'. Michael Schoenfeldt shares this view: 'Galenic medicine' he claims, 'led individuals to a kind of radical introspection'.¹⁰⁶

Both the culture of dissection and the culture of therapeutics involve opening the body, but the latter was practiced in the main by individuals themselves, under instruction from their physicians, administering at home the means by which to open the body through excretions of urine, vomit, blood, sweat, and excrement in order to observe the movement of humours. Purges were the study of the living body whose interior state was replicated in externalised signs—a very different form of physiological awareness to the scrutiny of bodies destroyed and opened. A supporter of therapeutics over anatomy, Bacon claimed that: 'in the inquirie which is made by Anatomie, I finde much deficiencie: for they enquire of the Parts, and their Substances, Figures, and Collocations; But they enquire not of the Diversities of the Parts; the Secrecies of the Passages; and the seats or neastling of the humours'.¹⁰⁷ Jonathan Sawday argues that Bacon's claim is a sign of his ignorance about the continental culture of dissection, but Harkness suggests instead that it reflects Bacon's understanding of that culture and his dismissal of it on the grounds that it failed to sufficiently uncover the secrets of the

¹⁰⁴ Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture*, 1996).

¹⁰⁵ Harkness, 'Nosce Teipsum: Curiosity, the Humoural Body and the Culture of Therapeutics in Late Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century England', 176.

¹⁰⁶ Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England*, 1-22.

¹⁰⁷ M. Kiernan (ed.), *The Advancement of Learning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 99.

body.¹⁰⁸ I find more productive here Harkness' findings that domestic therapeutic practices, which privileged the externalising signs of humoral movements around a living body as markers of its health, were certainly pervasive. Indeed, one of England's greatest and most controversial contributions to early modern knowledge of the body was William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood through the heart and veins: a discovery achieved by observing the externalised movements of fluids in a living subject rather than the anatomising of a cadaver.

Ford arguably references this discovery explicitly in one of *The Broken Heart's* emblematic death scenes.¹⁰⁹ Harvey's treatise was published in 1628, making it coincident with the years Ford was working on *The Broken Heart*, and although it was not translated into English until some years later, Harvey's Latin is grammar-school Latin, easily accessible to Ford. The treatise offers a description and a diagram of how to draw blood and Harvey's method is precisely that which Orgilus himself follows when he kills himself. Condemned to die for his murder of Ithocles, Orgilus selects phlebotomy, a fitting means by which to purge himself and his community of his crime. Seated in a chair centre-stage, he asks for a staff to clench in his hand so as to assist the passage of his blood from his open vein. This is, of course, exactly how Harvey demonstrated his discovery of the circulation of blood in the anatomy theaters to which Beeston's Phoenix was architecturally allied. Harvey's popular print image (taken from Fabricius) with which he demonstrated the flow of blood depicts veins running along a flexed arm, extended away from the body and clutching a staff in its fist.

Debates about the relative chastity of the two means by which early moderns could 'know' and 'see' the interior of the body hovered behind Ford's staging. This was especially the case in Beeston's Phoenix Theatre which so recalled the centralised stages of early modern dissections and of Harvey's demonstration of the circulation of the blood.¹¹⁰ In *'Tis Pity*, performed at the Phoenix, the figure of a pierced heart is used to pose the play's questions about chaste and unchaste knowledge, or self-cleansing, penitential passion versus the envious passion that feeds on itself while seeking to anatomise another. Those characters who most influence Annabella's unchastity, Giovanni and Soranzo, deploy the figure of a pierced heart in order to do so whereas the Friar, the only voice calling Annabella to contrition, uses the same image to chastise her and convince her of her crime. Both forms of the image assume that the heart is the source of truth and, when viewed together, constitute

¹⁰⁸ Harkness, 'Nosce Teipsum', 191.

¹⁰⁹ Terri Clerico argues that Ford's treatment of the flow of blood within the contained circuit of incestuous love is indebted to his awareness of Harvey's discovery in 'The Politics of Blood: John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *English Literary Renaissance* 22:3 (1992), 405-434.

¹¹⁰ Harvey studied in Padua, in the anatomy theaters which Inigo Jones visited in the 1590s. For scholarship on the importance of architectural resonances between anatomy theaters and the English popular theatre, see Nunn, *Staging Anatomies*. For the theatricality of Padua's anatomies see Cynthia Klestinec, 'Civility, Comportment, and the Anatomy Theater: Girolamo Fabrici and His Medical Students in Renaissance Padua', *Renaissance Quarterly* 60:2 (2007), 434-463.

an argument about the nature of erroneous and chaste knowledge not dissimilar to early modern arguments about the value of new medical technologies.

Giovanni first imagines his heart pierced with a blade when he professes his love for his sister. Offering her his dagger and exposing his chest, he cries: 'strike home!/ Rip up my bosom, there thou shalt behold/ A heart, in which is writ the truth/ I speak' (1.2.211). Where Eve led Adam into trespass, here Giovanni draws his sister into incestuous love, a knowledge and 'truth' which she too has felt but of which she dared not speak. Unlike her brother, Annabella is periodically repentant and in her first confession, the Friar confirms the unchastity of her deed by deploying the same figure Giovanni used in his 'marriage' proposal to his sister. Seeking to represent to Annabella the horrors of her damnation, the Friar argues that when in hell, she 'will wish each kiss [her] brother gave,/ Had been a dagger's point.' It is the Friar's use of Giovanni's own passionate image which moves Annabella to contrition more than any of his gruesome and highly emblematic images of damnation. The Friar immediately reads the change in Annabella: 'But soft, methinks I see repentance work/ New motions in your heart; say, how is't with you?' (3.7.27). Giovanni exposes his heart to be ravaged in order to press on Annabella how true his love is. In doing so he is claiming that he must know her or die and Annabella's requital is therefore posited by him as an act of rescue. The Friar, however, reverses this argument. He uses the image of a pierced heart to rescue Annabella, arguing instead that it is her excessive knowledge of her brother which is the dagger to her heart.

The Friar's penitential use of the image affects Annabella so much that when the image next surfaces it has become in her mind a figure for her contrition. Here again, it is associated with differing kinds of knowledge. The dissembling Soranzo convinces her that his love plumbed her heart, 'and, as I thought, thy virtues', whereas her lover, he argues, only 'doated on the picture that hung out/ Upon thy cheeks, to please his humorous eye'. Annabella reacts passionately to the suggestion that Soranzo read virtue in her heart, because she knows that in truth that is where her crime is written: 'O, my lord!/ These words wound deeper than your sword could do' (4.3.125-9). When locked in Soranzo's tower and unable to confess her sin, Annabella pierces her veins and writes her confession in her own blood. Her action has three purposes: it is an attempt to purge herself physically of her unchastity, to alert the Friar to her need for absolution, and to make known the truth of her contrition by writing it with the substance of her deepest self. Annabella writes her penitence in blood so as to announce that it is her true passion, thus aligning herself with the Friar's chaste rendering of the figure of the pierced heart and denying her complicity in the unchaste use with which Giovanni deploys it. Giovanni, of course, cannot accept such a rendering of the figure. He only understands pierced hearts as the suicidal alternative to the joy of their requited love. He refuses to acknowledge the verity of Annabella's confession, even while he reads it in her blood, because it signifies the greatest of arrows pointed at his heart:

'Tis her hand,
I know't; and 'tis all written in her blood.
She writes I know not what. Death ! I'll not fear
An armed thunderbolt aim'd at my heart. (5.3.31-3, italics mine)

Finally, the Friar offers Giovanni that chaste rendering of the image which so affected Annabella: 'thy blindness slays thee' he argues (5.3. 22). And so it will.

It is Giovanni's rendering of the figure that ultimately triumphs when he stabs Annabella in the heart. Yet early in this decisive scene, the Friar's redemptive interpretation of the image struggles for a place. Although Giovanni rejects the Church's moral teachings and his old tutor, he nonetheless tells his sister to pray when he comes upon her in her chamber. He does so because he means to kill her. But she, having associated herself with the Friar's understanding of pierced hearts as redemption, believes Giovanni has also been chastised. Annabella's 'I see your drift' is usually glossed as her recognition that her brother has come to kill her (5.5.66). But this reading makes no sense given that when Giovanni later says farewell to Annabella, she assumes he means to leave the room (5.5.81). 'I see your drift' immediately precedes Annabella's prayer for angelic protection, not because she realises she is about to be murdered but because, having spent so many long hours alone in penitence, she assumes her brother's desire for prayer is a sign that he has repented also. This moment sees each sibling interpreting oppositely Annabella's heart: blinded by his envious and unchaste passion, Giovanni believes her prayer is preparing her for the final act of their unchaste knowledge and destruction of each other; contrite and purged of her sin, Annabella assumes that her brother wishes her to pray because he too has experienced the chastity gained by repentant purging. But the moment passes, and Annabella is drawn definitively into Giovanni's reading of her pierced heart.

Giovanni violently actualises the play's most prominent image when he enters the banquet with his sister's heart on his blade. He then reads the final instance of the image as his doing rather than Christ's, and as the destruction of an erroneous, unrepentant and envious lover, not the purging of a penitent soul. 'These hands have from her bosom ripped this heart,' he cries. 'Beh[old] the rape of life and beauty/ Which I have acted'. 'Tis a heart,/ A heart my Lords, in which is mine entombed', 'a love, for whose each drop of blood/ I would have pawned my heart'. 'This dagger's point ploughed up/ her fruitful womb, and left to me the fame/ Of a most glorious executioner'. 'The glory of my deed/ Darken'd the mid-day sun, made noon as night'. The final gruesome image of pierced hearts collecting on one blade literally joins all three characters in their unchastity and visually confirms the figure of the pierced heart as signifying envious and destructive knowledge (5.6.58;20;26-7;101-2;32-3;21-2). Annabella's spilt blood, Giovanni claims in a telling pun, has not purged her but has instead 'gilt' himself (5.6.67). All vestige of Annabella's and the Friar's understanding of pierced hearts as chaste, penitential passion have vanished, and are finally swept

aside by the corrupt Cardinal's glib closing judgement that the entire tragedy has extended from Annabella's unchastity alone: "Tis pity she's a whore' (5.6.159).

'Digging for Food': Feasting, Sacrifice, and the Chastity of Christ's Body

Controversy in the late 1620s over new medical technologies—which questioned the chastity of the exposed and purged body but also the chastity of knowing and seeing such a body—was a field of early modern discussion quite distinct from the theological and doctrinal debates about the chastity of Christ's body in divergent Eucharistic doctrines and liturgical practice—a debate to which I will now turn. What both discussions shared was their concern with chastity as a virtue capable of governing both the body's boundaries and the correct orientation of relationships and a recognition that pride, the most extreme form of erroneous relationship, led to the total destruction of bodily integrity. Ford's drama derives so much of its moral impact and complexity from these tropes of chastity, effortlessly referencing distinct areas of early modern life through them, that I believe we ought to read his particular use of the tropes as evidence that they possessed an increasingly independent life of their own in the language and moral consciousness of many early moderns.

If the pride of Ford's lovers can be understood, through the popular medical imagery to which the plays refer in both their language and staging, as a supreme form of unchastity as erroneously-orientated relationships between humans and between humans and God, then so much more is their pride evidenced in the plays' references to avant-garde theologies emerging in the 1620s and 1630s. Within the new Laudian theologies of the Eucharist, and the Calvinist arguments raised in opposition to them, the pride of Christians who dealt unchastely with the body of Christ was a major issue. The relevance of the controversy to Ford's theatre is clear when we note how central to his plays are banquets at which the central characters' unchastity is revealed and their deaths sacrificially and ritualistically enacted. In their engagement with this controversy, Ford's plays make full use of the moral interplay between unchastity as erroneous relationships and as the breached boundaries of collective bodies.

Increasingly throughout the 1620s and 1630s the Eucharistic prayer had become a major focus of dispute between Calvinist iconoclasts, especially non-conformists, and those anti-Calvinists who aligned themselves closely to Archbishop Laud's and Charles I's reassertion of the beauty of holiness. The Elizabethan Prayer Book refers variously to the place at which the Eucharist is prepared as a table, an altar, and the Lord's board. Throughout the Tudor reigns, however, controversy over such titles was growing. By the 1620s and 30s, table and altars—both the objects and the terms—had come to signal which side one took in a doctrinal dispute whose significance to the drama of the Stuart

reigns has been given little attention. The English dissemination of Calvin's denial of transubstantiation resulted in the official reinterpretation of the Eucharist as commemorative prayer, which enabled spiritual (rather than material) participation in the body of Christ and through which Christ's promise to his disciples was recalled (rather than fulfilled). The prayer ceased to be seen as a repetition of Christ's sacrifice and became instead a commemorative meal which took place at a simple table like that on which Christ himself broke bread. Christ's promise to those who gathered to eat his body and drink his blood was no longer fulfilled through the substance of the bread and wine but through the grace of faith, which was to be understood as nourished more by Christ as word than as word made flesh. For those who adhered strictly to the doctrine of predestination, the Eucharist was thought to bring succor and support to all, but its sanctifying grace was limited to the elect. However, a growing community of anti-Calvinist Laudians in the 1620s and 1630s, favoured a reintroduction of deference to the Eucharistic prayer through the beautification and sanctification of the altar at which it was prepared. In Laudian parishes, cups became chalices again, decorative fabrics were reintroduced, and crucifixes returned to their place at the altar. Careful to maintain a distinction between reverencing the Eucharist and believing it to be the transubstantiated material body of Christ, advocates of the 'beauty of holiness' nonetheless held that Christ's sacrifice of himself to his people was an event through which grace was made available to communicants and thus demanded due respect. Advocates of the beauty of holiness were not always anti-Calvinists but reverence to the Eucharist often stemmed from a belief that Christ's promise at the last supper was made to everybody and that no special community of believers had been predestined by God.¹¹¹ Both sides of the dispute over whether the Eucharist was a banquet or a sacrifice were anxious to maintain the chastity of Christ's body. Calvinist non-conformists perceived the superstitious reverence for the Eucharist and its availability to ungodly reprobates as the whorish adornment and debasement of Christ's body, while anti-Calvinists perceived the casual commemorative meal and its limitation to the few self-styled elect as an irreverent violation of the integrity of Christ's body. In their extreme forms, both views held that the errors of the other repeated the crucifixion of Christ rather than participating in the graces his crucifixion afforded believers.

Lisa Hopkins has argued for the possibility that Ford was a Catholic by tracing his Catholic connections and the Catholic implications of his plays' highly-wrought imagery.¹¹² But we ought to be more cautious in this regard now that, thanks to the work of Kenneth Fincham, Nicholas Tyacke, Peter Lake, Graham Parry, and Anthony Milton, we have a more nuanced understanding of changes in liturgy and doctrine during the decades preceding the Civil Wars. This work has revealed just how

¹¹¹ Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*; Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour*; Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*; Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1995).

¹¹² Hopkins, *John Ford's Political Theatre*.

Catholic was the worship of anti-Calvinist advocates of the beauty of holiness, and subsequently many of those elements in Ford which might once have struck us as Catholic could just as easily, and certainly less controversially for Ford, have been indications of his preference for the high rituals of Laudian Protestantism. Ford's theatre exhibits an almost excessive amount of ritualised spectacle. Although we can hardly say that the rituals themselves are presented by Ford as right or good, I do believe they are evidence of his sympathies for Laudian worship.

Through their self-annihilation, Orgilus and Penthea rehearse the devastation of Christ's death but ignore the supreme gift believers understood as being made available by it: the Eucharist.¹¹³ In so doing they express the hunger of communicants who felt shut out of the grace and sustenance provided by a Eucharist understood as materially efficacious.¹¹⁴ To Orgilus, Penthea's love is a banquet he can see and smell but never consume:

All pleasures are but mere imaginations,
Feeding the hungry appetite with steam
And sight of banquet, whilst the body pines,
Not relishing the real taste of food:
Such is the leanness of a heart divided. (2.3.34-8)

For Penthea, this starvation becomes all too real: she refuses to eat until she dies. Lesel Dawson has located Penthea's self-starvation within the tradition of love-sickness and melancholia, and indeed, the lovers are both aware of this tradition.¹¹⁵ Penthea believes the adulterous pollutant that so infects her is a direct result of her not getting the kind of sustenance which, in her fixation on absolute chaste nuptial union, she thinks she needs: Orgilus. However, her self-denial, though legitimate in Galenic terms, is not only dangerous but theologically alarming. Penthea is told that to 'not eat' is the action of a 'monster', and that she will become 'a murderess to thyself' if she 'refuse the only ordinary means/ Which are ordained for life' (4.2.156-8). To refuse herself earthly food is distressing within any moral praxis but, from an anti-Calvinist perspective, to refuse herself the grace available in the Eucharist is most alarming indeed.

¹¹³ Although Michael Boyd's 1994 interpretation of the play emphasised the demands stoicism places on the emotional life of the play's characters, his staging showed an understanding of the Christian imagery to which I refer. The set of Boyd's production for the Royal Shakespeare Company included an elaborate banquet which was never enjoyed and ultimately wasted when the swan which was the centre-piece of the feast was finally disemboweled and strung up by its neck, its gushing blood tainting the rest of the uneaten food. Kristin Crouch, 'The Silent Griefs Which Cut the Heart Strings': John Ford's *The Broken Heart* in Performance,' in Edward J. Esche (ed.) *Shakespeare and his Contemporaries in Performance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 261-274.

¹¹⁴ As Lesel Dawson has shown, both Penthea and Orgilus equate their appetite for each other with their appetite for food. Dawson, *Lovesickness and Gender in Early Modern English Literature*.

¹¹⁵ In their self-annihilation, they have recourse to popular treatments of love-sickness. Orgilus rids himself of both his crime and his life by purging his veins of tainted blood. Feeling herself to be polluted by her own unchastity, Penthea mourns that her 'blood is seasoned' and contaminated by a fullness, 'whose pluriety hath severed faith and modesty'. She vows that her blood will 'be henceforth never heightened/ with the taste of sustenance' (4.2.148-14).

After he has avenged Penthea and murdered her brother, Orgilus is condemned to a death of his own choosing. He chooses phlebotomy and, seated centre-stage, opens his veins and bleeds to death. Although in this scene he does not refer to his death as a cleansing of infection, he earlier claims that ‘griefs will have their vent’ (4.1.116), and, after Orgilus has confessed his crime to his sovereign, she refers to him as the ‘bloody relater of thy stains in blood’ (5.2.77). Renaissance commonplaces concerning blood and its relative cleanness would have alerted early modern audiences to the fact that the death of both lovers was a cleansing of the body politic.¹¹⁶ Fixated with the chastity of their thwarted union, the two lovers refuse sustenance and ultimately destroy themselves by a desire to be cleansed and to cleanse their society of the disease with which their own divided bodies have been infected. While such cleansing is right and good within the vocabulary of Galenic therapeutics, it is from the point of view of Eucharistic theology misguided, especially when that theology is articulated from an anti-Calvinist position. By refusing to eat of Christ’s broken body the lovers refuse communion back into their society. Instead, they seek to cleanse their society by removing themselves from it and remaining ever-isolated. As I hope to show, Ford presents their refusal as a tremendous act of pride.

‘It sparkles like a lusty wine new broacht’ Orgilus observes of his blood as he opens his veins. ‘The vessel must be sound from which it issues’ (5.2.125-6). Seated in a chair with his arm outstretched and clutching a staff to encourage the flow of blood, Orgilus is demonstrating his knowledge of Harvey, and of the Galenic medical system in which the soundness of his blood attests to the soundness of his body.¹¹⁷ But in using the image of wine he is also placing himself amid the other very prominent contemporary concern for the just fit of Christ’s blood with its vessel. One of the main objects which distinguished an altar from a table was the vessel which held the blood of Christ: on altars, a chalice; on tables, a cup. The one is appropriate for a sacrificial ritual in which the wine has a material effect on those who partake of it, the other is no more than a commemorative meal. Orgilus’ claim for the soundness of fit between his blood and its vessel is not in itself an assertion of either doctrine, but he goes on to assert that the ritualised release of his blood has a crucial effect on the

¹¹⁶ Dawson, *Lovesickness and Gender*, 165.

¹¹⁷ Orgilus deploys both the Galenic and the liturgical vocabularies to emphasise his understanding of the relationship between moral health and bodily soundness. It is odd, therefore, that his blood should be so ‘sparkling’ with health when Lucrece, in Shakespeare’s *Rape of Lucrece* (1594), and Corsa, in Davenant’s *The Cruel Brother* (1630), both display in their blood the taint of their unchastity. Lesel Dawson has argued that the instances of tainted blood in early modern drama evidence Galenic medical thinking on gender: it is only women’s blood that is tainted by unchastity, though men’s blood is heightened by passion. Where women’s blood records physically their taint, men’s does not (*Lovesickness and Gender*, 164-172). Yet, Philip Melanchthon in *De Anima* (1540), Philip Stubbes in *Anatomy of Abuses* (1583) and Henry Burton in *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), all detail how lust corrupts the inside of the body and though Burton refers to the rotten insides of a lustful woman, Melanchthon and Stubbes are not specific about gender (see Laoutaris, *Shakespearean Maternities*, 75). Perhaps Orgilus’ insistence on the health of his blood is part of his self-justification: he may have lusted for Penthea but he did so because she was rightfully his wife. His murders, however, cannot be so justified.

health of all Sparta and thus that he interprets his own death as a sacrifice through which his country is cleansed.

The extent of Orgilus' unchaste pride is evidenced when, letting out the 'wine' from his veins, he refers to the act as broaching: a term as much in use for piercing skin as piercing wine casks. He also uses the term in scene one when he rehearsed to his father the divisions that had so ruptured Sparta and his own happiness in love. There, it was 'quarrels' and 'dissension', 'fury and rage' that had 'broached in blood' (1.1.17-8). In Orgilus' first use of the figure, Sparta is the body from which unrest draws blood. We could therefore read Orgilus' second use of the term at his own bloodletting as a sign that he believes his death redresses all former discontent. The view is in keeping with his own commonplace assumption that he is cleansing the body politic of his crime, but in such a way that evidences his belief that he has been pursuing a noble goal throughout the play's action. Even while he acknowledges his guilt, Orgilus is at pains to show the heroic martyrdom of his suicide, as though it, and the murders that led to it, were the only means by which Sparta could be restored to health.

To fully understand the degree to which Orgilus' intention can be read as an argument for his erroneous pride requires we revisit two lines which the Quarto of 1633 ascribes to Orgilus at his bloodletting, but which Spencer, in the Revels edition, gives instead to two bystanders: 'Honourable infamy' and 'desperate courage' (5.2.123). When Orgilus attributes honour and courage to his own death, we are less likely to share his views than we are if they are given to bystanders. This is as it should be, since we are also, therefore, less likely to believe his description of his blood as sparkling with health. It is entirely in keeping with Orgilus' own erroneous logic that his blood should be a shining testimony to his honourable cleansing of Sparta. His own death, and the crime that led to it, are ritualised spectacles which recall Eucharistic ceremonies. Ford's audiences knew that such ceremonies ought properly to attest to the glory of God but for Orgilus, poisoned as he is by pride, they instead celebrate his own glory. In case we didn't get the point, he asserts that:

This pastime
Appears majestic; some high-tun'd poem
Hereafter shall deliver to posterity
The writer's glory and his subject's triumph. (5.2.131-4)

In *'Tis Pity*, Giovanni also makes claims for the heroism of his own actions: 'Why this was done with courage. Now survives/ None of our house but I, gilt in the blood/ Of a fair sister' (5.6.66-8). He has 'digg'd for food' in his sister's body and found a heart, which 'trimmed in reeking blood/ That triumphs over death' (5.6.10-11). A spectacular example of Giovanni's pride, this phrase assumes the blood that triumphs over death is not Christ's but that of the lover he adores. He is trimmed (decorated and ornamented) in that blood which he has spilled in a sacrifice to human passion. Orgilus and Giovanni, like Ford's other broken-hearted lovers, exemplify the error Ford himself detailed in *Christes*

Bloodie Sweate: they imagine that the purging of their own body, and the elevation of their love, have taken on that level of significance which ought to be attributed only to the purging and loving self-sacrifice of Christ's body. They are those Platonic 'schollers' who Ford criticises directly in his 1615 poem for rejecting their tutors and believing their knowledge so great they start to pen unchaste and 'smooth beguiling rimes' about their own heroism (350-66): Orgilus' 'high-tune'd poem' and Giovanni's 'tribute which my heart/ Hath paid to Annabella's sacred love' (5.556-7).

The Eucharistic rituals which Ford's proud lovers abuse fitted the stages on which they were played. The death scenes of *The Broken Heart* require thrones, candles, veils, and the refinement and adornment sympathetic with that celebration of the Eucharist which the Blackfriars' fixed altar or stage recalls. In *'Tis Pity*, however, Giovanni's savage and bloody anatomy of his sister takes place on the centralised stage which recalls both medical anatomies and the less-exalted celebration of the Eucharist chosen by those churches which resisted Laud's and Charles's mandate for a fixed and railed altar. While Ford's different treatment of unchastity on each stage does not in itself reveal anything of his own liturgical and doctrinal preferences, it does confirm that he was very aware of the intricacies of the Eucharistic debate. Each spatial orientation had equal potential to remind audiences of local debates about the relative chastity of Christ's body on the altar because all sides of the Caroline Eucharistic dispute were suspicious of abuses of ritual: Calvinists of what they saw as superstitious idolatry and a too-external form of worship and anti-Calvinists of an irreverent neglect of respect and beauty.

Ford's blasphemous lovers and their proud abuses of ritual could therefore be attributed to either of these positions. Their unchastity could be said to stem as much from their failure to maintain the reverence of ritual as from their persistence in observing rituals that are deemed fundamentally corrupt. However, we must remember that one of the most visually and spatially significant differences between all pre- and post-Reformation Church interiors, despite the orientation of their altars, was the replacement of devotional statuary with memorials to prominent members of the parish. What had been a 'spiritually significant space' became in the Elizabethan and Jacobean Church a 'socially privileged space'.¹¹⁸ Anti-Calvinist innovators perceived this change as a sign of erroneous human pride and sought to reverse it by transforming churches back into monuments to God's sacrificial love. A parallel criticism exists in Ford's theatre. His characters ask us to accept their deaths as heroic, but the plays encourage us to think otherwise. The apparent cleansing of Orgilus' and Penthea's blood through purging, and of Annabella and Giovanni through pierced hearts, is in fact a most tragic loss since it evidences the characters' continued misconception about the primacy of their passion, and the pride which sees them commemorate their own glorious sacrifice rather than God's.

¹¹⁸ Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour*, 87.

Ford depicts his erroneous lovers' pride definitively through their failure to understand the most basic Eucharistic doctrines, which were accepted by all sides of the controversy roiling outside the theatre. Ford's lovers stand apart from those of his contemporaries because of their inability to grasp the moral stakes of purges, anatomising, and feasting, and their limited application of such theologically powerful concepts to the sphere of human passion only. As I have argued, this is especially apparent in their choice of deaths. Ford's overriding awareness that the excessive ennobling of human love is a tragedy is most clear in his depiction of his lovers' deaths, and it is this fact which distinguishes his plays from the many plays of his contemporaries in which the exchange of death for love is heroic. Ronald Wymer's study of suicide and despair on the Jacobean stage sets out the terms of the period's moral and dramatic conflict between classical and Christian approaches to the relative nobility of suicide. Wymer argues that love tragedies from the first half of the seventeenth century extract their dramatic complexity from the tension between a vision of romantic love as a noble and mystical experience capable of transcending not only the boundary between life and death but the prohibition against despair and self-harm, and a depiction of suicidal lovers as tragically misguided.¹¹⁹ Elements of the former category, most associated with Fletcher, are present in Ford's plays—such as Calantha's love for Ithocles in *The Broken Heart*—but in the main I find his treatment of despair too aware of the spiritual costs of a totalising romantic love to be dramatically invested in an idea of its transcendent power. While his lovers are so invested, his plays are not. Most especially, the topicality of Ford's depictions of suffering suggest to me that his plays were too much engaged with local questions over the physiological and spiritual chastity of the human body and its relationships to allow his lovers an experience of romantic love as quasi-religious and ennobling.

All three sets of Ford's lovers, in *The Broken Heart* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, approach death in a manner not unlike the Calvinist iconoclasts of Ford's generation. All of them are unrepentant, sure of their destination after death and unwilling to receive Eucharistic sustenance. One crucial difference between Calvinist iconoclasts and anti-Calvinist adherents to the beauty of holiness is revealed when we look at their attitude to death, which is easier to verify than are their liturgical practices because it is documented in their wills. Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke have noted how a Calvinist belief in predestination motivated one to compose his or her will with a certainty that he or she was going directly to Christ in heaven, while anti-Calvinists wrote penitential wills. Without assuming any knowledge of their destination, anti-Calvinists begged to have their sins forgiven in terms that demonstrate their belief that it is Christ's blood, tears, and sweat that can purify them. Where the will of one who believes in predestination makes explicit his or her great faith in God, that of an anti-Calvinist demonstrates their belief in their need for the sacraments, and the importance of works. The composer's belief in the efficacy of works is demonstrated by the detail they provide of those charitable purposes to which they leave their assets. Following the example of Lancelot Andrewes and

¹¹⁹ Ronald Wymer, *Suicide and Despair in the Jacobean Drama* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1986).

Archbishop Laud, anti-Calvinists often left behests to their parish with the specific instructions that they be used to beautify the altar.¹²⁰ These wills exhibit three uniquely anti-Calvinist beliefs: that certainty of one's destination after death is considered to be dangerously proud, that grace is immanent in Christ's material body, and that it is crucial to maintain the integrity of ritual. Ford's lovesick lovers, however, display no fear about their destination, an absolute faith in the primacy of their romantic love, a lack of penitence, a proud manipulation of religious ritual, and a refusal of Eucharistic sustenance. Combined, these behaviours point to the errors which adherents to the beauty of holiness perceived in the worship and doctrine of anti-Calvinist non-conformists.

Further specific evidence of this is found in Giovanni's direct denial of the Friar's counsel. The lover most willing to overthrow God in the name of human passion, Giovanni refers to the Friar's beliefs as 'religion-masqued sorceries' (5.3.29). He also accuses the Friar of 'fond and superstitious fear' (5.3.20). Soranzo too asks Annabella if he has adored her 'too superstitiously' (4.3.119). Ford has given these strongly Calvinist lines to two men who have explicitly denounced God and who believe so little in the rituals of faith that they use them to stage murder and suicide. As we shall see, the only lover in either play who absolutely renounces his blasphemy and embraces penitence uses the same language expressed in those wills written by anti-Calvinists.

'Excellent Misery!': The Chastity of Christ's Broken Heart

Ford's investigation of unchastity as both erroneous relationships and breached bodily integrity finds its fullest expression in his treatment of the devastating effect of pride on collective—figurative—bodies. It is through this aspect of Ford's interest in chastity that his work draws closest to tragicomedy and produces even the markedly tragicomic trope of return. Ford's interest in actual bodily borders—via the medical and theological controversies I have been analysing—informs his figurative deployment of the body trope for communities in ways that reveal the moral and dramatic debt his theatre owes to Shakespearean tragicomedy. We have seen that penance is the means by which individual bodies are purged and cleansed of their sin—an act which requires the opening of the body's borders—but in *The Broken Heart* it is also the means by which sinful individuals are drawn back, are returned, to full communion in the collective body.

When in the *Broken Heart* Bassanes is separated from Penthea, he is reformed from a jealous husband and the play's most ridiculous figure to a penitent and wise man, who alone articulates the

¹²⁰ Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, 61-2; Fincham and Tyacke (eds.), *Altars Restored*, 259.

truths which the audience is left to digest after the play's four deaths. Bassanes' excessive, envious and possessive behaviour motivates Ithocles to separate him from his wife and in his loneliness for Penthea, Bassanes begins to undergo a 'rare change' (4.2.6). Where once he harassed his servants with their duty to spy on and contain Penthea, he now instructs them to 'pray' and to use their 'recreations' well.

All the service
I will expect is quietness amongst 'ee.
Take liberty at home, abroad, at all times,
And in your charities appease the gods,
Whom I with my distractions have offended. (4.2.1-5)

Sensible of his great loss, Bassanes can no longer return to an ordinary life in which his staff perform their usual tasks. Instead, all is turned to his consideration of his crimes and how best to make amends for them. He knows that his crimes were not just against Penthea herself but against the entire community and the gods also and that if there is to be any satisfaction for his fault, he must reorientate himself in relation to others on earth and to the heavens. The best assistance his staff can give him is to serve the gods and the wider community, not just himself. Indeed, the best task he can perform for those in his care, especially after his previous negligent influence on them, is to assist them in overcoming their own selfishness. The crime of self-interest is only satisfied by selflessness, just as the sorrows of the repentant sinner are only healed by drawing him into communion again with the heavenly and earthly body of which he is rightly a part. Grausis and Phulas, still ridiculous and comic figures, scoff at their master's changed state. Yet in so doing they articulate the fundamental link between his prior envy, his new repentance, and chastity: 'My Lord, to cure the itch, is surely gelded./ The cuckold, in conceit, hath cast his horns' (4.27-8). While pointing out to Bassanes that any casting of his cuckold's horns is a function of his own fancy, or 'conceit', rather than a fact, Grausis and Phulas observe that to overcome his longing for Penthea he has simply castrated himself. In their bawdy they express a truth that is newly dawning on Bassanes: his desperate need to possess his wife was an act of unchastity, which demands the 'gelding' of his lust. His possessive desire requires chastening not just because it warps the truth, mutuality and 'temple' of marital love, but because his marriage caused the unchaste separation of Penthea and Orgilus (4.2.32).¹²¹

Bassanes acknowledges that in his desire to possess Penthea, he defiled her and their marriage. 'Of ... beasts', he laments, 'the worst am I'. 'I, who was made a monarch / Of what a heart could wish for, — a chaste wife'. Such a wife, he feels in his penitence, is a 'temple built for adoration only', which he has 'level[ed] in the dust of causeless scandal'. He resolves that 'to redeem a sacrilege

¹²¹ This scene offers directors the possibility of striking a most affecting balance between the comic and pathetic and, by doing so, emphasising the profound change which repentance brings. Grausis and Phulas remain comic and bawdy figures and are unable to register the transformation of their master. They can only interpret his new demeanour within the comic framework they all once shared. Bassanes, however, is no longer a ridiculous figure and, with a touching self-reflexivity, his penitence makes him aware of this. He is not only in the process of reforming himself but of reforming his role in the play, those who once shared that role with him, and the generic conventions through which they were constituted.

so impious' he will 'pour' his 'humility ... before the deities / I have incensd'. This could be read as a statement of his conversion to the same cult as Antonio and the many martyrs to love on the Jacobean and Caroline stage, in which romantic love is elevated to divine heights. But Bassanes' difference from them is evident in the nature of his resolve. Rather than pursue a life of devotion to the object of his love, or seek to take his own life because he cannot have her, he instead decides to seek reform because he realises his crime is against God, not against love. He resolves to cultivate 'a largess of more patience' than the displeased Gods can require. 'No tempests of commotion shall disquiet / The calms of my composure' (4.2.28-39).

Bassanes is immediately tested in his vow to remain calm and humble: Orgilus enters the scene and presses home to him his destructiveness in an image that makes explicit the community-wide implications of Bassanes' crime:

I have found thee,
Thou patron of more horrors than the bulk
Of manhood, hoop'd about with ribs of iron,
Can cram within thy breast: Penthea, Bassanes
Curs'd by thy jealousies, — more, by thy dotage, —
Is left a prey to words. (4.2.39-44)

Developing the play's use of the heart as a figure for the truth, Orgilus locates Bassanes' unchastity within his breast, where it has corrupted and replaced his heart. Bassanes' ribs are figured as a cage which have drawn into themselves the 'bulk of manhood'. This could be taken as a figure for the whole of one man's bulk contained within Bassanes' breast, but given the highly wrought and often grotesque somatic images used throughout the play there is good reason to read Orgilus' image as one in which all of mankind is hooped together within Bassanes' breast. His crime is as big as all of mankind's crimes, and more literally, his crime implicates all of mankind.

Editors are not content with the description of Penthea in the above passage as 'left a prey to words'.¹²² There is no disputing that Orgilus is referring to her madness but the apparent illogic of the phrase has invited emendations. I see no problem with Penthea's madness being figured as an attack by language. Indeed, her mad scenes are elaborate soliloquies through which she is tormented by her own ever more elaborate descriptions of her desperate state. Moreover, the image of Penthea's madness as one in which she is disembodied is apt. Her self-starvation and her constant verbalised rumination on her misery literally remove her identity from the body she finds it impossible to inhabit (dedicated as that body is to two opposing loyalties) and casts her instead onto a plane of disembodied language. Orgilus' chastisement of Bassanes thus brings home that his unchaste dotage on Penthea makes him patron of all the horrors the entire body of mankind can produce while robbing Penthea of her place,

¹²² T.J.B. Spencer (ed.), *The Broken Heart*. See discussion at note 44, page 171-2.

not only in her own body but in the collective body. Bassanes' crime implicates all of humanity since it unjustly expels Penthea from humanity.

To begin to make amends, Bassanes must first locate himself among the lost. He tells Calantha that his 'reason is so clouded / With the thick darkness of my infinite woes' and asks to be given 'some corner of the world to wear out / The remnant of the minutes I must number'. He imagines this penitential space as one in which he:

... may hear no sounds but sad complaints
Of virgins who have lost contracting partners;
Of husbands howling that their wives were ravish'd
By some untimely fate; of friends divided
By churlish opposition; or of fathers
Weeping upon their children's slaughtered carcasses;
Or daughters groaning o'er their fathers' hearses;
And I can dwell there, and with these keep consort
As musical as theirs. (5.3.22-35)

Bassanes fittingly describes his penitence in the same terms with which Orgilus described Penthea's madness. Excluded by his own crimes from communion, he feels that he is in a darkened corner where he can only hear and know his own part in the 'music' of divided love and disembodied suffering. Bassanes is the only broken-hearted lover who does not participate in the elaborate performance of his own death. His life continues because his intent concentration on his crimes and his efforts to make amends through charity and selflessness are rewarded, justly, by his reunion in the Spartan community. In one of her final instructions before her death, Calantha makes Bassanes 'Sparta's marshal', incorporating him back into the body politic. She tells him that 'the multitudes of high employments could not/ But set a peace to private griefs' (5.346-8). Orgilus and Bassanes both saw Bassanes' crime against Penthea as one that damaged the entire community. In her forgiveness of Bassanes, Calantha makes a division between his new public duties and his 'private griefs'. She re-embodies him from his own imagined dark corner by distinguishing his new stately self from the 'music' of his grief, which she relegates to a private place.

When Bassanes was still envious and possessive, Ithocles was well placed to chastise him and separate him from Penthea since Ithocles had himself become penitent for his crime against his sister. But Ithocles is only made sensible of his crime by the 'extremities' of his love for Calantha: 'Twas a fault,/ A capital fault. For then I could not dive/ Into the secrets of commanding love;/ Since then, experience, by the extremities ... hath forced me to collect' (2.2.43-53). He has been chastened by 'extreme' love and has allowed that love to 'command' him. There are alarming contradictions in this language, which should alert us to the fact that Ithocles' conversion away from selfishness is incomplete, since he has simply moved from his desire for heroic glory on the battle field to his desire for heroic glory in love. Like Bassanes, Ithocles uses religious language, but Ford is asking us to pay attention to the motivations behind such language. Ithocles requests 'satisfaction' for his crimes from

Crotolon just as he later begs his sister to put him 'to any penance' for his 'tyranny'. Yet, in begging of them a sentiment which should rightly spring from his own heart, Ithocles can be understood as simply asking Crotolon and Penthea to forgive him and by so doing, relieve his guilt. He evidences no desire to be changed by his crime but rather merely to have it removed.

When we compare Ithocles' penitence to that of Bassanes, it appears luke-warm, especially since his contrition is always coupled with his aspirational love for Calantha. His passion for Calantha enables him to enter into his sister's and Orgilus' suffering, but it is not the passion of a contrite heart, which brings a penitent to detest his or her crimes in such a way that he or she pines for God's love and mercy. Ithocles' regret for his separation of the young lovers makes him pine instead for Calantha. The most striking evidence of this can be found in Ithocles' response to Penthea's prescription of her own murder as her brother's penance:

After my victories abroad, at home
I meet despair. Ingratitude of nature
Hath made my actions monstrous. Thou shalt stand
A deity, my sister, and be worshipped
For thy resolvèd martyrdom—wronged maids
And married wives shall to thy hallowed shrine
Offer their orisons and sacrifice
Pure turtles crowned with myrtle—if thy pity
Unto a yielding brother's pressure lend
One finger but to ease it. (3.2.80-89)

Ithocles praises her resolution to die for love. There is only so far his martyrology can be read metaphorically, especially since Ithocles develops the trope so elaborately. His references to 'pure' turtle doves and myrtle figure Penthea's desire to die for love as something pure and faithful and, ultimately, sacred and worthy of veneration. His detestation of his own 'monstrous' crime leads directly to excessive reverence for her as a goddess of thwarted love. Compared to the penitence of Bassanes, which seeks quietness and humility, acceptance, and a wish to comb over his faults so as to better understand them, Ithocles' language is infused with the exact passions for which he praises his sister. He adopts the language of repentance only to silence his sister and to ward off the truth of his crime: 'Trouble not/ The fountains of mine eyes with thine own story;/ I sweat in blood for't' (3.2.109-11). Ithocles may cast himself as a penitent, but he is in fact an unfulfilled lover bearing sacrifices to Penthea's altar in the hope that she will bring him Calantha (which she does). His final remarks in the passage above are coercive to say the least: his elevation of Penthea to the status of a 'deity' and martyr to love is dependent on her relief of his pain. By petitioning for his sister's pity, Ithocles indicates that he is in the realm of Platonic adoration. Begging for release from his suffering, he is speaking both to Calantha, the distant lady he adores, and to the deity he imagines Penthea to be—a deity he would worship were she to ease the pain of his lovesickness. Penthea stops him abruptly: 'O no more'. She reads his language clearly. Ithocles has kept his love for Calantha a secret, yet it is clear in this scene to

Pentheia that her brother is in love and transferring his passion onto his sister's grief. She asks: 'who is the saint you serve?' (3.2.89/93).

Like Penthea and Orgilus who starve for each other because they cannot see beyond the earthly sphere in which their love reigns supreme, Ithocles mistakes romantic love for love of God. In a phrase that reveals his search for a Real Presence not found in the valour of battle victories or the power of statesmen, Ithocles snatches up the ring Calantha tosses to him, calling it 'a real, visible, material happiness' (5.1.50). Ithocles' reference to the ring as sacramental enhances the sense that he is snatching at a mystery he cannot attain: the wedding ring was another of the religious objects whose material divinity was under question in the liturgical and doctrinal disputes of the 1620s and 30s.¹²³ Beyond the walls of the theatre, Ford's audiences were being asked the same question Ithocles poses: is the ring a real, material happiness? A real sign of God's grace within marriage, or just another idolatrous object? Whatever the answer, it is clear that Ithocles is being idolatrous in his use of sacramental language: Calantha's ring is merely a token of her love. It is not part of a wedding ceremony properly performed to all of Sparta, yet Ithocles has exaggerated it into a sign of divine grace. His raptures over the ring signal Ithocles' mistaken belief that Calantha's love will cure him of the sorrow he feels for his crime against his sister. By seeking human love, particularly the love of a woman far his superior, Ithocles has not moved beyond the scope of his initial act of proud unchastity against Penthea and Orgilus but rather remains enclosed by his wish to cure a selfish action with a self-orientated desire.

Only Bassanes expresses his penitential sorrow in terms which actually redress the unchaste pride of his own prior actions and those of his community. Unlike Ithocles, his loss has placed him in correct relationship with God; it has not propelled him toward a greater ambition and hunger for earthly satisfaction. Only Bassanes' expressions of pain are like those of Christ's own broken heart and bloody sweat. He recognises that a rupture has occurred in the divine presence which keeps the body of the community incorporated, causing chaos, and that healing can only occur through the re-establishment of connections between the earthly and the heavenly realms. This requires an end to self-seeking, unchaste love and a turning instead to that which will most benefit the communal good. For Christ, this meant suffering pain and death for the redemption of humans; for Bassanes it means not looking to ease his pain or grief, not looking for death or escape. He is the only character whose use of the broached body trope reflects the suffering of Christ: 'Rip up my bosom', he cries when Penthea is taken away from him. (3.3.188) 'Sweats, hot as sulphur, / Boil through my pores. Affliction hath in store/ No torture like to this' (4.2.96-8). Ithocles, however, never really articulates his suffering as anything distinct from his yearning for Calantha. And his suffering for his crime against his sister is quick to depart when he finds Calantha returns his love. When Ithocles is sure the Princess loves him, he announces in over-blown joy to Orgilus: 'the sweetness/ Of so imparadised a comfort, Orgilus!/ It

¹²³ William Laud, 'Concerning the Clergy', *Articles* (London, 1635), 3.

is to banquet with the gods' (4.3.127-9). The heights of Ithocles' pride are evidenced in his belief that Calantha's love is a divine feast. He is on precisely the road which lead Orgilus and Penthea to their destruction: rejecting Eucharistic sustenance because of an erroneous belief that their earthly passions are the only sustenance on which they can survive.

From the very beginning of *The Broken Heart*, Orgilus mistakes his passion for Penthea as divine. Orgilus' teacher, Tecnicus, who like the Friar in *'Tis Pity* is the only consistent voice of religious wisdom, senses the wildness and pride of Orgilus' passion and counsels him to 'tempt not the stars' with whom 'thou canst not play'. 'In thy aspect' he warns, 'I note/ A consequence of danger' (1.3.1-7). But despite Tecnicus' warning not to elevate earthly love above divine love, Orgilus departs from his teacher musing:

Love, thou art full of mystery! The deities
Themselves are not secure. In searching out
The secrets of those flames which hidden waste
A breast made tributary to the laws
Of beauty, physic yet hath never found
A remedy to cure a lover's wound. (1.3.36-41)

Orgilus attributes to love the mysteries which, in seventeenth-century theology, properly belong to God.¹²⁴ He does this to such a degree that he perceives the gods themselves as vulnerable to earthly passions and the envious 'flames which hidden waste a breast'. The human art of physic may not, as he observes, have found a cure for lovers' wounds but the heavenly arts which Tecnicus teaches do provide the cure: penance. He chides Orgilus for his 'extremities' which 'care not/ For harms to others' but 'contemn their own' misfortunes. Bassanes, however, does understand the importance of his penance for the health of the whole community, both heavenly and earthly. When preparing to avenge Penthea, Orgilus promises Bassanes: 'I will acquaint 'ee with an unmatched secret,/ Whose knowledge to your griefs shall set a period.' Bassanes answers: 'Thou canst not, Orgilus. 'Tis in the power/ Of the gods only' (5.1.37-40).

For the brief time that it lasts, Ithocles' requited love for the princess offers him the prospect of being elevated to a status far above his own. But Ithocles remains like the other lovers who allow human passion to function in their lives as though it were divine providence or punishment, and like them, he dies for love. He is not raised above his station. Bassanes, however, is so raised. His deserving comes from his true repentance and his unique understanding that extreme passion can only properly exist, can only be properly chaste, when it does not undermine the passion from which all human action and affection must take its compass: Christ's passion. In his own grief, Bassanes consoles others

¹²⁴ Romantic love was for many writers a means of evoking and describing divine love. See Elizabeth Clarke, *Politics, Religion and the Song of Songs* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). However, Ford's focus on pride makes a clear moral distinction between the two forms of love.

who grieve. On the death of Ithocles, he counsels Armostes to 'rent not/ Thine arteries ... Thou'st lost a nephew,/ A niece; and I a wife. Continue a man still' (5.2.54-7). 'Make me', he continues:

a pattern of digesting evils,
Who can outlive my mighty ones, not shrinking
At such a pressure as would sink a soul
Into what's most of death, the worst of horrors.
But I have sealed a covenant with sadness,
And entered into bonds without condition
To stand these tempests calmly. Mark me, nobles,
I do not shed a tear, not for Penthea.
Excellent misery! (5.2.58-66)

These lines justify readings of Bassanes' reform in terms of stoic restraint. However, he uses specifically religious language (covenant, evils, a sinking soul) and although he tries not to cry for Penthea, his 'excellent misery!' betrays the sadness to which he is now bound. These are not Bassanes' last words. On the death of Calantha, and her bestowal of leadership on him, Bassanes weeps and mourns and abandons any stoic or reasoned resolve: 'Alas, great mistress, reason is so clouded/ With the thick darkness of my infinite woes' (5.3.22-23). Here, Bassanes uses words which recall the penitent in *Christes Bloodie Sweate*, who looks on Christ's wounds and is so sorrowful that 'remorce confounds/ Reason and sence' (1438-9).

It is Bassanes who survives and points the way forward for Sparta. Of all the plays' passionate lovers, he alone learns that human passion is only chaste when it does not occlude the chastity of Christ's own passion for his bride, the people who incorporate his body. Human passion which damages the body of Christ cannot survive in a world which is from the Christian perspective always being compelled toward the just realignment of unchaste and misdirected relationships. In this way, the narrative thrust of *The Broken Heart* is in good measure tragicomic. The play may not conclude with the wondrous reuniting of lovers, families, and friends but it does provide a profound consolation. Through his willingness to see how his actions have injured all of Sparta and to make appropriate amends, Bassanes represents a future Sparta properly orientated toward the one passion which chastens all others through its redemptive grace. Bassanes proves the play's hero because only he learns to overcome the heartbreak suffered from the loss of the one he loved improperly and comes to share instead in what Ford in *Christes Bloody Sweate* describes as the 'contrite and broken' heart of Christ (471).

The conclusion of *The Broken Heart* is far from realising the wonder which saturates the final tableaux of Shakespearean tragicomedy, nor can it be said to invest deeply in the actual and figurative processes of female reproduction in order to bring about its providential vision, but it does evidence a sufficient degree of investment in the tropes of chastity to warrant reconsidering its generic categorisation. Ford's theatre exemplifies the growing tendency in the period for the tropes of chastity to cross-fertilise between the theatre and various fields of life and debate beyond its walls. For Ford, like Shakespeare, this interaction implicates his audiences personally, morally, and—most especially—

somatically. Chastity was the virtue through which Ford's drama investigated the instability of the human body as both a cause of and a trope for the susceptibility of individuals and communities to moral degeneracy. By describing unchastity in terms that referenced controversies developing outside the theatre, Ford not only made his characters' conflicts powerfully relevant to Londoners, he made the theatre itself a participant in contemporary debates that were consumed by the problem of unchastity. In so doing, Ford directly implicated his audiences in the moral questions played out on his stage by reminding them that their very presence in his theatre compromised their chastity. It is true that at a time when anti-theatricalists were growing ever more vocal in their warnings against the theater's sexual license, any dramatist could be said to implicate his audience in the unchastity acted onstage.¹²⁵ But Ford made particular use of the spatial echoes between the interior of his theatre and those of contemporary churches and anatomy theaters. His exploration of incest and lust drew on his audience's knowledge of debates surrounding the relative chastity of liturgical arrangements and of new medical technologies. Ford built into his tragedies images, gestures and language which drew on the very concerns his audiences would have felt when they decided whether to kneel, stand or sit for communion as much as when they sought health advice. In the late 1620s, both of these routine activities had as much potential as did theatre attendance to make any Englishman or woman wonder if they were allowing themselves, body and soul, to be contaminated by unchastity. Ford, therefore, not only explored the moral implications of the unstable human body within the action of his plays but drew the bodies and chastity of his audience into question, inviting them to feel for those on stage what Cynthia Marshall has described as 'a horrified sympathy that might literally be felt on the pulse'.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ For recent discussions of anti-theatricalism, see Jeffrey Knapp, *Shakespeare's Tribe: Church, Nation, and Theater in Renaissance England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Tanya Pollard, *Drugs and Theatre in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye*.

¹²⁶ Cynthia Marshall, 'Bodies in the Audience', *Shakespeare Studies* 29 (2001), 51-7: 57.

Chapter Three

Caroline Chastity Part One:

The Calvinist and Pro-Parliamentary Camp

When members of the Long Parliament met for their first public fast in 1640, they did so on the 17th November, the day on which the nation had for decades celebrated the Accession of Queen Elizabeth I. The sermon was preached by the staunchly Puritan Cornelius Burgess, who argued that God's covenant with his people was a marital bond, a 'fervent, intire, loyall, chaste love'. He did not speak on politics, but his argument for the total fidelity between believers and God sent a powerful message about the unnecessary place of a monarch in the covenant. For Burgess, the best and perhaps the only monarch was one who simply enabled and protected the marital bond between God and his people. Elizabeth's memory hovered over the proceedings: not only was she on the day of his sermon being celebrated across the country in the ringing of bells and lighting of fires, but Burgess spoke passionately of her triumph over the Whore of Babylon. Elizabeth, he argued, was the door by which God's chosen first entered into the 'nuptial knot' with God because she led them away from the adultery and prostitution of Idolatry.¹²⁷ He stipulated that the Church which sets up pictures and ornaments has allowed itself to be 'exposed and prostituted to all manner of whoredomes and filthiness' (26).

A wise man will never marry a strumpet, nor with any woman that hath another husband; his wife shall bee onely his owne, none else shall have interest in her. Much lesse then, will the Holy and jealous God admit of any Spouse that is wedded to any lust ... purge out and cast away (as a *Menstrous* cloth) all *Idols* and *Idolatry* in particular. All our lusts are lothsome to his stomack, but nothing is so abominable to his Soule, as Idolatry'. (47)

To demonstrate the determination with which the godly must overcome unchastity and idolatry, Burgess evoked the story of King Asa who did not spare even his mother, Queen Macha, when he found she had erected an idol in a grove and worshipped it. 'So obscene' was the act that the Queen lost her crown because 'shee was not onely a grosse Idolatresse, but abominable strumpet: for ordinarily, idolatry and adultery, spiritual and bodily fornication goe together.' Not shy of controversy, Burgess builds from Deuteronomy a picture of Charles' marriage to Henrietta Maria: 'for though shee

¹²⁷ Cornelius Burgess, *A Sermon preached to the honourable house of commons ... at the publique fast* (London, 1641), 43, 18. All subsequent references will be cited in text.

had beene neerer than a Mother, even the *Wife of his bosome*, yet if shee were an Idolater, and should *entice him secretly, saying let us goe and serve other Gods*, shee must have *been put to death*, and *his owne hand must have been first upon her*' (6-7, emphasis his).

Burgess' arguments for which monarch and which style of religious worship enabled God and his chosen people to enter their 'nuptial knot' and avert idolatry and adultery drew on chastity's tropes of correctly orientated relationships and legitimate sexuality, union, and issue. He also went on to make vivid use of chastity as bodily integrity. Arguing that Elizabeth was the chaste 'door' or 'pipe' connecting the bodies of English men and women to God but also the chaste armour which protected their bodies against the Whore of Babylon, Burgess charged Parliament to remember the Virgin Queen: 'If you would indeed honour Her precious memory; yea, honour God and your selves, and not onely continue the possession of what shee (as a most glorious Conduit pipe) hath transmitted to us, but perfect the worke, set upon this dutie of *joyning our selves to the Lord in an everlasting Covenant that shall not be forgotten*'. To do so is to steel oneself, in the manner of Leontes, against unchaste assaults. The chaste believer, like the chaste wife, dedicates himself completely to God and so erects 'an impregnable wall against all assaults that might otherwise draw her to folly' (46, 19).

The manner in which Burgess intertwined these three tropes of chastity is exemplary of similar arguments being put by controversialists throughout the late-1630s and into the 1640s. Arguments of this kind made various use of the proposition that the relative legitimacy or illegitimacy of both real unions (such as that of the King and Henrietta Maria) and figurative unions (the Church and the Court) were characterised by their ability to either protect the real or figurative bodies within the union from infection and dissolution or leave them open to attack, and that such attack resulted in the destruction of proper relations between humans and God. As I will show, Leontes' 'sluice' took on its own political afterlife within this formulation as a description of the breached or broken body which, through its illegitimate (adulterous or idolatrous) union, has fallen into unchastity and pride—especially the pride of idolatry or erroneous religion.

This particular rendering of chastity's tropes was not limited to controversy; it was also finding its way into commonplaces. One early and very high-profile, but non-polemical, example of unchastity as an illegitimate union which causes infection to spread to those around it can be found in commentary on the Castlehaven Scandal of 1631. Castlehaven's mother-in-law, the Dowager Countess of Derby, whom Milton praised in *Arcades* and who absorbed the fall-out of the family scandal, described her fears of unchaste influence in a particular way. Unsure whether she ought to take her granddaughter into her own household after Castlehaven was condemned, she suggested that 'some sparks of my grandchild Audley's misbehaviour' might remain in her to influence 'the young ones which are with me'.¹²⁸ The Dowager is afraid that the spark of 'ill' influence, having first passed from Castlehaven himself to his son, Audley, and from Audley to his young wife, could then pass to others.

¹²⁸ Cynthia Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 101.

The process she describes might appear at first little more than a figure of speech. However, the Dowager's description of unchastity as a volatile force capable of moving between, and igniting, proximate bodies represented the same alarm that also informed the King's instruction to chaste ladies not to attend Castlehaven's trial, as it did anti-theatricalists' warnings to chaste women not to attend the theatre. Writing from an entirely different tradition, St. François de Sales uses two similar figures when charging his readers to observe strict chastity in their conversation with men. 'Turn away at once from every temptation and attraction to impurity. ... Human bodies are like glasses, which cannot be carried when they touch one another without danger of being broken; or like fruits which however sound and fresh, are damaged by being brought into contact with one another.'¹²⁹

The commonplace proved powerful when arguing for the legitimacy of particular institutional relationships. Indeed, the central Reformation controversy—over the nature and function of the visible Church—made extensive use of it. Which relationship, disputants contested, was the most chaste? Parliament and Church? People and Church? Crown and Church? Which Church? And how were the infectious and sluicing properties of the various unchaste pairings these comparisons produced to be managed? As I hope to show in this chapter, understanding how unchaste and chaste bodies worked in these figurative formulations can open up some important insights into how early moderns identified their own bodies and selves in relation to what we might term the individual/collective spectrum. The collectivity which the penitent Bassanes in Ford's *The Broken Heart* seeks in reparation for his crimes expressed a view of communal identity which, since the early Church, was consistently understood as materially constituted by Christ's body. Throughout the middle ages, the materiality of the bond between societies was conceptually grounded in the Pauline vision of individual members bound together as parts of Christ's body, his visible Church. The Reformation, however, became a testing ground for theories of collectivity and identity, not only because the question of Christ's materiality was in a broad sense coming into increasing scrutiny but because institutional schism was a reality no Englishman or woman of any confessional allegiance could avoid. By the decades immediately prior to the Civil Wars, with tensions between various sects within the Reformed Church mounting, these disputes became fraught indeed. By engaging with scholarship from Greenblatt and others on early modern identity, this chapter will conclude by addressing the Caroline use of chastity's tropes of legitimate union, correctly orientated relationships, and bodily boundaries in order to pose questions about chastity's role in evolving constructions of early modern communal identity.

Of course, the area of Caroline life which made the fullest use of chastity's tropes was the royal masque. So indebted were Caroline masques to the providential vision of Shakespearean tragicomedy that I believe the two modes of performance ought to be considered within the same category. This is especially the case when we approach genre, as I am arguing we ought to, from a

¹²⁹ St. François de Sales, *Introduction to a Devout Life*. Translated by Michael Day (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1961), 125.

consideration of its efficacy rather than its form. By including participants in the dance and by shaping their narratives around the lives of those taking part, masques made explicit tragicomedy's expectation that audiences join in the wondrous providence they enact. With their promotion of the monarchs' married chastity through the image of the single, impenetrably chaste body of 'CARLOMARIA', Caroline court masques led the way in the period's use of chastity as the protector of legitimate unions and bodily boundaries.

In this chapter, I will explore further the spread of chastity's tropes to fields of early modern knowledge and debate beyond the theatre. To this end, textual analysis will give way to cultural analysis in both this and in the next chapter on Henrietta Maria's queenship. Court masques were, to a degree, textual and fictional. However, I will be approaching them here, and more fully in the next chapter, as the components and expressions of a culture: the royal cult of chastity. This cult and its masques offered polemical arguments on a par with those being put by anti-Court, pro-Parliamentary pamphlet writers who, in resisting the masque's seductive and very tragicomic vision of the world, began themselves to lay claim to the tropes of chastity through which public opinion could be won. In the 1630s and 1640s, the tropes of chastity popularised by Shakespeare's late plays became the moral and semiotic ground of the period's most fraught debates. This is most observable in the cluster of metaphors, deployed by both Caroline masques and political pamphlets, which saw unchastity as a breached, sluiced or broken body (both individual and collective) and as an infectious, poisonous or morally corrupting influence capable of spreading between persons but remedied by the moral and physiological enclosure provided by legitimate unions.

The Stuart Career of *The Winter's Tale's* 'Sluice'

In the trial of Lord Egerton, Earl of Castlehaven, Attorney General Heath's accusation cast Castlehaven as religiously, morally, sexually and emotionally vulnerable to 'the influence of others'. The Earl, Heath argued, changed his confession when others pressed him to it, gave into the sexual and emotional advances of inferiors and allowed his wealth to be drained away from his own family and estate and ultimately from the aristocracy and monarchy.¹³⁰ The trial was a public display of Charles' intolerance of sexual unchastity but its reference to the accused's susceptibility to unchaste influences was a little dangerous, since court critics had already begun suggesting that the King was himself susceptible to unchaste influences: first Buckingham, then Henrietta Maria. Martin Butler has described the conflict many critics of the court experienced in the 1630s as the 'Caroline dilemma'. He argues that the language of opposition to Charles was marked by the 'perpetual and compulsive

¹³⁰ Herrup, *House in Gross Disorder*, 69.

advertisement of its own loyalty'. Butler describes the process by which critics of the court struggled with the deeply ingrained belief that rebellion equalled moral chaos, and so attempted to define their position as orthodox and faithful to the Crown, even while they gradually eroded and absorbed its power. Parliament, he notes, insistently attacked the King's servants but not the King himself, whose authority they wished to rescue from those who had infected it.¹³¹ Directing criticism away from the King and onto those who advised him was a form of rebellion that pointed to the King's susceptibility to external and negative influence. One powerful way for court critics to bolster such a claim was to argue that the influences infecting Charles were unchaste in nature. To do so was to raise in the minds of readers the common knowledge that once unchastity had infected the integrity of the Crown, it would soon spread to all subjects. As the King's personal rule progressed through the 1630s and into the early 1640s, pro-Parliamentary observers increasingly represented the monarchs' marital affection as an unchaste enthrallment of Charles' senses and the royal marriage as an effeminate infection which damaged the chastity of the King's royal body. By offering his wife that fidelity which the King rightfully owed to Parliament and the true Church, Charles, it was argued, had opened the country up to foreign influence and sluiced the nation of all that 'Elizabeth of famous memory'—unmarried, faithful to Parliament, properly martial and champion of right religion—had fought to establish and protect. I recall the term 'sluiced' here on purpose: the image that so tormented Leontes is used with increased frequency in the later years of the Caroline reign by critics of the personal rule. Its relevance to early modern thinking on chastity as an infectious disease is compelling and deserves considering at some length.

Before the last years of the sixteenth century the term appears to have been most frequently applied in a literal sense to the opening of rivers, veins or eyes in order to let out water, blood or tears. Shakespeare himself first used the term in *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and in *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) to describe the letting and stopping of tears.¹³² Although depicting emotional torment, this usage nonetheless referred to the material actions of a body opening and closing. No great moral significance appears to be attached to the term in either poem so neither usage, I think, departs much from convention. A more moral use appears in Robert Southwell's *St Peter's Complaint* (1595): he refers to sin as the 'sluce of fame'.¹³³ In 1597, John Norden applied the term in a noticeably unconventional, metaphoric and moral form in *The Mirror of Honour*, a guide to men of war. In a treatise in which one would expect to find the term used in reference to a battle wound, Norden instead uses it to refer to the conscience of a failed soldier. Not wishing to fight any longer, the soldier in question feigns illness, an action which Norden describes as a betrayal not only of his company but of God. By 'breaching his

¹³¹ Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis 1632-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 19-20.

¹³² *Venus and Adonis*, line 956; *Rape of Lucrece*, line 1076 in Katherine Duncan-Jones and H. R. Woudhuysen (eds.) *Shakespeare's Poems* (London: Arden, 2007), 958; 1098.

¹³³ Robert Southwell, *Saint Peters complaint With other poems* (London, 1595), 14.

allegiance', the soldier has suffered a 'sluice in his conscience'.¹³⁴ Three years later, in *The Ghost of Lucrece* (1600), Middleton used the term in a literal description of a vein opening, but by playing on the term's figurative relevance to Lucrece's chastity, he drew on that cluster of unchaste images which Shakespeare would later explore when depicting Leontes' torment. Middleton's Lucrece laments:

Now is my tyde of bloud: Come, quench thy soule,
 The sluices of my spirit now runs againe:
 Come, I haue made my breast an lviore bowle,
 To hold the bloud that streameth from my veyne,
 Drinke to my chastitie which thou hast slaine:
 "But (woe the while) that labour is in vaine.
 "To drinke to that which cannot pledge againe.¹³⁵

Lucrece's chastity runs out of her along with the blood and spirit that is sluiced from her body as much through rape as her grievous remembrance of it. Figured eucharistically, the recollection of her rape, a sacrifice on which the nation was founded, is equated to the sacrifice of Christ and his passionate suffering. Yet, unlike Christ's redemptive bloodshed, Lucrece's blood is merely a human pledge, one which fails to bring back her chastity. Where Christ's death is chaste and continues to bring life to those who partake of it, Lucrece's rape and suicide secure only her perpetual unchastity—"To seale my soule with Rape and Murders stampe"¹³⁶—and to pledge to it would be in 'vaine' since, unlike Christ's chaste blood, it cannot pledge anything in return. Lucrece interprets the permanent sluicing of her body as an inverse Eucharistic feast. Her description surely spoke to the sense of division which Middleton's readers, regardless of their confession or how contentedly they adhered to it, would have registered (however implicitly) each time they communicated in the Reformed Church.

In the decades following Middleton's and Shakespeare's figurative use of the term, polemicists on all sides of Reformation controversy began to routinely utilise 'sluice' and synonymous terms such as breach, break and open: it was clearly becoming a powerful image. By the end of the 1630s 'sluice' was in especially frequent use among Puritan critics of the court who believed Charles' promotion of Laud was a backsliding in religion. The anonymous *Novembris Monstrum, or, Rome brought to bed in England with the whores miscaryng*, written in the year of the Irish uprising, describes the corrupt sexual relationship between Phocas and Pope Gregory I. It argues that 'Phocas will ope a sluice, from which shall flee/ Supremacy to swell the Bishops See'.¹³⁷ Here the sluice in the body of the Emperor (or Charles) releases that fluid which impregnates Rome. The punning correlation between semen running into a feminised body and a broken bank letting water out to sea is in keeping with the

¹³⁴ John Norden, *The Mirror of Honor* (London, 1597), 49.

¹³⁵ Thomas Middleton, *The Ghost of Lucrece* (London, 1600), 6.

¹³⁶ Middleton, *The Ghost of Lucrece*, (4.

¹³⁷ Anon., *Novembris Monstrum* (London, 1641), 90.

etymology of the word sluice. But it also plays into early modern English fears that the corruption of the King's body by his tolerance of Catholics equated to a breach of English shores.

Prynne used the term, and its suggestion that the King's body, like English shores, could be opened and drained, when criticising the court of popery in *The Sovereigne Power of Parliaments and Kingdomes* (1643). He complained that the King gave his word in a solemn oath and in two printed declarations not to abandon his 'Loving Subjects' or the Petition of Right, nor to violate the purity or perfection of 'Lawes, Liberties, Properties, Religion' by 'back-sliding to Popery.' Prynne accused the King of breaching his fidelity to Parliament through 'severall inundations of oppressions, Taxes, grievances, Innovations and relapses to Popery (which have flowed in upon them ever since as if these bene no bankes to keepe them out, but sluices onely to let them in the faster').¹³⁸ Elsewhere Prynne argues that in Ezekiel, the vision of the temple was perfectly described so that its 'exact rule' could be maintained 'Else a sluice would be opened to drowne the whole world in superstition and error'.¹³⁹ Henry Burton also used the term in *Conformity's Deformity* (1646) when he said of the new orthodoxy under Archbishop Laud: 'Conformity the sluice, or inlet of all superstition and slavery.' He goes on:

And in truth, this was that very sluice, which when first opened, did let in that inundation and deluge not only of will-worship, in all kinde of ceremonies and superstitions, but also of humane forms and frames of Church-government, and in all of them such a tyrannicall power over all consciences and Churches, as hath wholly drowned all; so as Christs Dove can no where finde, where to set her foot.¹⁴⁰

In Burton's account, the unchastity of growing ritualism and clericalism is a watery deluge, pouring from the sluice Laud opened in the body of the Church, Christ's body, until it so covered the land as to alienate the Paraclete. Bastwicke used the same image for the body of Laud himself, when arguing that the Archbishop's interest in ritual and ceremony only corrupted the body hiding beneath his fine vestments until it was corroded and full of holes. 'Coming daily from the starchamber ... see what pompe grandeur and magnificence he goeth in; the whole multitude standing bare wherever he passeth, having also a great number of Gentlemen, and other servants waiting on him, al uncovered, some of them cariying his tayle, for the better breaking and venting of his wind & easing of his holy body (for it is full of holes)'.¹⁴¹ From the 1620s and 30s, 'sluice' was increasingly used to reference unchastity, effeminacy and corruption rather than simply an opening of contained liquid. By 1697, Lady Brute in Sir John Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife*, playfully uses the term to describe her adulterous

¹³⁸ William Prynne, *The Sovereigne Power of Parliaments and Kingdomes* (London, 1643), 34.

¹³⁹ William Prynne, *Truth Triumphing over Falsehood* (London, 1645), 129.

¹⁴⁰ Henry Burton, *Conformitie's Deformity* (London, 1646), 12.

¹⁴¹ John Bastwicke, *The Letany of John Bastwicke* (Leiden, 1637), 6.

desire: 'Lord, how like a torrent love flows into the heart when once the sluice of desire is opened!'¹⁴² The image is crucial to understanding how early moderns perceived unchastity as an infectious force.

When Burgess delivered his sermon before the Long Parliament in 1640, he made full use of the watery imagery which had, since *The Winter's Tale's* 'sluice', become so associated with unchastity as breached bodily boundaries and illegitimate unions. He argued that 'Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth' was a '*woman drunken with the bloud of the Saints, and with the bloud of the Martyrs of Jesus ...* She is never in her element, but when she is swimming in bloud. So insatiable is she, that like the *horse-leeches* daughter, *she never saith, it is enough*'.¹⁴³ Casting Mary Tudor as the murderous midwife who sluiced the Church of its chastity, Burgess argued that Henry VIII began the first deliverance of the Church from Babylon when he 'threw out the *Pope*', but that this good work was soon 'abort[ed]' by his daughter who 'quickly turn'd the Tide, before it was halfe high water: and she set all the Gates wide open againe both for Pope, and Popery to reenter with triumph, and to drinke drunk of the bloud of our Ancestors'. God, however, 'discharged her, and released his people from her cruelty'. Burgess argued that although Elizabeth rescued her people from the contagion of her predecessor, she did not do nearly enough to purge the Church of its error. Yet he lays the blame for this at Mary's feet. Unlike Mary, who aborted and sluiced the true Church, letting out chastity and letting in Idolatry, Elizabeth opens the '*doore of hope*'.

When we consider this 'door of hope' in terms of chastity's tropes of bodily boundaries and legitimate unions we can read the language of polemicists, and their search for the true means of securing England's health and sanctity, as part of their tragicomic vision. By developing and utilising Leontes' 'sluice' and its concomitant images of breaching and breaking the integrity of those bodies, both actual and figurative, whose chastity ought rightly to be maintained, these writers were borrowing more than a word. Rather, they were claiming for their own cause a set of figures which spoke to the popular tragicomic desire to maintain the moral and physiological security of individuals and institutions through just and true unions and allegiances. Leontes' excessive concern over the integrity of Hermione's body and the legitimacy of her sexual unions may have come under scrutiny in *The Winter's Tale* but his ultimate reform at the hands of Paulina and Hermione nonetheless confirmed tragicomedy's vision of a total and wondrous union between the earthly and heavenly spheres, which both produces and is produced by the communion of peoples into one body: be it family, nation or community of believers. This vision became fundamental to the Caroline masque, and its formulation of chastity's tropes can be seen as engaging directly with those of the polemical writers treated in this chapter. At the Caroline court, the monarchs were claiming that their own chaste union was in fact the 'door of hope' between earth and heaven. Directly countering arguments to the contrary, Caroline

¹⁴² John Vanbrugh, *The Provoked Wife*. Edited by Antony Coleman (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), 102. 3.1.360-362.

¹⁴³ Burgess, *A Sermon preached to the honourable house of commons* (1641), 24, emphasis his.

masques presented the monarchs' union as that source of providential love which could protect England's communal integrity against the sluice or breach which in the court's formulation was caused by court-detractors and schismatics.

Legitimate Unions, Conjoined Bodies, and Gates to Heaven

The royal conception of just and virtuous rule, which was articulated most fully in the masques of the 1630s, cast married chastity as a heavenly virtue through which Charles and Henrietta Maria embodied their divinity. Structurally, the masque and its triumph over the anti-masque owed a good deal to tragicomedy. Although Anne of Denmark came up with the idea of introducing an anti-masque into proceedings, the contest between the two halves of the performance was elaborated considerably under Charles and Henrietta Maria who used the structure to showcase the triumph of virtue (especially chastity) over vice. Charles and Henrietta Maria also consolidated the role of the Throne of State, placing it at the centre of the masque's action in such a way that it became the emblem for each of the tropes of chastity and the source of the masques' providential vision. The State was where the monarchs sat in glory at the conclusion of the action. Their chaste marital union within the one impenetrable and hermaphroditic body of 'CARLOMARIA' was itself a symbol of England's sanctity and impenetrability. More than their Jacobean predecessors, Caroline masques emphasised the importance of properly orientated relationships—of virtuous friendship, love and rule, of sanctity and moral order—and they offered the monarchs as the model of proper relations, of legitimate unions and issue, inviting participants to emulate them. Again more than their Jacobean predecessors, Caroline masques celebrated the return to virtue and sanctity after the threat of the anti-masque had been overcome and, like tragicomedy, this return was always staged as a wondrous moment in which the divine will made itself available to all present.

Rather than a 'door' or 'gate', the figure first used at court for the chaste connection between heaven and earth was of 'pipes'. In the 1633 court pastoral, *The Shepherds' Paradise*, Henrietta Maria, playing the Queen of Chastity, remarked that true and chaste love 'is a spiritt extracted out of the whole Masse of vertue, & twoe hearts soe equall in it, as they are measur'd by one another; they are the vessells wherein ioynd by Pipes as subtile as our thoughts, by wch it runnes soe fast from one into another, as the exchange & the returne, are but one instant.'¹⁴⁴ The chaste influence running between the 'pipes' of the monarchs' chastely-united 'vessells' was celebrated at court in all aspects of the Carlomaria tradition, which saw the glorious chastity of the monarchs' conjoined bodies as a powerful force for good. The tradition was expressed as much in Van Dyck's double portraits of the monarchs as

¹⁴⁴ William Davenant, *Shepherds' Paradise* (London, 1633) 73.

in the conjoined heraldry and tableau which emerged in all the royal palaces and masques, but it was articulated most explicitly in Thomas Carew's 1634 *Coelum Britannicum*.

Staged under an arch depicting the Queen's fertility and virtue and the King's strength and valour, *Coelum Britannicum* was a celebration of the monarchs' capacity to spread their chaste influence to those around them. The 'exemplar life' of the 'Bright glorious Twins of Love and Majesty' has, the masque claims, not only 'transfus'd a zealous heat/ Of imitation through [their] virtuous Court' but caused all the classical deities to convert to a chaste life. Inspired by the monarchs' 'matrimonial union', Jupiter inscribes over his 'bedchamber dore' 'CARLOMARIA' and vows to forever live by their chaste example.¹⁴⁵ Momentarily threatened by the anti-masque, led by an upstart from the 'adulterate Sphere', the perfect union of the monarchs is ultimately confirmed through the celebration of their 'pure Soules entwin'd'. The monarchs' spiritual and bodily unity brings about the same condition in their 'subjects', who are drawn through admiration and imitation—'their melting hearts / That flow with cheerefull loyall reverence'—into one body of 'hearts combin'd'. Through this perfect union and unity, the wonder of heaven enters the earthly sphere: 'Mortality cannot with more / Religious zeale, the gods adore ... This Royall Payre, for whom Fate will / Make Motion cease, and Time stand still; / Since Good is here so perfect'. Of the Carlomaria tradition, with its unprecedented celebration of chaste and domesticated marital union, Graham Parry has noted that 'the platonic hermaphrodite of the two balanced souls mixed equally has reappeared as the controlling spirit of the blessed isles of Great Britain, and its name is CARLOMARIA'.¹⁴⁶

The masque's claim for the monarchs' virtue through a depiction of perfect union, bodily integrity, and heavenly grace used the same set of imagery as Burgess would in his sermon six years later. Burgess, and many other pro-Parliamentarians, used the tropes of chastity to argue that in fact the best union, that between King and Parliament, was being eclipsed by the Queen. In opposition to the claims of Caroline masques, these tracts identified Henrietta Maria or Archbishop Laud (or both) as the source of unchastity and Parliament as the chaste influence that could release the King from his poisonous and unchaste enthrallment, thus opening up the real 'gate' between England and Heaven. As the 1630s drew on, anti-court commentators increasingly observed the proximity of the Queen's body to the King as a source of alarm and Henrietta Maria's body came to figure the cluster of

¹⁴⁵ Rhodes Dunlop (ed.), *The Poems of Thomas Carew and his Masque Coelum Britannicum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 151-85; 160.

¹⁴⁶ Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restor'd: The Culture of the Stuart Court, 1603-42* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), 184.

unchaste influences which Parliamentarians feared were overwhelming the throne.¹⁴⁷ In *The Great Eclipse of the Sun, or Charles His Waine Over-clouded* (1644), Charles is eclipsed by the evil counsel of ‘this Popish Plannet, the Queen’. The tract accuses Henrietta Maria of seducing Charles, ‘under the Royall Curtaines’ ‘to advance the Plots of the Catholickes’. The tract narrates how the King, infected by the opinions of the Queen, along with the ‘Popish’, ‘Cavalier’, ‘cring[ing]’ and ‘bow[ing]’ bishops, and the King’s counsellors and judges (by everyone except his neglected Parliament), began to ‘pray unto the Lady *Mary* and be rul’d by his little *Queen Mary*, who had convinced him that to do so was not ‘idolatry, but the way to increase his Royal Off-spring’. Demonstrating how violent the image of vessels connected by pipes can be when the liquid they contain is unchaste, the tract exhorts the King to resist the carnal influence of the Queen and free his reason, which has, like the kingdom itself, been so drowned in a ‘Deluge of blood’ that ‘*Noahs* dove’ cannot ‘finde a place to rest’ his foot.¹⁴⁸

Sometimes pro-Parliamentarians did not specifically name those close to the King whom they accused of being the source of unchaste influence. This was a highly effective rhetorical device that both protected the writers against the charge of treason while instilling in the tract’s many readers a generalised fear of corruption spreading freely and unseen from any or all of the King’s advisors to the King himself and then to all his subjects: a powerful fear easily stirred in a plague-riddled century. Charles found this technique a difficult one to combat. Seeking to shift authority back into the official machinery of State, he requested in his answer to the petition which accompanied the *Grand Remonstrance* (1641), that its signatories identify those they accused and ‘bring a particular charge and sufficient proof’ so that the accused may be brought to a legal trial and to otherwise ‘forbear such general aspersions as may reflect upon all our counsel’.¹⁴⁹ But the non-specific charge of a corrupting influence, of ‘evill counsels’, was effective precisely because it laid general aspersions upon all those close to the King and, as the antidote for such a secretive, dispersed, and infecting influence, Parliament could offer itself as the identifiable, chaste, upright, just, and true partner to the Crown.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ For the discussion about the nature and perception of the Queen’s influence on the Charles, and of early modern wives on their prominent husbands more generally, see Robin Clifton, ‘Fear of Popery’, in C. Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (London: Macmillan, 1973), 144-67:162; John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660-1688*, 84; Caroline Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 228; Butler, *Theatre and Crisis*; Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment* and ‘The Image of Virtue’, 248, 257; Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, ‘Introduction: After Revisionism,’ in *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603-1642* (London: Longman, 1989) 20; Peter Lake, ‘Anti-Popery: The Structure of a Prejudice,’ in Cust and Hughes, *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, 88; Sharon Achinstein, ‘Women on Top in the Pamphlet Literature of the English Revolution,’ *Women’s Studies* 24 (1994), 131-63; Dolan, *Whores of Babylon*, 123; Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999) 194-5.

¹⁴⁸ See also Britland’s analysis of *Tyrannical-Government Anatomised*, the 1642 Parliamentary play in *Drama at the Courts of Henrietta Maria*, 198-9.

¹⁴⁹ Charles Stuart. *His Majesties Answer to the Petition which accompanied the Declaration of the House of Commons* (London, 1641), 4.

¹⁵⁰ *A remonstrance of the state of the kingdome of England* (1641), 14.

The Grand Remonstrance, produced after the 1640 meeting of the Long Parliament, is both a series of commands, veiled as requests, to the King and a brilliant piece of narrative-making. The document records events from the beginning of Charles' reign, written entirely from a pro-Parliamentary and anti-Catholic, anti-Laudian stance. The central claim of the narrative is that, having neglected his Parliament, the King has allowed the country to fall into schism and chaos, thereby leaving it open to attack. 'The pressing dangers and distempers of the State' have caused the neglected Parliament 'with much earnestness to desire' the return of the King from Scotland so that they may enjoy 'the comfort of your gracious presence, and likewise the unity and justice of your royal authority, to give more life and power to the dutiful and loyal counsels and endeavours of your Parliament, for the prevention of that eminent ruin and destruction wherein your kingdoms of England and Scotland are threatened'. The tract goes on to argue that 'jealousies' between King and Parliament will result in 'violent distraction and interruption', 'insurrection', and 'danger and division' among the People. Their message is clear: when Parliament and King are separated, 'ruin and destruction' ensues; when they are together 'unity and justice', 'peace and safety' prevail.

The tract reports that 'with much earnestness and faithfulness of affection and zeal to the public good of his kingdom and his Majesty's honor and service', the commons have struggled without their King. Yet still the 'wicked', 'devilish' party, under the leadership of the Archbishop, having already 'corrupted and distempered the whole frame and Government of the Kingdome', 'labour[ed] to seduce' the King and to separate him from his Parliament. Arguing that the proper relationship is not between the Crown and Canterbury, but the Crown and Parliament, the tract aligns the popish Archbishop's party with the Catholic uprising in Ireland whose members have 'committed murders, rapes, and other villainies, and shaken off all bonds of obedience to his Majestie'. The 'malicious ... popish party ... foment jealousies between the king and Parliament' and they cannot take care of the King's needs as well as his Parliament can, for they have 'brought him to that want, that he could not supply his ordinarie, and necessary expenses'.¹⁵¹

When describing the dangers which continue to threaten the fidelity between the King and Commons the tract's authors deployed the powerful image of unchastity as broken bodily boundaries. They argued that those opposed to the reunion of the King and his Parliament sought a 'breach' from which will flow more 'injustice, oppression, and violence'. In a second image, even more reminiscent of Leontes' fears of dissolution, the tract depicts the King's initial dismissal of his Parliament as a separation from which disease '*broke in upon us* without any restraint or moderation'.¹⁵² In his response to the tract, the King turned this image back on his petitioners. Warning them against any further rebellion, he reinterpreted their resistance to his authority as the truly unchaste act of separation. He instructed them that 'should any malignant party ... be willing to sacrifice the Peace and Happinesse of

¹⁵¹ *A remonstrance of the state of the kingdome of England* (1641), 11, 23, 24, 3, 15.

¹⁵² *A remonstrance of the state of the kingdome of England* (1641), 4.

their Countrey to their own sinister ends and ambitions under what pretense of Religion and Conscience soever; If they shall endeavour to lessen our Reputation and interest, and to weaken Our Lawful Power and Authority with Our good Subjects ... that all disorder and confusion may *break in upon Us*, We doubt not, but God in his good time will discover them to Us'.¹⁵³ Charles' warning proved prescient. The breaching of the King's body on the very stage where his effeminate masques had been performed before the enemies of the Commons ultimately put an end to the question, raised in the two tracts of 1641, over whose body, the King's or Parliament's, would be broken in upon.

The language of chastity—with its tropes of bodily unity, legitimate union, and relationships oriented to sanctity and away from pride and tyranny—provided controversialists with a powerfully effective way of navigating the complex process of political alliance-building. Depicting a certain alliance as chaste and all others as unchaste was a persuasive method by which to promote one's view of the country's surest road to prosperity and salvation, while undermining the view proposed by opponents. In 1624 the Puritan Thomas Scott warned against the match between Charles I and the Spanish Infanta by arguing that the bonds between King and Parliament were marital. He claimed that one's own mother is a preferable guardian to someone else's mother since she can nourish her children with her own breast, while another cannot:

Princes are married to the commonwealth; & the wife hath power of the husbands body, as he the husband of hers. The Common-wealth then hath power of the Prince in this point. Their wives ought to be as Mothers to every Subject. And were not he a Foole, that would not desire a Naturall Mother, rather than a Step-Mother? Queenes ought to be nurcing Mothers to the Church: Who then would seeke a dry-Nurse, that might have another.¹⁵⁴

However much he worried the distinction between the two kinds of queenly mother, Scott is very clear that the most chaste relationship ought to be between the King and Parliament. This is the only relationship he describes as spousal, one in which both parties have a total claim to each other's body. The Queen, however, is only depicted in relation to her children or subjects. Where Parliament is the King's 'wife', his queen is merely a 'naturall' mother, preferable only to a step-mother. The implication of adultery between the King and the 'natural' mother of his children reveals Scott's real claim: all queens, whether Protestant or Catholic, enjoy the King outside the true, legal and chaste bond that exists between him and his Parliament. All queens, therefore, threaten to breach the integrity of the nation. A Protestant queen merely poses a lesser risk than a Catholic. Where a Catholic queen is a daughter of the whore of Babylon, a Protestant queen, compared to Parliament as chaste spouse, might at worst be only a whore.

The Whore of Babylon was routinely deployed to accuse another of an unchaste institutional union. Bastwick made inventive use of the figure when he accused Archbishop Laud of ruining his

¹⁵³ Charles Stuart. *His Majesties Declaration to all His Loving Subjects* (1641), emphasis mine.

¹⁵⁴ *Vox Regis* (1642), 13-14.

reputation. When in prison, he wrote an ironic letter requesting his jailer to ask the Archbishop and William Juxon, Bishop of London, if they might consider being godparents to the child his wife was about to deliver. Bastwick explained that after the persecution he had suffered, neither he nor his wife had any friends remaining to take on the role, but if the two Church leaders would accept the task, his child was sure to be well provided for since ‘the WHORE OF BABYLON, their old mistress ... with whom they have so long committed fornication’ would also be his child’s godmother.¹⁵⁵ When the whore of Babylon was evoked, it was often followed closely by arguments for the King’s susceptibility to a variety of diseased influences. In early Stuart England, popery was consistently associated with a nexus of courtly sins, including the ‘notion of evil counsel’.¹⁵⁶ The figure was highly evocative, not just of evil councillors as unchaste bedfellows but of their council itself as a diseased poison which undermined the bodily integrity of the King and thus of the Crown and the Nation.

Once the King ceased to call Parliament, the image of a diabolical advisor pouring poison into the King’s ear and infecting him bodily became central to arguments that Charles was vulnerable, ‘fallible’, and in need of Parliament to save him from the influence of those who, themselves fornicating with the Whore of Babylon, infected the King and corrupted his previously chaste fidelity to Parliament.¹⁵⁷ Parliamentary concern over Charles’ unchaste bedmates perverting the true and just marital relationship which he shared with them was evident very early in his reign. In 1628 it was Buckingham whom Parliament recognised as their greatest rival. When the Commons presented Charles with the *Petition of Right*, Mead recounted in a letter that ‘the House of Commons read their Remonstrance to the king in the banqueting house: against the Duke, the Duke’s mother—‘patroness of popery’—and Laud.’¹⁵⁸ A week later, he reported that stuck to a post in London was a sign which read ‘Who rules the kingdom?—The king. Who rules the King?—The duke. Who rules the duke?—The devil’ (I:368). The rumours circulating in 1628 attest to the popular belief that Buckingham, infected by the Catholics with which he associated, had in turn infected the King. He was widely denounced as a Papist who mixed with Jesuits and through his influence on Charles had opened the door to Arminianism. Buckingham’s prominent place at the head of the naval fleet was also noted with suspicion, especially after he had returned from La Rochelle defeated (I:372-3). We could say that he was seen by detractors as a breach from which the strength of the country and of right religion drained away from English shores, allowing corruption to enter the body of the nation.

¹⁵⁵ Basticke, *Letany* (Leiden, 1637), 11.

¹⁵⁶ A. Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Culture and the Overbury Affair, 1603–1660*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 176.

¹⁵⁷ Andrew McRae, ‘Stigmatising Prynne’ in Ian Atherton and Julie Sanders (eds.), *The 1630s: Interdisciplinary Essays on Culture and politics in the Caroline Period* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 171-188: 177-8.

¹⁵⁸ *The Court and Times of Charles I*, vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn, 1848), 366. All subsequent references to the letters in this collection will cite volume and page number in text.

It is no surprise that in this atmosphere, Parliamentary nostalgia for the reign of Elizabeth I escalated. Her rule was recalled as a time when the commons enjoyed the rightful fruits of their sovereign's love and the Virgin Queen herself was celebrated for the very virtues which Charles lacked. For Peter Smart and many other divines, she was the chaste embodiment of true religion; for Prynne she was free from any corrupting desire to participate in theatrical performance; for Nathaniel Bacon, she knew the limits of her power and submitted to the will of her Parliament. Where at the beginning of Charles' reign, Henrietta Maria's wifely devotion and fecundity had been a standard trope not only in court art and literature but in popular prints sold in London stationers,¹⁵⁹ the end of his reign and the interregnum years saw a rise, at least amongst pro-Parliamentarians, of interest in Elizabeth's virginity. Elizabeth's famous and final 'Golden Speech', celebrated by Parliamentarians who read in it a tone of loving submission to their predecessors, was reprinted continually throughout Charles' reign and was reportedly presented to him during the Parliament of 1628 to urge him to sign the Petition of Right (1:378). Pro-Parliamentary interest in policing and limiting those who could lay claim to the sovereign can be seen as an attempt to both police the sovereigns' bodily boundaries and to argue that no union, other than the institutional union being proposed by the writer, was legitimate.

In *The Continuation of an Historicall Discourse of the Government of England* (1650/51), Nathaniel Bacon argued that a 'Queen Regent is doubtless a dangerous condition for England ... unless she be married onely to her People'.¹⁶⁰ He describes Elizabeth's virtues by comparing her to her predecessor. Unlike Mary, Elizabeth was not married and was thus able to marry herself to her people. Bacon argued that Mary's loyalty to her people was compromised by her loyalty to her husband and to a foreign Catholic power whose counsel she preferred over that of her Parliament. 'She thought nothing too dear for the King'. The more she loved her husband and rejected Parliament, the more she erred: 'where a Forraine mighty King is so nigh the Helme, its dangerous to trust the same to his Wife without the joynt concurrence of the Lords. The matter in fact declared no less, for many times She had steered quite wide, had not the Lords been more stiff to their principles then She'. Mary forgot that the title of Supremacy only gave the monarch power to 'visit, correct, repress, redress, Offences and Enormities: This Power and no other did Queen Elizabeth claime'. For Bacon, it was Elizabeth's 'infirmity' as an unmarried woman that made her a successful ruler because she trusted herself to Parliament, whereas Mary, like Charles I, thought too much of her own abilities: 'when the Throne is full of a King, and he as full of opinion of his own sufficiency and Power, a Parliament is looked upon as an old fashion out of fashion'. However, 'where the Crown is too heavy for the wearer by reason of infirmity, the Parliament is looked upon as the chief supporters in the maintaining both the Honour

¹⁵⁹ Malcolm Smuts, 'Religion, European Politics and Henrietta Maria's Circle, 1625-41' in *Henrietta Maria: Piety, Politics and Patronage*, 13-38: 20.

¹⁶⁰ Nathaniel Bacon, *The Continuation of an Historicall Discourse of the Government of England* (London, 1650). 281.

and Power of that Authority, that otherwise would fall under contempt'.¹⁶¹ Elizabeth's memory became a touchstone for those zealous Reformists who did not shy from advocating the violent separation of the unchaste from the body of the Church when they committed idolatry, a sin that by the 1640s was so routinely figured as an act of adultery that the two were almost interchangeable terms. By the beginning of the decade, such claims were being made with greater confidence about the King and Queen themselves, who were, in the eyes of many, idolators.

Legitimate Union and Bodily Boundaries: The Implications for Understanding Early Modern Identity

In Phineas Fletcher's anti-Catholic *The Locusts, or Appolyonists* (1627), the Jesuit Cardinal Bellarmine speaks of the unchaste influence which spreads from members of the Society of Jesus to women and from women to Protestant men:

... women sooner drinke our lore,
Men sooner sippe it from their lippes, than ours:
Sweetly they learne, and sweetly teach: with store
Of teares, smiles, kisses, and ten thousand arts
They lay close batt'ry to mens frayler parts:
So finely steale themselves, and us into their hearts. (Canto IV, st. 21-2)

In Fletcher's verse, Catholicism is a sexualised and liquid force that travels via unchaste women to the bodies of those they speak to/seduce, thereby infecting Protestant men with Jesuit unchastity. A succinct rendering of the tropes of chastity I have been exploring in this chapter, Fletcher's vision of Catholicism as both an unchaste bedmate and a liquid capable of infecting and moving between bodies is suggestive of a particular view of morality (and, more broadly, of identity itself) as fluid, contingent, even 'interpersonal'. In *The Interpersonal Idiom*, Nancy Selleck takes issue with Stephen Greenblatt's emphasis on early modern selfhood as defined against phenomena perceived as 'alien, strange or hostile'. Selleck suggests that instead of thinking about early modern identity as clarified in relation to the other as 'foil or anti-self', we need to pay attention to the fact that Renaissance language 'makes the other not merely the self's context but its source and its locus'. She notes that the language of Shakespeare and Donne especially presents a model of selfhood as interpersonal: Donne's 'these several souls contain / Mixture of things they know not what,/ Love these mix'd souls doth mix

¹⁶¹ Bacon, *The Continuation of an Historicall Discourse of the Government of England*, 274-277. As John Watkins has argued, Caroline Royalists also recalled the Virgin Queen in their claims to the chastity of their cause. They remembered Elizabeth as a sovereign 'who chastised outspoken members of Commons for raising impertinent questions about her marriage and the succession'. Where Elizabeth's body was for advocates of commonwealth the image of gracious giving and chaste submission, for Royalists it was a divine site of chaste authority, an image of queenship that strengthened their loyalty to Henrietta Maria. John Watkins, *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England: Literature, History, Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 88.

again,/ And makes both one, each this, and that' and Shakespeare's 'I have a kind of self resides with you'.¹⁶²

The porousness of early modern identity has also been suggested by Gail Kern Paster:

To the picture of the human body as a "semipermeable, irrigated container in which humours moved sluggishly," we need to add a nuanced picture of humoral subjectivity in similar terms – as a form of consciousness that is open, penetrable, fluid, and extended outward to the higher animals with which it shared affective workings. The mental interior of the individual subject, so understood, begins to seem less bounded and contained than in prior accounts, less opposed to the world outside.¹⁶³

Paster was right to suggest this view of identity in a study of humoral theory since it is within the paradigms of humoral medicine as well as faculty psychology that the model of early modern identity as porous emerge very clearly. Both paradigms present the body and soul as functioning not discretely, but rather, as Selleck notes, as part of a collective identity.¹⁶⁴ We are brought closest to the early modern vision of interpersonality in the medical fields of humoral theory and faculty psychology because for early moderns the many and various parts of a collective identity implicated each other most when diseased or erroneous. However, these two historical paradigms—both of which have been of great interest to scholars over the last two decades—are not the only means of understanding early modern interpersonality. The porousness of identity also needs to be considered as part of the tragicomic vision which sees communities of people bound together in chaste, figurative bodies. Considered from the perspective of chastity's tropes and the early modern tragicomic vision, interpersonality can be understood as describing not just the relationship between bodies but the union between a properly integrated body of people and the divine will. To explore this possibility further I will turn to the early-seventeenth-century debate over the nature and function of the visible Church.

The 'contingent identity' which Selleck describes with reference to psychoanalytic and post-structuralist theory can be accounted for in a more historically relevant manner by reference to early modern concerns over the preservation of a unified and true visible Church: the body of Christ whose sound collective identity depended on the moral health of each of its constituent members.¹⁶⁵ When arguing for the legitimacy of the Reformed Church and its claims to be the true visible Church of Christ, English theologians and divines described the nature of their separateness from Rome through various theories of unity, division and difference. A full survey of this literature is beyond the scope of this study, but what is important is the language with which many of the arguments were constructed.

¹⁶² Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom*, 2; Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (, 5-9, quoting Donne's 'The Ecstasy' and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, 3.2.135.

¹⁶³ Paster, *Humoring the Body*, 137.

¹⁶⁴ Selleck, *Interpersonal Idiom*, 2-3.

¹⁶⁵ Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom*, 3.

Christ's parable of the Kingdom of Heaven as a field containing both wheat and darnel, true and erroneous Christians, was sometimes evoked.¹⁶⁶ However, the trope dominating discussions of the visible Church was the Pauline image of the body. In the early modern period the Church was still almost universally understood as both the body of Christ and as his bride: discussion of it was therefore understandably dominated by descriptions of both health and chastity. Indeed, because the Church was both body and bride, bodily health and chastity were in these debates mutually dependent concepts. Early seventeenth-century arguments about the nature of the visible Church abound with descriptions of it as a body whole and dismembered, healthy and diseased, chaste and unchaste. The tropes of chastity as legitimate union and bodily integrity, with which the arguments of this chapter have been engaged, were thus of crucial importance to theologies of the visible Church and their influence on early modern thinking about the relative interpersonality or collectivity of identity.

In 1610 the Catholic apostate, Thomas Bell, described the early Church as 'a Virgin, free from all Heresies and corruptions'. However, after the death of the Apostles, she was in Bell's account slowly corrupted by superstition and error.¹⁶⁷ Using the same figure in 1615 the Calvinist controversialist, Thomas Adams, described the early Church as a beautiful virgin to whom God pledged his chaste love. Adams argues that this perfect chaste union is something for which every soul ought to strive. But the soul, which he also figures as a 'beautious damsel', has many suitors, among which God and the Devil are principal, and she must discern to whom she ought to dedicate herself. The wrong choice leads to disease. Adams likens the Reformation to the expulsion of illness, which preserves the health and chastity of the Church's virginal body. He refers specifically to humoral theory when offering the diseased body as a figure for both the erroneous soul of individuals and of the whole body of the Church in which each soul is corporate. As the natural body 'when it is over charged in the veines and parts with ranke and rotten humours', which it has 'gathered by misdiet, surfetting, or infest ayres' until it 'growes dangerously sicke' and requires 'some fit evacuation ... So the body of a Church being infected with humours, and swolne with tumours of unsound doctrine, of unsouder life, superstitious ceremonies, corrupting the vitall pores and powers therof: troubled with the colde shakings of indevotion, or taken with the numnesse of induration, or terrified with windy passions of turbulent spirits cannot be at ease, till due reformation hath cured it'. Adams later calls on surgical imagery for the treatment of corruption. 'Bee the errour small, yet the ache of a finger keepes the body from perfect health. The greater it is the more dangerous. Especially ... when it possesseth a

¹⁶⁶ Matthew 13: 24-43.

¹⁶⁷ Thomas Bell, *The Catholique triumph conteyning, a reply to the pretended answere of B.C. (a masked Iesuite,) lately published against the Tryall of the New Religion. Wherein is evidently prooued, that Poperie and the doctrine now professed in the Romish church, is the new religion: and that the fayth which the Church of England now mayntaineth, is the ancient Romane religion* (London, 1610), 414.

vittall part, and affecteth, infecteth the Rulers, of the Church ... So the disease may prove a Gangrene, and then ... no meanes can saue the whole, but cutting off the incurable part'.¹⁶⁸

These early arguments generally applied to the severance and purging of all remnants of Rome from the body of the English Church, but were applied just as frequently in later decades by those non-conformist Calvinists who felt the Reformation had not gone far enough and that the visible Church in England remained diseased. For many, however, it was division itself that was the disease. 'Alas!' wrote John Brinsley in response to St. Paul's call for a perfectly unified Church, 'What multiplicity of divisions are here to be found?' Despite his sympathy for the views held by the Independents, the Puritan Brinsley was concerned for the schism he saw at the parish level. His use of somatic imagery recalls the complaints of Ford's lovers, who experienced separation from others as a division of their own body: 'Tongues divided: Hearts divided: Heads divided: Hands divided: State divided: Church divided: Cities divided: Towns divided: Families divided'.¹⁶⁹ The Presbyterian Robert Baillie in 1645 described the Church beset by schism as the 'dangerously-diseased Spouse of Christ' and the Puritan Vicar, Robert Abbot, regretted that the various sects emerging in the 1630s were like 'undutiful' and 'unnatural' sons, acknowledging their father but denying their mother. Such ungrateful children are, in Abbot's account, implicating the chastity of the Church, since their behaviour gives the impression that their mother has not been constant to Christ, her spouse, but rather living in 'perpetuall adulteries'. 'Surely', he concludes, addressing the Church, 'thy love is to thy husband alone'.¹⁷⁰ The Lancashire Puritan Ellis Bradshaw's concerns for the unchastity of schism also invoked adulterous imagery. He insisted that 'every member ought to be careful, that none be admitted as joynt members, and incorporated with them' because the Church, 'rightly constituted', is 'a chaste Virgin onely unto Christ'. He noted that just as among Christians there is jealousy 'that some Women will not continue chaste. So there is cause of Jealousie, that some churches will not be espoused unto one Husband'. Collapsing unchastity and disease in his description of a Church beset by schism, Bradshaw concluded that to remain 'a chaste Virgin to Christ' Christians must avoid being 'corrupted' from the purity that is to be found in devotion to him.¹⁷¹ Oliver Almond warned against 'infectious and pestilent

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Adams, *Englands sicknes, comparatively conferred with Israels Diuided into two sermons* (1615), 15, 30, 33. In subsequent decades, John Bastwicke made full use of his experience as a doctor when describing the Church as a diseased body.

¹⁶⁹ John Brinsley, *The arraignment of the present schism of new separation in old England. Together with a serious recommendation of church-unity and uniformity* ... (London, 1646), 2.

¹⁷⁰ Robert Baillie, *A dissuasive from the errours of the time wherein the tenets of the principall sects, especially of the Independents, are drawn together in one map, for the most part in the words of their own authours, and their maine principles are examined by the touch-stone of the Holy Scriptures* (London, 1645): 4; Robert Abbot, *A triall of our church-forsakers. Or A meditation tending to still the passions of unquiet Brownists* ... (London, 1639), 3-4.

¹⁷¹ Ellis Bradshaw, *An husbandmans harrow to pull down the ridges of the presbyteriall government and to smooth, a little, the independent ... containing divers new and unanswerable arguments* ... (London, 1649), 69-70 and 13.

heresy' and John Brinsley asserted that 'the whole is infected, because a part is so ... the incestuous person ... by his continuance in the Church of Corinth uncast out, indangered the whole Flock.'¹⁷²

Descriptions of the Church as a field in which both wheat and darnel could grow may have suited moderate arguments for the toleration of erroneous bodies within the true Church, but most writers for whom schism was challenging—either because they desired to see the various Reformed churches unified into one body or because they wished to excise those churches they believed to be erroneous—dwelt on the image of the Church as a human body. Expressing the same fear of infection as Leontes, these writers registered concern that on the one hand, schism itself was a disease that would infect the whole and, on the other, erroneous individuals and groups required severing because their disease would soon infect that part deemed true. It is this concern to root out erroneous members in order to protect the whole that motivated Richard Baxter to instruct his brethren to know the hearts of all their followers. Importantly, Baxter describes error as both disease and unchastity:

Let there not be a soul in your charge that shall not be particularly instructed and watched over. Go from house to house daily, and enquire how they grow in knowledge, and holiness, and on what grounds they build their hopes of salvation ... See that no seducers do creep in among them, or if they do, be diligent to countermine them, and preserve your people from infection of Heresies or Schismes: or if they be infected, be diligent to procure their recovery.¹⁷³

In Baxter's warning, heresy is a disease to which one is seduced away from both the true knowledge of salvation and chaste union within Christ's body and Church.

The dual images of the divided Church as a diseased body and an adulterous bride also informed Catholic arguments against reform. Such arguments usually urged that if corruption in the Church is discovered, believers ought to remain loyal and seek to heal and correct its errors rather than abandoning it in its distress for 'to leave [our] mother thus on her sick bed ... is but the part of unnatural children'.¹⁷⁴ The Separatist minister, Henry Ainsworth, who was terrified of the contagion to which such loyalty would subject him, articulated a common Calvinist reaction to the proposition. He has no time for 'those children that dwell with their adulterous mother', a 'whore ... which lyeth in a deadly sort swollen with waters of the dropsie, or with poison', and he denounces their belief that by continuing to love her while 'abhor[r]ing her syn' they will 'call her back from evil'. He wishes instead

¹⁷² Oliver Almond, *The vncasing of heresie, or, The anatomie of protestancie* (London, 1623): 3; John Brinsley, *The arraignment of the present schism of new separation in old England. Together with a serious recommendation of church-unity and uniformity* ... (1646), 42-3.

¹⁷³ Richard Baxter, *The saints everlasting rest, or, A treatise of the blessed state of the saints in their enjoyment of God in glory wherein is shewed its excellency and certainty, the misery of those that lose it, the way to attain it, and assurance of it, and how to live in the continual delightful forecasts of it* ... (1650), 508.

¹⁷⁴ Quoted in Henry Ainsworth, *Covnterpoysion considerations touching the poynts in difference between the godly ministers and people of the Church of England, and the seduced brethren of the separation* ... (London, 1642), 3-4.

to see the infectious Church burned in a spectacular act of purification. ‘The skirts of the whore of Rome have been discovered’ and when ‘compared with the chastitie of Christs spowse’, true Christians must ‘hate the whore and burne her with fire’.¹⁷⁵ ‘And then shall we be so far from mourning at her funeral, as we shall rejoyce with the heavenly multitude, and sing Hallelujah, when God hath given Sodoms judgment on her, and we see her smoke rise up for evermore’.¹⁷⁶

What these arguments reveal is that unchastity was bound up with early modern ideas of disease on an individual and collective scale and that both conditions were perceived as capable of spreading like a contagion between bodies. Just as unchastity was interpreted as a malignant force whose influence dissolved proximate selves into physical and moral sickness, chastity was understood to ensure the integrity of bodies: both the discrete bodies of those who wished to protect themselves against unchaste influences, and the collective body of Christ, the Church, which relied for its integrity on the moral and spiritual health of its communicants. However much Reformed theologians and divines may have sought to diminish the effects of schism, early modern literature, drama and controversial pamphlets register an awareness of damage to the unity of collective identity. On the stage, this anxiety found voice in fears of adultery and tyranny. Offstage, it was more explicitly articulated in both fears of and fears for those no longer held to be part of the visible Church or legitimate English society, and in anxieties about one’s own unchastity and exclusion from communion. In time, anti-court polemicists and Caroline court performances both in their own way exploited this pervasive sense of damage and disunity when seeking to code their own sphere, Parliament or court, as the truly legitimate, the truly chaste, collective body.

My study of *The Winter’s Tale* attests to the fear which the permeable body could inspire in early moderns who, like Leontes, felt themselves being dissipated by the sins of those on whom their identity depended. His reaction to the perceived threat of dissolution is, in fact, in keeping with Greenblatt’s vision of early modern selfhood as identified against an alien other. However, Leontes ultimately reaches maturity only after experiencing the pleasure and wonder of total bodily dissolution in his reunion with his wife: his experience thus also attests to Selleck’s description of interpersonality. Approaching early modern selfhood from the perspective of chastity reveals that both Greenblatt’s and Selleck’s models are correct. In its exploration of chastity, *The Winter’s Tale* specifically asks Leontes to mature from the one form of relational identity to the other, moving away from a frightened defensiveness to an open interpersonality: a move which depends on his discovering that his wife is in fact chaste and that it is safe for him to re-embed himself, his blood, his heart, within their marital union. It is important that Leontes’ distemper, like that of Ford’s lovers, is inspired by an apparent act of unchastity. Indeed, it must be noted that the examples Greenblatt uses for the threats against which

¹⁷⁵ Ainsworth, *Covnterpoyson considerations touching the poynts in difference between the godly ministers and people of the Church of England, and the seduced brethren of the separation* ... , 3-4.

¹⁷⁶ Henry Ainsworth, *An animadversion to Mr Richard Clyffons advertisement* ... (London, 1613), 104.

early moderns defined themselves are all elements of English society which were routinely interpreted as unchaste: 'heretic, savage, witch, adulteress, traitor, Antichrist'.¹⁷⁷

Why was unchastity in particular the virtue around which fears of dissolution and infection gathered? Above all virtues, chastity oversaw the integrity of bodies. It protected against the unseen and unacknowledged spread of 'adulterers' blood into illegitimate veins. That is, chastity protected against the loss of the self. As Leontes, Ford's lovers, and the controversialists with which this chapter is concerned all suggest, early modern identity existed very much in the blood and depended for its safety and purity on the sharing of blood only through legitimate unions. However, chastity also played a more figurative, and I think more pervasive, role as a virtue capable of protecting against all forms of broken bonds and dissolved boundaries. In a period so beset by schism at various institutional levels, concern for the integrity of boundaries emerged as a pervasive anxiety. In turn, many elements of early modern English society that were deemed threatening to the integrity of individual and collective bodies were identified as unchaste: women, Catholics, foreigners, theatrical performance and spectacle, heretics, traitors, tyrants. Consequently, images of unchastity, when applied to any one of these threats, summoned by an associative logic many or all of the others.

Greenblatt's description of selfhood as defined against an alien other is thus a true description of how early moderns reacted to the threat of unchaste influences. But Selleck's interpersonality is not contrary to Greenblatt's model. In fact it is conceptually fundamental to the early modern urge to distinguish and divide the self from perceived threats. By paying attention to the language of chastity in writing from the first half of the seventeenth century, we find that the early modern tendency to define identity through separation and self-protection is a natural reaction to the belief that existence is far from being so easily individuated. It is precisely the knowledge of interpersonal existence that drives the desire to individuate when the people and experiences to which one is proximate are thought to be unchaste, diseased, corrupted or erroneous. Yet, the same knowledge informed the early modern belief that schism and separation could themselves be erroneous, and that unity was necessary for salvation. In a manner impossible before the Reformation, unity, wholeness, and the integrity of the body were ideas capable of instilling tremendous peace in early moderns of all confessions. As well as being itself a supreme realisation of chastity, collective unity also required the chastity of its members. As Leontes learns from Hermione and Paulina, as John Ford's proud lovers fail to realise, and as the Caroline masques asserted throughout the 1630s, interpersonality could be a source of considerable confidence and succor when the influence to which one felt proximate was chaste and pure. Early modern language, and what I have been calling the 'tragicomic vision', thus points to a perception of identity as much anxiously defined through the fear

¹⁷⁷ Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 9.

of what Greenblatt terms a 'loss of self' as it is consoled by Selleck's 'physically and interpersonally embedded person'.¹⁷⁸

The management of individual and collective identity was a central concern of tragicomedy; what I hope this chapter has shown is that outside the theatre early modern thinking about identity was shaped by the same tragicomic or chaste tropes that were being explored onstage. Chapter One's investigation of tragicomedy's capacity to draw communities together—and to connect them, their wills and desires, to the divine will—attests to the genre's vision of chastity as a force capable of securing the integrity of collective bodies and the legitimate union between those bodies and the divine through the heavenly 'gates' or 'doors' evoked by the polemicists treated in this chapter. In the same way, Chapter Two's exploration of how dangerous to early modern sanctity was the pride of individuals who fail to understand their rightful place in collective identity also attests to the period's tragicomic vision of chaste communal bodies and their proper union with the divine. This aspect of tragicomedy's vision was fundamental to the logic and function of court masques, but also to debates (such as that between Charles and Parliament at the time of the *Grand Remonstrance*) over the best and most chaste unions among England's central institutions. We must therefore recognise that the very tropes which organised a particular generic experience in the theatre formed the very ground for negotiations on which the most prominent and important debates of the period rested. The conceptual conflicts out of which the martial conflicts of the Civil Wars would emerge can in this way be seen as shaped by each party's efforts to utilise the strength and conviction of chastity's tropes for their own vision of England's health and sanctity.

¹⁷⁸ Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom*, 3; Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 9.

Chapter Four

Caroline Chastity Part Two:

Henrietta Maria, Catholic Queen of Married Chastity

As the head of the Catholic Church in England, an exemplar of married chastity, and the fertile mother of numerous Stuart heirs, Henrietta Maria was the perfect embodiment of the emerging Caroline cult of chastity. That her public life was built as much from an appreciation of, and participation in, Marian devotions and the genre of performance most associated since Shakespeare's late plays with the divinity of female chastity only consolidated the Queen's status as fertile, chaste, and holy Marian leader. As this chapter will argue, Henrietta Maria's 'Marian fertility' (her chaste and divine maternity), which was promoted at court by her masques, birthing rituals, and her religious supporters, recalled that wondrous vision of the chaste and feminised divine will expressed most succinctly at the conclusion of *The Winter's Tale*. It should be clear from my analysis in the last chapter that the association of this tragicomic vision with the Queen's religion was an interpretation of chastity's tropes anathema to the tenets held by the period's anti-Catholic and anti-Laudian writers. In the battle to win popular opinion, both the Queen's supporters and her detractors sought to claim the tropes of chastity for their own cause. But Henrietta Maria had one crucial talent which none of her opponents could match: her prodigious fertility. In Chapter One's assessment of Shakespearean tragicomedy's final tableau and its roots in medieval liturgical drama's Marian scenes of revelation, I detailed the importance of chaste fertility to the genre's physiological and spiritual effect on the bodies in the theatre space and its capacity to make available to audience members a direct and affective experience of the feminised divine will. This acclamation of chaste female fertility as the source of divinity, so crucial to tragicomedy and the masque, found its perfect expression in Henrietta Maria's capacity to enter, through the birthing rituals she underwent throughout the 1630s, into a divine drama in which her body was both literally and figuratively the gate between heaven and earth—that 'doore of hope' which in his anti-Catholic sermon Burgess claimed for Elizabeth I.

Many aspects of Henrietta Maria's life and queenship were drawn from the conventions of masque and tragicomedy, but none more than her maternity. In 1629, the queen lost her first child, a boy who was baptised Charles II and buried with a full state funeral. Almost exactly a year later, she gave birth to a second Charles II, who lived. No greater early modern example of chastity's trope of

the return-of-the-lost exists outside the theatre. Henrietta Maria built her career from precisely this awareness that the tropes of tragicomedy and masque—the tropes of chastity—were the building blocks of a divine vision that shaped life as well as drama. In this chapter, I will be focussing on Henrietta Maria's career and how it emerged out of antagonism between her (and her supporters) and those who sought to code her body, court, life, and faith, as unchaste and her influence upon the King as infectious. I will therefore be continuing to focus on the tropes of legitimate union and issue and bodily boundaries (both actual and figurative). When we focus on Henrietta Maria, and the perceptions of her by suspicious, Puritan-leaning commentators, a new facet of the bodily boundaries trope emerges: one which applies to the open spaces of England itself, its soil, topography, and architecture. I will therefore be reading the Queen's career in terms of its reception as a chaste or unchaste influence on the many public and private spaces of London, and of England as a whole. To do so not only sheds new light on the way the Queen used space to defend her claims to chastity's tropes but reveals another area of early modern thought in which the tropes of chastity played a crucial role.

Early modern thinking on the chastity of space evidences a medicalised and moral interpretation of geography and topography: one that figured London itself as a body around which unchastity moved like an infectious disease. Charles I's leniency to Catholics, for example, was perceived by a number of anti-Catholic commentators as a cause of plague. This diagnosis appealed to the commonplace belief in divine retribution and it can be attributed to just such a vertical model of cause and effect, but it was also an anxious mapping of the unseen spread of disease across London, a disease of which the Queen (and if not directly the Queen, then her Catholic entourage) were the cause. After initial hopes for Henrietta Maria's conversion were disappointed, the young Queen's unchaste body, and in time her unchaste houses and chapels, were to anti-Catholic commentators a source of infection whose proximity to the King was particularly alarming. However, Charles' and Henrietta Maria's many forms of court performance made use of the same thinking about moral influence, arguing conversely that the monarchs' chaste marriage was a source of sanctity and grace. Their bodies radiated a chastity whose healing was available to all subjects, just as their ambitious building projects purified London and made the chastity so celebrated in their masques directly available to the city's inhabitants through the very spaces in which they daily moved.

While in this chapter I will be briefly treating Caroline court masques and pastorals, and their part in the promotion of Henrietta Maria's chastity, the dramatic events on which I will focus more closely are Henrietta Maria's births. I am taking this approach because it is through an understanding of how early moderns perceived the relative chastity of space that birthing rituals emerge as the perfect forum in which the forms and intentions of Henrietta Maria's masque performances and devotional practices could converge in an embodied and ceremonial mystery of the greatest moral, spiritual, and physiological importance to the Crown and its subjects. A central

argument of this chapter is that royal birthing scenes were indeed a performance, a ceremonial governed by the same tropes of chastity as any court masque and fundamental to the theatre of monarchy. The many royal births of the 1630s, each coincident with a lavish court masque, were especially interested in celebrating the Queen's chaste fertility, not least because commentators immediately after the Queen's arrival in 1625 perceived the monarchs' inter-religious marriage as a suspiciously unchaste source of royal issue (a view which some thought vindicated by the first, and still-born, Charles II). When we situate Henrietta Maria's fertility within both her reform of religion and her taste for tragicomedies, pastorals, and masques, it is possible to see how central the promotion of the Queen's Marian fertility was to the proliferation of that cult of chastity which I have been tracing from Shakespeare's late plays.

Rape of the City: Henrietta Maria and Chaste Space

Scholarly interest in a politicised view of space—an approach to societies that has for some decades been associated with questions of power and ownership emerging from world literature—has recently turned its attention to geography, architecture, and the arrangement and use of court buildings within early modern Europe.¹⁷⁹ Court historians are also revisiting royal architecture in order to understand the gendered and politicised implications of how and by whom buildings were designed and used.¹⁸⁰ Deepening our understanding of the way early moderns perceived their world through the lens of chastity enables a fresh perspective on the early modern organisation and navigation of space. I have been detailing the frightened defensiveness expressed by early moderns when confronted with unchastity's capacity to spread like a contagion between people, and the corollary and deeply consoling belief that chastity could emanate from those who strove to perfect the virtue, thereby sanctifying others who came within their sphere of influence. To what extent did these paired views also hold true in early modern perceptions of space? The pro-Parliamentary belief that the King's body ought to be protected from the advisors by whom he was infected also motivated the 'cleansing' of Church interiors which, overly decorated, were deemed sluttish and prostituted spaces, ill fit to contain the body of Christ but also dangerous in themselves as sites of infection. The same belief in the moral potency of spaces and material objects was a key motivation for Cromwell's army when it swept

¹⁷⁹ Andrew Gordon and Bernhard Klein (eds.), *Literature, Mapping and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Marcello Fantoni, George Gorse and Malcolm Smuts (eds.), *The Politics of Space: European Courts 1500-1750* (Roma: Balzoni, 2009).

¹⁸⁰ Janette Dillon, *The Language of Space in Court Performance 1400-1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Simon Thurley, *Somerset House: The Palace of England's Queens 1551-1692* (London Topographical Society, 1999) and *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England: A Social and Architectural History* (Yale University Press, 1993); Caroline Hibbard, 'Henrietta Maria in the 1630s: perspectives on the role of consort queens in *Ancien Régime* courts' in Atherton and Sanders (eds.) *The 1630s*, 92-110; and Sophie Carney's unpublished doctoral thesis 'The Queen's House at Greenwich: the material cultures of the courts of Queen Anna of Denmark and Queen Henrietta Maria, 1603-1669' (Roehampton University, 2012).

through Stuart royal residences, purging them of their effeminate corruption and making them fit to house a general and his men. At Westminster, Pride's Purge was as much a purging of the building in which Commons met as it was of the Commons themselves. From the perspective of Royalists, however, the rebels' invasion of London's palaces was an unchaste and terrifying assault, whose violence against the hallowed structures on which social harmony depended was only surpassed by the ultimate 'rape' of the King's body in 1649.

In one sense, the fact that early moderns interpreted space politically, spiritually, and morally is obvious. The last two decades of scholarship interested in the spectacle of monarchy in Renaissance Europe has revealed the degree to which the rituals and ceremonies of power exploited the theatrical potential of public space, particularly for a figure like Elizabeth I.¹⁸¹ Equally, scholarship interested in the rise of the Stuart masque has been quick to notice that Inigo Jones believed architectural space not only embodied but brought into being universal truths, and that the arrangement of space was fundamental to the development of virtue within the men and women who made use of his buildings.¹⁸² But attention to the early modern conception of unchastity as an infection, and the manner with which the fear of its spread was utilised by controversialists, suggests the extent to which all early moderns understood space as a figurative body in which they were incorporated, and the importance of maintaining the chastity of space, not only in order to protect their own moral condition but to protect the broader structures of institutional governance and authority.

The anonymous authors of *Novembris Monstrum or, Rome brought to bed in England with the whores miscarrying* can be seen as appealing to their readers' fearful instinct that it is not only in the bodies of creatures but in all space and objects that the divine and moral combat between God and the devil is played out.¹⁸³ Narrating the events of the Gunpowder Plot, the verse follows each of the perpetrators' movements across London, identifying specific locations as either innocent and good (through images of glory, light, truth, purity, or simply of Englishness), or as criminal (black, evil, funereal, lustful and corrupting). The degenerate locations and their objects are associated with the Plot's Catholic and Jesuit perpetrators, who are characterised by the whole catalogue of early modern commonplaces for unchastity: wolves, foxes, women, idolators, whores and actors. When they, the objects they use, and

¹⁸¹ Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth* (California: University of California Press, 1977); Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Eggert, *Showing Like a Queen*; Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation*; Henderson, *Passion Made Public: Elizabethan Lyric, Gender, and Performance*; Doran and Freeman, *The Myth of Elizabeth*; Walker, *The Elizabeth Icon, 1603-2003*; Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation*; Dillon, *The Language of Space in Court Performance 1400-1625*.

¹⁸² Roy Strong and Stephen Orgel, *Inigo Jones: the Theatre of the Stuart Court* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance*; Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England*, Chapter Nine, especially 266.

¹⁸³ Anon., *Novembris Monstrum* (1641). Although printed at this later date, the pamphlet was written much earlier in Charles' reign and suppressed.

the spaces they inhabit come into contact with their innocent and sanctified opposites, the collision is figured as a rape.

The Jesuit criminals lurk in a vault beneath the legitimate space of Commons' 'stately house' above, ready to break through the dividing surface. The 'wall' of London, the Thames, is guarded by a 'grand army', protecting the city from violation. But the perpetrators breach the barrier. They 'creepe' and burrow like 'sly' foxes, or 'adders under fairer flowers', raping the innocent soil of England: 'With beamy-yron-rows they sticke the heart/ Of Mother earth' until the Thames begins to shake. The river, in sympathy with the earth, 'quak[es]' and falls into an 'ague'. Once inside their lair, the Jesuits sing songs to Ignatius while 'night spreads her sable wings in dismall fort/ Over the vault, and keeps continuall court'. The subterraneous space is compared to the splendour of Whitehall above, with all its chaste classical deities crowding the walls and Eliza waiting with her sword in hand, ready to bring justice upon Rome's 'blackbread broode'. Having prepared 'treason's wide warehouse' beneath London, the group begin to transport across the city barrel-loads of explosives. The barrels themselves are innocent and have been violated by the evil black powder which is 'stuff't' into their 'rising wombs'. The sound of the vehicle being 'press[ed]' by the load is a funeral dirge, marking the passing of souls. The horses are hell's animals, black and monstrous, who move through London 'swift as thawing winter's current', violating the very air through which they pass.¹⁸⁴

The perpetrators cut down trees to fashion idolatrous images of gods, which they place at the site as fuel: they break innocent wood, turning it to sin and error. In the same way, the earth is hewn to make way for the site of the crime, a violation which paves the way for the planned explosion's even greater ravaging. The criminals transformation of the ground beneath London is most scandalous because the un-hewn earth is called nature's 'cell', a place of prayer which, with the arrival of the Catholics, becomes a 'stage'. Their play is acted in a theatre 'rudely built as low as Hell'. Onto its stage walks the Whore of Babylon. She is followed by Lust, Ignorance, Error, and Superstition. We are told that although the theatre is 'set up in England', its actors come from Rome. Extending the figure of innocence raped to a national scale, the authors finally detail the invasion of English soil by the 'true borne of that Father Feind, / A Cadmus brood sprung from the scattered seed/ Of that true serpent's teeth'. Their 'rape' of English soil would ruin 'the purer blood of long liv'd unity, / Which ranne in Englands veines'. The offspring of the crime would be 'so foule a birth' that 'Phoebus would invest 'himselke in sable black'.¹⁸⁵

It is perhaps not surprising that we find such detailed descriptions of England's violated 'wombe' and 'foule' birth in a poem about Catholic treason. In many respects, the early modern English fear of the unchastity of space grew out of anti-Catholicism and continued to be concentrated on Catholic sites or those sites of Arminian worship thought by plain religionists to be tainted by

¹⁸⁴ *Novembris Monstrum* (1641): 111, 109, 112.

¹⁸⁵ *Novembris Monstrum* (1641): 118, 68, 127.

popery. Anti-Catholic fears also registered a knowledge that the unchastity of Catholic worship could move outside particular buildings and spread across the country: an anxiety apparent as much in Elizabethan as Caroline language, though differently nuanced. From the beginning of the Society of Jesus' English mission, Catholicism was increasingly represented by anti-Catholics as an unchaste infection spreading through England in the person of Jesuit priests. Such images dwelt not just on the bodies of the Jesuits themselves but on the spaces in which they passed, preached, said Mass, and were housed and hidden from authorities.

Julian Yates has looked specifically at what he terms the 'parasitic geographies' of the Elizabethan period of anti-Catholicism.¹⁸⁶ Yates describes the movement of young Englishmen, who left home shores to be educated abroad as Jesuits before returning in secret to reconvert the nation, as a set of movements that terrified Protestant Englishmen and women, and was expressed most hysterically by the chief priest hunter Richard Topcliffe and in Anthony Munday's *English Romayne Lyfe* (1581). In Yates' account, the sons of the Catholic gentry who disappeared abroad, carrying the crown's wealth and assets with them, were corrupted by a Jesuit education and returned by 'Secrete Creeks, and landing places'. Having breached the nation's shores, they then made 'breaches in men's and women's consciences'. Once converted to their faith, their victims would harbour 'the sayd traiterous messengers in obscure places', burrowed deep in the country's great houses where they could not be found.¹⁸⁷ Elizabethan intelligence-gatherers 'monitored houses, ports, crossing-places, bridges, entryways and thoroughfares, relaying a mish-mash of signs that would enable Cecil and Walsingham to track the flow of bodies arriving from the Continent'.¹⁸⁸ Yates argues that Elizabeth's pursuivants represented themselves as righting a 'spatial anomaly', in which money and resources flowed out of the country with members of the Catholic gentry, and pestilence, unchastity, error, idolatry and heresy flowed in: an economy in direct reverse of the proper order. For Catholics, however, England became a landscape filled with obstacles that had to be negotiated in secret as they sought to create unseen and sacred hollows where Mass could be said and where they themselves could be hidden if pursued. Where for pursuivants, England was 'dislocated and infected by the unseen existence of seminaries, safe houses and hiding places', for Catholics, the same spaces were deemed sanctifying and chastening.¹⁸⁹

The direct conflict between these opposing Elizabethan views of sanctified and violated space was again evident when Charles I married a Catholic princess. Early in the royal marriage, meals often commenced with Henrietta Maria's confessor and the chaplain to the Lord Keeper competing with each other to say Grace, each seeking to sanctify a space which the other's ritual of

¹⁸⁶ Julian Yates, 'Parasitic Geographies: Manifesting Catholic Identity in Early Modern England' in Arthur F. Marotti (ed.), *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 63-84.

¹⁸⁷ Julian Yates, 'Parasitic Geographies', 67, quoting Munday.

¹⁸⁸ Julian Yates, 'Parasitic Geographies', 74.

¹⁸⁹ Julian Yates, 'Parasitic Geographies', 68, 64.

sanctification could only sully.¹⁹⁰ The extent to which early moderns perceived space as either chastened or unchastened by the blessings of a true or erroneous priest is suggested by their attitudes to the burial of the dead. The new legal Catholic spaces in London under Henrietta Maria attracted people from as far afield as Scotland and Ireland, hoping to bury their loved ones in Catholic ground. Many, of course, could not do so. The graveyard at the Queen's chapel was solely for the use of members of her household.¹⁹¹ However, Father Cyprian of Ganache recounts that at night he would secretly bless Protestant ground before Catholic bodies were given an official burial the following day (*Court and Times*, 2:340, 342). This practice presents a remarkable picture of the Catholic-Protestant opposition played out in the unseen mapping of space. It suggests that early modern believers conceived of London through a geography parceled up into areas, be they buildings or simply patches of ground, that were either sacred or profane but whose identity as such was not fixed. For Christians of all confessions and tastes, the very rituals which marked a space as sacred were precisely those which others believed were potentially corrupting.

Even more unsettling was the fact that the effects of such rituals remained invisible. Religious objects were an easy target for iconoclasts given they were visible and breakable, but the blessing of English soil by a Catholic priest like Cyprian transforms the very earth on which the nation is built in an invisible manner: from one perspective sanctifying it, from another polluting it. I recall here Burgess' 1641 sermon, which I treated in the last chapter, in which he held up King Asa as an example of a true and chaste believer because Asa, on discovering his mother had erected an idol in a grove and worshipped it, stripped her of her crown. Burgess accused Asa's mother and the English Catholics which she represents of being an 'obscene' and 'grosse Idolatresse' and 'abominable strumpet', not only because she insulted God with her overly-adorned worship but because, in Burgess' description, the 'menstruous cloth' of her idol transformed the space of the grove into a secret and darkened corner. Such an unchastened corner of the earth is evocative of those spaces that witches, themselves associated with Catholic worship, used for the kind of diabolical practices described by the authors of *Novembris Monstrum*—unchaste spaces which Milton in his masque called the 'obscured haunts of inmost bowers' and the 'dark sequesterd nooke' where Comus' 'monstrous' rout practice their 'abhorred rites' and 'guylefull spells' to Hecate.¹⁹²

If indeed the early modern perception of unchastity as an infection can be understood as applying to space, then in many respects English soil was, like its Church, figured as a body through which roads and rivers ran like veins which were as susceptible as veins to unchaste invasion and

¹⁹⁰ Caroline Hibbard, 'Translating Royalty: Henrietta Maria and the Transition from Princess to Queen', *Court Historian* 10 (2005), 15-29: 19.

¹⁹¹ Frances Dolan argues that there were exceptions to this rule, such as the burial of Elizabeth Cary in 1639. *Whores of Babylon*, 150.

¹⁹² Burgess, *A Sermon preached to the honourable house of commons* (1641), 47. Burgess, *A Sermon preached to the honourable house of commons* (1641), 47. S. E. Sprott, *A Masque: the Earlier Versions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 115, 119.

infection. This is certainly how plague tracts figured London.¹⁹³ As Margaret Healy has argued: ‘Geographical location, then—inside and outside the city walls—articulated and reflected a growing social polarization and widespread fear about disorder and subversion in early modern London. The boundaries of the City body, like the boundaries of individual bodies c. 1600, were felt to be vulnerable sites, requiring especial policing to protect the inner body from pollution’.¹⁹⁴ And we have seen how Leontes interpreted his estate as an extension of his own body, guarding its entrance and exits against that sluicing he believed had been caused by his wife’s apparent unchastity. The same anxiety is evident in the language of Elizabeth’s pursuivants, for who the ‘secret creeks and landing places’ were those passages into and across the country through which Jesuits came and went. Feeding this same anxiety were early modern fears that recusants were infecting the country from within. Frances Dolan and Diana Barnes have noted the view that recusancy depended on female sub-cultures which spread unseen through communities, ‘bypass[ing] the authority of husbands and priests’ and causing ‘a festering infection’ to ‘secretly tak[e] hold from within’.¹⁹⁵ The image of unchaste beliefs spreading unseen like a plague between bodies was certainly on the minds of Londoners when Henrietta Maria arrived in the capital in 1625. The young Queen’s journey to London coincided with the spread of plague and the preparation of a naval fleet to depart for Spain. An awareness of the moral and divine significance of these convergent events—the arrival of the Queen and her Catholic entourage, the departure of healthy young Protestant Englishmen overseas to war, and the spread of infectious disease—is evident in letters from the period as it is in the agreement by the Lords and Commons that a general fast throughout the country must be kept in order to ‘give God thanks for the happy succession of his majesty after his father’, that ‘the Divine Majesty will be pleased to cease the plague’, and ‘to the good success of the fleet’ (I:34).

At the centre of reports relating to the events of 1625 is the body of the new Queen. Her arrival in London stalled by her illness, she was visited by Dr. Meddus who reported that she is ‘a brave lady’, though touched a little by green sickness. The Doctor’s reference to the Queen’s need to commence a fully sexual marriage with the King is richly suggestive of anti-Catholic views that her body was a foreign and suspicious object in need of full possession by the King and, through him, full appropriation by Protestant England. The same letter then recounts that the Queen followed the Doctor’s advice and ate something, despite the presence of her confessor who wished for her to maintain her fast as it was the feast of St. John the Baptist (I:31). Again ignoring her confessor’s advice,

¹⁹³ Anon., *Lachrymae Londinenses: or, Londons lamentations and teares for Gods heauie visitation of the plague of pestilence ...* (London, 1626) contains a complaint by Mater Londinia which figures the city as her body.

¹⁹⁴ Healy, *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England*, 93-4.

¹⁹⁵ Barnes, ‘*The Secretary of Ladies and Feminine Friendship at the Court of Henrietta Maria*’ in *Henrietta Maria: Piety, Politics and Patronage*, 39-56: 54, 56. See also Frances Dolan, “‘The Wretched Subject the Whole Town Talks of’”: Representing Elizabeth Cellier’ in *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts*, 157-211.

Henrietta Maria spent the night alone with the King.¹⁹⁶ Dr. Meddus recounts how hopeful are those who ‘know best [the Queen’s] disposition’ that she will convert (I:17).¹⁹⁷

The sexualisation of religious conversion was a popular Reformation trope, of which scholars have long been aware¹⁹⁸. Although, as my last chapter noted, it was usually used in a pejorative way to describe the unchaste exchanges between Catholic priests and the women to whom they ministered or between Catholic wives and their Protestant husbands. In the 1625 accounts of the Queen’s arrival, observers were more confident of the King’s capacity to convert Henrietta Maria. Dr. Meddus’ letter reveals that he, and presumably his reader also, actually thought the Queen might convert immediately upon her arrival—a view in keeping with the assumption that a night alone with the King might sort her out. Crucially, the correspondents noted that in those first days, when the Queen’s conversion did not come, the number of plague deaths in London almost doubled (I:32). This narrative, told collectively by a group of correspondents, tells the story of unchaste infections entering English shores in the person of the Queen and of the power of the King’s Protestant body to overcome the threat posed by her and her entourage. However, despite the correspondents’ initial hopes, the King’s chastening of the Queen did not come quickly or easily and the correlation between the spread of plague and the Queen’s movement toward the centre of London was reported with increasing alarm.

Anxiety over the pathological effect which the Queen’s unchaste resistance to conversion had on London reached its climax when Henrietta Maria and her entourage took up residence in the royal palaces. The correspondents soon reported that ‘the friars so frequent the Queen’s private chamber that the King is much offended’. Observers feared the degree to which the new Catholic party had penetrated the court and presented their intimacy with the Queen as a disease moving ever inward to the heart of the realm, the King himself. The friars’ regular presence inside the most inner chambers of the royal palace was reported alongside the discovery that the plague had penetrated right into the King’s kitchen, killing the son of Charles’ baker (I:39-40). In the same week, Mead reported the number of plague deaths rose so steeply they were thought to be caused not only by the spread of initial disease but by the eruption of new infections across the city. In response, Parliament announced their intention of withholding all further funds for the King’s war until he agreed to tax recusants more heavily and disinherit his Catholic peers. Over the following weeks the number of plague deaths

¹⁹⁶ She promised her Confessor she would not ‘give scandal’ on her first night with the King.

¹⁹⁷ Corroborating this image of Henrietta Maria’s readiness to choose the King and his Church over that of her homeland, Mead reports rumours that the Queen’s slow progress from France to Dover, initially attributed to Marie de Medici’s illness, was rather due to the Pope’s legate instructing Henrietta Maria to spend sixteen (‘some say twenty-six’) days in penance for consenting to marry Charles before the papal dispensation was issued. The letter concludes by suggesting that the King triumphed over Rome when he demanded the Queen come to him immediately. She apparently consented, leaving the Papal legate at Amiens, and departing for England even before her confession could be heard. *Court and Times of Charles I*, I: 32.

¹⁹⁸ Dolan, *Whores of Babylon*, 45-94, especially 76 and 90-91; Claire McEachern, “‘A whore at the first blush seemeth only a woman’: John Bale’s Image of Both Churches and the Terms of Religious Difference in the Early English Reformation”, *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 25 (1995), 245-69.

continued to rise, far surpassing the number of the 1603 plague. Then in September, they began to abate. Joseph Mead wrote that ‘we have some here make an observation, that the first abatement of the plague was the week following that wherein came out the proclamation against the papists’ (I:46). He wondered how the plague was progressing in France and Spain, because he has heard no report. He had, however, heard it was very bad in Constantinople, ‘where it is no wonder’ (I:49).

The association between plague and Catholicism was as well-established in Protestant countries as the association between Catholicism and unchastity.¹⁹⁹ It had been cemented in English thought during the 1603 plague which coincided with the death of Protestantism’s chaste exemplar, Elizabeth I.²⁰⁰ Throughout the Reformation in England, fear of plague was expressed in descriptions of the City, and of England as a whole, as a body around which disease moved, emanating from sites of moral infection such as theatres, the houses of Catholics, and ale houses. In arguments of this kind, chastity was particularly important because it was a virtue which policed borders. Margaret Healy notes that in times of high plague deaths, ‘the boundaries of the City body, like the boundaries of individual bodies ... were felt to be vulnerable sites, requiring especial policing to protect’ the interiors from pollution.²⁰¹ Elizabeth I’s chastity was used in exactly this way in early conceptualisations of nationhood. Her impenetrable body figured the impenetrable borders of the English maps on which she was depicted. By not marrying the Continent, Elizabeth and her chaste body were the perfect tropes for the safety of the island’s borders.²⁰²

The problem of policing borders becomes particularly interesting when we turn to architectural spaces. Chastity often surfaced in plays, pamphlets and letters wherever vulnerable architectural thresholds were at stake. Following Laura Gowing, Martin Ingram, Loreen Giese, and Sara Mendelson, Lena Orlin has written about the significance of doorsteps and windows in early modern defamation cases and the concomitant theatrical representations of gossips and unruly

¹⁹⁹ Dolan, ‘Gender and the “Lost” Spaces of Catholicism’. Nicole Greenspan notes the seventeenth-century awareness that Catholicism was a particularly dangerous form of contagion because it was pleasurable, physically intoxicating and offered Protestants a sensual enjoyment. It could also be caught abroad and brought back to England where the carrier might infect others: ‘Religious Contagion in Mid-Seventeenth-Century England’, in Carlin (ed.), *Imagining Contagion in Early Modern Europe*, 212–242. See also Harris, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic*; Healy, *Fictions of Disease*. Naphy treats some of the religious implications of plague in sixteenth-century Geneva, in *Plagues, Poisons and Potions: Plague-Spreading Conspiracies in the Western Alps 1530–1640*. Margaret Pelling, ‘Skirting the City? Disease, Social Change and Divided Households in the Seventeenth-Century Metropolis,’ in Paul Griffiths and Mark S. R. Jenner (eds.), *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 154–175; Marie B. Rowlands, ‘Recusant Women, 1560–1640,’ in Mary Prior (ed.), *Women in English Society, 1500–1800* (New York: Methuen & Co, 1985), 149–180; Diane Willen, ‘Women in the Public Sphere in Early Modern England: The Case of the Urban Working Poor,’ in Dorothy O. Helly and Susan M. Reverby (eds.), *Gendered Domains: Re-thinking Public and Private in Women’s History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 185. For an analysis of the eyes as the window through which lust is transmitted or ‘caught’, see Donald Beecher, ‘Windows on Contagion’, *Imagining Contagion in Early Modern Europe*, 32–46.

²⁰⁰ Richelle Munkhoff, ‘Contagious Figuration: Plague and the Impenetrable Nation after the Death of Elizabeth’ in Totaro and Gilman (eds.), *Representing the Plague in Early Modern England*, 97–112.

²⁰¹ Healy, *Fictions of Disease*, 93–4.

²⁰² For a lively analysis of Elizabethan border-chastity, see Linda Woodbridge, ‘Palisading the Elizabethan Body Politics’, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 33:3 (1991), 327–354.

housewives who loiter at their doors and windows when they should be inside. Alice Friedman's work takes a similar materialist approach to the gendering of early modern London spaces.²⁰³ If we consider Orlin's and Friedman's work together with Margaret Healy's observations on early modern depictions of the city in times of plague, we can see how important chastity was to the containment of spaces figured somatically. Healy notes that 'a recurring motif from medieval and early modern writings is the human body as a fortified (materially and/or spiritually) yet vulnerable enclosure—castle, ship, city or temple—threatened constantly by "enimie" incursions which can only be averted through sound and vigilant regimen'.²⁰⁴ I suggest further that an early modern woman's chastity was figuratively replicated by the chastity of the building in which she lived. As Diane Purkiss has argued, early modern communities were organised in such a way that 'the physical boundaries of property' were 'identified with the social boundaries of property'.²⁰⁵ Such an analogical relationship between house and body did, under ordinary circumstances, present problems. If women were to be 'truly sealed within her household', they would be 'unable to perform such functions as going to market to sell and buy, attending church, or engaging in the life of the community'.²⁰⁶ However, in times of crisis, like plague, when the movement of moral and material infection through the city put a premium on containment, houses were far more insistently perceived as bodies which, like a woman's naturally leaky body, required quarantine.

We have seen how John Ford's jealous cuckolds, onstage at the end of the 1620s, are obsessed with the belief that their unchaste wives hover at windows and doors trafficking in words and kisses with whomever passes outside. And recent scholarship on early modern witchcraft provides a number of examples of practices which, by replicating the somatic figure and applying it in a talismanic fashion to buildings and objects, demonstrate that the unchastity of space was understood as a conceptual correlative to the unchastity of actual bodies. A common talisman against a witch was a bottle containing pins and urine which was designed to block the urinary tract of the witch and thus stop up the 'poysonous matter' thought to proceed from her body. These objects were then placed at the thresholds of houses. In fact, most charms, both protective and execrative, were buried at the doors of houses because doors were the passages through which curses might penetrate to where they could do the most damage or good: the interior of homes. Charms were also buried at the boundaries of parishes and the thresholds of towns.²⁰⁷ As I have noted, Henrietta Maria's arrival in the Royal palaces

²⁰³ Lena Cowen Orlin, 'Women on the Threshold'; Alice T. Friedman, 'Inside/Out: Women, Domesticity, and the Pleasures of the City,' in *Material London c. 1600*.

²⁰⁴ Healy, *Fictions of Disease*, 18.

²⁰⁵ Diane Purkiss, 'Women's Stories of Witchcraft in Early Modern England: the House, the Body, the Child,' *Gender and History* 7:3 (1995), 408-432: 415. See also Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Brighton: Harvester, 1983), Chapter Four.

²⁰⁶ Dolan, 'Gender and the "Lost" Spaces of Catholicism', 660.

²⁰⁷ Laoutaris, *Shakespearean Maternities*, Chapter Three.

was interpreted by Parliament as a potential threat to the palaces themselves. And in Dr. Meddus' first 1625 report of Henrietta Maria's green sickness, he assures his reader that the King took charge of the situation: 'that same night, having supped at Canterbury, her majesty went to bed, and, some time after, his majesty followed her; but, being entered her bed-chamber, the first thing he did, he bolted all the doors round about'. It was the material structure of the palace rooms which enabled the King to lock himself in with his religiously wayward wife and to close out her confessor.

This image of a building as a kind of chastity belt—something which encloses 'round about' the chastity within—brings new light to urban geographers' 'flow' theory, a theory whose relevance to the early modern theatre Julie Sanders has already noted.²⁰⁸ In his chapter in *Patterned Ground*, Tim Ingold writes that in our lived experience, the self is not locked in the body but open to its surroundings ... the mind overflows into the environment just as the environment flows into the mind. In the same way, he argues, 'the environment pours into ... building[s], giving rise to ... echoes of reverberation and patterns of light and shade. The significant division, then, is not so much between inside and outside, as between the movement 'from the inside going out', and 'from the outside going in'.²⁰⁹ The point of doors and windows is to let in and out those elements which a building requires to make it a functioning interior, but such structural openness also renders interiors vulnerable. A point worth considering here is the fact that it was light through stained glass windows which penetrated the interior of devotional spaces, transforming and beautifying their interiors, and that this particular openness between inside and outside came to be interpreted as an unchaste adornment whose violation was given official sanction at various moments throughout the Civil Wars.

In the 1620s and 30s, anxieties over the vulnerability of architectural openness only grew more pronounced when Henrietta Maria began to open Catholic chapels and monastic spaces throughout London. Father Cyprian of Ganache reports that on their arrival Henrietta Maria's Capuchin Friars settled in monastic quarters in London which both Catholics and curious Protestants visited. The Friars also maintained a constant presence in the chapel at Somerset House where the cycle of sung and silent prayer, Mass, lectures, preaching, catechism, meditation, and confession (all in both French and English) continued throughout the day and night. The daily routine at the chapel was as full as, if not more full than, that of a monastic house. It was the most significant, and certainly the largest and busiest, legal space of continual Catholic worship since the dissolution of the monasteries and it was right in the middle of London. Although Charles himself visited the chapel, as did a good number of his courtiers, he was routinely called to greater vigilance by the Commons, and he appears

²⁰⁸ Julie Sanders, *The Cultural Geography of Early Modern Drama 1620-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 12.

²⁰⁹ Tim Ingold, 'Buildings' in *Patterned Ground: Entanglements of Nature and Culture*. Stephan Harrison, Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift (eds.). (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), 239. See also Floyd-Wilson and Sullivan, Jr (eds.), *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England*; Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*; Sutton, *Philosophy and Memory Traces*; Marshall, *Shattering the Self*; Harvey (ed.) *Sensible Touch: On Touch in Early Modern Culture*; Reiss, *Mirages of the Self*; Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom*.

to have responded by occasionally strengthening his guard on the chapel door.²¹⁰ Shortly after the arrival of the Capuchins in 1629, Beaulieu reported that the ‘hundreds and thousands’ of Papists who once ‘flocked openly’ to the chapels of the Queen and the foreign ambassadors and who had greatly anticipated the new devotional space, were disappointed after the King announced that no subject of his would be allowed to go inside their buildings. The Queen and the ambassadors protested on the grounds that he was limiting their legal right to practice their religion freely, but Charles and his council retorted that no foreign Catholic would be prohibited from entering. Instead, the Crown’s pursuivants were to wait outside on the street to deter Protestants from going inside (1:67).

It was at the threshold of these buildings that the drama of their threat to English society was played out. Cyprian recalls that the first English Catholics to attend a Mass said by the Capuchins in the Queen’s temporary chapel in 1630 were dragged away by the King’s officers and imprisoned (1:67). One of the women wishing to attend Mass was pregnant and, taken from the site by force, she apparently miscarried her child (1:67). Calls for the King to restrict access to Catholic chapels marked the sites as both clandestine and foreign. They were pockets of legal but suspect Popery, which to Catholics were some of the most thoroughly sanctified areas in the city and to anti-Catholics sites of infection which were difficult to remove but which, like houses touched by plague, could be sealed off to protect the King’s subjects from the spread of disease. Of course, in addition to these solely religious spaces, Henrietta Maria spent her years in London pursuing a remarkable number of building projects —projects which introduced into the English court architectural, artistic and cultural innovations inspired by the foreign Catholic courts in which the Queen was raised. Of the dozen royal properties in use by the court in the years of Charles’ reign, six were in Henrietta Maria’s jointure by 1630, and Wimbledon was added in 1639. Only three palaces were used by the King, who pursued no building despite elaborate plans for Whitehall. Throughout the years of her reign, both during her husband’s life and in the years after Charles II reclaimed the throne, Henrietta Maria was building and developing Somerset House, Greenwich and Wimbledon.²¹¹ While these palaces may not have immediately posed the same threats as the religious spaces she sponsored, reports did quickly circulate that she was reshaping the inner chambers of the royal palaces into rooms in which she and her ladies could retreat and observe the full office in a monastic manner.²¹²

²¹⁰ For scholarship on the conflict surrounding the chapels, see Gordon Albion, *Charles I and the Court of Rome: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Diplomacy* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1935); Clifton, ‘The Fear of Popery’, 144-67; and ‘The Popular Fear of Catholics During the English Revolution,’ *Past & Present* 52 (1971), 23–55; Walsham, “‘The Fatall Vesper’: Providentialism and Anti-Popery in Late Jacobean London,’ *Past & Present* 144 (1994), 36-87.

²¹¹ Hibbard, ‘Henrietta Maria in the 1630s: perspectives on the role of consort queens in *Ancien Régime* courts’ in *The 1630s*, 97. Hibbard also describes the extraordinary degree to which Henrietta Maria attended to the building and furnishing of her chapels, 125.

²¹² Salvetti, whom Caroline Hibbard notes is a detached observer, reported that at Easter in 1626, Henrietta Maria and her ladies retired to Somerset House where cells, a refectory and an oratory had been set up ‘in the manner of a monastery’ and there they ‘sang the hours of the Virgin and lived together like nuns’. Salvetti, Quoted in Hibbard, ‘Henrietta Maria’, *Court Historian*, 20.

One of the benefits for scholars of understanding the association made by the Queen's critics between unchastity, erroneous religion, and the movement of disease around London, is that to do so opens up important possibilities for reading the response by Henrietta Maria and her supporters. Crucially, it enables us to see that the conviction behind the Queen's building projects contributed to the message being delivered in her masques and performances. *The Shepherds' Paradise* of 1633 and *The Temple of Love* in 1635 are key examples of this. Both performances were staged around the time of construction at Somerset House—the first shortly after the building of the temporary chapel and the second after the opening of the permanent chapel. In both performances, the Queen reveals to the court those special topographical and architectural spaces in which can be found right religion, chastity, and moral health. When these court performances are read with reference to suggestions by the Queen's detractors that her body was an unchaste and infecting influence on the collective body of England, we can interpret their claims for the Queen's chaste influence as explicit denials of anti-Catholic propaganda.

The Shepherds' Paradise is a pastoral in which the King pours praises on the chaste Fidamira, elevating her to the level of a saint and offering her any of his palaces and temples that she may wish to claim as her own devotional spaces. The King promises to secure the buildings from any 'impure breath' by placing a guard outside each one. He tells her to

Choose what place agrees best with your intent, if you will accept this Palace, I'll leave it to you, and your privacy shall be secured to you by a guard ... Choose what temple you like best and the entrance shall be forbid to all but you, that no impure breath may mix with yours. But Fidamira, these your devotions perfected, I shall expect you will accept our Court for sanctuary to that saintlike innocence that shines about you. It were impiety to let you live in the crowd of common persons and your own piety will enjoin you to allow my daughter your company, as a pattern for virtuous youth.²¹³

In declining his offer, Fidamira rejects an architectural space within the King's palace and enclosed by the King's guard, choosing instead a space a little further apart, still guarded by the King's garrison, but ruled by Henrietta Maria herself. She resists one version of a chaste life, in which she is enclosed, policed and the appointed educator of the King's daughter, for a life of communal and monastic chastity under the Queen's rule. This 'heavenly institution' as it is called in *The Shepherds' Paradise* is established in an area not far from the court but enclosed on all sides by 'impregnable' walls in which stands a single passage. The passage is guarded by the king's garrison in order to 'deliver to [the community] suitors not invaders'.²¹⁴

Against charges that the Queen's devotional spaces were unchaste sites of infection from which Londoners required protection, Montagu's pastoral argues that they are instead places in which

²¹³ Walter Montagu, *The Shepherds' Paradise*. Malone Society Reprints, vol. 159. Edited by Sarah Poynting (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 19: 612-624.

²¹⁴ Montagu, *The Shepherds' Paradise*, 27: 2.1.847-857.

courtiers can find solace away from the moral turpitude of public life, where they can live communally with other men and women who strive for moral perfection and who value the same style of devotion and social etiquette as the Queen: one marked by chastity, beauty, passionate prayer, and female authority. The pastoral stipulates that by virtue of its central place within the architecture of the court, the community continues, despite its guarded enclosure, to heal and influence those outside its walls. The play's courtiers are never hostile toward the enclosed community and receive comfort from the knowledge that it exists even when they have not yet discovered the narrow passage by which to enter. All 'foreign Nations', the pastoral argues, though they have not seen the 'heavenly' and 'peaceful harbour', know of it, 'admire' its 'privileged laws and ceremonies' and are consoled by the many reports they hear of its 'strange repaire of wrack't & hopeles fortunes' and 'blessings' it brings to those in 'distresse' (1.6.470-496).

The message of *The Shepherds' Paradise* clearly took root. The peace and stability of the 1630s may have been short-lived but the decade was marked by a significantly increased desire, in and around the court, for precisely the spiritual and cultural practices promoted by the Queen. Henrietta Maria's popularity can be traced to a number of other factors, which I will in this chapter treat in more detail, but among those factors must be counted the fact that in the decade after her arrival, the number of plague deaths dropped to some of the century's lowest. To Father Cyprian of Ganache, this was no surprise. From his perspective, England was the lost and corrupted land into which the Queen and her co-religionists had poured their sanctifying truth. When Cyprian described the Queen's laying of the temporary chapel's first stone, he compared the action to the laying of the cross on Christ's shoulders, thus interpreting the land on which the chapel would be built as a new Calvary, a site of redemption. On 'the mount' of Somerset House, she lay the cornerstone of the Church in the very 'first place' from which it had been 'hurled' by 'heresy ... when the religion was changed in this unhappy kingdom' (2:308). The Capuchin Friars then took up their residence where the people of London came see them in their austere living conditions and peculiar dress 'as one goes to see Indians, malays, Savages, and men from the extremities of the earth' (2:309). The Friars believed they were evangelising simply by making their quarters available, since few Londoners in the early 1630s had any memory or knowledge of the simplicity of monastic existence. To the Capuchins, the luxury enjoyed by the average Protestant was an excess potentially chastened by an encounter with their own sparse life. To this end, the Friars showed curious visitors their bare rooms and hard beds, preaching as they did so about Christ and St. Paul's self-chastisement. When the Queen formed the Confraternities of the Holy Rosary and St Francis, the space of the chapel was clearly marked as a site of chaste self-mortification and Marian veneration. Remarkably, even a statue of the Virgin Mary, the object most reviled throughout the Reformation, was sent to Henrietta Maria from her mother and was carried to and around the London Chapel by a priest in pontifical habit (2:432-433).

For court critics, however, the Queen's influence on the architectural landscape of the city was alarming. In 1642, a pro-parliamentary news sheet complained that 'since the King's departure

from *London*, *Whitehall* is become an *Amazonian Castle*, *St. James* an hospital for Strangers, *Somerset House* a Catholicke College, *Westminster*, a receptacle for Seminary Priests and Jesuits'.²¹⁵ By the end of the decade, the new buildings through which Henrietta Maria had sought to beautify, sanctify and (as her pastorals and masques argued) to chasten her adopted court were themselves purified by Parliamentary forces. In spring 1643, the House of Commons moved through London, cleansing it of popish symbols. Early in April a group of MPs led by Sir John Clotworthy and Henry Marten pillaged and desecrated Henrietta Maria's chapel and the Capuchin monastery at Somerset House. Simon Thurley has argued that 'by 1640 the perception of court space had become a vital and explosive component of national politics'. By then, popular and controversialist attention had shifted from Whitehall to Somerset House: 'the queen's palace became iconographically the most significant court space in England'.²¹⁶ Anti-court tracts in 1640 argued that through the Capuchin friars at Somerset House 'the king was contaminated with popery'.²¹⁷ The City of London accused the friars and others at Somerset House of being 'seducers of the people' and when the parliamentary ordinance was given for the seizure of the King's houses, Somerset House was quickly broken into and ransacked, its chapel whitewashed and turned into a preaching house fit for the Lord Protectorate.

The same violent anger was, of course, directed at Lambeth Palace. Although Laud spent most of his time in London, the chapel at Lambeth was where all new bishops were consecrated. It was a centre of power and influence: there the episcopacy were formed in a divinity of high ceremony with the intention that they take the culture and liturgy preferred by Laud and the King out into the counties. The chapel 'had an influence out of all proportion with its size, which is why Prynne devotes so much space to denouncing it in his attack on Laud'.²¹⁸ Simon Thurley argues that as the Chapel Royal was the official organisation through which the Crown expressed religious orthodoxy, it was, once the monarch became the head of the Church, also the site through which each sovereign expressed his vision of monarchy. In a climate of escalating dispute among Reformists over ecclesiology, liturgy, and Church ornament, the Chapel Royal became a focus for controversialists, whose criticisms of Charles' Personal Rule were very often also criticisms of Laud and his infectious influence upon the King. Arguments that pitted Laud's influence on Charles against the waning influence of Parliament naturally focussed on the activities of the Chapel Royal, which, as such, became in many respects the stage on which was played England's transformation from the divine right rule favoured by James and Charles to a Commonwealth. Thurley concludes that 'the

²¹⁵ Anon., *The Scots Scouts Discoveries* (London, 1642), 25.

²¹⁶ Simon Thurley, 'The Politics of Court Space in Early Stuart London' in Fantoni, Gorse and Smuts (eds.), *The Politics of Space: European Courts 1500-1750*, 193-208: 294.

²¹⁷ Thurley, 'The Politics of Court Space in Early Stuart London': 304-5. See also Keith Lindley, 'London and Popular Freedom in the 1640s' in R.C. Richardson and G.M. Ridden (eds.) *Freedom and the English Revolution: Essays in History and Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 111-150; and e Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*, 198-199.

²¹⁸ Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour*: 46.

architectural symbolism of the chapels' was 'an important part of the image of the Cromwellian regime' and of its claims to authority and power, but also of its promotion of those virtues it favoured in its members.²¹⁹ His approach places early modern perceptions of architectural space, its uses, ornaments and rituals, at the heart of the theatre of government.²²⁰

Charles' interest in high ceremony was most visible, and most controversial, in the liturgy he sponsored in the royal chapels and the program of refurbishment which he and Laud oversaw in order that churches across the country might be brought into line with the style of worship they preferred. When Cromwell became Lord Protector, he left the interior of the royal palaces relatively intact. The royal chapels, however, were transformed to express the power of the Commonwealth. Their walls were painted over and preaching became the central form of worship. Soldiers often preached the sermon, and one observer noted that Cromwell himself preached occasionally. Purified of any 'idolatry' or 'superstition' until it barely resembled a religious house at all, the Chapel Royal was transformed into an expression of Commonwealth Reformed purity. And yet, once Cromwell had purified the Queen's Catholic chapel at Somerset House of its unchaste idolatry, he took to sitting during sermons in the 'royal pew for all to see, in the manner of the Stuart kings'.²²¹

A bold announcement of his authority, Cromwell's place at the head of a transformed Church speaks to his knowledge that it was in the area of Church sovereignty that the greatest, and perhaps most palpable and publicly visible, tensions had existed before the regicide. Cromwell heeded the preceding decades' iconoclast cries for the cleansing of figurative unchastities from the national Church: he channelled both the non-conformist desire for plain worship and the Parliamentary desire for Commonwealth government into a new form of ceremony and a new use of space that announced his authority. Not only did he sit in the Royal pew, but, bolstered by the statement which his cleansing of the Chapel Royal (and the Catholic chapel at Somerset House especially) made about his ability to cleanse the nation of its unchaste influences, Cromwell also took control of the pulpit. Elizabeth I may have routinely 'tuned' the pulpits, but she never spoke directly from one. Many factors made it possible for Cromwell to transform the public spaces of London (and in doing so to claim for himself a degree of authority in many ways beyond that of any monarch) but his exploitation of a decade of Parliamentary language marked by images of chastity and unchastity was certainly one such factor.

²¹⁹ Simon Thurley, 'The Stuart Kings, Oliver Cromwell and the Chapel Royal 1618-1685,' *Architectural History* 45 (2002), 238-274: 17-20.

²²⁰ Thurley, 'The Stuart Kings, Oliver Cromwell and the Chapel Royal 1618-1685', 37.

²²¹ Thurley, 'The Stuart Kings, Oliver Cromwell and the Chapel Royal 1618-1685', 255.

Enacting Chaste Fertility: Henrietta Maria's Birthing Rituals

Over a decade before Cromwell transformed the spaces of the Chapels Royal, Henrietta Maria was drawing on popular thinking about the chastity of space in order to promote her own view of right religion. The Queen's birthing rituals were events in which her Marian fertility—her status as the chaste 'door' between heaven and earth—was promoted through the birthing rituals' use of all the decorative arts deployed in the more public ceremonies of court masques. Under the Tudors, the royal palace chosen for most births was Greenwich and Henrietta Maria also chose this location for the birth of her first child on 13th May, 1629. However, the son, baptised Charles, was either still-born or died within a few hours of delivery and Henrietta Maria chose not to return to Greenwich for her subsequent labours, the first five of which took place at St. James's Palace (Charles, Prince of Wales, 29th May 1630; Mary, 4th Nov 1631; James, Duke of York, 14th Oct 1633; Elizabeth, 28th Dec 1635; Anne, 17th March 1637). Her sixth, seventh, and eighth children were: Katherine (died), born at Whitehall, 9th Jan 1639; Henry, Duke of Gloucester, born at Oatlands, 8th July 1640; and Henriette Anne, born at Exeter, 16th June 1643. Despite Henrietta Maria's apparent decision that the Greenwich Palace was a space blackened in some way by her misfortune, she did subsequently build on Greenwich's Tudor reputation as the site of royal fertility by embedding into the fabric of the more recent Greenwich building (Inigo Jones' Queen's House) iconography which clearly marked it as a space in which Stuart fertility was to be celebrated. The grotesque ceiling of the bedchamber at the Queen's House contains four emblems which describe the space in terms that appear to be designed specifically as a celebration not only of the fertile and chaste union between Charles and Henrietta Maria but of the space itself as pure and purifying: emblems which constitute a direct rebuttal of her detractors' accusations that her religion and sexuality had an unchaste effect on the architectural spaces of the court.

The four emblems draw on French and English courtly imagery—including two conjoined palms for married fertility and three lillies for purity—and bear the titles *Mutua Fecunditas*, *Spes Reipublicae*, *Ardet Aeternum*, *Cum Odore Candor*. The strength of the commonwealth is secured by the eternal love and fertility of Charles and Henrietta Maria, whose marriage is the source of that pure essence, the goodly perfume, which dispels disease.²²² By drawing the image of healing perfume into its celebration of the monarchs' fertility, the painting makes a contentious claim for the space as the site of a birthing ritual that is concerned at once with the physiological and spiritual health of humans. While the burning of herbs to purify the air of houses appears to have continued uncontroversially throughout the century as a form of health care, the burning of herbs for devotional purposes was, like candles, silver, music, and gesture, an adornment under intense scrutiny by religious disputants in the

²²² My thanks to Sophie Carney for permission to consult her 'The Queen's House at Greenwich: the Material Cultures of the Courts of Queen Anna of Denmark and Queen Henrietta Maria, 1603-1642' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Roehampton University, 2012).

years of Henrietta Maria's reign.²²³ Acceptable as a form of physiological purity, burning incense before an idol was seen as erroneous by advocates of plain religion who, with Thomas Adams, believed that Christian prayers 'are onely perfumed by the Incense of Christs prayers and righteousness'.²²⁴ By asserting that the agent by which the monarchs' fertile union sustained the health of the commonwealth was incense, the bedchamber's grotesque ceiling made both the benign claim that the physiological purity and health of the monarchs' fertility secured England's future and the more controversial claim that the heirs to the throne, future heads of the English Church, were begotten by a Queen whose birthing rituals were built from the unchaste Popish adornments of elaborate religious worship.

The evolution of incense into increasingly contradictory functions capable of chastening a space (by healing its air of disease) and unchastening it (by turning it into a darkened 'grove' of idolatrous worship) indicates how embroiled were the Queen's birthing rituals (and the bedchambers in which they either occurred or were promoted through architectural and decorative fabrics) within Caroline disagreements over the chastity of space. Henrietta Maria's birthing rituals were also built from adornments which to advocates of plain religion were explicitly unchaste: she filled the spaces of her bedchamber with paintings of the Virgin and Child. Erin Griffey and Sophie Carney have both analysed the material acquisitions of the court during times of birth and their findings reveal the vast purchase of herbs for burning and strewing around the bedchamber, of paintings to adorn it, and of linens with which to adorn the Queen and the baby.²²⁵ Regardless of which palace Henrietta Maria chose to give birth in, we can speculate that she spent her labour in a birthing chair under a great cloth canopy, not unlike those which sat above the Throne in State, and she surrounded herself by paintings of the Virgin and Child, which were brought especially from other palaces to be hung in the bedchamber for the occasion. She also, Griffey has found, pinned canvases of the Virgin and Child to the inside of the canopy that surrounded her. The floors were strewn with fresh flowers and the air was full of the smoke of incense and perfume. Her ladies, spiritual guides, doctors and midwives, would have attended her in the hierarchised formations befitting a court solemnity, and music was perhaps played without. Regardless of their finer details, these rituals were some of the court's most elaborate and important ceremonies. They were not open to as many observers as other court ceremonies, yet they were occasions of the greatest solemnity and ritualised splendour in which the material and spiritual health of mother and child coincided with that of the nation and in which God's grace might

²²³ See Holly Crawford Pickett, 'The Idolatrous Nose: Incense in the Early Modern Stage' in Williamson and Degenhardt (eds.), *Religion and Drama in Early Modern England* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 19-38.

²²⁴ Thomas Adams, *The Happiness of the Church: or a description of those Spiritual Prerogatives wherewith Christ hath endowed her or a description of those Spiritual Prerogatives wherewith Christ hath endowed her...* (London, 1619), 375.

²²⁵ Sophie Carney, 'The Queen's House at Greenwich: the material cultures of the courts of Queen Anna of Denmark and Queen Henrietta Maria, 1603-1642', 82; Erin Griffey, 'In the Bedroom: Ritual, Display and Personal Identity in the Stuart Bedchamber', paper given at the University of Nottingham on 7 March, 2012.

enter the world in the form of a divine leader through the body of a chaste Queen. Or, as in the case of Henrietta Maria's first birth, it would not.

The implications of the Queen's still-birth ought not be underestimated and its relevance to my analysis of early modern chastity is considerable. To the Queen's detractors, the still-born Prince would have been a sign of precisely the unchastity with which her erroneous religion marked the monarchs' marriage. As Julie Crawford has argued, monstrous births (which included still-born and sickly babies), were a morbid sign of more than the mother's unchastity: they were also 'outcasts from God and irrefutable testament to their parents' own spiritual reprobation'.²²⁶ The association between the sexual act, the relative chastity of the partners, and the issue of birth itself is attested to most vividly by the widespread belief that a marked or damaged child was a direct result of unchastity at conception. James Reuff's *The Expert Midwife* (1637) has a special section on monstrous births. Such afflictions could be 'attributed and ascribed to the Judgement of God'. Yet, 'the corruption and fault of the seed is to be acknowledged'. Reuff recounts the instance of a monstrous birth, attributing it to the sins of the parents. 'We allege the immoderate desire of lust to be a cause, whereby it commeth to passe, that the seedes of men and women are caused to be very feeble and imperfect, whereby of necessity a feeble and imperfect Feature must ensue'. Keith Thomas notes that Tudor and Stuart 'moralists had always taught that incest, adultery and other forms of sexual immorality were punished by ill health and monstrous births'. It was with 'relish' that Puritan commentators ascribed monstrous births to the evil of the times.²²⁷ An anonymous tract printed in 1645 rejoices that the King has resolved to return and be reconciled to his Parliament, to which 'there is no good Subject (unlesse he be a desperate Malignant or some arch Papist) but will say Amen'. The happy moment is described as especially timely since, in the months when Charles and Parliamentarians were at war, many monstrous wonders had visited the country. Of greatest note is the baby born in Shoe Lane with no legs or arms and instead of a head, a hollow of flesh from which another limbless body proceeded.²²⁸

To appreciate the importance of chastity and the perception of space to royal birthing rituals, we must first grasp the virtue's crucial relevance to early modern birthing practices more generally. For non-elite women as much as royals, chastity dominated the discussion of all stages of pregnancy, labour, and childbirth because it was a time when the vulnerable infant was at the mercy of the vagaries of the (female) flesh and the checkered world of female medicine. The close early modern association between 'bawdery', midwifery and witchcraft is well known.²²⁹ *The Expert Midwife* warns against unchaste medics: 'doe not use ... the counsell of unskilled Physicians' or the 'wicked Arts and

²²⁶ Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism*, 20.

²²⁷ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 109-10, 124, 125.

²²⁸ Anon., *The Most Strange and Wonderful Apparition* (London, 1645), 7-8.

²²⁹ James Reuff, *The Expert Midwife* (London, 1637), 58. See also Leah Donnison, *Midwives and Medical Men* (New Barnet: Historian Publishers, 1988).

policies of old Witches and Harlots'. Reuff argues that such women ought to be 'remov[ed]' and 'punish[ed]' by 'Magistrates' because only these 'fathers of the people' can protect the innocent 'virgins' and 'widows' who have been 'insnared and intangled with the Arts and divellish practices' that threaten not only and 'tender Babes and Infants' but the world of legitimate and sanctified medical practices. Reuff's ambivalence over the chastity of midwives is also evident in the fact that throughout his treatise, he does not use the term midwife at all, but rather the synonymous title 'grave and modest matron'. For Reuff a good female midwife is a chaste woman and a bad one a 'witch' or 'harlot'. When he goes on to provide instructions on nursing children, the chastity of the nursemaid is also given particular emphasis. Sexual abstinence in nursemaids is crucial, he insists, as is a chaste demeanor, since, following Galen, sex and sensuality 'troubleth the blood' and so by consequence the breast milk.²³⁰

From a spiritual and Galenic perspective, the new mother's body was especially vulnerable to corrupting influences. In the month between her labour and her churching, the new mother was in receipt of elaborate treatments: her body was covered in ointments and wrapped in fresh animal skins. Ideally, her diet was scrupulously designed with a view to purity. The process sought to deliver her safely and untainted from the long trial of her pregnancy and birth and to secure her from further illness. However, often its ultimate and ideal goal was the restoration of the virginal state. Reuff notes that this ought to be the aim of postpartum care, since Vestputius Florentius had spoken of 'those perpetual virgins that dwell beyond the antarctic pole'.²³¹ When we turn to royal births, it is easy to see how the relative chastity of the Queen's body and of the spaces in which she gave birth were interpreted as influencing the fortunes of the royal line and the health and stability of England's connection to God. More than any other body, the Queen's body was the vessel in which royal life, touched by an especial divine favour and decree, entered the world.

We have seen how wondrous and divine are the moments in tragicomedy and masque when the lost child, loved-one, or state of grace is finally returned to those who most long for it. In the same way, we can be certain that one year after the death of the first Charles II the majority of Caroline subjects were attentive to the Queen's second labour, both its result and its conditions. The fact that this second labour produced a healthy boy who, again named Charles II, would go on to become King makes this second birthing ritual at St. James's Palace a crucial moment in the Caroline reign: one which produced the very wonder and celebration conjured by similar scenes in tragicomedy. This birthing ritual would have brought real conviction to the masque's image of Henrietta Maria as holy, fertile, and chaste Queen. The conditions of the ritual are therefore of crucial importance to understanding the 1630s—they can tell us much about the country's increased loyalty to the Queen after 1630, and its greater investment in her devotional, moral and aesthetic cult of chastity.

²³⁰ Jacques Guillemeau, *The Nursing of Children* (London, 1612), 4.

²³¹ Jacques Guillemeau, *The Happy Delivery of Women* (London, 1612), 195.

From the few traces of evidence we have, we can ‘read’ the conditions of Henrietta Maria’s successful labour at St. James’s and, where there exists no evidence, we can speculate on the perceptions of observers. This is especially so for the birth of Charles II because the extant evidence suggests that even those living in London at the time were not sure which of two possible ‘scenes’ were taking place. The one, in which a Huguenot doctor of dubious reputation attended the birth, was a scene caught up in and determined by the greatest levels of bravado and controversy which the masculine professional medical world could produce. The other was steeped in the figures and rituals of a Catholic world that had not been seen in England for generations. As I hope to show, the second of these most likely took place, at least in the minds of English subjects. The ritual’s Catholic conditions can thus be viewed as one crucial reason that Henrietta Maria’s cult of chastity proliferated throughout the succeeding decade. That is, in this single birthing ritual the Queen’s interpretation of chastity as feminine, pietised, Marian, Catholic and spectacular was galvanised and affirmed by the ritual’s fortuitous enactment of each trope of chastity. Where her opponents could draw only on rhetoric to further their own claims to chastity’s tropes, the Queen’s first successful labour confirmed the chastity of the monarchs and the legitimacy of their union and issue; returned to the nation the lost Charles II; attested to God’s divine favour, drawing his blessing onto the earth; and consolidated the strength of the nation, uniting it into one body.

We know that Henrietta Maria’s first birth, the still-born Charles, was attended by Peter Chamberlen the elder. The attendant at the second birth, that of the healthy Charles II, is less clear. Radcliffe very reasonably assumes that because Dr. Peter Chamberlen, the son of Peter Chamberlen the younger, succeeded to his aged uncle’s royal appointment after the Queen’s first pregnancy he therefore attended the birth of Charles II in 1630.²³² Charles II himself appears to have believed he was delivered by Dr. Peter Chamberlen.²³³ However, we also know that around the time of Charles II’s birth, the French midwife Mme Peronne arrived at court and was given a handsome allowance for this and all her subsequent services to the Queen throughout the decade.²³⁴ That Marie de Medici would have sent over one of the French court’s most competent midwives is in no way surprising: France had at the time an excellent reputation for professional midwifery. Louise Bourgeois Boursier, who had attended all of Marie de Medici’s births, including that of Henrietta Maria, was an educationalist and scholar and had produced some of the best seventeenth-century manuals on midwifery. Boursier had

²³² Walter Radcliffe, *Milestone in Midwifery*, (Bristol: John Wright & Sons, 1967), 30.

²³³ W. R. LeFanu, ‘Huguenot Refugee Doctors in England’, *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 19 (1955), 113-127: 118.

²³⁴ Caroline Hibbard, ‘The Queen’s Patronage of Artists and Artisans’ in *Henrietta Maria: Piety, Politics and Patronage*, 135.

retired by the time Henrietta Maria began to have children, but one of her pupils and successors, Mme Peronne, shared her teacher's reputation, and the reputation of the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris.²³⁵

Chamberlen had a more complicated reputation. Throughout the seventeenth-century, the Chamberlens were performers on the scale of any anatomist, building up the brand of their family name and their mysterious instruments by promoting their peculiar abilities and challenging the power of the College of Physicians who chastised them for routinely stepping outside their official area of practice. However, the family's unorthodoxy did not bar them from court where they played a crucial role in the Caroline theatre of birth. The theatrical spectacle of a Chamberlen birth was enhanced by the family's demands for enclosure. How they ensured secrecy during labours remains a subject of speculation. We do know that they arrived with a flourish at the house of their patient with the carved and ornamental wooden chest in which they kept the forceps and other tools.²³⁶ These were carried inside and the room was cleared. Did they then cover the seated patient with a large white sheet tied around her neck and stretching down to the floor? This was common practice in Holland, where male midwives attempted to maintain decorum for their patient by sitting on a stool outside the sheet and, their arms tucked beneath it, delivered the baby without ever observing the mother below her neck.²³⁷ For the Chamberlens the purpose of the sheet would not have been to conceal the mother's sex from their own view but rather to conceal their instruments from the view of the mother and her attendants. Peter Dunn argues that this method would have been impossible as the instruments, especially in their initially large and clumsy form, could not have been applied successfully in dim light.²³⁸ Did the Chamberlens take candles with them beneath the sheet? Or, as William Prioleau has speculated, did they blindfold the patient instead?²³⁹ Either of these scenes presents a grimly emblematic inversion of State: the mother's body, enthroned beneath a canopy and surrounded by a huge white shroud, blood-smearred, and she either blind-folded or lit from beneath her skirts by the glow of candle light projecting onto the inside of the white sheet the looming shadows of the iron forceps, their long blades clattering loudly against each other.

The French court can only have felt that their own care would be superior to that of Peter Chamberlen, a Huguenot and a naturalised Englishman with a reputation for dubious theatrics. But they clearly also felt that their own care would be more chaste: a quality essential in birth as in all

²³⁵ On the basis of gender alone Louise Bourgeois Boursier would not have approved of Chamberlen's attendance upon the Queen: she once denounced French gentlewomen who preferred male physicians over female midwives as 'coquettes'. Louise Bourgeois, *Observations diverses sur la stérilité, perte de fruit, foecundité, accouchements, maladies des femmes et des enfants nouveaux nés* (Paris, 1617), II: 215.

²³⁶ Walter Radcliffe, *The Secret Instrument* (London: Heinemann, 1947); *Milestone in Midwifery* (Bristol: John Wright & Sons, 1967); Adrian Wilson, *The Making of Man-Wifery* (London: University College of London Press, 1995).

²³⁷ Radcliffe, *Milestone in Midwifery*, 31-2; Donnison, *Midwives and Medical Men*, 23-4.

²³⁸ Dunn, P. M., 'The Chamberlen Family (1560-1728) and Obstetric Forceps,' *Archives of Disease in Childhood: the Journal of the British Paediatric Association: Fetal and Neonatal Edition* 81.3 (1999).

²³⁹ William H Prioleau, 'The Chamberlen Family and Introduction of Obstetrical Instruments,' *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 27.5 (2002), 705-714: 707.

aspects of a woman's life. Boursier's condemnation of mothers who request male midwives as *coquettes* reveals how scathingly she disapproved of men in the birthing room and the French may have felt that the English court's provision of a male midwife for Henrietta Maria was a grossly inadequate defense against a second tragic birthing scene. However, England also responded with concern over the care given by their court to the Queen and the dead Prince. In one correspondence it was noted that there 'may be cause to add fears to our sorrows, that Chamberlen's help was used in her majesty's labour' (2:14). Both Peter Chamberlens, the elder present at the Queen's first pregnancy and his successor, shared equally in their family's complicated reputation so it is no surprise that the replacement of the one by the other did not inspire confidence in all. For English observers, however, the new Chamberlen appointment was preferable to that of the French, which was noted with suspicion. 'The queen's majesty, having no fancy, it seems, to our English midwives and nurses, had sent into France for both'. Crucially, the French midwives and nurses did not come alone but 'together with a dwarf, and, as some say, twelve nuns' (2:70). Their ship followed shortly after the ship which contained not only the Queen's Capuchin friars but a French bishop and a Catholic physician 'to be near [the Queen] in any occasion of her sickness' (2:47).

The new decade began with the Queen's second pregnancy and with it two quite different royal birthing scenes began to be anticipated by court observers. Each scene was highly emblematic, with its own distinctive characters, whose props and (in the case of the Catholics) costumes were novel, foreign and threatening. In the first scene, the country's future was in the hands of Chamberlen, who, despite the frightening theatrics he brought to the birthing chair, his dubious instruments, and his French extraction, was nonetheless a naturalised Englishman, a Protestant, and a servant to the King. This scene was, to the English, perhaps preferable and the one thought best able to secure a happy outcome. The other scene contained a series of figures lifted directly from the stock of those unchaste characters least welcome at such an important occasion: nuns, Capuchins, a bishop, a Catholic physician, French nurses and midwives, and a dwarf. We are unlikely to ever know for sure which scene actually took place. Yet, even if Mme Peronne, her French nurses, the Capuchins, the 'Catholic physician' (and the dwarf) did not attend the birth, they were certainly present after it to care for the Queen and the new Prince, taking up residence at court and enjoying a degree of welcome they would not have enjoyed had their arrival coincided with a second unhappy outcome.

It is crucial for our understanding of the rise in the 1630s of the Caroline cult of chastity that the new cast of 'unchaste' French figures arrived on English shores to attend what proved to be a successful birth and that, even if they were not actually in attendance, they continued to be associated with the fortuitous occasion. The Queen's first tragic birthing scene, however, was associated with Peter Chamberlen. We can therefore read Henrietta Maria's birthing rituals as events which occupied a pivotal place in the history of English monarchy. The success of the Queen's second birth—its issue both healthy and male—contributed to the consolidation of the Queen's status as Marian exemplar, not least because her fertility was ultimately fostered by those attendants most associated with her

Marian devotional spaces. A birthing ritual whose potentially idolatrous staging (incense, paintings of the Virgin and Child) and Catholic attendants might have proved to confirm English suspicions of the unchaste influences which Henrietta Maria had introduced into the royal palaces and bloodline in fact turned out to be the catalyst of a softening of attitude toward the French faction at court. It also proved an opportunity for Henrietta Maria to celebrate and promote the chastity of the royal marriage, and the chastity of her own newly-arrived 'temple', in the masques of the 1630s.

The monarchs' chaste marital union was celebrated on the royal masquing stage in almost exactly as many performances as the issue it produced. In the minds of onlookers, the Queen was perhaps understood to have sat in the masque's Throne of State as often as she sat in her canopied birthing chair. Both performances claimed to chastise the spaces in which they occurred and to radiate blessing from the monarchs' chaste bodies to all subjects. Henrietta Maria's birthing rituals were, as the ceiling paintings at the Queen's House asserts, the means by which purity and love were made available first in the space of the bedchamber and then throughout all of the commonwealth. In the same way that *The Shepherds' Paradise* made it clear that the chaste and sequestered space of its community healed all the court and the many nations beyond its walls, the grace and purity of Caroline royal birthing spaces radiated chastity and sanctity outward. Henrietta Maria's fertility ensured that the bedchambers' paintings of the Virgin and Child, its incense, and Catholic attendants, did not transform them into those dark and sequestered 'groves' of idolatry described by Burgess, but rather into the blessed spaces which, like the Queen's chapels and masque-stages, made available to all a wondrous experience of the divine will as both chastening and feminine.

Institutional Union and Married Chastity in the Masques

In my last chapter, I outlined how crucial the trope of legitimate union was to court critics. The Caroline court masques, which showcased the union between the monarchs and between the Crown and the Church, were Charles' and Henrietta Maria's contribution to the argument over which institutional union was the most chaste. By promoting the chastity and fertility of the monarchs' union as a model for the union of Church and Crown, the masques did little to dispel their critics' view that the Crown was being contaminated by the Queen's Catholicism. Further, the Carlomaria tradition could in certain masque formulations even be read as claiming that the monarchs' marriage was a chaste union between the head of the English Church and the head of the Roman Church in England. English Catholics looked to Henrietta Maria as the head of the country's Roman Church in ways they never did to the Papal legates whom she convinced Charles to welcome back to the court. Even more than a 'symbolic figurehead for Catholicism's generativity', Henrietta Maria was, as her confessor acknowledged, the 'foundation' of the 'Catholic religion ... in England'. 'As the life of the

Queen kept [the Caroline Catholic mission] alive, so her decease was death to it.²⁴⁰ In some Caroline masques, especially those in the middle of the 1630s when the Queen's popularity and influence were growing very strong, this view of her was celebrated.

The Temple of Love (1635), which the Queen commissioned from William Davenant, presents Henrietta Maria as Queen Indamora, the queen of chaste love. She and 'the beauties of her train' are praised for '[raising] strange doctrines' at court. Their fellow courtiers are 'Carthusian Poets', 'cloistered ... in an Hermitage', while the anti-masquers are wild magicians who love and worship erroneously.²⁴¹ Scholars since Erica Veevers have interpreted the 'true temple' in Davenant's masque, which is hidden in mists until the Queen reveals its location, as a figure for the Queen's religion if not more specifically for the Queen's chapel at Somerset House, which was officially opened not long before the masque was performed.²⁴² *The Temple of Love's* final image of Charles and Henrietta Maria seated in State, beholding the revelation of the temple, has prompted Bailey to observe that the 'regal image of chaste love projects the potentially explosive symbol of religious union'.²⁴³ Britland has noted more specifically that *The Temple of Love's* anti-masque 'clearly associates Calvinist Protestantism with Chaos and disruption': its erroneous magicians call upon 'a sect of modern devils ... that claim / Chambers and tenements in heaven as they / had purchased there'. She suggests that the masque may have worked to consolidate the relationship between Catholicism and Laudian Arminianism by locating Calvinism as the source of chaos, thereby 'rendering English Catholics less threatening by showcasing their virtues' and 'the doctrinal similarities between them and Laudian Reformists'.²⁴⁴

It is my contention that *The Temple of Love* presents Henrietta Maria as the embodiment of the Church itself: the Church both loosely defined as the chaste and mystical bride of Christ and more specifically—for those viewers wishing to so read the image, either out of sympathy or hostility—as the embodiment of the Roman Church. In Davenant's masque Charles and Henrietta Maria offer their chaste union as an emblem of virtuous conduct on which the nation can model its own behaviour. Fate is so beloved of Charles that she has placed him—'the monarch of men's hearts'—on the throne specifically to draw down upon his people 'love's blessing' (290). But it is Henrietta Maria who reveals to him and his subjects the true temple: a temple which is distinguished from its false counterpart by its chastity. The masque argues that the Queen will discover for her adopted country the true temple when those who have been worshipping and loving erroneously are reformed by her chaste example. *The Temple of Love*, like the tracts of so many divines writing outside the court, posited that the true

²⁴⁰ Dolan, *Whores of Babylon*, 136, and Cyprian in *Court and Times of Charles I*, 2:464.

²⁴¹ William Davenant, *The Dramatic Works of Sir William Davenant*, vol. 1 (New York: Russell and Russell, 1964): 292-294. All subsequent quotations will be cited in text.

²⁴² Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion*; Britland, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria*; and see especially Bailey, *Staging the Old Faith*, chapters three and four.

²⁴³ Bailey, *Staging the Old Faith*, 148.

²⁴⁴ Britland, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria*, 148.

Church was both chaste and obscured and that it could only be revealed, and schism overcome, through the pursuit of particular virtues and doctrines. Not surprisingly, *The Temple of Love* argues that the virtues and doctrines which will bring about the revelation of the true Church are those popularised by the Queen: chastity, spectacle, beauty, piety, and the arts. What is remarkable is that the masque argues that the Church will be revealed by the Queen once her influence has cleansed art of its profanity and made it sacred again. Only when the masque's poets have been 'purifi'd' can they herald 'what Indamora comes to show': the location of the true Church (289).

Henrietta Maria's queenship was built from a celebration of her reform of court spaces and the arts: a fact most extravagantly attested to by Gentileschi's ceiling paintings for the Queen's House. Charles shared his wife's love of Continental arts, most controversially in his liturgical taste. By celebrating the Queen's ability to chasten the arts and thus to restore them to their sacred agenda, to guide the King, and to reveal the true Church, the masque comes very close to admitting the truth of anti-court accusations that the King's taste for beautified ceremony and ornament, especially in worship, owed much to his wife's Catholicism. However, the masque's argument for the chastening of love poetry had its own tradition. From Sidney's 'Leave me, O Love' and Robert Southwell's *Marie Magdalene's Funeral Teares* to Ford's *Christes Bloody Sweate* and the devotional poetry of Richard Crashaw, the call to bring love poetry back from its earthly dimension and return it to the heavenly was one more early modern use of chastity.²⁴⁵ Where this tradition advocates the redirection of carnal desire toward God as a chastening influence on both poet and poetry, *The Temple of Love* presents the Queen herself as the mechanism by which profane desires and erroneous worship are redirected to the truth and chastity of the true temple. In the true Church earthly love poetry will be supplanted by the 'grave frosty Homilies,/ And Anticke lawes of Chastitie' already being enjoyed by certain 'Carthusian Poets' in 'an Hermitage' at court (294). That is, the arts and worship currently enjoyed by the King's subjects will be replaced by the style of monastic worship which the Queen and her Capuchin friars had already introduced into the centre of London. But the new teaching will be made attractive because the Queen will embody it herself. When Henrietta Maria, as Queen Indamora, descends from the heavens and onto the masquing stage, she is saluted as both the object of adoration and the authority by which adoration is chastened and spiritualised. 'She' and 'each Princesse in her traine' are praised by the 'wise enamor'd Poets' as most beautiful (300-301), but they are also kind and instructive.

²⁴⁵ In his preface to *Christes Bloody Sweate*, Ford announces that he is attempting to chasten the poetry of his time: 'Poetrie is so every way made the herald of wantonnesse, as there is not now any thing too uncleane for the lascivious rime; which among some (in whose hearts God hath wrought better things) hath bin the cause, why so generall an imputation is laid upon this ancient and industrious Arte. And I, to cleere (as I might) verse, from the soyle of this unworthinesse, have herein (at least) proved that it may deliver good matter'. In this intention, he follows Robert Southwell, who, in his dedication of *Marie Magdalene's Funeral Teares*, (London, 1591) bolsters his arguments for the chastening of poetry with chastity's watery imagery: 'For as passion, and especially this of love, is in these daies the chief commaunder of moste mens actions, and the Idol to which both tongues and pennes do sacrifice their ill bestowed labours: so is there nothing nowe more needful to bee intreated, then how to direct these humors unto their due courses, and to draw this floud of affections into the right channel. Passions I allow, and love I approue, only I would wishe that men would alter their obiect and better their intent'.

Where in the realm of earthly love poetry chastity is cruel, in the new divine poetry advocated by the Queen, it becomes the source of true passion: that holy passion which Ford's lovers fail to discover but which Henrietta Maria and her ladies expressed in abundance. The Queen's chastity is not cold and pitiless, but a loving and spiritual instruction. While she and her ladies 'subdue' the hearts of those who behold them, they are also 'kind' and 'take a care/ To free, and counsell, whom their eyes ensnare' (301). It is through the person of the Queen that love is chastened and redirected to God as sacred, passionate devotion. For all the non-conformist-Calvinist and pro-Parliamentary efforts to recast the marital image of the Church in terms that secured the King from Popish influences, little had been done to displace the still-widespread figure of the Church as the chaste, mystical bride of Christ. *The Temple of Love* suggests that the true and chaste temple is not only the Queen's Capuchin chapel but the Queen herself, who searches 'ev'ry Heart' to heal the wounded, clean the tainted and teach all how they 'should love' (289). She is the Church in the *Song of Songs*, the mystical bride on whose passionate chastity De Sales regularly meditated in the works that so informed the Queen's spirituality.

In *The Temple of Love*, the monarchs' two crowning virtues are personified by Sunesis (Understanding) and Thelema (Will). Making full use of the trope of legitimate union as total bodily integrity, the masque's final tableau sees Understanding saying to Will: 'Come, melt thy soule in mine, that when unite,/ We may become one virtuous appetite'. Not only is the union between the monarchs and the virtues they embody itself chaste, it also produces the source of perpetual chastity: a virtuous appetite, an appetite chastely orientated toward the good. The monarchs' two bodies, so joined, prohibit any further couplings. Though they beget more chastity through their issue, their soul is closed within an impenetrable bloodline: 'Thus mix'd, our love will ever be discreet'. Their 'thoughts and actions' continuing in this way to be 'pure', their 'love' will 'create' and 'endure' (303).

We can assume that Will is the King's virtue in particular since he wields the scepter. Henrietta Maria therefore embodies Understanding, a claim in keeping with the masque's vision: she is both beautiful and wise and directs her husband and all his subjects to God. To conform the will to God by first deepening one's understanding of his divine plan is standard and timeless Christian ontology, but William Davenant and Henrietta Maria did something unique by arguing in *The Temple of Love* that such a process constitutes chastity, since chastity was also the virtue by which commentators of all confessions were describing the true visible Church. Importantly, the masque's claim for the 'pure ... love' of Will and Understanding, which refers to both virtues jointly, is the most that is said in promotion of Will. Will's purpose appears to be as clear to onlookers as the purpose of the King who embodies it. Understanding, however, is given high praise indeed. Will responds to Understanding's request to mingle souls by asking her to take the lead: 'first breath thine [soul] into me, thine is the part/ More heavenly, and doth more adorne the heart'. The Queen's understanding of what is good and right is more heavenly than the King's ability to act on it. Henrietta Maria's understanding 'adorns the heart': apprehending the good is more loving, and more lovely, than doing good. Referring

as this claim does to Henrietta Maria as the Queen of the true and chaste temple, it can be read as suggesting that the comprehension of chaste divinity is a wondrous experience superior to and productive of good actions. Henrietta Maria will give the King and his people the gift of her most true understanding of divinity; the King will merely act on it. If we are reading the two monarchs as the heads of their respective churches, then the masque can be interpreted as claiming that while the English Church wields the scepter, it is acting on the divine love of Rome's piety realised in and embodied by the beautiful, chaste, and feminised form of Henrietta Maria.

When the temple is revealed, Will and Understanding enter its gilt archway, united. Henrietta Maria remains seated at the foot of State richly dressed, like all her ladies with her, in blue, yellow, white and gold, their dresses and head-dresses embroidered in silver and plumed with feathers, their bodies everywhere reflecting 'beaut[iful] light' (291): a final tableau whose radiance matched exactly that of the true, chaste Church in De Sales' much-read interpretation of Psalm 68:13. 'Propose unto yourselves a fine dove amidst the sun's rays; you shall see her change into so many divers colours, as you behold her diversely; because her feathers are so apt to receive the light ... which bring forth a great variety ... of colours so agreeable to the eye, yea the enamel of richest jewels; colours that are glittering and so quaintly gilt that the gold gives them more life. In consideration hereof the Royal Prophet said unto the Israelites: *Although affliction rudely [...] your face/ Yet shall your hew henceforth to men appear/ As pigeon's plumes, when silvers trembling grace,/ And burnished gold do make them shine the more.* The Church is indeed [so] adorned'.²⁴⁶ In *The Temple of Love*, Charles is seated in state amid a glittering Church embodied by Henrietta Maria and her women all covered in feathers: a Church that is chaste, female, and adorned by the same 'painted feathers' which Milton would later accuse Charles of wearing to 'set him off so gay among the people', when with his 'rosarie prayers' and 'sweet rapsodies of Heathenism and Knighterrantry' the King drew the 'ignorant and wretched people' to 'go a whooring after him'.²⁴⁷ From Charles' perspective, the masque may have simply claimed that the Church of England was, under himself and his Queen, discovering its true catholicity while remaining firmly within his rule. But Henrietta Maria and her supporters could only have read one way the masque's claim that the King must conform his will to her chaste and heavenly soul. *The Temple of Love* did not refute the claims of anti-court commentators that the Queen had seduced the King to popery; it merely argued that his marriage to the Catholic Church was chaste.

At the conclusion of my first chapter, I proposed that *The Winter's Tale's* therapeutic and spiritual chastening of its audience was built from a reworking of medieval liturgical drama's Marian agency and that the play invited the bodies in Blackfriars to experience the movement of the divine will as a wondrous affect that was somatically coded as chaste and feminine. The experience offered by

²⁴⁶ Francois De Sales, *A treatise of the Love of God* (London, 1630), Preface, 2.

²⁴⁷ *Eikonoklastes*, *Complete Prose Works*, 3. Edited by Maurice Kelly (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953-82). 3: 364-7.

the play was in this sense both health-giving and prayerful and it worked by making available to all an enjoyment of embodied and feminised piety that was, through the play's presentation, distanced slightly from its Catholic associations. This affective, feminised, and pietised experience of chastity continued after Shakespeare's formulation to be associated with the wonder of tragicomedy and court masques and was one powerful influence on the seventeenth-century royal cult of chastity. The cult was fostered as much by prose romances, poetry, liturgy, devotional practices, and figures such as Henrietta Maria most especially, but it was shaped in the theatre and in royal performances by the generic celebration of union, reunion, regeneration, and fertility: by precisely the experience of the divine will as a female act of chaste creation which *The Winter's Tale* articulated with such brilliance and subtlety.

The Temple of Love celebrates a union in which the King's 'Will' predominates, but in which the Queen's 'Understanding', her reform of religion and love, are crucial. The Caroline married chastity promoted in the masque foregrounds the fertility of chaste marriage by embedding within it those elements of the Queen's devotional culture which court detractors could only have thought anathema to true chastity: 'Carthusian' poetry and the celibate and 'cloistered' life of the 'hermitage'. That is, Caroline married chastity drew on an aestheticised version of Catholicism—claiming those arts, devotions, and practices which by 1635 had risen to the status of exotic—in order to assert the uniquely chaste character of the monarchs' Protestant marriage. It drew spiritually and aesthetically upon a culture of cloistered celibacy and monastic art and prayer as a means of imbuing the fertility and piety of marriage chastity with greater divinity and wonder. Henrietta Maria was the 'gate' through which this inculturation occurred. Not unlike *The Winter's Tale*'s Marian statue scene, *The Temple of Love* associates the production of refined and baroque works of art—the work of the masque's chastened divine poets and *The Temple of Love* itself—with an experience of female chastity through which the divine will is revealed.

The Temple of Love celebrates the Queen's reform of religion through her chastening of the arts by which the visible Church is constituted, through her drawing into the English Church, as did *The Winter's Tale*, a chastised version of those court arts most associated with the Roman faith. By making available to the audience a sense of wonder built at once from this picture of the arts and the joy of emotional and spiritual union, the masque draws on the experience of wonder popularised by tragicomedy in order to refute the accusations of court critics that the monarchs' marriage is schismatic or unchaste. It denies the charges of unchastity, of Milton's 'whooring', by celebrating an aestheticised and pietised form of chaste union in which the Queen's body, and all those elements of her body deemed threatening by detractors, are centre-stage. This rhetoric worked especially well since the Queen's prodigiously fertile body could be presented, both on the masquing stage and in her birthing rituals, not only as the source of chaste art and devotion but, more literally, as the source of chaste life. Given their bountiful production of 'issue', the monarchs could throughout the 1630s claim

for their version of England's most chaste institutional union a powerfully persuasive form of divine validation, where all other versions of chaste union being posited by court critics—between Crown, Parliament, church or people—could only claim God's blessings through an assertion of figurative fertility.

Chapter Five

Chastity and the Throne of State in Milton's 'A Maske' and *A Maske*

Amid the success of Charles' and Henrietta Maria's cult of chastity in the 1630s, the young John Milton began to assert his own version of the virtue's tropes. Although he articulated it most completely as early as his 1634 masque, Milton's vision of chastity can be seen as paving the way for the cultural and political events of the late 1640s, through which the court's spectacular, feminised, and pietised cult of chastity was eventually eclipsed by the more masculine, prosaic, and martial pro-Parliamentary vision of the virtue. Indeed, we could say that it was Milton's vision of chastity which led to the definitive separation of the virtue's tropes from their roots in tragicomedy and, with the closure of the theatres, brought an end to chastity's and tragicomedy's brief but pervasive hold on early-seventeenth-century language and culture. In Milton's corpus we see how important chastity was to the emergence of those early-seventeenth-century intellectual processes through which royal authority was resisted and from which would emerge, preeminently in Milton himself, a powerfully articulated voice for political and religious reform. What makes Milton so interesting as a figure through which to assess early modern perceptions of chastity is that he, like Charles I and Henrietta Maria, displayed not only a canny sense of the polemical force and the moral and conceptual relevance of chastity to his cultural moment but also a deeply personal investment in the virtue. This is, perhaps, to be expected: the central ideas by which identity is structured and by which the rhetoric of major controversies are made convincing and relevant in any given moment in history are usually powerful for the very fact that individuals believe in their importance.

In its subtle criticism of the court, Milton's *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle* makes brilliant use of the Throne of State as the emblematic focus for Milton's recoding of chastity's tropes and, as such, evidences the extent of his thinking about Caroline masques and the cult of chastity's efforts to associate its own vision of the virtue with the Throne of State. In this, Milton demonstrates why he was so eligible to become the chief promoter of the commonwealth project. He knew as well as Cromwell, and perhaps even better than the King, Queen, and those who created their masques, how to use the props of power to assert the integrity and ascendancy of his view of true chastity over the inordinate number of competing views being offered by his contemporaries. Milton's sense that the Throne of State was a powerful means by which to explore chastity suggests he was also aware of the numerous prominent instances, both on and off the stage, in which thrones and the virtue were associated.

The Throne of State was something of a super-sign, an emblem in which each of the tropes of chastity could be concentrated. In my last chapter I argued for an interpretation of royal birthing scenes as a form of public performance crucial to the theatre of monarchy. At the centre of these performances was the royal birthing chair, an object at once medical, ecclesial, and royal: a prop of power and divinity which marked the gates between heaven and earth and through which the continuance of the royal line was either secured (a grand testimony to royal chastity) or damaged. The royal birthing chair and the performance that surrounded it were seen by few but were nonetheless evoked in the Throne of State which, in the masques of the 1630s, proclaimed the monarchs' fertility, chastity, and sanctity. In the Caroline court's cult of chastity, the Throne was a sign of the monarchs' correctly orientated relationship with God; their legitimate union with each other and their many legitimate issue; their power to bring back to virtue those who, embodied by the anti-masque, had strayed from the Crown's chaste influence; and it was a concentrated figure for the bodily boundaries of the monarchs themselves and of the nation. As I hope to show, this concentration of chastity's tropes into the single sign of the Throne was a difficult symbolic feat for dissenters to unravel, but they did so by recoding the Throne as a site of moral struggle in which the tyranny and pride of princes who had lost all just sense of their proper place in relation to the divine allowed not only their own bodies to be broken and unchastened but, figuratively, the body of the nation also. While Milton's masque made the expected generic use of each of chastity's tropes—the return of the lost children to their parents, the celebration of the Bridgewater family's legitimate union and issue, the threat to Lady Chastity's bodily integrity—it was fundamentally a sustained exploration of the moral struggle against pride and toward a proper relationship with God. Wrestling the tropes of chastity away from the super-sign of the Throne meant recoding the Throne as the seat of trial, in which virtuous leaders could become tyrants, spoiling the Throne itself, themselves, and the nation with the blood that flowed from their breached and unchaste bodies.

In this chapter I will explore the importance of chastity's tropes to the presentation and discussion of significant thrones throughout the 1620s and 1630s. I will first assess the Caroline court's presentation of the Throne of State as the single, exalted site from which Charles' chastity radiated, chastising his subjects, before exploring a number of instances in which this presentation of the Throne was questioned. Such questioning usually took the form of suggesting the Throne was instead a seat of unchaste pride. One instance in which these two views of the Throne collided was the Castlehaven trial, a legal performance designed to assert the Crown's chastity and authority over a wayward and apparently grossly unchaste peer. Satirical commentary on the trial instead described the Throne of State as so unchastened, so stained by pride, as to undermine its claims to chaste authority. Another area in which these two views of the Throne met was in the dispute over the nature and function of Christ's Mercy Seat—an argument of relatively minor theological significance but major political consequences. My exploration of this debate reveals how court-supporters and pro-Parliamentarians were each using their competing definitions of the Mercy Seat to argue either that all

earthly and heavenly power was concentrated in the single, exalted, and semi-divine Throne of State or, more rebelliously, that it was to be found in the seat of virtue located in each human heart. The third area I will explore, in which the Throne played a major role in the struggle to determine the dividing line between chastity and pride and resulted in consequences of great significance for Charles's reign, is William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood. As I will argue, one particular historical moment influencing Harvey's thinking can be seen as weakening the King's claims to possess the exalted site of chaste authority and instead lending credence to pro-Parliamentarian arguments in support of individualist claims to chaste authority.

I will be arguing that each of these debates forms the backdrop for Milton's intervention in the royal genre. Milton's masque boldly took up the challenge of thinking through contemporary debates over the Throne as a symbol of either centralised or dispersed authority and the implications of these debates for chastity's tropes and the genre in which they had for decades been promulgated. To reveal this most fully, I will be turning to Milton himself and his very personal engagement with chastity. Through an analysis of his sonnet 'How Soon Hath Time' and his University exercise, the 'Sixth Prolusion', I hope to show how Milton's developing ideas about authority, subjection, pride, and the proper relationship between the chaste subject and his chosen throne (be it the Throne of State or the divine seat in each human heart) drew on local conflicts over the rightful definition of the Mercy Seat and the relative pride of enthroned earthly rulers. Milton was keenly aware that crucial to the rhetorical force of these debates were the tropes of bodily boundaries, correctly-orientated relationships and legitimate unions. His own developing understanding of what constituted a chaste subject, a chaste throne, and the genre through which chastity was best realised, is a central concern of his masque. Through a reading of both the printed and performed versions of Milton's masque of chastity, with which this chapter concludes, I will assess how Milton's re-inscription of chastity's tropes within the printed word and away from the spectacular world of court performance constituted a powerful attack on the cult of chastity and paved the way for those who, writing in the following decade, began to win popular support for their criticism of the King and court.

The Chaste Throne at Court

When we turn to the Throne of State, we find an image uniquely suited to act as vehicle for the whole nexus of early modern concerns over those unchaste forces at work in humanity—tyranny, idolatry, heresy, adultery, witchcraft. The numerous descriptions of earthly government emerging in the early modern period sought to describe the proper, stable functioning of power and authority and to warn against its dissolution and many did so by concentrating on the Throne of State as that emblem of centralised order which, when debased, would unravel all the threads that held society together. The image of an 'unchaste' Throne as a sign of tyranny (a spoiled, bloodied, or contaminated seat of lust) had a strong Elizabethan precedent. John Knox concentrated his horror at the prospect of a woman

monarch into his depiction of a monstrous Throne of State which overwhelms all who are subject to it, transforming them from upright citizens to ‘foolish’, ‘fond’ and ‘coward[ly] ... women’.²⁴⁸ He argued that ‘the erecting of a woman to [the Throne] is not onely to invert the ordre, which God hath established: but also it is to defile, pollute and prophane ... the throne and seat of God, which he hath sanctified and appointed for man onely’ (34). The woman monarch would, Knox argues, infect the throne with her own ‘imperfections’, ‘naturall weaknes, and inordinate appetites’. For history reveals that women ‘have burned with such inordinate lust, that for the quenching of the same, they have betrayed to strangers their countrie and citie: and some to have bene so desirous of dominion, that for the obtaining of the same, they have murdered the children of their owne sonnes. Yea and some have killed with crueltie their owne husbandes and children’ (13).

In the seventeenth century, the possibility that tyrannical monarchs could infect (‘defile, pollute and profane’) the throne itself with their own lust and pride bolstered arguments that the throne and its props be separated and protected from unstable humanity. Yet, these arguments generated a series of figures in which thrones became metonymic extensions of the monarchs’ virtue or vice and thus as coterminous with them. The writers of *Novembris Monstrum* (1641) depict its various unchaste characters as extensions of their thrones: Bacchus’ throne is a cask of wine, Pan’s a rock, and Phocas’ the couch in which occurs the titular miscarriage of the child which the whore of Babylon begot by the corrupt emperor (28, 73). Depicting the vulnerability of the Throne of State to the unchastity of tyrannical monarchs spoke efficiently and effectively to commonplace fears that the vice of rulers spread quickly to the instruments and machinery of government and to the more abstract ideals of purity, peace, and stability which they signified. As Knox made clear a century earlier in his caustic description of a woman in State, the props of power were signs of justice and authority—‘the royall crowne upon her head, the sworde and sceptre borne before her, in signe that the administration of justice was in her power’—and to sully the objects through misuse was to throw proper order into chaos. One of the most terrifying practices attributed to seventeenth-century witches was their use of swords, scepters, and orbs for demonic purposes.

When we pay attention to the prevalence of throne imagery in a number of early seventeenth-century fields, we see that in varying contexts, the figure of the sovereign throne was short hand for any nucleus of power and virtue. Further, any chair or seat could under most conditions signify authority. As Laud himself admitted, even while defending the importance of a centralised earthly authority: ‘Thrones, or Chairs, or Seats, (call them what you will, the thing is the same)’.²⁴⁹ Early modern thrones or seats figured authority in such general terms because from antiquity the main purpose of a chair was to contain and display only the most powerful figures in a room. More specifically, however, chairs signified central authority because the early modern conception of

²⁴⁸ John Knox, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstruous Regiment of Women* (London, 1558), 11.

²⁴⁹ William Laud, *A sermon preached on Monday, the sixth of February, at Westminster at the opening of the Parliament* (London, 1625), 35.

systematic organisation usually assumed a ruling and central force of power and governance. Thus for Ford the heart is the seat of man's virtue: God 'gently yet again attempt's to winne/ The Monarchy of hearts usurp't by sinne', but for William Gilbert the pole of a magnet is the 'the seat, the throne'.²⁵⁰ Yet it was this very moment in history in which the figure of the throne was also used to question not only the legitimacy of those enthroned in State but the very concept of centralised government. William Harvey scandalised the medical world by shifting his attention from the central control of the heart as 'seat' and 'monarch' of the body²⁵¹ to the more dispersed powers of the blood just as anti-Laudian arguments that God's throne, the Mercy Seat, no longer sat in the Old Testament tabernacle posited instead that its true place was in every human heart.

At Charles I's court, however, the Throne was very much a singular object of reverence, given a degree of prominence and ritualised significance far greater than it possessed under James. This is true not only in Caroline court masques, in which the Throne of State enjoyed an unprecedented position both dramatically and morally, but throughout Caroline court ceremony. Shortly after Charles' accession, it was noted that he had reinstated the 'antient form' of ceremony when in State, practices which emphasised the authority, majesty and mystery of his kingly body.²⁵² Of particular interest is the degree to which the Throne of State was separated as a sacred space to which all present must show reverence. The King, 'of all European princes, was served on bended knee, and when the French ambassador complained because neither chair nor stool was set for his wife—as was done for the English ambassador's wife in France—he was told that on official occasions no lady of the English Court except the Queen herself, not even the Princess Royal' was allowed to sit.²⁵³

At the initial assembly of Charles' first Parliament in London in 1625, it was noted that the King wore his crown for the entire duration, even though his Coronation had not yet taken place. The crown remained veiled except when Charles delivered his speech. By revealing the crown only when he spoke and, when silent, obscuring and mystifying it, Charles marked with high ceremony the divinity of his words and his throned body in State (I: 33-4). Perhaps this performance failed to instill in Parliament the sufficient awe it was calculated to inspire, or perhaps it did little to camouflage the King's lack of natural majesty. Charles did not share Elizabeth's and James' gift for oratory and, unable to produce in his address to Parliament the gravity with which he wished to imbue his throned person, he decided not to speak at all. When next seated before the House at the Oxford session of his first Parliament, Charles issued decrees through 'the king's mouth to the house,' the Lord Keeper (I: 81). Charles' new ceremonialism was as much an expression of his love for beauty and formality as it

²⁵⁰ Ford, *Christes Bloodie Sweate*, 5-6 and William Gilbert, *On the Magnet* (London, 1600), 17. See Elizabeth Spiller, *Science, Reading and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²⁵¹ William Harvey, *De Motu Cordis*, in G. Keynes (ed.), *The Anatomical Exercises of Dr. William Harvey* (London, 1928), vii-viii.

²⁵² In a letter from John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, April 9, 1625. *Court and Times of Charles I*, I: 7-8.

²⁵³ Cicely Veronica Wedgwood, *The King's Peace 1637-1641*, (London: Collins, 1955), 55.

was a cure for, and at times a symptom of, his awkwardness. However, his attention to the ceremonious presentation of his throned body in official appearances was far from consistent and provided a number of opportunities for his detractors to resent those in his favour who were excused from observing ritual decorum. It was this resentment that fueled scandal when it was reported Buckingham had been carried in the King's box to St. James' while the King walked beside him. Parliamentarians also noted bitterly the report that when Charles was seated in State during a Christmas performance at court and Buckingham arrived at the end of the first act, the players were made to start again from the beginning (I:191).

While these breaches of Caroline ceremonial decorum were not committed on occasions whose explicit aim was to assert the monarchs' chastity (as in some court masques), the King's critics often attacked him on such grounds, reinterpreting the Caroline chastity of State as its opposite. Charles left himself open to such attacks. Throughout his reign the Crown continued to bear the figure of the Virgin Mary. Married to a Catholic Queen who shared the name of the mother of God, Charles had to work hard to diminish the effect of this conspicuous object. When painted in State, he was always depicted from behind. But this was not enough to allay the concerns of those who, in *The Great Eclipse of the Sun, or Charles His Waine Over-clouded* (1644), argued that the crown had been sullied by the King's love of Popish ceremony and the inordinate power he granted Archbishop Laud. Drawing an easy parallel between unchastity, Catholicism, and tyranny, the writers argued that the King's love of his Parliament and the true Church had been so darkened by the seductions of the Queen and the popish Bishops that the throne and props of State had all been contaminated. They asserted that Charles' true subjects needed 'to pray that [the King] may recover the light of his scepter and the love of his subjects' and that war against him was justified because 'desperate diseases must have desperate cures'. The King's unchaste disease of pride and idolatry was thought to be so desperate that he would even 'pawne his Crown (if he could get it from *Westminster*) to maintaine the Miter'.²⁵⁴

A more sustained criticism of the chastity of the Throne of State under Charles occurs early in *Novembris Monstrum* (1641). The authors describe two thrones, one chaste and just, the other unchaste and tyrannical. In the chaste throne, Eliza sits with Peace asleep contentedly on her lap: an image reminiscent of the Pietà, still popular in early-seventeenth-century prints. In the other throne, the Pope fornicates with Phocas. A narrative account of the Gunpowder Plot printed in 1641, the tract looks askance at Charles' ties with Catholicism. Through its depiction of a tyrannical and unchaste throne, *Novembris Monstrum* articulates the growing Caroline interest in distinguishing the objects of State from the monarch, and the conceptual innovation of resisting royal authority while asserting loyalty to the Crown. The writers insist that the Throne of State is itself incorruptible and only sullied by those who inhabit it: 'Peace flies not Scepters, but dread Tyranny'. Eliza, however, was not a tyrant and Peace was at home in her England:

²⁵⁴ Anon., *The Great Eclipse of the Sun, or Charles His Waine Over-clouded* (London, 1644), 5.

When blest Eliza swai'd proud England's rod
And ballanc't in her hands the golden ball:
Peace sat by hir, laid downe her head to nod
Within her Princely lap, and there did fall.
Into a slumbring sweet-security. (62)

Although Peace lives contentedly in Eliza's throne, her slumber is interrupted when the Queen leaves to fight her Catholic enemies. The women's mutual comfort is also disturbed when Peace has a gruesome and prescient dream of the Gunpowder Plot. Where Eliza's throne sits in radiance and glory overlooking and defending English shores, Rome's throne is in Peace's dream buried deep in a close cellar 'full as darke as jett' and surrounded by its evil advisors (71). The Synod is made up of the familiar stock of unchaste Catholic female personifications, including the 'incestuous' Devotion (72). Drawing on all the watery and fleshly imagery of unchastity as a broken or sluiced body, the tract depicts the 'purple whore' as an over-gorged body which cannot fit into its Throne: the Pope, 'that man of sinne', is 'quite surfetted with goare, / Gorg'd with the flesh of Saints at Plutos feast, / Bathed in Nectar blood, pancht with mans flesh, / As if it were high Ioves Ambrosia dish' (2). In the same way, the throne Pope Gregory creates for the corrupt Phocas will not contain him. Mounted on his 'high imperiall seate' Phocas is 'brim-full of Honour'. Such an excess of 'honour must runne o're' and from the breach, 'shall flee/ Supremacy to swell the Bishops See' (90). Over-gorged with ill-gained honour Phocas' uncontrollable, liquid corruption is the unchaste seed by which the tyrannical emperor impregnates the Holy See. Where under the chaste Eliza, the throne is shared only with Peace, and certainly with no consort or overseas Catholic power, the throne of Phocas (and Charles) is the very place where the earthly ruler fornicates with Rome. The period's figure for unchaste broken bodies as, to use Leontes' phrase, 'knee deep' in blood and fluids is evoked throughout the tract when describing the thrones of Phocas or Rome, both of whom struggle to remain in State for all the blood in which their thrones are drowned.

In 1631, the court's assertion of the Throne of State's chastity under Charles, and anti-court depictions of the Throne as watery, fleshly, prideful and unchaste, were in direct and very public conflict throughout the trial of the Earl of Castlehaven. The trial was an unprecedented spectacle in which the Crown sought to punish the transgressions of a peer accused of gross unchastity and tyranny in his own home. The trial of a peer was historically an extremely rare event but by 1631 Charles had already punished a number of noblemen for crimes against chastity. However, none had committed acts as cruel as those of which Castlehaven was accused and none were peers. Castlehaven's son had appealed to the King on the grounds that his father had performed sexual and fiscal acts that represented a diabolical inversion of every category in the natural hierarchies. The Earl reportedly lavished his money and attention on his servants, while denying them to his heir. He was said to prefer the company of his male inferiors, valuing them emotionally and sexually while humiliating his wife and children. He sought to have his man penetrate his wife before him. The Countess of Castlehaven, older and very much her husband's social better, claimed that her marriage

was a constant battle over her honour. Her husband, she asserted, repeatedly humiliated her sexually and verbally, forced her on his favourites, and threatened her with rape if she did not consent willingly. The Earl's son and daughter-in-law appeared to loathe each other and had separated after three years of marriage. It was alleged that Castlehaven subsequently encouraged a sexual relationship between his son's estranged wife and his favourite, Henry Skipwith, a man of no social or financial standing. Castlehaven was said to have expressed a desire to claim Skipwith's offspring as his heir, rather than that of his son. Even before this affair began, Castlehaven had rewarded Skipwith with money and property, and had him sitting at table with the family and referred to as 'mister' (18).

In a legal trial of such high profile, the moral and disciplinary power of the Throne as a guarantor of sexual chastity and a check to its subject's pride was key to its success, but Charles' personal desire to chastise his wayward subject was given particular voice. Before the trial commenced, Charles announced that he was disappointed to discover that 'some great ladies intended to be spectatrices' of the 'obscene tragedy'. He instructed all woman, regardless of their status that they attended the trial 'upon pain of ever after being reputed to have forfeited their modesty'.²⁵⁵ The narrative of the prosecution made it perfectly clear that the Crown expected a guilty verdict, emphasising that it fell to Charles to maintain and protect chastity just as God had done when he annihilated the tribe of Benjamin for refusing to surrender a brutal rapist, and had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins. 'If these offenses be not punished', Heath announced, 'certainly a heavy judgement must fall upon the land' (50, 83). To this end, the Throne of State was given a prominent position in the performance of the trial.

The trial's extensive ceremonials were aimed at the glorification of the Throne and the assertion of its authority to chastise Castlehaven. Scaffolding was built into the courts of the King's Bench and Chancery in Westminster, converting these spaces into theatres which could accommodate the crowds that attended. At the opening of the trial the twenty-seven peers acting as judge and jury ascended twelve steps to the gallery and sat themselves in order of precedence at a long table, at the head of which stood the Chair of State. Seven judges and legal advisers followed, then the four prosecuting lawyers and all the clerical officers of the court. An hour after this procession began, seven sergeants-at-arms bearing seven maces entered. Behind them, in 'greater state' than had been witnessed before, came Coventry, Keeper of the Great Seal and (for this occasion) Lord High Steward of England. A considerable series of salutes, greetings and announcements were then observed (58). Coventry sat in the Throne of State before the Usher of the Black Rod knelt and presented him with the white rod of state. This was held upright throughout proceedings, and, at the end of the trial, the white rod was broken over the Steward's knee. The staff, its white symbolising the purity of the monarch and of English justice (a theme on which Coventry spent considerable time in his accusation

²⁵⁵ Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder*, 50.

of Castlehaven), marked the King's presence in the person of the Lord High Steward and its breaking marked his departure and the conclusive delivery of the monarch's punishment.

The breaking of the white rod of State at the end of Castlehaven's trial was officially a mark of the Crown's triumph over unchastity, but for some commentators the action did not so definitively signal the purification of error, which continued to fester in the pride of the Lord High Stewart. One pamphleteer noted that Coventry sat in 'greater state than ever I saw before'. A second commentator agreed. To him, 'my Lord High Steward his grace/ with many a rich mace' came 'into the palace', guarded and with much pomp. The theme of the verse, as is to be expected, is sexual unchastity. But unlike other bawdy commentaries on the trial, this one lampoons the high ceremony of the proceedings, suggesting thereby that there is something ridiculous about the chastising of criminal excess through a process marked precisely by such unchaste and proud effeminacy and pomp. The author details Coventry's horror that 'so vile a thing' has damaged 'the happiness of the King' who has lived so long without one of his peers going astray. Of Coventry, the anonymous author notes:

He used much scripture text
which many there perplexed
who did not think it possible
That a man of his trade
who so much profit had made
Should be so well read in the bible.²⁵⁶

Seated in State, Coventry so 'liked the canopy ... and the chair he sat in' that it was thought he would have been contented to be 'The Red Flap of the Law.' The bawdy connotations of 'red flap' are numerous. The term referred as much to a loose woman as to loose lips (a flap-mouth). It also referred to flap-like valves both on tunnels and ducts (like a sluice) but especially to the epiglottis. Given the verse jeers at Coventry's over-zealous speech this meaning is surely one to which the term refers. Another possible meaning is the proverbial 'to be flapped with a fox tail': to dismiss contemptuously, a womanish action. For our purposes it is important that the author overturns the trial's claims to chastise the grossly erroneous Castlehaven by depicting instead Coventry's unchaste pride, his lust for high ceremony, verbose and hypocritical speech, avarice, pomp and effeminacy (162). The author expresses this unchastity through the image of the Throne of State as the red flap from which, in the image of unchastity as a broken (female) vessel, chastity drains away. The jibe is aimed directly at the Lord High Steward's claim that the peers who tried Castlehaven were men 'whose heads and hearts are as full of integrity as their veins are full of blood' (66). In his statement at the trial, Coventry specifically chose this image to contrast the fullness and integrity of the monarchs' veins with Castlehaven's lack of integrity, in body and spirit. But in the satirical verses, Castlehaven's willingness to ravage his family and sluice his own veins, is shown to be only as unchaste as Coventry's pride and verbosity. Seated in the Throne of State and enthralled by the power it granted him in such a

²⁵⁶ Cited in Appendix of Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder*.

sensational event, Coventry's vainglory in fact drains the chaste blood of the sovereign out of the Throne through his canting 'red flap'.

We have seen that throughout the 1630s Charles and Henrietta Maria utilised chastity's tropes in order to promote the monarchs' virtue. Castlehaven's trial was in many ways a function of this: the peer, in failing to maintain properly orientated relationships, the legitimacy of his family's unions and issue, or the integrity of any of the family's bodies, became an example within a trial almost as spectacular as a royal masque. Crucially, however, Castlehaven's trial was designed to assert the integrity of the nation—that body which the monarchs' bodily integrity was, within the Caroline cult of chastity, supposed to figure. Disorder and unchastity were by no means singular to Castlehaven's household. Unlike other men, however, he had failed to keep such problems within the sphere of his control, and, by placing his heir in a position in which he felt it necessary to involve the Crown, the Earl had also implicated the King himself. To restore the chastity of the Throne of State, Castlehaven was required to repent of his crimes and submit to the King's punishment. Instead, Castlehaven resisted the role prescribed to him by the trial. He was never contrite, never ashamed, but rather asserted consistently that he had done nothing wrong and that his family, whom he described as greedy and murderous, were conspiring against him. His resistance made explicit not only his failure to maintain his sovereignty over the house, but made public the abuses, the jealousy and rivalry, lust and resentment that must have at times been present in most households, including that of the King. Where Charles I worked to present himself as a stalwart leader, whose virtue influenced the behaviour of his subjects, Castlehaven openly blamed those over whom he was expected to exercise control and refused to take responsibility for the unruliness of his house. In doing so, he demonstrated that he too was a subordinate the King could not control, thereby undermining the royal image of moral and bodily perfection.

Through the language of his prosecution and the physical presence of the Throne of State, Heath was re-articulating and consolidating the vision of chastity upheld by the Caroline court²⁵⁷. While Castlehaven's resistance to the King's authority confirmed in the minds of spectators how crucial chastity was to the nation's moral well-being, it also argued powerfully against the Crown's assertion that the monarchs could, by embodying the virtue themselves, will it of their subjects. The Crown's intention for the trial was that Castlehaven would acknowledge his crimes and, implicitly, his treason. Had he been contrite, Castlehaven would have confirmed the power of the Crown by enacting the reabsorption of transgressive forces into the chaste influence which royal masques were arguing constituted the King's influence on his subjects. However, by maintaining his resistance to the Crown's decree and insisting upon his own innocence, Castlehaven asserted an individualism that initially made Heath's task of presenting him as perverse easier, but ultimately created uncertainty about the validity of the verdict and the operations of power from which it proceeded. Instead of

²⁵⁷ Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder*, 63-98.

claiming responsibility for his crimes and showing contrition, Castlehaven threw the accusation of unchastity squarely back upon the women in his family, accusing them of sexual voraciousness. His wife was a 'common whore' who had borne a bastard shortly after their marriage. He argued that it was his inability to fulfill his wife's gluttonous desires that had motivated her to bring about his ruin and murder. Broadway, Castlehaven's servant on trial for his part in the crimes, said that the Countess lay commonly with other inferior men of the household and had 'made away' with her own bastard (76, 80, 96). One pamphleteer took a similar angle in his commentary on the trial:

I need no trophies to adorn my hearse
My wife exalts my horns in every verse
And placed them so full upon my tomb
That for my arms there is no vacant room
Who will take such a Countess to his bed
That first gives horns and then cuts off the head?²⁵⁸

Popular default to commonplaces of female sexual unchastity was itself one reason why Attorney-General Heath had to work so hard to depict the extreme unchastity of Castlehaven himself, while arguing that his wife and daughter-in-law were chaste and innocent victims. To this end, Heath built his argument against Castlehaven upon the claim that even the most wicked man would still wish his partner and family chaste, whereas Castlehaven forced unchastity on others. This claim was delivered after a long narration of the history of rape and sodomy and the lament that until Castlehaven, Charles I's reign had been free from aristocratic scandal.

Crucially, the accused's breach of chastity was explicitly linked to his damaging of the royal doctrine of chastity, which was being promoted in court masques as a force strong enough to reform not only England but the heavens, and which was throughout the trial represented in the throne erected high upon the stage. Heath's speech invoked war and suggested that Castlehaven had created a war of sorts in his own house and in the nation's house (60). Linking nationhood with chastity, an argument integral to Caroline masque rhetoric, Heath also repeatedly linked Castlehaven's sodomy with treason (62). We have seen from those writings which present England's very soil, streets and buildings as vulnerable to the infectious spread of unchastity how powerful Heath's strategy must have been. Connecting the image of a penetrated, broken and unchaste body with that of a soiled life or ravaged England inspired a degree of psychological and spiritual fear in early modern men and women that was perhaps unique to this moment in English intellectual history.

Coventry's and Heath's attempts to claim for the Throne of State the same chastity and authority within the theatre of the law that it asserted in court masques meant presenting the Throne's influence on the figurative bodies it protected as unifying and sanctifying. Critics of the trial instead presented the Throne as an unchaste seat of pride, stained and fleshly, and thus as damaging to England's unity and sanctity. This conflict over the relative chastity of the Throne of State took on a

²⁵⁸ Quoted in Herrup, 160.

subtle but, I think, very influential role in the theological debate over the nature and function of Christ's Mercy Seat. Both sides of the debate claimed chastity for their description of true authority and accused their opponents of wishing to rule tyrannically.

Chastity and the Mercy Seat

In 1637, when Henrietta Maria had just staged in *The Temple of Love* her elaborate celebration of the chaste Throne of State and its unity with her devotional community at court, William Prynne wrote *A quench-coale*. The tract argued against the refurbishment of English churches. Taking up the figure of the Mercy Seat, Prynne refuted Arminian claims, primarily those of Edmond Reeve, that the central and exalted position of the Old Testament Mercy Seat justified the relocation of, and reverence to, the altar. He made the familiar point that God spoke from the Mercy Seat and so, following Reeve's logic, congregants ought more fittingly bow toward the pulpit and reading pew. Prynne makes the further point, which Milton would also argue in his masque, that the true location of the Mercy Seat is not fixed at all. 'Christ's Chair of Estate ought to be seated there where himself hath promised his special presence: But that is not in the East end, but in the midst of the Church and people'. Moreover, 'Our bodies are the Temples of Christ, and the holy Ghost ... And where doe both of them principally dwell ... but in the heart (seated in the midst of the bodie)'.²⁵⁹ Prynne's dispersal of thrones into each individual body, a rhetoric which in effect questioned the certainty of all centralised sources of authority, moved in the opposite direction to the rhetoric of Laud, who sought to reduce legitimate sources of earthly authority to the fewest possible number before merging them all in the one figure visible on earth: the monarch throned in State.

The main writers in this debate were Lancelot Andrewes and Archbishop Laud on one side and William Loe and William Prynne on the other. By using the Mercy Seat to bolster their own claims for the most just and true form of governance, each party accused the other of a pride which dealt improperly with the enthroned body of Christ. Characterising such impropriety with reference to commonplace images of unchastity these four men consolidated within their field the capacity for the throne or seat to figure the moral association between unchastity and pride, and, conversely, between chastity, true governance and upright Christian citizenship. Doing so within a debate about Church ornament and just worship, their sermons staged within the realm of Eucharistic controversy an opposition between two views of chaste citizenship: the one an individuating resistance to authority and the other a reverent submission to a single glorified earthly throne. Where Laud and his co-religionists promulgated the image of a chaste Throne as singular and revered, thereby complementing the message of court masques and strengthening the Caroline cult of chastity, pro-Parliamentary low-Churchmen instead located the chaste Throne in each individual heart. This

²⁵⁹ William Prynne, *A quench-coale. Or A briefe disquisition and inquirie, in what place of the church or chancell the Lords-table ought to be situated, especially when the Sacrament is administered* (London, 1637), 41, 32.

disagreement over the throne's signification provides a powerful background for Milton's masque, which made the throne the focal point of a sophisticated moral struggle in which the pursuit of chastity equates to the resistance of authority.

While this debate over the nature and function of the Mercy Seat might appear a rather recondite theological issue, it had significant political consequences. In the 1630s and 40s, the biblical Mercy Seat was the focus of considerable disagreement among churchmen, yet it is an object that has received little attention from contemporary scholars. In many instances, those Reformation commentators who mention the Mercy Seat do so in a purely descriptive fashion. In the Book of Exodus (25:17), the Mercy Seat is an object of pure gold that sat above the Arc of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies, a pre-Christian site of the greatest majesty and mystery which many early moderns no doubt assumed had been rendered obsolete or at least merely figurative by Christ's Incarnation. However, some prominent writers—Andrews, Laud, Prynne—paid particular attention to the Mercy Seat and their arguments reveal that it was an object whose identity and role were, after the Incarnation, slippery enough that it could be made to support a variety of conflicting views. In The Book of Exodus, the Mercy Seat is not only the beautifully adorned seat of God on earth, but the place where God will speak his commandments, via Moses, to all of Israel. In the hands of such eminent opponents as Laud and Prynne, the Mercy Seat could thus figure either the location of the sacrament atop an altar orientated and adorned to reflect the beauty of holiness or the righteousness of the word preached from the pulpit. Crucially, to each party, the other's treatment of the Mercy Seat was deemed an unchastening of Christ's body.

As early as 1611, Lancelot Andrews was using the figure of the Mercy Seat to argue his theology of sin and worship while preaching before King James at Whitehall on Christmas day. The passage was John 1:14, 'And the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory'. For Andrewes, the glorified word made flesh was the Eucharist as Christ's Mercy Seat, an interpretation that united Christ's throne on the altar with his throne in Heaven. On the surface, this may have appeared to many listeners a logical conclusion given that in Old Testament worship the Mercy Seat was the single most exalted object of mystery and adoration. But Andrewes used the comparison to pursue arguments for sacramental reverence. As Mercy Seat, he claimed, the Eucharist was both the primary source of forgiveness (a figure for Christ dying on the Cross as propitiation for human sins) and the sign of his glory (a figure for Christ in his majesty in Heaven, seated in State). Andrewes collapsed these two functions into one vivid image of Christ enthroned in heavenly State, his heart bleeding precious blood. Drawing on the commonplace convergence between disease and unchastity, Andrewes observed that Christ's precious blood is medicinal and cures communicants of their pollution. The enthroned Christ was both King and 'the Physitian slaine', who poured out the blood of his heart so that communicants, his 'patient[s]', might 'recover', be cleansed of their 'foule

spots without' and purged of their 'homours' within.²⁶⁰ By depicting Christ's most chastening and purifying actions through a figure of him enthroned on the altar, Andrewes was claiming that the chastity and sanctity of communicants required that they give due reverence to his body on the altar. He claimed further that by reverencing the altar, Christians drew closer to Christ and to Heaven. For Andrewes, the medicinal healing offered by Christ seated in mercy was united to Christ seated in his glory because unlike the Old Testament Mercy Seat, which was closed to all but the highest earthly authority, Christ calls his followers to sit with him in his heavenly glory and 'He could not bring us to sit with Him in His throne ... being so spotted and foule, as we were, by meanes of the pollution of our sinnes. He was then to purge and make cleane our Nature first' (58). By uniting the purging quality of the Eucharist with its glorification, Andrewes firmly associated the efficacy of Christ's redemption with that style of worship he favoured.

Andrewes went on to use the image of Christ enthroned to argue that preaching was only one aspect, and an inferior aspect, of worship. He emphasised the three actions implicit in the passage from John: speaking, purging, and sitting. 'As a Prophet, He speakes; as a Priest, purges; as a King, sits' (60) and argued that 'In the Sermon time something is begunn to be made in us, but, it continueth not'. The word is not enough to sanctify. 'The Word giveth a light', a 'brightness', which does cleanse but only partially. If we are to be truly purged and glorified with Christ we must receive the truest 'medicine', Christ's flesh and blood. Unlike the brightness offered by the word, the word made flesh instills in communicants a 'permanent ... character' (60). Drawing on the trope of unchastity as broken bodies and ruptured union, Andrewes warned against severing the word from the flesh since on Christ's nativity, the day his sermon celebrated, the two were joined by God. Implicitly accusing low-Churchmen not only of abusing their office but of falling into the unchastity of pride, he goes on to remind his listeners that maintaining the unity of word and flesh demands a proper understanding of the office by which Christ's gifts are made available: 'Prophetts spake; but purged not. Purging was ever the Priests office'. Those who believed that by preaching alone they were performing the task Christ designated for them glorify only themselves and fail to give proper glory to Christ's Mercy Seat, the Eucharist: 'The same flesh that cleansed our sinnes' is the same that 'now sitteth on the throne; and so, hath both vertues: ... a power to purge' and 'a power likewise to exalt' (61).

A few years later, the Puritan William Loe, Doctor of Divinity and Chaplain to King James, delivered a fiery sermon to Parliament in which he argued against Andrewes' definition of the Mercy Seat, asserting instead that it was to be found in the word preached at the pulpit. He turned Andrewes' accusation of pride back on him by criticising advocates of external worship for failing to excite their flock to interior devotion and true penitence. To Loe, Andrewes' image of Christ's exalted Mercy Seat as a 'Chair of consolation' was an unchaste failure to draw his flock into proper relationship with

²⁶⁰Collected in: Lancelot Andrewes, *XCVI. Sermons by the Right Honorable and Reverend Father in God, Lancelot Andrewes, late Lord Bishop of Winchester. Published by His Majesties speciall command ...* (London, 1629), 59. All subsequent references will be cited in text.

Christ. His critics, he notes, have accused his style of preaching because it turned the pulpit into a 'Tribunal ... where the Auditory is arraigned, accused, and condemned'. 'I answer. Behold I show you a Paradox. It is a plague unto you when you are not plagued, and you are undone, when you are not undone'.²⁶¹ Arguing that the pulpit was the Mercy Seat and that its function was to stir the consciences of all listeners, Loe made good use of chastity's image of a broken vessel to describe the state of those 'fools' who look to Christ's Mercy Seat for consolation only—who are too comfortable with the things of the world and do not come to God, truly humble, with 'confusion, ... trembling, quaking, sighing, and sorrowing'. 'Such fools ... they are destitute of understanding: Their heart is like a broken pitcher, it will hold no wisdom, and if it doe hold any thing, it is like a sieve that retains the chaff only, and lets the good grain passe through' (5).

Loe's sermon was suppressed, presumably by Laud who around the same time was appointed Dean of Gloucester Cathedral where Loe had served in various capacities for some years. Laud ordered the rearrangement of the Cathedral altar and Loe appears to have been implicated in the controversy that followed.²⁶² Loe's sermon eventually came to the press in 1621, the same time that Laud was demoted to Bishop of the obscure diocese of St. David's. In the printed sermon's dedication to the Duke of Buckingham, Loe attacked Laud and other 'ungodly great ones' and narrated how Laud, now brought low, had been 'surprised' by 'Almighty God' whose hand had 'clipped' and 'restrained' his 'over-weening greatnesse, and wilfulnesse' (3). Drawing his conflict with Laud into his theology of the word, Loe's sermon (on Mark 1.3) argued that the voice crying in the wilderness is the voice of God which can only be delivered through preaching. Loe asserted that, in suppressing his sermon, Laud in fact suppressed the very word of God and erected instead glorious thrones from which he, like all who shared his love of the beauty of holiness, could only tumble. Again turning the accusation of pride back onto Laud and his co-religionists, Loe warned those who would not harken to the preached word: 'Consider this ye great ones, lest God lay your honour in the dust: yee mighty, lest the Almighty throw you down, and there be none to help you up' (6). In his bitterness, Loe painted a picture so much like that Milton would later use in his masque, that it is tempting to assume the young poet read the sermon after 1621. Laud, he claimed, like all advocates of the beauty of holiness, slumber and would have been happier had they 'hearkened to that Voice from God' for 'if it had pleased the Almightye, his soul might thereby have been awakened out of that fearful slumber, wherein he then lay, bewitched with the Circean Cups of Ambition, Wantonnesse, and sensuall securitie' (3).

At the opening of the 1625 Parliament, Laud, his star rising again, preached on the unity of Church and State, a topic on which he had in preceding years been writing and speaking with increased frequency. His descriptions of an ordered and beautiful institutional unity and sanctity,

²⁶¹ William Loe, *Vox clamantis. Mark 1. 3 A stil voice, to the three thrice-honourable estates of Parliament: and in them, to all the soules of this our nation, of what state or condition soeuer they be* (London, 1621), 48.

²⁶² Stephen Wright, "Loe, William (d. 1645)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: Oxford University Press, <http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/16927> (accessed October 11, 2011).

figured by an earthly throne properly placed in relation to heaven but also properly respected on earth as head of Church and State, can only have pleased Charles who had just ascended to the throne. Making full use of chastity's tropes to promote his view of true worship and Church leadership, Laud presents an image of correctly-orientated Thrones as integral to both institutional integrity and legitimate union. He describes schism and division in Church and State as 'violent' 'opening[s]' and 'breach[es]' and warns against the 'corruption' which disunity will bring to the whole when members, 'the eye and the hand', the 'Direction and Execution', 'are at odds in any State'.²⁶³ 'So both State and Church then happy, and never till then, when they are both at unity in themselves and one with another' (14-15). Using a conceptual distinction common to Eucharistic doctrines, Laud depicts the 'Mercy Seat' on the altar as 'the Seate Ceremonie, but the Mercy substance' (27). He holds up the Eucharist, and the ceremonial celebration through which God's mercy is made available, as the single unifying power over Church and State. He also presents it as the source of orthodoxy just as it was in the Old Testament when, he argues, no schismatics destroyed the arke with their dissent. 'This Law they might and did expound, but they might not crosse with it. No preaching in their several Synagogues, and Parishes (that I may so term them) but was according to the Law, contained in the Arke, at the Temple, the Mother Church. And 'twas fit. For if every man may preach as he list, though he pretend the Law and the Gospel too, Jerusalem will bee quickly out of unity in it self. And if they leave coming to the Ark and the Testimony, the world will soon have as many differences in Religion, as there bee young, ignorant, and bold Priests in Parishes' (23).

Laud then built up a description of peaceful earthly governance much like those that would later emerge in court masques. Christians, he argued, must all look upwards to a trinity of seats: the seats of God, the King, and the Church, 'that is God, his Spouse, & his Lieutenant upon earth' (31). All of which are 'so near' and chastely 'allied'. 'God and the Church in love. God & the King in power. The King and the Church in mutual dependance upon God, and subordination to him: That no man can serve any one of them truly, but he serves all three' (32). Laud spent some time chastising those who would see Civil powers raised above ecclesiastical, and civil authority is conspicuously absent from his vision of a throne in which the authority of Church, King, and God are unified. In his desire to see the Throne of State merged with Christ's Mercy Seat, Laud intimated a sentiment that was later given full expression in the martyrology of Charles I. Henry King, for example, remembered Charles as the

Bulwark of Law; the Churches Cittadell;
In whom they triumph'd once, with whom they fell:
An English Salomon, a Constantine;
Pandect of Knowledge, Humane and Divine.
Meek ev'n to wonder, yet of stoutest Grace,
To sweeten Majesty, but not debase.
So whole made up of clemency, *the Throne*

²⁶³ Laud, *A sermon preached on Monday, the sixth of February, at Westminster at the opening of the Parliament. By the Bishop of St. David's*, 10, 13.

Prynne's and Loe's arguments for locating the Mercy Seat in the pulpit and in each human heart was an attack on centralised authority which might not have had such political resonance had Laud not built his own description of the Mercy Seat's centralised authority from images which united it with the Throne of State. To undermine each other, the proponents of these two views of authority accused each other of pride. For those in favour of dispersed authority, to erect a single seat or throne was to unchasten it, rendering it as fleshly, as 'sensual' and wanton', as the tyrannical thrones in *Novembris Monstrum*. For those who preferred the order of a single, unified source of authority and a merging of Church and State the pride of individual preachers who wished to take the authority of the Church into their own hands was an unchastening of the body of Christ, a forcing of Christ's body 'out of unity' with 'itself'. One last area of early modern debate focussing on the Throne of State, and relevant to Milton's masque, needs to be addressed here: that within William Harvey's medical and political career, which appears to be referenced in a scene from Ford's *The Broken Heart*.

Chastity and the Throne in the Theatre of John Ford and William Harvey

In the late 1620s, Ford made particular use of the Throne of State in *The Broken Heart*, a play in which Orgilus murders Ithocles by trapping him in a throne and accusing him of both tyranny and unchastity (4.4.29). Ithocles bitterly articulates the convergence between ambition, unchastity and tyranny: 'Ambition!' is 'of vipers' breed' and 'gnaws/ A passage through the womb that gave it motion'. 'Like a seeled dove' it 'mounts upward,/ Higher and higher still, to perch on clouds,/ But tumbles headlong down with heavier ruin' (2.2.1-5). Although he can diagnose his own unchastity and ambition, Ithocles is not freed from it: a truth which Ford explores through his use of chairs. The text stipulates clearly that Ithocles and Penthea are sitting together on the same chair when he begs her to put him to 'any penance' for his 'tyranny' (3.2.63). Outside, Penthea's jealous husband waits, convinced that the siblings are committing incest. Throughout the play Ford used chairs and thrones to stage his most fraught scenes. After Penthea's death, her body is brought onstage, seated in a chair and veiled. The song accompanying her entrance is an ode to her 'chaste' life and her 'endless' death as a martyr to love (4.3.142-53). We discover that she in fact died in the same posture in which she is presented, seated and veiled: a ceremonial flourish so recently reintroduced at court by the King, but one also reminiscent of the churching ritual: an event for which Penthea, who would never be mother to 'pretty prattling babes', both longed and mourned (4.2.88). Penthea's body is set onstage between two other chairs, that on her right being the engine which Orgilus has planted in order to trap Ithocles. In fact,

²⁶⁴ Henry King, *A deep groane, fetch'd at the funerall of that incomparable and glorious monarch, Charles the First, King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, &c. On whose sacred person was acted that execrable, horrid & prodigious murther, by a trayterous crew and bloody combination at Westminster, January 30* (London, 1648), 6. Italics mine.

we find the whole scene has been orchestrated by Orgilus, who, with characteristic self-aggrandizement, attempts to become the play's dramaturge. He dismisses Penthea's ladies (her 'prompters' [4.4.11]), who have so far been the narrators of Penthea's end, in order that he might stage his elaborate revenge. Having arranged the three chairs just as he wants them, Orgilus commands Ithocles to 'Take that chayre'. 'I'll seat me here in this: betweene us sits/ The object of our sorrowes' (4.4.16). There may be no canopy marking Penthea's death-chair specifically as the Throne of State, but, veiled and flanked by two princes, she is presented by her lover as majestic, queenly. As soon as he is seated, Ithocles is trapped in the engine. 'Caught, you are caught/ Young master: 'tis thy throne of Coronation' (4.4.22-3). Wishing to punish Ithocles for the pride which drove him to force Penthea into an unchaste union, Orgilus stages a murder that mocks the princely ceremonies his enemy once sought. The glory for which Ithocles had laboured is delivered instead as a fatal rebuke for his assault on female chastity, that 'monarch[y]' which Bassanes' earlier came to see was the 'Soule, and Elixar of the Earths abundance' (4.2.25-30).

By demonstrating how easily chaste love can be distorted by ambition and the human desire for self-gratification, *The Broken Heart* could be said to mock Charles' and Henrietta Maria's claims to a virtuous authority based on chastity in love and religion. Orgilus certainly mocks Ithocles for his error on this point by arguing that Ithocles' blissful and penitential discovery of chaste love is merely another form of that ambition for which he condemned his sister to an unchaste union: 'Thou foole of greatnesse: see, I take this vaile off;/ Survey a beauty wither'd by the flames/ Of an insulting Phaeton her brother' (4.4.246). But Orgilus is himself the prime example of the error he so longs to punish. His overblown sense of the heroic value of his revenge, and his desire to prove at all costs that the only throne worth a coronation is that of chaste and mutual love, misses the point being made by the play. The same point was made, however simply, in *The Temple of Love*: that to worship chaste love leads not only to the object of one's love (in Ford: a lover, at court: the monarchs) but ultimately away from the self, the self's desires, and toward the heavenly Mercy Seat.

In his loss and penitence, Bassanes does come to realise this truth. He laments that he 'who was made a Monarch/ Of what a heart could wish, for a chast wife' loved her too possessively. Chaste love, he realises is a 'Temple built for adoration onely' and to have ruined such a heavenly gift was 'a sacrilege so impious' (4.2.29-34). Ford's exploration of the throned body reveals just how tragic his erroneous lovers are: in their devotion to chaste love they come very close to realising that through it one can attain salvation, yet they fall just short of redemption by continuing to worship their lost lover and ultimately seeking martyrdom on the throne of chaste love rather than reconciliation at God's Mercy Seat. Ford's incestuous lovers in *'Tis Pity* demonstrate this alleged error most explicitly. Giovanni recalls his enjoyment of his sister's body, claiming there was 'wonder in every portion of that throne' (2.5.54). Their love was a bliss that raised him to majesty: 'nine months I lived/ A happy monarch of her heart and her' (5.6.42-5). When in *The Broken Heart*, Ithocles and Orgilus martyr themselves on either side of Penthea's throned body, they continue to locate her as the object of their

self-sacrifice. Striving for a glorious death, they look to 'Pentheas's sacred eyes' to 'lend new courage' (4.4.57). The scene's tragedy extends from the error of its three players, but visually it speaks to a truth which the play shares with Caroline court masques: that the throne is the site of chaste married love, whose passion is the devotion by which believers can see the face of God.

With Orgilus' suicide by phlebotomy (5.2.99-159), Ford made inventive use of the unchaste throne's capacity to figure vainglory. In a manner that recalls the richly emblematic suicide of Shakespeare's Cleopatra, Orgilus stages his own death as a purifying and heroic act of majestic proportions. Ford's audience, however, witness in his final act a near-treasonous, and certainly a blasphemous, claim to exit the world a martyr to love, throned in State. Seated for his suicide, Orgilus takes a staff in his hand, exposes a vein, and, opening it, narrates the heroism of his final surrender. The barber's pole—an object familiar to most in Ford's audience who would have had blood let regularly by their barber, surgeon or physician—only differs from a royal scepter in its symbolic function and its lack of finery. Where one has at its tip a shining finial, the other has attached to its base a bowl for catching blood. This difference aside, the two objects are held in the same manner by a person seated, his arm extended and his hand clenched around the centre of the pole. When Orgilus calls for his 'staff', he is clearly asking for an instrument that will, like a barber's pole, assist in bringing a vein closer to the surface of his skin. But the only staff present on stage at the play's final scenes are those carried by the nobility. Therefore, both the chair on which Orgilus sits and the staff he grasps in his hand would have borne a greater likeness to those of a throned and scepter-bearing monarch than of a man being bled by his barber. His tragic mockery of the Throne of State is a gruesome warning to Ford's audience against the unchastity of pride. Like the blood-drenched thrones of the fornicating tyrants in *Novembris Monstrum*, Orgilus sits in State covered in his own blood, with the blood of his victim (if only figuratively) on his hands, and all the while pridefully believing he is sacrificing himself at the altar of his chaste love.

Ford's message is clear: Orgilus dies condemned of the greatest pride since he, unlike everyone observing him, does not realise how closely his bloody and enthroned death approximates the purifying and medicinal image, which Ford himself in *Christes Bloodie Sweate* and Andrewes' in his Christmas sermon both depicted, of the throned Christ, bleeding from his heart. Ford's use of the throne also draws on other early modern acts of purification, each one contributing to his aim of extracting as much tragic irony as possible from the convergence of two such opposing experiences, salvation and damnation, within the one emblematic image. For instance, the similarity between Orgilus' kingly posture and the more pedestrian scene of a barber's bloodletting would have brought to the minds of his audience a cluster of associated ideas about chastity. Even at the physical level, the King's body in State was as relevant to an individual's awareness of their physical purity and impurity as was the common experience of bloodletting. Not simply a source of heavenly virtue, the purity of the chaste Caroline throne could bring soundness of body to those who came to be touched for the

King's Evil—one of the many ceremonial practices whose regularity marked the new ceremonialism of Charles' reign. Further, when early moderns sat to have their blood let they in fact took on the posture, if not the grandeur, of their King in state, in order to be cleansed of impurities. Impurities, which, as Orgilus and the tradition of lovesickness confirms, were thought to be caused as much by unchastity in body, mind, and passions as any other vice or disorder. In its aping of a barber's bloodletting, Orgilus' death is a medically accurate picture of cleansing. As a picture of a criminal seated in State, his death is in one sense accurate since he is cleansing the State of his crime. But Orgilus claims to die a martyr to chaste love in the very Throne of State which at Whitehall was being promoted as the site of heavenly chastity: in this he demonstrates that he has failed to learn the lessons being taught by the King and Queen. The play's tragic loss argued for the true virtue of the chastity its characters failed to realise, but it did so by staging a treasonous and erroneous possession of the throne in the name of earthly love.

While assessing in Chapter Two the place of Ford's plays in disputes about new medical technologies, I pointed to the similarities between Ford's staging and the staging by which Harvey demonstrated his thinking on the circulation of the blood. I want now to look more closely at the chair in the performance of Harvey's lectures and demonstrations because it is another field in which unchastity's tropes of the breached body and erroneously orientated relationships, especially pride, were in play, and because Harvey himself would eventually play a role, however unwittingly, in the decline of Charles' authority and the eclipse of the Caroline cult of chastity.

Although we have no first-hand account of Harvey's lectures or demonstrations we know from his notes that the staging of his anatomies were much like those he himself attended in Padua, with the cadaver lying flat on a raised table at the centre of a conical gallery.²⁶⁵ Under Fabricius and Cremonini, Harvey learned to deliver lectures and demonstrations that were as much a theatre of the virtues as any royal masque or popular drama.²⁶⁶ How much more theatrical must have been those spectacles in which he unveiled his controversial discovery. When it came to demonstrating his thinking on the circulation of the blood, Harvey needed to use a living subject. Most often these were animals,²⁶⁷ but he must surely have at times demonstrated on a human. The engraved plates illustrating the movement of the blood in *De Motu Cordis* show a man's arm outstretched, clutching a barber's pole and tied with a tourniquet as though the arm were being prepared for phlebotomy. The plates were copies of the well known images in Fabricius' *De Venarum Ostiolis* (1603, 1624). Although the images could be said to illustrate a man lying flat like a cadaver in an anatomy hall, his arm stretched out beside him, it is more likely that when demonstrating his controversial ideas on circulation Harvey

²⁶⁵ Gweneth Whitteridge, ed. *The Anatomical Lectures of William Harvey. Prelectiones anatomie universalis. De musculis*, (Edinburgh; London: For the Royal College of Physicians by E. & S. Livingstone, 1964).

²⁶⁶ Thomas Wright, *Circulation: William Harvey's Revolutionary Idea*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2012), 67-74 and 51-53.

²⁶⁷ Wright, *Circulation: William Harvey's Revolutionary Idea*, 147-155.

used the posture so routine and conducive to the letting of blood. As such, the staging of Harvey's demonstrations would have recalled the Throne of State with all its props, as did Ford's *The Broken Heart*. Harvey's explorations of the human body and the divine truths it reflected were in an important sense performances in which the throned body—the body of the King, of Christ, of all men—was revealed, its mysteries peeled away. However, as much as his demonstrations exposed divine and human truths, Harvey was also adding to the wonder of the body enthroned: revealing its unseen movements he uncovered further questions. He may have demystified Galenic views of the blood's behaviour, but at the same time he demonstrated that the body mimicked the mysterious circulation of the heavens even more closely than Galen had ever thought.

I have detailed the conflict between those who, suspicious of the new medical technologies, presented the new and greater knowledge of the interior of the body as a form of unchaste pride epitomised by 'Adam and Eve' books. Harvey himself attracted accusations of pride not only from proponents of this view but from his fellow medical men because his methods rejected so much institutional knowledge. Further, by demonstrating his discovery on a throned body, astute observers might have noted that Harvey's investigation was an assault on the very chastity with which the monarchs infused the State. Cowley's ode to Harvey, 'Coy Nature' draws on the classical literary tradition of chastity in order to praise the great anatomist as a plunderer of nature's secrets and a methodological trail-blazer:

Coy Nature (which remain'd, though aged grown,
A beauteous Virgin, injoy'd by none,
Nor seen unveil'd by any one)
When *Harvey's* violent passion she did see,
Began to tremble and to flee,
Took Sanctuary, like *Daphne* in a Tree:
There *Daphne's* Lover stopt, and thought it much
The very Leaves of her to touch:
But *Harvey* our *Apollo*, stopt not so,
Into the Bark and Root he after her did go.²⁶⁸

In an attempt to escape Harvey, Daphne/Nature leaps into the human bloodstream and hides in the heart. But Harvey pursues her. His investigation of the heart is as much a triumphant rape of chaste nature as it is a dethroning of the sovereignty which Galen ('*Daphne's* Lover') had enjoyed before the empirical Harvey pushed beyond him into nature's 'Bark and Root'. Harvey, unlike his peers, can truly know her given he alone 'sought for Truth in Truth's great book' and investigated 'the creatures' who were 'writ' by 'God himself'. Unlike his fellow medics, Harvey 'wisely' thought it fit 'not to read comments only but 'on th' original itself to look'. His fame is secured by his empirical methods, his bold scrutiny of God's original, while his peers are held back by their insistence on medicine's

²⁶⁸ Abraham Cowley, *Verses, written upon several occasions* (London, 1663), 18.

intellectual fidelity to its philosophical tradition.²⁶⁹ Cowley's Harvey may have performed an act of unchastity upon coy nature but ultimately his investigation revealed those truths written on the body by God himself.²⁷⁰ In an inversion not unlike Donne's 'Batter my heart three-person'd God' or the 'inviolat' blood of the violated Christ in Ford's *Christes Bloodie Sweate*, the sanctifying revelation which Cowley's Harvey enables undercuts the violence of the doctor's search, turning ravishment into the revelation of God's truth.

In the early modern medical world, the sovereignty of the heart was a commonplace, deriving ultimately from Aristotle. John Halle referred to it in 1565: 'Let us call the heart of man a king, the brain and the liver the chief governors under him.'²⁷¹ However, by the time William Harvey's career was at its peak and the popularity of the King was waning, the belief that the heart was the throne of the body had become one of the most notoriously disputed claims in the medical world.²⁷² While in the realm of theological controversy, Laud and Loe were arguing over whether the Mercy Seat was concentrated in a single point on the altar or dispersed into each human heart, Harvey was overturning long-held medical beliefs that the heart was the throne of the human person by suggesting instead that the multitudinous blood was sovereign. In 1628 Harvey claimed that on earth it is from the King, as in the body it is the heart, from which 'all power arises and all grace stems'. However, in 1649, the year in which Charles was executed, Harvey renounced his earlier opinion: he 'dethroned the heart'.²⁷³ He no longer believed the source of life and vitality stemmed from 'the sovereignty of the heart' but from the 'the prerogative ... of the blood'.²⁷⁴ While in 1628 Harvey invited the King to 'contemplate the Principle of Mans Body, and the image of your Kingly power', twenty years later, Harvey's view of the body was, however unwittingly, in sympathy with Parliament's view of how English society ought to be governed.

One of the events which influenced Harvey's dethroning of the heart involved Charles himself as can be seen as a moment in which the tropes of correctly orientated relationships and bodily boundaries played surfaced in a real historical event which marked, with an elegiac quality, the end of the royal cult of chastity and the King's authority. In approximately 1640 Harvey brought the young aristocrat, Montgomery, to the King's attention. Montgomery had suffered a wound to his chest

²⁶⁹ See also Patricia Parker on Harvey's 'ocular' opening in relation to the presentation of dark, foreign, feminine and unchaste truths in 'Fantasies of "race" and "gender": Africa, Othello and Bringing to Light' in Susan Zimmerman (ed.), *Shakespeare's Tragedies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 167-211: 171.

²⁷⁰ See Sawday, *Body Emblazoned*, 241-242.

²⁷¹ J. Halle, *An Historicall Expostulation* (Percy Society, London, 1844), xxii.

²⁷² For an analysis of this shift in thinking, not only to the relationship between king, people, and Parliament, but to the mixed-plot of tragicomedy and emerging commercial economies, see Richard Kroll, *Restoration Drama and 'the Circle of Commerce'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 32-56.

²⁷³ Hill, 'William Harvey and the Idea of Monarchy', *Past and Present* 27, 54-72. See also Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: the Body and the City* and Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution*, 16.

²⁷⁴ Hill, 'William Harvey and the Idea of Monarchy', 55.

which, though healed, remained an open cavity. It was kept clean and covered throughout the young man's life, but the curious were able to place their fingers into the hole and feel his heart beating. The fact that Montgomery could not feel the hand that touched his heart was of great interest to Harvey since it suggested, contrary to traditional medical belief, that the heart had no sensation, and thus little vital spirit of its own. How, therefore, could the heart be deemed the monarch of the body? It is reported that when Harvey brought Montgomery before the King in order that he might touch his heart and verify its senselessness, Charles responded: 'Sir, I wish I could perceive the thought of some of my nobilities' hearts as I have seen your heart'.²⁷⁵ This event was crucial to the shift in Harvey's thinking from the centrality of the heart to the importance of the blood. It is for this reason, and the fact that the event took place in the year in which Parliamentary power reached its height, that John Rogers has attributed an elegiac quality to the scene in which Charles is asked to participate in his own dethronement by acknowledging the heart's senselessness. Harvey, in Rogers' interpretation, asks Charles to agree that the body's 'most principal member' in fact cannot 'function as a governing center or sentient locus of reason and organisation'.²⁷⁶

However, we must also acknowledge the deeply theological resonances of the scene: the similarity between the King's investigative touch and that of Thomas when he placed his fingers into Christ's side might not have been lost on those present, nor on those who related the story to each other. Thomas' narrative only enhances the scene's evocation of a King facing his own dethronement. Before he placed his hand in Christ's side, Thomas was unable to accept the truth that Christ had been transformed and did not yet understand that he would soon ascend to his heavenly throne from where he would institute the true Church. It could be said that in the same way, Charles, when he met Montgomery, had not yet accepted that the Church was changing in ways contrary to his hopes and would soon dethrone him as its head in favour of Christ himself, whose Mercy Seat would have no single earthly counterpart, officially lodging instead in the hearts of every man and woman. At the beginning of the decade which would end in his trial and beheading, the King unwittingly played the tragic part in an emblematic scene narrating the fall of monarchy. Enthroned in State, the King was invited to accept the truth that God had inscribed in the bodies of his creatures a divine plan whose central governance was in fact not as total as Harvey had once assured Charles it was. Charles' figurative dethronement scene spoke to the fact that those who opposed the King and the very idea of centralised governance in a number of fields were wrestling the tropes of chastity away from the monarchs' cult of the virtue and using them to assert a new commonwealth vision, whose relevance to such a wide range of early modern fields of knowledge and belief made it as totalising as the cult of chastity had been for the previous half-century.

²⁷⁵ Quoted in Whitteridge, *The Anatomical Lectures of William Harvey*, 235.

²⁷⁶ Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution*, 33.

Throughout the first decades of the seventeenth century, the Throne evolved as a symbol of chastity against which and within which erroneous desires were fought, policed, subdued and sanctified in order to maintain the delicate integrity of individual, dynastic, and national identity. Each of the thrones I have assessed makes up the rich store of imagery from which Milton built his masque, with its chaste adventurer and unchaste throne. *A Maske's* interest in the de-centering of authority, for example, was indebted to tension between Laud and Prynne over the nature and location of the Mercy Seat and his vivid description of Lady Chastity's 'gums of glutenous heat' drew on early modern depictions of unchaste and tyrannical thrones. Milton's interest in pride as a disorder to which those in power were just as susceptible as were those chaste citizens whom he believed must question and resist the authority of tyrants drew him to the morally and emblematically complex figure of the throne. However, Milton's own history reveals that his thinking on chastity had a personal relevance for him, stretching back at least to his University years.

Chastity and the Young Milton

Milton's *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle* was commissioned by the Earl of Bridgewater and performed on the 29th of September 1634 at the new family home, Ludlow Castle, in Herefordshire. The Earl had recently been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Wales and President of the Council. The masque is thought to have marked his investiture, though it was performed months afterward. Three of the Earl's children played the principal roles: Lady Alice Egerton, aged 15, played the Lady, and her brothers John Viscount Brackley, aged 11, and Thomas Egerton, aged 9, played the two brothers. The Bridgewater children had all performed in royal masques. In 1632, they appeared in *Tempe Restored*, which, like Milton's masque, included Circe and the transformation of men into beasts. The two boys were also torch-bearers in the 1634 *Coelum Britannicum*. The children's music teacher, Henry Lawes, played the Attendant Spirit in the Bridgewater masque, composed the music, and is said to have engaged Milton for the task, as he was acquainted with the young poet's father. Lawes had recently enlisted Milton for verses to be included in *Arcades*, commissioned by the Earl of Bridgewater's mother-in-law, Alice Spencer, Dowager Countess of Derby. Both the Countess of Derby and her son-in-law's family had recently been at the centre of the scandal surrounding the Earl of Castlehaven, who was another of the Countess's sons-in-law. While the relevance of the scandal to Milton's masque has long

been disputed by scholars,²⁷⁷ my treatment of Castlehaven's trial will remain limited to its more general role in the Throne of State's capacity to signal chastity and unchastity, which I have treated above.

Milton's replacement of the theological virtue of charity with chastity in *A Maske* speaks to his interest in chastity as a preservation of the self. Where charity is a giving of the self, chastity, in Milton's view, is a restraint and protection of the self. This is, of course, the anxious and rather limited interpretation of the virtue which *The Winter's Tale* forces Leontes to reject in preference for a more expansive, generous, relational and mature interpretation. In *Milton and the Culture of Violence*, Michael Lieb describes Milton's deep anxiety over the threat of physical assault and his attendant interest in images of the body safe and intact. Whatever positions Milton held on Christian doctrine and ecclesiology in the years leading up to 1636, it is clear from *A Maske*, as elsewhere in Milton's corpus, that he believed in the necessity of chastity to an upright and virtuous life, realised through a sound and disciplined body, and that the opposite of chastity was effeminacy: a tendency to vice—ambition, pride, sensuality, lust—to which those in authority were particularly prone. Milton's early writing on chastity evidences a particular interest in avoiding the pride produced by the unchastity of an erroneously-oriented relationship with God. He expresses this interest through a resistance to the cult of chastity's interpretation of the virtue's tropes.

St. Paul writes that: 'man ... is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man'.²⁷⁸ While recounting his own strict practice of chastity in *Apology Against a Pamphlet*, Milton argues that Paul's words can be taken to mean that 'if unchastity in the woman ... be such a scandal and dishonour, then certainly in a man who is both the image and glory of God, it must, though commonly not so thought, be much more deflowering and dishonourable'.²⁷⁹ Milton explicitly claims chastity as a virtue at once masculine and crucial to the Christian search for perfection. He recognises that schooling in the virtue of chastity is a complex, life-long process, essential to salvation. But, as Milton's earlier work evidences, for him the struggle for chastity is a distinctly Protestant battle: muscular, intellectualised, masculine and individual. He does not, for instance, learn the depth of the

²⁷⁷ Barbara Breasted, 'Comus and the Castlehaven Scandal', *Milton Studies* 3 (1971), 201–24; John Creaser, 'Milton's Comus: The Irrelevance of the Castlehaven Scandal', *Milton Quarterly* 4 (1987), 25–34; Leah S. Marcus, 'The Milieu of Milton's Comus: Judicial Reform at Ludlow and the Problem of Sexual Assault', *Criticism* 25 (1983), 293–327; Nancy Weitz, 'Chastity, Rape, and Ideology in the Castlehaven Testimonies and Milton's Ludlow Mask', *Milton Studies* 32 (1995), 153–68; Catherine Thomas, 'Chaste Bodies and Poisonous Desires in Milton's Mask', *Studies in English Literature* 46 (2006), 435–459. Castlehaven was a close relative of the Egerton family. However, I am inclined to agree with Cedric Brown that Milton's masque could not have been referring directly to the scandal. Not only was it an occasion demanding a degree of decorum prohibiting such aspersion but Milton himself was a young man too scrupulous to breach the requisite polity. More importantly, chastity and its staged interrogation through the stately props of authority was widespread enough in the early-seventeenth century that Milton's trial of chastity was surely understood by observers as participating in a broad tradition rather than referencing directly any single incident. Cedric Brown, *John Milton's Aristocratic Entertainments*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). 14.

²⁷⁸ I Corinthians 11:7.

²⁷⁹ *Complete Prose Works* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–82), 1: 892. All subsequent references will be sited in text.

virtue from women as Leontes does from Hermione and Paulina. Nor does he arrive at it through a deeply affective encounter with God and his own limitations, as do Leontes, Bassanes, and the speaker of Ford's *Christes Bloodie Sweate*. Most of all, he does not arrive at it through the celebration of the divine will as feminine, through the Queen's cult of pietised fertility or through the spectacle and ornament of a masque or Laudian communion service. Milton may have brought to the English language a feminine and baroque ornament²⁸⁰ and his thinking on gender was in an important sense revolutionary regarding women's emancipation in certain contexts²⁸¹, but Milton's morality viewed the affective and the feminine as too proximate to the vice of effeminacy, and contrary to truly masculine and rigorous chastity.

Referring to Milton's prose, Gina Hausknecht observes: 'where Milton's most closely held principles are at stake' gender emerges. 'He describes the world through a discourse of manliness in which privilege accrues to male gender, not male sex: men can be insufficiently masculine, and women are not unequivocally subordinate'.²⁸² The same can be said for a lot of Milton's poetry, in which both men and women are defined morally as either manly or effeminate, but the pursuit of perfection through chastity is a manly struggle out of effeminacy. For Milton the struggle is deeply existential, as it was for Leontes and Bassanes. But unlike with them, it is not the fear of contamination and loss caused by a beloved woman's unchastity that initiates an exploration of the virtue. Instead, we see in Milton's early work that a fundamental aspect of his pursuit of virtue was an awareness that the risk of infection from unchastity or effeminacy lurks in the prideful desires that plague man from the earliest moments of adulthood. His descriptions of chastity as spiritual combat and moral perfection are always attended by the search for maturity and an instinctive resistance to authority. As I hope to show, Milton's interest in chastity as a means of battling pride and fostering virtue concentrated on the practice of refinement, both of the body and of language. To explore Milton's interpretation of chastity fully, I will spend some time here analysing two of his early works, which I see as developing the ideas he would later articulate most fully in his masque.

In the sonnet, 'How Soon Hath Time', which Milton wrote to mark his arrival at his twenty third birthday, he observed:

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arriv'd so neer,

²⁸⁰ Gordon Campbell and Thomas Corns, *John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought*, 83-4. Campbell and Corns recent and controversial assertion that Milton's masque evidenced his early Laudian tendencies has created disagreement among Milton scholars over the interpretation of the masque's more baroque qualities. As my discussion will go on to show, I find these elements to be part of Milton's gesture toward the genre he was working within, rather than an expression of his own liturgical and doctrinal taste. Indeed, my assertion that Milton gave these elements a parodic treatment is an argument against Campbell's and Corns' position. Milton may have made stylistic choices that appear Laudian but this was in service of his exploration of a moral truth that was distinctly anti-Laudian.

²⁸¹ Catherine GimelliMartin (ed.), *Milton and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2004.

²⁸² Gina Hausknecht, "The Gender of Civic Virtue", in *Milton and Gender*, 32.

And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That som more timely-happy spirits indu'th.²⁸³

His physical youthfulness and femininity misrepresent his true (inner) manliness, his moral and vocational maturity. The fruit of that manliness (poetic repute) has not yet arrived: 'But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th' (119). Indeed, with nothing worldly to show for his inner ripeness, how can he say that he is a man at all? Untimely youthfulness at his age, a failure to take his place in the world of responsibilities and reputation, could easily constitute effeminacy. But does he want his blossoms to show in order that he might appear a man or be a man? Acknowledging the potential presumption in his resentment of how time has treated him, Milton moves toward a position of acceptance and then submission to God:

Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even,
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which time leads me, and the will of heav'n;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great task-maister's eye. (119)

The sonnet narrates Milton's early vision of maturation, in which the desire for worldly manliness must be overcome and true manliness, which is something for God's eyes first and foremost, must develop in its place. Although Milton claims that his 'inner ripeness' has not bloomed in any evidence of poetic greatness, the sonnet itself constitutes exactly such evidence. It is the work of a promising young poet and therefore the bloom of worldly maturation and achievement. But for Milton the truly mature man and poet is one who explicitly disavows any significance in the work except the dedication of it to God.

The sonnet describes an act of self-dedication that is also an act of self-definition, one which depends on the initial questioning comparison between the poet and others and the ultimate denial of the world as a measure of greatness in favour of a singular, manly fidelity to God. This is the *felix culpa* operating at the level of individual consciousness: subjectivity—for the manly, chaste self—is constituted in the simultaneous and triumphant moments of worldly self-assertion and chaste self-dedication, in the oscillation between pride and humility, unchastity and chastity. One cannot be chaste without first asserting the self as great in the world's eyes, for there would otherwise be nothing worthy to offer God, nor can one be chaste without dedicating the self to God, as to do so signals self-interestedness and moral immaturity, qualities that precisely constitute the effeminacy of pride. A knowledge of unchastity is therefore essential if the chaste adventurer is to realise their goal, just as the Lady in her trial must encounter Comus, debate with him, and even be partially physically altered by his unchaste throne before emerging triumphant.

²⁸³ All references to Milton's poetry, except his masque, are to John Shawcross' edition: *The Complete Poetry of John Milton* (New York: Anchor Books, 1971), 119. All subsequent references will be cited in text.

‘How Soon Hath Time’ appears to be mostly interested in chastity as the perfection of language and of the poet’s proper relationship with his work and with God. But it is also in some measure concerned with the body, and I do not refer here solely to Milton’s concern for his lack of physical maturation. The humility of the sonnet’s speaker has been described by Michael Lieb and Richard Halpern as the self-emptying or self-offering of Christ, his *kenosis*.²⁸⁴ Halpern argues that it is Christ’s chastity, expressed in the ‘Nativity Ode’ through the unifying totality of his infant body, that chastises the ‘foul deformities’ of nature and the pastoral world of sexuality. Where sexuality ‘decompose[s] the body’, ‘Christ’s mastery over nature is figured by his ability to repel these sexual threats and thus retain the chaste integrity of his bodily form’.²⁸⁵ In *A Maske*, Milton would again figure the effeminacy of unchastity as a contagion that liquifies and deforms the body. While debating their sister’s safety and the nature of chastity, the Elder Brother tells the younger that:

when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion.²⁸⁶

This clottedness is an excess of the flesh which ‘imbodies and imbrutes’ until ‘the divine property’ of the person is, like the Church in Burton’s vision, so swamped by unchastity that it comes to resemble the ‘thick and gloomy shadows damp/ Oft seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres’ (485-91). The Elder Brother’s depiction of a damp grave to which the brutish, ‘degenerate’, and ‘degraded’ soul is attached by its ‘carnal sensuality’ is a prefiguring of the stately palace in which Comus later entraps the Lady (495). There, her refined, chaste soul or ‘mind’ is forced to linger in the fleshly world where her own flesh is momentarily ‘clotted’ by the release of its ‘gums of glutenous heat’ (957). As the visions of fleshly thrones discussed above evidenced, the unchastity of leaders was caused by more than sensuality. Like Shakespeare and Ford before him, Milton interprets pride, the desire for the fleshly and worldly over the divine, as most characterising unchastity. But Milton retains that part of Leontes’ anxious thinking which seeks to chasten the body and protect it from assault through ‘rigour’, armour, and self-enclosure. Where the healing vision of chastity in *The Winter’s Tale* and *Christes Bloodie Sweate* depicted the virtue as the breaking of Christ’s body, Milton perceives chastity instead as a Protestant armour against unchaste influences, a virtue that is fought for through the refinement of the mind and

²⁸⁴ Michael Lieb, ‘Milton and Kenotic Christology: Its Literary Bearing’ *English Literary History* 37 (1970), 352; Richard Halpern, ‘The Great Instauration: Imaginary Narratives in Milton’s “Nativity Ode,”’ in *Re-membering Milton: Essays in the Texts and Traditions*, edited by Mary Nyquist & Margaret W. Ferguson (New York: Methuen, 1987), 7. See also Stephen M. Fallon, *Milton’s Peculiar Grace* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 60.

²⁸⁵ Halpern, ‘The Great Instauration’, 12-13; and ‘On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity’ (Shawcross, *Complete Poetry*), 65, line 44.

²⁸⁶ Line 483-7. All references to both the 1637 printed and 1634 performed versions of the masque are to Sprott’s edition: *A Maske: The Earlier Versions*, edited by S. E. Sprott.

the preservation of the body, but primarily through the dedication of the self to God. For Milton, with his difficult relationship to authority, chaste self-dedication was a complex ontological process played out most vividly in his early poetry. The early stages of his moral maturation involved a concentrated exploration of the tropes of bodily boundaries and correctly-orientated relationships which was already marked by a resistance to authority and to the version of the tropes utilised by the Caroline cult of chastity.

For Milton, resisting the version of chastity's tropes articulated by the Caroline cult of chastity, meant re-gendering them. However, while he masculinised the struggle for chastity, he did not limit its benefits to men only. The self-conquest involved in the 'How Soon Hath Time's' final act of submission is an act of manly chastity that in fact anticipates Eve's decision to desist from questioning. This is the most significant decision of its kind in Milton's corpus. Waking from her divine dream, Eve prepares to enter the post-lapsarian world, 'all her spirits composed/ To meek submission' (12: 516): submission to her 'task-master'. Crucially, Eve has here moved away from the effeminacy that marked her self-involvement, her susceptibility to temptation, and her fall. Her arrival at the muscular moral practice of self-conquest and the dual process of self-betterment and the dedication of that best self to God is a move away from effeminacy and toward masculine chastity.

The movement from effeminacy to chaste manliness described by the sonnet is the arc that Milton's Adam and Eve follow, but it is also the arc of Milton's own arrival from a youth characterised by his peers as effeminate to a manliness elevated enough that he can use it to denounce his critics as themselves effeminate. Milton's University oration, the 'Sixth Prolusion', illustrates Milton's development of manly chastity as a virtue constituted in and through the transformation from adherence to worldly opinion to an alliance of the chaste individual with God—an alliance that is superior to the world's demands on the self. The 'Sixth Prolusion' narrates this process as one that takes place amid distress. In it, Milton's initial effeminacy is a charge his peers level at him in an expression of 'hostility and dislike'.²⁸⁷ The effeminacy of which they accuse him suggests physical weakness, moral scrupulousness, and high ideals. Consequently, Milton articulates his doctrine of manly chastity by re-defining manliness as a virtue predicated on high ideals and moral scrupulousness and a moral muscularity that refuses physical strength any significance. Indeed, in Milton's redefinition the physical prowess of his attackers becomes a sign of their effeminacy. Through their sporting antics and sexual adventures they fail to step up to the truly manly battle with the self: a battle in which such low exhibitionism and venal pleasures must be overcome. As Michael Lieb has argued, Milton's rhetoric in this exercise reveals a personal investment more vexed than any of his other work.²⁸⁸ He responds to his new popularity among the group of young men, by whom he has clearly felt persecuted

²⁸⁷ *Private Correspondence and Academic Exercises*, translated by Phyllis B. Tillyard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 86. All subsequent references will be cited in text.

²⁸⁸ Michael Lieb, *Milton and the Culture of Violence* (London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 83-113.

for the majority of his undergraduate terms, with a mixture of resentment and outright abuse, masking disdain with condescension and disgust with vulgar humour. In this, Milton's thinking about the tension between chastity and pride can be seen in its very nascent, and very personal, form. His defensive and self-protecting assertions of chastity risk falling into that unchastity of pride which Milton would later interrogate in his sonnet and, more fully, in his masque.

Milton opens by describing the way he was dragged from his study to perform for his peers. In doing so, he acknowledges the view, held by his audience, of himself as studious and exacting. He has been 'commanded to transfer that zeal, which I had intended to devote to the acquisition of knowledge, to foolery and the invention of new jests'. But he will deign to such a lowly task since he is not the first great champion of chastity to do so. 'If Junius Brutus, that second founder of Rome and great avenger of the lusts of kings, could bring himself to disguise his almost godlike mind and wonderful natural talents under the semblance of idiocy, there is assuredly no reason why I should be ashamed to play the wise fool for a while' (85-6). Milton's actual project is to avenge his own past belittlement by those whom he no doubt both actually and defensively considers foolish by reinscribing as greatness the capacities that mark his difference from them. In marking his difference by aligning himself with Brutus, Milton is again both playfully and actually claiming for himself a degree of greatness and virtue that far outstrips that of his audience. Milton says something very specific when he aligns himself with Brutus: the man who had to hide his true greatness was also the man whose valiant response to the rape of Lucrece was the founding of a new nation on the claims of chastity against the 'lust of kings'. Milton then goes on to remind his audience that they recently contradicted their usual conduct toward him by offering a 'new-found friendliness' when he last gave an academic oration. It is rhetorical skill that distinguishes Milton from his persecutors, just as it was between Brutus and his peers at the moment of Lucrece's suicide. Milton's use of language marks his ascendancy over his audience at the same time that it wins the approval he no doubt both desires and feels compelled to scorn.

The claim Milton must defend in his oration is that 'Sportive Exercises on occasion are not inconsistent with philosophical Studies'. The task is quite complex for Milton, who must defend the very act he is performing whilst rebuking those to whom it is designed to give pleasure. He has also clearly been ridiculed himself as a figure not unlike the studious boors he is expected to attack:

... if a man does not desire to be considered cultured and witty, he must not be annoyed if he is called a clown and a boor. There is a certain mean kind of fellow, often enough met with, who, being themselves incapable of wit or gaiety and conscious of their own dullness and stupidity, always conclude that any witty remark they may hear is made at their expense. It would indeed serve them right if their unreasonable suspicions were to be realised, and if they should find themselves the butt of everyone's witticisms, till they were almost driven to suicide. But such dregs of mankind as these cannot stand in the way of the pleasantries of polite society. (90)

Milton distinguishes himself here from an extreme example of the personality he has himself been forced to occupy by the ridicule of his peers. Where another tormented man is driven to annihilate

himself, Milton is immune. Unlike his hypothetical man, Milton himself is cultured and witty but is not—he is anxious to assert—concerned with the opinions of others. However, prior to his first most public opportunity to defend himself, Milton had in fact been taunted by his listeners, if not as a clown and a boor, then certainly as a Lady.

Milton then moves to the section of his exercise which has proved most embarrassing to his nineteenth- and twentieth-century readers. His grotesque and gastronomic humour here appears to be an expected element of his performance and Milton throws himself into the task with energy. However, he is careful to equate the vulgarity of his language in this section with the vulgarity of his audience and to distance himself from both. Wherever he may lower himself to ‘barbarity and meanness’ it is because that is what his audience both wants and deserves; he is merely descending to the task. Yet, in proving consummate at such a task, Milton wins approval precisely at the moment that he defines his difference from and supremacy over his listeners.

In a moment we shall shake off the fetters of rhetoric and throw ourselves into comic license. If in the course of this I outgo by a finger's breadth, as they say, my usual habits and the strict rules of modesty, I beg you, gentlemen, to accept this explanation: it is to give you pleasure that I have put off and for the moment laid aside my usual habit, and if anything I may say is loose or licentious, put it down to the suggestion, not of my real mind or character, but of the needs of the moment and the genius of the place. (93)

Milton proves that he can, if he chooses, put off his usual habit of chastity, modesty, and refinement in order to be as vulgar as the next man. He then changes direction by announcing that ‘I will now turn to what concerns me more closely’ (98):

Some of late called me “the Lady.” But why do I seem to them too little of a man? Have they no regard for Priscian? Do these bungling grammarians attribute to the feminine gender what is proper to the masculine ... It is, I suppose, because I have never brought myself to toss off great bumpers like a prize-fighter, or because my hand has never grown horny with driving the plough, or because I was never a farm hand at seven or laid myself down full length in the midday sun; or last perhaps because I never showed my virility in the way these brothellers do. But I wish they could leave playing the ass as readily as I the woman. (98-9)

Milton's behaviour, which his peers have deemed unmanly, is, in fact, ‘proper to the masculine’. Those who overlook this are themselves effeminate. Not only because they are morally inept (requiring a brothel to prove their virility) but because they are ‘bungling grammarians’. Milton's oration proves he is a consummate rhetorician; Milton's peers reveal their lack of basic grammar through their inability to correctly gender a pronoun. As we will see, this vision of chastity, as a battle against pride as much as a refinement of the body and of speech, persisted throughout Milton's life.

The ‘Sixth Prolusion’ offers an early view of Milton's negotiation between his worldly ambition and his need to dedicate himself in chaste fidelity to God: a negotiation he later expressed so coherently in his sonnet. Milton does not describe explicitly the importance of self-dedication in his University performance, as he does in his sonnet. A too genuine humility is, after all, anathema to his

project. However, he nonetheless denounces his peers for self-interest and stupidity. In doing so, he also makes it known that he is not so presumptuous as to claim for himself unqualified greatness: ‘But indeed as to any such nick-name as “Lord” or “Lady” I utterly reject and repudiate it; for, gentlemen, it is only in your courts and on your platforms that I have any ambition to lord it’ (99). Milton is above all titles because he denies himself any claim to them unless in a purely formal capacity. We have seen, in the sonnet, how he seeks first to achieve greatness if it is to be denied in subjection and dedication to God. Hence, the young poet recognises that he aspires to greatness in courts and on platforms, but reduces the significance of those sites by suggesting that beneath their strictly superficial and public function, lies a self whose real sentiment and actions are of true moral importance. His own greatness is dependent upon his denial of the worldly greatness embodied by titles. This is a rebellious rejection of authority that is at once a denial of the feminine title with which his peers address him and a claim to the moral superiority of those who have ‘no ambition to lord it’.

In its negotiation between the contrary aims of inoffensively fulfilling generic expectations while subtly critiquing the moral stance of those by whom the genre is most valued, Milton’s University oration was excellent preparation for his bold intervention in the royal genre. When in 1636 he came to describe the chaste adventurer in the person of Alice Egerton, Milton was able to draw on his own experience of chastity as a battle against pride, physical impurity, and ill-refined language. For Milton, chastity was crucial to moral strength. It is through her ‘well governed’ and ‘wise appetite’ that the Lady of *A Maske* fosters the chaste proliferation and propagation of the self. Here, as elsewhere in his corpus, Milton asserts that furtherance and production are in fact only possible through diligent care and discipline of the self’s resources. The Lady chooses her words well, where her opponents are, like those to whom Milton performed his University oration ‘unlettered’, ‘jocund’, ‘gamesome’, and ‘ill-managed’ (172-4). She exemplifies Milton’s view that if the self is not tempered and restrained, it will not flourish in the appropriate manner. The virtue and fertility, so joyfully detailed at the conclusion of the masque, shows that the Lady’s temperance allows for the growth of something more valuable than that which could be produced by the instinctive indulgence of the appetites. The tendency to such indulgence, and the burden of venal dissipation that results from it, characterises the suffering Milton ascribes to all the unchaste persons in his corpus: persons who, by partaking of pleasure readily, are unable to produce anything good or worthy by it. Like evil in *Paradise Lost* (4:17) and *A Masque* (595), they must ultimately ‘back recoil’ unto themselves. Or like the souls described by the Elder Brother in *A Maske*, they let defilement into their ‘inward parts’ until ‘clotted by contagion’ they embody and imbrute. Chaste restraint is in fact the supreme cultivation, indulgence is dissipation.

For Milton, this moral opposition is specific to the human abilities of language and reason:²⁸⁹ the qualities that marked his ascendancy over his collegiate audience. As Christopher Kendrick has

²⁸⁹ For a discussion of the divinity of language as human agency see Leonard Mustazza, ‘*Such Prompt Eloquence*’: *Language as Agency and Character in Milton’s Epics* (London: Associated University Presses, 1988).

observed, Milton's chastity 'served as a support' for his 'poetic aspiration'.²⁹⁰ Comus, who knows nothing of divine dedication, offers 'false rules pranked in reason's garb' (759). His misuse of language and reason confirm what the Lady intuited early in the masque: that he 'thanks the gods amiss' (208). A manly fidelity to God requires a constant struggle with the self, and the fruit of such a struggle, fit for divine dedication, is the right, proper, and good use of language and reasoning: evidence of a well-governed self and a wise application of the self's resources. Just as in the sonnet Milton denied the need for poetic repute while at the same time establishing his reputation, in *A Maske*, he asserts that good, plain language marks the truly chaste masque (where the royal masque relies on spectacle) even while Milton himself allows his observers to relish the heights of baroque ornamentation in Comus' effeminate language. This is most evident in Comus' debate with the Lady, but his moral health, relative to hers, is revealed much earlier through their use of language. Comus reports that he saw the Lady's brothers 'under a green mantling vine ... Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots, ... I took it for a faery vision ... I worshipt'. He is 'over-exquisite' in his speech (359) but the Lady (good, plain speaker) stops his excess: 'Gentle villager/ What readiest way would bring me to that place? (294-305).

Not unlike the speaker in the Prolusion, *A Maske's* Lady when trapped in Comus's throne, physically and sexually vulnerable, is forced to rely on her linguistic skill if she is to assert the 'hidden strength', the 'sacred' 'steel' of chastity that the elder brother believed would protect her from all assailants. Thus, the word—the chaste word—becomes the supreme masculine force, privileged over traditionally masculine martial skills as over the more visually spectacular form of the masque at court. In Milton's masque, the masculine word becomes a divine force: the 'he' lodged in the Lady's breast is figured masculine because it is 'holy'. Milton would later elaborate on this construction in *Paradise Lost*. There, the struggle with the self is the truly heroic act; while the actual (celestial) battle—the use of arms—is shown to be less important, both through its de-emphasised placement in the recapitulation and the hyperbolic terms in which it is dramatised. The epic conception of winning the kingdom, which the celestial battle in *Paradise Lost* references, is less relevant for Milton. The real kingdom to be won is the kingdom of God. When one's faithfulness to God fails, that kingdom is lost. The real battle, therefore, is with the self: a battle to maintain obedience to God. In *Paradise Lost*, the loss of this obedience is catastrophic, while the loss of the battle is almost meaningless. Indeed, in Milton's masque, the only martial figure is the angel of chastity.

When the Lady first perceives her danger, she has a vision of chastity as the 'hovering angel girt in golden wings' (214), the same chaste 'quivered nymph' which her brother describes as 'clad in complete steel', armed with 'arrows keen', who traces all the world unharmed and victorious. This powerful angel, who spreads her 'sacred rays of chastity' without 'pride' or 'presumption' is so 'saintly' and powerful that she brings with her 'a thousand liveried angels' to 'drive off each thing of sin and guilt' (421-56). We can perhaps hear in this scriptural reference an echo of Milton's self-defense against

²⁹⁰ Christopher Kendrick, 'Milton and Sexuality: a Symptomatic Reading of *Comus*', in Nyquist & Ferguson (eds.), *Re-Membering Milton: Essays in the Texts and Traditions*, 48.

his more conventionally masculine peers in the Prolusion. Before his crucifixion, Christ chastised the disciple who drew his sword to protect his master against his assailants. Christ reminded him that were it God's will, twelve legions of angels would come to his protection.²⁹¹ Traditional masculine victories are thus recuperated through chastity. The truly heroic, and truly masculine, act becomes the considered use, and dedication to God, of one's faculties, of language and reason. Physical action is so immaterial it often rarely features at all in the lives of Milton's chaste characters. The Attendant Spirit advises the Lady's two brothers to put their swords away: 'Farr other arms and other weapons must / Be those that quell the might of hellish charms' (612-13). Conversely, the often very bodily assailants of the Prolusion, *A Maske*, *Paradise Lost*, and *Samson Agonistes*, are distinctly effeminate. Eve, Comus, Satan, Delilah, are all licentious, wanton and deceitful in physical and feminine terms: serpentine, bent, Bacchic, knotted, painted, intemperate, their arguments cunning and obscured by their physical presence. (Within this paradigm, Milton's view of masquers' circular dances is self-evident). Whereas the Lady of Comus, Samson, Abdiel and, to a large extent, Adam are upright, sure, unbending, firm, steadfast, temperate, and their speech is clear and un-calculated.

The speaker in 'How Soon Hath Time' is ultimately chastised by reminding himself to whom his works must be dedicated. He learns to navigate the territory between his own enjoyment of, and triumph over, the work he cultivates, and the realisation that the product of his cultivation is ultimately under the sovereignty of God. This requires passing from manly self-government to feminine supplication without risking the charge of effeminacy. In order to do this, Milton re-interprets the presumption and wickedness of individual poetic greatness as a weakness coded effeminately. Conversely, supplication and divine dedication—a good that is achieved through struggle—becomes manly and upright. He codes chaste goodness as a virile masculine struggle and self-oriented pride as unchaste and effeminate weakness. Thus, Satan's charismatic masculine stature, his epic heroism, is undermined by his serpentine, intemperate and covetous effeminacy; beneath Eve's licentiousness she is artistically adept, rational and ultimately the source 'by her Seed' of man's deliverance; and Milton himself, in the 'Sixth Prolusion', can be a woman because he is not an ass (516).

Spiritual Combat and Courtly Celebration: The Throne in 'A Maske' and *A Maske*

²⁹¹ Matthew 26: 52-3.

While it fulfills the demands of the royal genre,²⁹² Milton's masque celebrates the interior struggle for chastity as a process of greater moral weight than the means of achieving virtue popularised by the Caroline masque: monastic piety, ritualised devotion, ornament, wonder, and chaste female fertility. Milton's masque is 'a victory of personal integrity over public conventions'²⁹³ and a criticism of the court's ephemeral celebrations.²⁹⁴ It is an early articulation of Milton's growing sense that 'the only space over which political power cannot exert its ravenous claims is the inward space of the self. Where Herbert struggled to make these spaces available to his God, Milton struggled to hide them from his king'.²⁹⁵ Crucially, Milton's masque achieves this vision of interiority through a sophisticated depiction of the chaste adventurer learning personal virtue from an attitude of political rebellion: it takes the tropes of chastity and uses them to assert that true chastity is individuating while the court's cult of chastity is nothing but an external and empty show, frivolous, effeminate, and morally bankrupt. My reading of Milton's masque situates his thinking on chastity as a masculine and individuating virtue, at once defiant on the earthly plane and supplicating to heaven, within the context of his rhetorical struggle in the 'Sixth Prolusion' and his thinking about the growing tradition of thrones depicted unchastely. In doing so, I hope to show that Milton's developing understanding of his vocation as a poet meant he worked through the different mediums and social demands of both the performed and printed versions of his masque in order to embed within his vision of spiritual combat a moral comparison between his personal chaste struggle against authority and pride and the claims to virtue being made through the court's cult of chastity.

The kind of spiritual adventure in which Milton believed tested one's virtue through encounters with authority and were a complex working of the trope of correctly-orientated relationships. For him, moral formation took place within the tension between a proper resistance to the worldly, including worldly authority, and the resistance of that effeminate and self-certain pride which rebellion could incite in the spiritual adventurer—precisely that pride which his defensive and self-protecting attack on his University peers produced in himself in the 'Sixth Prolusion'. This reality is evident in both the 1634 Bridgewater Manuscript of the performed masque and its subsequent print

²⁹² Maryann Cale McGuire, *Milton's Puritan Masque* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1983); David Norbrook, 'The Reformation of the Masque' in David Lindley (ed.) *The Court Masque* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 94-110; Peter Walls, 'Comus: The Court Masque Questioned', in John Caldwell, Edward Olleson and Susan Wollenberg (ed.), *The Well Enchanting Skill: Music, Poetry, and Drama in the Culture of the Renaissance, Essays in Honour of F. W. Sternfield* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 107-113; Ann Baynes Coiro, 'Anonymous Milton, or, A Maske Masked', *English Literary History* 71 (2004), 609-629; Heather Dubrow, 'The Masquing of Genre in Comus', *Milton Studies* 44 (2005), 62-83; Barbara K. Lewalski, 'Milton's Comus and the Politics of Masquing', in David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (ed.), *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 296-315; Martin Butler, 'The Masque of Blackness and Stuart Court Culture' in Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr, Patrick Cheney, and Andrew Hadfield (eds.) *Early Modern English Drama: A Critical Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 152-163; Kate D. Levin, 'Coming of Age on Stage: The Pedagogical Masque in Seventeenth-Century England', *George Herbert Journal* 29 (2005), 114-130.

²⁹³ David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 252.

²⁹⁴ McGuire, *Milton's Puritan Masque*, 131.

²⁹⁵ Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England*, 166.

version of 1637.²⁹⁶ However, the first ('A Maske') and the second (*A Maske*) offered both the observers at Ludlow Castle and, a few years later, the readers of the printed version two separate visions of moral and spiritual formation, which, though their structure was essentially the same, were nuanced in such a way as to produce differing narratives of chastity and the spiritual fruits gained by those who strive for it. Most of these differences were contingent upon the two mediums' generic requirements: where the printed version is more introspective, descriptively detailed, and requires readers to visualise internally its more finely wrought verbal imagery, the other was realised through spectacle, sense and movement, and spatial positioning: all elements whose precise details at the time of staging we can only speculate over now. Stemming from the two text's generic conditions are their more meaningful differences. As a depiction of combat between chastity and tyranny, the printed version invited individual readers to enter into a spiritual and moral battle with both their own prideful fallenness and with a form of tyrannical earthly authority that was very broadly defined, a process which clearly identified the individual as an entity separable from a range of earthly authorities. The performed masque, however, was a communal and largely private, celebratory, and aristocratic text in which the Protestant Egerton family were praised for possessing a virtuous form of authority that had not been sullied by the unchaste stain of tyranny. It was thus neither individuating nor critical of earthly authority except in its most corrupted forms.

The difference between the two visions of chaste spiritual combat is exemplified by Comus in *State*. Neither text of the masque refers to the chair in which Comus traps the Lady as a throne, but the presentation of the chair in both texts suggests very strongly that the object is stately, even—especially—when it is part of the texts' parody of *State*. In 'A Maske', Comus first entered 'with a charming rod in one hand, his glasse in the other, with him a rout of Monsters ... their apparell glistring'. 'They come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with Torches in their hands' (100). Comus' court, throne, regalia, and entourage amount to a parody of stately power both royal and ecclesial. Although the parody would have been more visually evident in the Ludlow performance than it was to later readers, for whom it was mentioned once in a stage direction and never seen visually, it was ultimately more conservative in performance. Where the printed text invited readers to see in Comus the corruption inherent in courtliness, in 'A Maske' it is the Protestant Egerton family and the ancient seat of which they have recently taken possession against which Comus' corruption is measured. Rather than embodying the irredeemable perversion at the heart of all courts, Comus was, in performance, merely found wanting as a perversion of that proper courtliness embodied by the Egertons. The printed text instead contains a long additional passage, which was presumably omitted from the performance text both because it slowed dramatic pace and was rendered unnecessary by the masque's visual parody of *State*. But also, I propose, because it was only appropriate to the printed

²⁹⁶ Sprott, *A Masque: the Earlier Versions*; Cedric Brown, *John Milton's Aristocratic Entertainments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

text's particular description of spiritual combat. It is the passage in which Comus, compelling the Lady to become his queen, describes the pleasure of court life. I will quote it all:

List, lady; be not coy, and be not cozened
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin; must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavory in the enjoyment of itself.
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languished head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship.
It is for homely features to keep home;
They had their name thence: coarse complexions
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need of vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet. (771-89)

Comus reveals his corruption by allying 'courts and feasts and high solemnities' with fleshly indulgence, dissolute display, prideful beauty and flirtation. For readers, Comus is the only figure of courtly authority within the text and his arguments could have easily been interpreted as evidence that courtliness in general is corrupted and corrupting. In the performed masque, in which the passage was omitted, Comus did not and could not berate Lady Chastity for failing to display her treasures in courts, feasts and high solemnities since that is precisely what Alice Egerton was doing. Instead, the courtly dissolution which the Lady must resist was more narrowly defined as the inversion of those truly chaste courtly virtues for which the masque praised her and her family. I will treat the masque in performance at length before returning to the printed version.

In 'A Maske', the battle between chastity and tyranny was largely visual and made innovative use of the early-seventeenth-century tradition of chaste throne imagery. I have demonstrated how the capacity for thrones to figure virtuous or venal leadership generated a number of stage and print instances in which pairs or sets of thrones were depicted in comparison: *Novembris Monstrum's* chaste Elizabethan and unchaste Roman thrones and its triptych of Bacchus', Pan's and Phocas' unchaste thrones; Prynne's comparison between the single corrupted throne held by ecclesial authoritarians to be the only true Mercy Seat and the many true thrones in each congregants' heart; Penthea's apparently chaste martyr's throne flanked by those of her oppressive and murdering lovers in *The Broken Heart*; even Ford's more subtle evocation of the barber's chair and Throne of State in one single image, which drew on each chair's capacity to cause both chastity and unchastity, sound and broken bodies, true and corrupt leadership. At Ludlow Castle's masque, the opposing thrones were those of Comus, centre-stage, and of Lord and Lady Egerton for whom the masque was performed. As John Demaray observes: 'Comus and the [Earl of Bridgewater] are the two authority figures in direct opposition. And just as Comus reigns surrounded by his rabble from his palace located at the stage end

of the performance space, so too the peer reigns, surrounded on three sides by aristocrats ... from a raised chair at the opposite end of the space'.²⁹⁷ What Demaray reads as the thrones of Satan and God, I am reading as the thrones of unchastity and chastity.

The virtuous seat of chaste leadership looked across the masquing space at the gross unchastity with which the trappings of courtly life could poison humanity. The Peer inhabited the central viewing position, most like that of the State in a royal masque, where he was praised for maintaining virtue in his household. He and Lady Egerton were the 'Noble Lord and Lady bright' who at the conclusion of the masque received from the Attendant Spirit their 'Three fair branches' who, bearing a 'crown of deathless praise', had 'triumph[ed] in victorious dance/ O're sensual folly and intemperance' (925-34). The children's triumph was also a model for the Earl's own triumph over adversity: he 'A noble peer of mickle trust and power / Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide / An old and haughty nation proud in Arms' (54-6). The 'sober' Castlehaven family were neither the 'lewdly-pampered' gluttons and 'mincing dryades' of a dissolute court nor the 'unlettered hinds' over whom they had come to govern. Instead they were an example of 'moderate', 'holy' and 'goodly' courtly values exercised with due humility, moral and intellectual sophistication, and chastity (736/740/922/205/739/737/927).

By balancing Comus with the throne of the Peer, 'A Maske' followed the royal form of the genre, in which the Throne of State overpowers the threat posed by the anti-masque. However, although Milton's depiction of Comus as a dissolute anti-masque was in keeping with the demands of the royal genre, building his vision of unchastity from an inverse use of the props of state was not. Two Jacobean court masques incorporated a second throne but neither were constructed as moral oppositions to the Throne of State. The Throne of Beauty in Jonson's *The Maske of Beauty* was universally held to be a 'miracle' of engineering. Surrounded by cupids and spinning in a series of directions so that it produced sparks of light like a cut jewel, the throne was a brilliant tribute to Anne of Denmark's crucial place in the 'motion of the world'.²⁹⁸ In Daniel's *Tethys Festival*, the throne on stage spun in a watery world of bare-breasted nymphs: it was a tribute to Anne's rule 'within the large extent/ of [Tethys'] waves and watery government'.²⁹⁹ Both of these second thrones reflected the throne of State rather than opposing it. In the Caroline masques of the 1630s no stage throne rivals the power and virtue of the Throne of State, though in Townshend's *Tempe Restored* (1631), Circe momentarily sits in State to observe the anti-masque before departing when the vale of Tempe returns to the court and the sovereignty of Divine Beauty and Heroic Virtue (the monarchs) is once again asserted. Milton not only introduced a second throne into his masque, he made the competition between the two central to the masque's moral and dramatic combat. During the final dances, the

²⁹⁷ John G. Demaray, 'The Thrones of Satan and God: Backgrounds to Divine Opposition in *Paradise Lost*', *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 31 (1967), 21-33. 26.

²⁹⁸ See Tomlinson, *Women on Stage in Stuart Drama*, 29.

²⁹⁹ David Lindley (ed.) *Court Masques* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 59, line 208-9.

Lady would have moved ‘between the opposite centers of power of Comus and the peer’.³⁰⁰ From the moment Comus entered with his diabolical props of State to the Lady’s final movement from Comus’ corrupt throne to the virtuous seat of her Father, Milton’s splitting of the center of authority into two polarised positions invited comparisons between the Egertons and the most corrupt form of courtliness, thereby complementing the Egertons on their more rigorous and more temperate realisation of stately virtue.

Even more than in his mother’s masques, the Throne of State in Charles’ royal performances was crucial to the action; it was the State that, though static and emblematic, enacted the masque’s triumph over the anti-masque. The throne played a central role visually and ideologically: its power was asserted through its ability to subdue evil and resistance without actually participating in the action. Further, in the Caroline masque, the Throne of State symbolically and actually contained and was coterminous with the royal body: it was the seat of married chastity from which radiated the crown’s sanctity, authority and virtue. In Milton’s masque, as in Ford’s drama, the function of the throne is exactly the opposite: it ensnares the Lady’s chastity. In demonstrating the capacity for the throne to embody such an opposing moral function as that claimed for the throne at court, Milton in one sense agrees with the royal masque’s assertion that the throne and body are coterminous. A number of critics have posed the question of whether the ‘gums of glutenous heat’ (867) are produced by the throne or by the Lady.³⁰¹ The answer is: both. Just as in court masques the chaste throne embodies the chaste monarch, so in the Lady’s trial the unchaste throne embodies the—momentarily—unchaste body. In the Caroline masque, the virtue of the monarchs and the divinity of the throne are meet, the one fitting naturally and constantly to the other. In Milton’s masque, even the most chaste maiden’s body can be altered when entrapped by an unchaste throne. And, presumably, the opposite is true: the chaste Egerton throne would be corrupted if Comus were to take it from them. Importantly, Milton’s masque relocates the seat of the virtues away from the throne and places it instead in the heart and will of Alice Egerton, and by extension, that of her family. When the ‘freedom’ of the Lady’s ‘mind’ is cast as the true seat of chastity, the physical throne is left to signify those unchaste appetites by which the ‘corporal rind’ is ‘immanacled’ but which the virtuous adventurer, learning self-mastery, can overcome (665-8).

Trapped within Comus’ throne, the Lady is tempted by those delights offered at court. By resisting them, she demonstrates that those in the audience who are associated with her through social and familial ties have a more nuanced understanding of chastity’s moral requirements. Through the Lady’s resistance, the masque complimented the whole company by the implicit comparison between

³⁰⁰ Demaray, ‘The Thrones of Satan and God’, 27.

³⁰¹ William Shullenberger, ‘Milton’s Lady and Lady Milton: Chastity, Prophecy and Gender in *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle*’, in Claude J. Summers (ed.), *Fault Lines and Controversies in the Study of Seventeenth-Century English Literature* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002); Debora Shuger, ‘“Gums of Glutinous Heat” and the Stream of Consciousness: The Theology of Milton’s Maske’, *Representations* 60 (1997), 1-21. See also GimelliMartin (ed.), *Milton and Gender*.

themselves and those who participate in the monarchs' masques of chastity at court without understanding the true moral demands of the virtue. The Egertons were no strangers at court, and their children knew court masquing well, having performed in *Tempe Restored* (1632) and *Coelum Britannicum* (1634). Where the court masques asserted that the monarchs' authoritative chastity radiated easily from their persons, reforming and sanctifying all their subjects, Milton's masque instead depicts real chastity as a difficult but crucial moral struggle fought only by those individuals who are called 'by due steps to aspire/ To lay their just hands on that golden key/ That opes the palace of eternity' (37). The Egertons and their guests are, like Milton, able to participate in the joy of the royal genre without being drawn into the trap of believing, as Comus does, that chastity is a wasteful storing up of sensual goods, or, as the court masques could be construed as arguing, that chastity is merely a facet of Henrietta Maria's beauty. However, by staging the reformation of sensual, courtly pleasures through the redirection of them away from the self and toward the glorification of God, Milton's masque in fact makes the same claim as *The Temple of Love*. It is in the manner by which the arts and sensual pleasures are reformed that the two performances and their attendant political and religious outlooks differ. Henrietta Maria's masque reformed courtly arts through chastity by making them more Catholic in tone: confining their enjoyment to strictly chastened hetero-social relations, celebrating their place within community and Marian worship, and bending them to beautified devotions and a lavish glorification of God. Milton's masque, however, chastened courtly arts through the Lady's personal struggle to make the best use of her talents and to resist the lure of tyrannical ambition, venal pleasure, excessive and effeminate display, and, most importantly, the supreme and most effeminating sin: pride.

Most fundamental to the rhetoric of anti-court controversialists' depiction of unchaste thrones was the fearful warning against the tyranny of princes, whose pride, running to unchaste excess, infected the Throne of State. In Parliamentary justifications of regicide, to which Milton would become a key contributor, this argument later proved very valuable. Charles' opponents often claimed that they sought to protect the purity of the Crown against the King's personal weaknesses, his unjust neglect of Parliament, his erroneous perception of his own power, and his failure to stay faithful to his contracts. In Milton's masque, Lady Chastity is tempted toward just such an unchaste pride when she is seated in Comus' throne. Comus uses all his courtly 'glozing' to woo the Lady, not just to drink his 'spirits of balm' and become monstrous, but because he wants her to be his queen (161). He is tempting her to tyranny, the kind of tyranny depicted by a corrupt throne, liquified by unchastity, in the works which this chapter has been exploring. While the Lady's brothers are comforting themselves by recalling their sister's likeness to Diana, the 'Fair silver-shafted Queen for ever chaste', the 'queen oth' Woods' (442-6), Comus is trying to convince her to taste his 'treasonous offer' and become the queen of his diabolical court where she could sit in State and live a life of 'soft delicacy' (702, 681). Comus brings to the Egerton revels 'feasting', 'midnight shout, and revelry,/ Tipsy dance, and jollity'. He calls the Earl's guests to braid their locks with rosy twine 'dropping odours, dropping wine'. He

shuns 'Rigour' and 'Advise', 'Strick Age and Severity' (102-9). His dance and call to pleasure are a most attractive invitation to enjoy youthful and seemingly innocent rural pleasures. But the Attendant Spirit has forwarned that his world is in fact a 'brutish', 'miserable', and monstrous 'sensual sty' (70-7). The Lady possesses chastity, the 'golden key/ That opes the palace of eternity' (13-14), and is thus able to recognise Comus' 'riot' and 'ill managed merriment' when she hears it, just as the unchaste Comus knows her 'chaste footing' when he hears her approach (172, 146). The unchaste throne into which Comus traps the Lady stands amid the 'stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness' (680). Comus seeks to make the Lady his queen by drawing her into the very seat where 'a king must be adored like a demigod, with a dissolute and haughty court about him, of vast expense and luxury, masques and revels, to the debauching of our prime gentry'.³⁰²

The masque's anti-court criticisms were not only politically inflected but can be seen as engaging also with ecclesiological and theological problems. Milton's depiction of Comus' effeminate court is also a nod to anti-Laudian writing. Milton may have loved beauty and been attentive to due reverence but he was careful to delineate the beauty of chaste, refined speech and 'footing' from that of the self-indulgent physical display to which court masquing and high-Church ceremony were both at risk of descending. Blair Hoxby notes that in his stately palace, Comus is 'a Cavalier poet, a reveling courtier, and a Laudian prelate supervising a morris dance'.³⁰³ That the unchaste throne in which the Lady is trapped is also a bishop's chair, and that she must resist the lure of Comus' erroneous worship, is evidenced not only by the fact that the Lady is offered a 'charmed' and 'banefull cup' but because she intuitively immediately that Comus and his rabble 'thank the gods amiss' (74/528/208). They are 'loose' and 'unlettered' country rioters who, with 'swill'd insolence' indulge in the 'ill-managed merriment' endorsed by the Book of Sports, but their dance is also noted for its 'duck' and 'nod': two terms whose pejorative use were becoming routine in anti-Laudian caricature of gestural worship (205/209/203/918). The capacity for any throne to signify Christ's Mercy Seat would not have been lost on Milton and it is worth considering the Lady's 'gums of gluttenous heat' in relation to this (867). Comus' Laudian worship is depicted as a force that penetrates directly the purity of Christ's Mercy Seat, producing unchaste matter like that which the Lady's brother describes as the 'clotted' and 'contagi[ous]' flesh of sinners (468). This is in keeping with anti-Laudian opinion, which sometimes denied the distinction Laud was himself careful to make between reverence for the Eucharist and an adherence to the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. Milton's depiction of the capacity for unchaste worship to make fleshly the Eucharist, to 'clot' the Mercy Seat with 'gums of glutinous heat' was perhaps his demonstration of his and his audience's conviction that a belief in transubstantiation sullied the Throne of Christ by lowering it to the status of one of Comus' 'dainties'.

³⁰² *The Ready and Easy Way, Complete Prose Works* 7:360.

³⁰³ Blair Hoxby, 'The Wisdom of Their Feet: Meaningful Dance in Milton and the Stuart Masque', *English Literary Review* (2007), 74-99: 89.

In the printed *A Maske*, Milton drew the line between chastity and tyranny quite differently than in the Bridgewater Manuscript. In the omitted speech, which I quoted at length earlier, Comus argues that virginity is a storing up of those goods that should properly be shared, a point he makes through various figures: the hoarding of coin, the unseen beauty, the unplucked rose, flesh that has not known 'mutual' 'bliss'. His position is a fitting one for the Lady to pose her argument, drawn from the 'Sixth Prolusion' and 'How Soon Hath Time', that chastity is instead productive, a rendering of the self's best qualities through moral, spiritual, and intellectual effort. Just as he did in his 'Sixth Prolusion', Milton describes chastity as a denial of fleshly pleasure and ambition and the cultivation of the self's best qualities in order to dedicate their fruits to God. With only one throne to resist in the printed version of the masque, the individuating cultivation of the self Milton offered his readers was played out in their own intellectual resistance to an authority defined very generally. We have seen from the sermons of Andrewes and Laud and from the Caroline masques themselves that those political and theological commentators whose vision of spiritual and moral combat did not invest in a sentiment of rebellion or resistance deployed the image of the throne in a positive manner: to figure the glory of God, of Christ, and to direct the hearts and minds of communicants or subjects upwards. Instead, those writers like Milton, Prynne, and Loe, however little else they may have in common, all imagined spiritual combat as in some way resistant to earthly authority and their use of throne imagery reflected this. Where in *The Temple of Love*, it is the Throne of State that effects the reformation of dissolute appetites and directs its subjects to God, in Milton's masque the throne is a trap, as capable of liquid contamination, of watery unchastity, as were those depicted by so many critics of the court.

In his printed text, Milton presents a single throne as the unchaste site of moral and spiritual trial. In so doing, he locates the chaste throne at once in heaven and in each human heart. Milton achieves this displacement of chastity away from the royal throne in the very first lines of the masque. The Attendant Spirit introduces the occasion by referring to Jove's court, whose majesty is unmatched and which is the only true source of power and virtue (1-37), from which the world's 'several government[s]' are allowed by God's grace alone to wield their 'little tridents' (48/50). No masque throne, Milton announces, can match the throne in heaven. He then goes on to emphasise that a throne more chaste than any royal throne can be found in each of his readers: those who by their 'due steps' (or as Milton put it in 'How Soon Hath Time', 'strict measure') prove that they are mindful of the 'crown that virtue gives' are numbered 'amongst the enthroned gods on sainted seats' (32-4). This displacement of chastity from the courtly throne onto both God's heavenly throne and the thrones in each human heart was present also for the performed masque but its significance would have been hugely overshadowed by the visual feat that pitted the Egerton throne against Comus' seat of courtly corruption. In *A Maske*, the Lady no longer signifies her family's virtue but rather embodies the individual spiritual combat to which each reader was invited to participate.

Made up of words on the page, Milton's printed text also emphasises the degree to which his heroine discredits the genre's sensual delights in favour of individual self-articulation. *A Maske* describes the individuating acquisition of chastity as that denial of authority which makes supreme use of the medium to which Milton's prodigious talent disposed him: language: the same talent by which he differentiated himself from his unchaste University peers in the 'Sixth Prolusion'. This emphasis is particularly strong in the printed version of the masque, not only because it lacked the spectacle of the performance but because it contained the passage, omitted from the performance text, in which the Lady denounces Comus' 'words' while vehemently asserting the chastity of her own:

Shall I go on?
 Or have I said enow? To him that dares
 Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
 Against the sun-clad power of chastity
 Fain would I something say;—yet to what end?
 Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
 The sublime notion and high mystery
 That must be uttered to unfold the sage
 And serious doctrine of Virginity;
 And thou art worthy that thou shouldest not know
 More happiness than this thy present lot.
 Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
 That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
 Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced.
 Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth
 Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
 To such a flame of sacred vehemence
 That dumb things would be moved to sympathise,
 And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
 Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,
 Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head. (813-33)

Clearly audible are the echos of Milton's damning portrayal of his 'effeminate' University peers and his assertion of his own chaste 'virility'. Comus may possess 'wit' and 'gay rhetoric', where Milton's University audience were 'bungling grammarians', but both are effeminate and morally immature 'brothellers'. In his youth, Milton distinguished himself by comparing his moral refinement and exceptional articulacy to the brute strength of his oppressors, recoding feminine refinement and the correct dedication of cultivated language and reason to God as properly masculine and chaste. In *A Maske*, the Lady compares the 'sage' and 'serious doctrine' of her 'pure', 'sun-clad' chastity and the 'high mystery' and 'sacred vehemence' of her language to Comus' sensual indulgence, profanities and his 'magic structures' which, though 'dazzling', are merely a 'false' veneer which with one word from her will shatter and fall from their great heights. In both the Lady's speech and Milton's 'Sixth Prolusion', the triumphant qualities of chastity are the same, but by the mid-1630s the unchaste and effeminate opposition is no longer a 'prize fighter' but a courtly dissolute.

One of the remarkable qualities of the speech above, and one which has attracted significant attention from those recent scholars interested in revising the long-standing view of Milton's anti-

feminism, is the tremendous rhetorical power of the Lady's self-assertion.³⁰⁴ What I am about to propose complicates this crucial observation but does not contradict it. One of the speech's most important functions was only relevant to the printed *A Maske*, to its particular description of spiritual combat, and was to this end added by Milton just before 1637. The passage is absent from both the Trinity Manuscript (Milton's early notes) and the Bridgewater manuscript, so it was most likely not removed prior to performance and then reinserted for print but was rather added some time between performance and printing, when Milton was consolidating the work for the printed version's particular audience and purpose. I have argued that the challenge for the chaste adventurer in Milton's early work was to resist authority and venal pleasure but not, in the process, to fall into pride. In the 'Shall I go on?' speech, the Lady's bold assertion of her chastity contains within it the hint of excessive self-certainty, which is at its most explicit when she damns Comus to his evil, declaring that he is not 'worthy' to 'know/ More happiness than this thy present lot'. Milton knew very well God's capacity to call sinners back from error and that to think otherwise was to deny God's nature just as Milton himself would have pridefully denied him had he persisted in 'How Soon Hath Time' to wish for the blossom of his talents for his own sake and not for the sake of his 'task master'. The Lady may be trapped and assaulted but her predicament, though lamentable, in no way alters the abiding truth of God's mercy. Her pride, however understandable, remains erroneous. In wishing damnation on her persecutor, the very chastity she seeks to assert slips away from her. By invoking chastity as a violent threat, the Lady may come closer to winning the battle with her adversary (though Comus in fact reacts to her threat with greater physical force) but she loses the more important and more difficult struggle with the self. Where before her Shakespeare's chaste exemplars—Hermione, Imogen, Marina, Isabella, Desdemona—retain, even strengthen, their chastity and their chaste influence on others while defending themselves against assault, the Lady falters by declaring that her assailant is not 'fit to hear [him]self convinced'.

Seated in an unchaste throne and denouncing Comus so definitively, the Lady may in fact play the tyrant. Arguably, it is this momentary fall from virtue that produces the 'gums of gluttenous heat'. If we place the masque's throne within the literary, dramatic, and controversialist tradition of depicting unchaste thrones as watery and fleshly, then the question which has long plagued critics about the nature of the gums can be posed more specifically as: what is the unchastity that causes the throne's material change to take place? Perhaps there is no cause other than Comus himself: his chair is unchaste before the Lady is trapped within it and she is merely tainted by his tyranny, erroneous worship, and gluttony. While this conclusion might suit the celebratory occasion of the performed masque, I find it out of keeping with Milton's treatment of chastity throughout his writing, since it does not grant the Lady any internal transformation but merely the retention of the chastity she already

³⁰⁴ See especially Shullenberger, 'Milton's Lady and Lady Milton: Chastity, Prophecy and Gender in *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle*' and Shullenberger, 'The Profession of Virginity in *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle*', in *Milton and Gender and Lady in the Labyrinth* (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 2008).

possessed before her trial. I propose instead that the Lady, like Milton himself in his earlier work and like Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*, actually falls, momentarily, into the greatest of errors. Pride is, after all, the error which the unchaste and ‘clotted’ throne embodies most often in the tradition I have been detailing. The Lady falls into pride by wishing to see Comus and his rabble remain perpetually in their sensual sty, by believing them beyond redemption. When finally able to assert his superiority over his persecutors in the ‘Sixth Prolusion’, Milton himself sank into pride and was only checked by a humility which, in its immaturity, remained a veiled attack: ‘I have no ambition to lord it’.

By the 1630s, Milton’s greater maturity can be felt in the seriousness with which he treats the Lady’s error. Her own slip into tyranny renders her more spiritually vulnerable than she is physically vulnerable to Comus’ threatened violence. This is perhaps a novel recasting of the classical heroines’ belief in death-before-unchastity. For Milton’s Lady, pride is a crime as unchaste, even more unchaste, than physical despoliation. Milton makes clear that, so morally weakened, the Lady must rely on God’s grace. Having been marked by the same fleshly matter that marked so many unchaste thrones in the literary depictions of tyrants, the Lady is rescued from her pride, her ‘gums’, by the grace of God (in the form of Sabrina and the Attendant Spirit) and by her loyal brothers, inadequate though they are in their assault on Comus. That she, like all chaste adventurers, needs God’s grace for spiritual combat is also made clear when she specifically calls on the theological virtues to assist her, among which Milton places chastity. The Lady’s vivid vision of the personified virtues and the desert of sin from which they can protect her is the second extended passage not included in the performance text and thus of particular relevance to Milton’s individual readers. The Lady calls upon her own conscience and the three virtues in order to protect her against the ‘thousand fantasies’ which ‘throng’ her memory ‘of calling shapes, and beckning shadows dire,/ And ayrie tongues, that syllable mens names/ On Sands, and Shoars, and desert Wildernesses’ (220-35). The sin against which Jesus struggled in the desert was pride. It is, above all others, the sin that would ‘syllable mens names’, calling them to seek the inordinate power by which they might denounce their opponents and ensure their own names are immortalised by fame.

Crucial to an understanding of Milton’s thinking on pride and its relevance to contemporary depictions of unchaste, broken, and leaky bodies and thrones is that section of the Trinity manuscript most marked by corrections. Responding to the Lady’s refusal of him, Comus denounces her speech as mere ‘moral babble’. Further, he claims, it is ‘but the lees and settlings of a melancholy blood’. The most extended earlier version of this passage included: ‘this is mere moral stuff/ the very tilted lees/ And settlings of a melancholy blood’ (806-9). B. J. Sokol has treated the passage in detail, noting the *OED*’s other contemporary reference to ‘tilted lees’ in Thomas Overbury’s description of ‘a Whoore’, whose ‘body is the tilted lees of pleasure, dasht over with a little decking to hold colour’.³⁰⁵ Like the

³⁰⁵ B. J. Sokol, “‘Tilted Lees’”, *Dragons, Haemony, Menarche, Spirit, and Matter in Comus*, *The Review of English Studies, New Series*, 41 (1990), 309-324: 309; Sir Thomas Overbury, *Works*, ed. Edward F. Rimbault (London, 1856), 82.

many depictions of unchaste bodies which this thesis has examined, the Lady in Comus' construction is a vessel that has been emptied, leaving behind the dregs which are the source of that behaviour so distasteful to him. Comus interprets the Lady's resistance as a form of unchastity, as a refusal to conform to his view of the right use of the body. Her restraint is, he argues, 'against the Canon laws of our foundation': his cult is one which believes the body is for pleasure and not for that discipline which he can only interpret as cold restraint and wasteful preservation. Milton's moral and artistic sensitivity depicts Comus' error in his inverse understanding of chastity and his similarly inverse use of commonplaces about unchastity, while also suggesting that there is a certain truth in Comus' claim: one which he himself could not recognise. With reference to humoral theory, Sokol treats the Lady's tilted lees and settled melancholy blood as her menarche and, following Angus Fletcher, suggests the possibility that the Lady's 'gums', her onset of menses, form part of the masque's broader treatment of the sexual maturation she undergoes as part of her wandering and trial.³⁰⁶ Fletcher's thinking on the Lady's ordeal explains her immobility in Comus' chair as a consequence of her transition from a youthful virginity to a more conscious, adult state of virginity: one in which celibacy is taken on willingly and in full recognition of what is being denied. This 'sage and serious doctrine' which Milton had himself adopted is, of course, part of that difficult spiritual struggle required of him by God: the struggle I have been describing as one between self-cultivation and self-dedication. In Milton's vision, virginity (both the Lady's and his own) is, perhaps, at once an exalted path and a potential temptation toward pride. Both the physical restraint of celibacy and the moral demands of chastity can produce that fruitfulness and virtue which the masque points toward in so many places. But they can also potentially spill over into that self-indulgent pride with which Milton was so concerned throughout his early career and which, like the many depictions of proud thrones that I have been assessing, is the seat of unchastity from which goodness drains away—leaving only settlings, lees, dregs.

In performance, 'A Maske' was only able to emphasise the importance of avoiding pride through its subtle distinction between two thrones and their respective approaches to and uses of courtly values, thus complementing the Egerton family on their virtuous avoidance of courtly dissolution. In this context, the Lady's 'Shall I go on?' speech, and the pride it exemplifies, would have been unnecessary and counter-productive. Milton did not want to warn the Egerton family against damning the errors of courtly dissolution because his masque subtly invited them to do just that. In *A Maske*, the battle against pride takes place within each reader where, because the capacity for disdain is far greater in the individual human heart than it is in the communal identity of a stately family, the struggle is more complex and demanding. In Milton's view the individual heart is also therefore the site of the greatest salvation since it is where the most truthful and difficult battle is played out, a battle least compromised by the demands of compliment and occasion. In *A Maske*, no second throne is required to define the trial of chastity and Milton can emphasise more clearly what was for him the

³⁰⁶ Sokol, "'Tilted Lees'", 5; Angus Fletcher, *The Transcendental Masque: An essay on Milton's Comus* (London: Ithaka, 1971), 213.

true spiritual hierarchy: one that incorporated God's throne in heaven and the many thrones in each heart or 'mind'. To depict *A Maske's* theology of sin, only one Throne of State was required and its sole function was to embody those forces of earthly unchastity and ungodly self-reliance that each man must resist as he walks on his own path away from effeminacy and toward his 'sainted seat'.

How did Milton feel about the two versions of his masque? Did he feel that the sponsored performance, however brilliantly it launched his reputation, compromised that vision which he sought to re-articulate in *A Maske*? Perhaps the epigraph which Milton attached to the 1637 *A Maske* is useful here. It is taken from Virgil's second Eclogue: 'Eheu quid volui misero mihi! floribus austrum / Perditus' ('Alas! what have I done to my miserable self? I have let the south wind ruin my flowers'). John Shawcross reads the epigraph as part of Milton's relationship with Diodati, an argument to which the Second Eclogue as a whole does lend itself.³⁰⁷ But what if the flowers, gathered lovingly by Corydon, are the buds and blossoms of which Milton speaks in 'How Soon Hath Time', and the stormy south wind the compromising occasion of an aristocratic masque? Milton's first high-profile commission posed a very similar problem as did the requirements of the 'Sixth Prolusion': in both, his chance to take his place in the world of reputation depended on his writing in the genre so enjoyed by those figures whom he at once wanted to be approved by and wanted to denounce. In this context, it is worth considering whether the epigraph signified Milton's anxieties that, by allowing the flowers of his poetic flourishing to be spread on the rough winds of a genre so associated with values of which he was suspicious, he had brought about their ruin. The epigraph could merely be in keeping with the conventions of gentlemanly authorial disownment, in which Milton and Lewes fully participate throughout the prologue to the 1637 edition (a tradition I explored in Chapter One). If so, the south wind that ruined Milton's work is merely the printing press and the public eye. But the prologue surely sufficiently fulfills the convention, leaving Milton's epigraph to pursue the point rather fastidiously.

If we instead read the reference to Corydon's flowers, wasted on an uninterested Alexis, as a figure for Milton offering his 'blossoms' to his sponsors, then the epigraph becomes an announcement to those readers of the 1637 edition capable of so interpreting it that the real fruits of his work have been ruined by the demands of the occasion. In its acknowledgement that true chastity, which requires a rigorous individuating anatomy of pride, could not be realised in the Egerton celebration, *A Maske* is also therefore a very subtle criticism of the occasion for which 'A Maske' was written and, to a certain extent, of 'A Maske' itself. However, the printed masque's humble and self-accusatory acknowledgment of the human tendency to pride, most rigorous in its 'Shall I go on?' speech and its invocation of the divine virtues, is conversely part of the text's claims to moral superiority. *A Maske's* individual chaste adventurer is not only morally ascendent over the masques at court (which do not make any such acknowledgment of failure on the part of their royal chaste exemplars) but even over the Egerton masque, which could not assert as firmly as Milton would have liked the lure of unchaste pride—an

³⁰⁷ John Shawcross, *John Milton: The Self and the World* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 55. The translation is Shawcross's.

error which threatens the spiritual adventurer even, especially, when they are defending themselves against unchaste assault.

With *A Maske*, Milton announced the moral sophistication of the poet, his ability to pursue chastity through the resistance of worldly authority but, crucially, his ability also to resist his own tendency to that effeminate pride which most asserted itself when questioning authority. When we compare 'A Maske' and *A Maske*, we see that Milton in fact sets up three visions of chastity. The first is that of Comus, who cannot see his own tyranny and effeminate dissolution, who believes the best and most true use of the self and the world's resources is to indulge in them as much as one can so as not to waste them and make bastards of nature's children. Comus' gorgeous rhetoric is as sensual and slavishly effeminate as are his appetites for sensual pleasure and power. In 'A Maske', the Egerton family are celebrated for their ability to possess a temperate worldly authority without slipping into Comus' errors. Through its performance, the family can witness themselves as masquers able to enjoy the pleasures of dance, music, banqueting, and display with proper restraint and an understanding of chastity's tropes more developed than that of Comus and the supporters of the cult of chastity. But in *A Maske*, Milton offers a vision of the chaste individual, whose virtue is modeled on his own life and spiritual combat, which, while it is clearly superior to that of Comus, is also subtly shown to be superior to that of the Egerton family. The chaste poet can interrogate his own internal unchaste impulses more thoroughly than is possible in the public mediums through which figures of authority are identified and complimented. Indeed, *A Maske* narrates the individuating processes of a poetry that is identified against those communal celebrations in which a too-rigorous self-criticism would be impossible. This does not, however, mean that Milton was openly criticising the Egertons or, indeed, that he was in any way celebrating the common man. Each of his three visions of chastity applauds courtly virtue but he is careful to locate the individual as the site in which courtly virtues can best flower. Where the Egertons realised chastity more fully and properly than Comus, Milton himself realised them more fully and properly than the Egertons.

How can Milton's reworking of chastity's tropes be understood as responding not just to the vision of them offered in the Caroline masques but to the seventeenth-century tradition of chastity which I have been detailing? Does his masque respond to the vision of chastity laid out in Shakespearean tragicomedy? While Milton scholars have looked to Spenser as one source of *A Maske's* chastity, certain elements of the masque do reveal that Milton was also thinking about Shakespeare, or at least those aspects of his tragicomedies which formed the basis of the Caroline cult of chastity.

Through its use of chastity's tropes, *The Winter's Tale's* statue scene invited audience members to participate bodily in an affective experience of wonder coded feminine and built from the apprehension of Marian acts of chaste creation—Paulina's creation of the statue itself, Hermione's 'begetting' of the holy spirit in her reanimation. This presentation of statuesque wonder and female fertility as the realisation of chastity's tropes in the bodies and souls of the audience went on to inform the culture of Caroline masquing, in which all participants joined in the celebration of the monarchs'

triumphant tableaux of chaste fertility. The relative chastity of statuesque wonder and female fertility are subjects which Milton's masque also treats. In a significant departure from the wondrous statuary in the final tableaux of both *The Winter's Tale* and Caroline masques, Milton makes the Lady's enrapture 'in stony fetters fixt and motionless' the very means by which Comus ensnares her in his unchaste throne, her 'nerves' 'chain'd up in alabaster' until she is 'a statue' (856-9). The Lady only discovers her true chastity, spiritual bliss, and fertility when she is released from the statuesque. Where in *The Winter's Tale*, statuesque and affective wonder are the product of chastity as a spiritual and emotional reunion and regeneration built from images of female fertility, Milton's masque sees the Lady's transfixion as anathema to the fertility of chaste spiritual bliss promised to her at the conclusion of the masque. Crucially, her future fertility is only celebrated in the 1637 printed version of the masque and is omitted from the performed version. It is tempting to read a certain defiance in this: the fertility of spiritual bliss is something for the individualised moral combatant, not for the family of masquers to whom the promise of a secure future bloodline would seem more conventionally appropriate.

Milton's celebration of the Lady's fertility with reference to Cupid and Psyche in the printed version is further evidence of the 1637 masque's more pointed criticism of court taste than the 1634 performance. In her triumph against unchaste effeminacy, the Lady at the conclusion of the printed masque embodies the union of Cupid and Psyche, from whose 'eternal' and 'unspotted' love youth and joy are born (1054-61). David Norbrook notes that the Psyche and Cupid myth was a conventional allegory for the union of the soul with heavenly love. Popular at the Caroline court as one more sign of mystical union which could be mapped onto the monarchs' marriage, the allegory also, Norbrook argues, had apocalyptic associations 'to which Milton delicately pointed'. For Calvinists, Psyche had become a symbol of the true, visible Church, wandering in the wilderness, as the Lady 'wand[ers] in labours long' (1056). Against the Court's depictions of Henrietta Maria as the embodiment of the true temple, Milton's masque posits the Lady as the truly chaste Church undergoing trial in obscurity. Milton's argument to readers of his masque that the Lady is finally reunited with Cupid is, Norbrook argues, a sign that through their trial and wandering, the souls of the godly are united with Christ. This image of blissful spiritual union is a direct rejection of those heavenly unions celebrated in court masques. 'The traditional epithalamic imagery with which Milton celebrated the union was', Norbrook notes, 'a repudiation of asceticism'. Importantly, Norbrook reads the masque's final union as a celebration of spiritual bliss between the elect and God that is not only marital but which strongly implies 'sexual joy, and the joy of poetic composition'.³⁰⁸ The manly struggle with pride which I have been detailing is in the printed masque the source of spiritual and poetic fertility. It is distinctly un-Marian and unassociated with monastic chastity or a devotion built from statuesque wonder. Despite the marital and sexual tone of Milton's depiction of spiritual bliss, references to female biological

³⁰⁸ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* 251-252.

creation and the piety of monasticism—both cornerstones of the Caroline cult of chastity—are distinctly absent from his masque's vision of the sanctity produced by chastity's tropes.

In another quibble over the definition of chaste 'wandering' and trial, Milton elsewhere took issue with the association between devotion and acts of female, biological creation and his views can be taken as further evidence of his rejection of the vision of chastity first articulated in *The Winter's Tale*. Those who preferred plain religion objected to the view of childbirth as a trial, and to the ceremony of churching in particular, on the grounds of its ritualism and superstition, but also its irreverence. In his *Apology for Smectymnuus* (1642) Milton scoffed at the churching of women on the basis that the ceremony was built around the reading of Psalm 121, which promises that God will deliver the Jewish people as they come out of the wilderness and into Canaan. He rejected the suggestion that the labouring woman had 'been travailing not in her bed but in the deserts of arabia'.³⁰⁹ The reference to a bed here is telling. Since early modern births more commonly took place on or against a chair, Milton's reference to a mother's travails in her bed evokes the sexual act rather than labour. We have seen how the two acts were fundamentally linked in early modern thinking on sexuality and childbirth, but Milton's desire to rescue God's people from their association in the churching ritual with the trials of biological birth is best fulfilled by elevating the one and lowering the other. He therefore removed childbirth from the litany of genuine Christian trials by suggesting it is too unchaste to be included.

In a similar manner to the early modern publishing authors whose prefatorial disclosures influenced the *The Winter's Tale's* exploration of chastity, Milton is careful to claim for his version of masculine, intellectual, and individuating moral combat the fruits of spiritual union and poetic 'issue', while rejecting those elements so central to the Caroline cult of chastity and its vision of spiritual bliss: the processes of biological and female fertility, asceticism, and the pious, collective, and affective celebration of statuesque tableau. Milton's assertion of his own version of chastity over that celebrated at court was subtle in his masque but it would grow more robust as his career progressed. Equally, his re-coding of chastity's tropes within the more individualised processes of manuscript reading was a crucial step on the way toward his co-religionists' definitive rejection of tragicomedy with the closure of the theatres.

³⁰⁹ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 68; *Complete Prose Works*, I: 939.

As this thesis has progressed through its analysis of the 1620s, 1630s and 1640s it has noted the developing moral and aesthetic opposition between chastity as a spectacular, feminised, affective, courtly, and increasingly Catholic or Laudian expression of virtue and an anti-court, Protestant, masculine, combative, and individualist chastity which, though it can be traced throughout the first decades of the seventeenth century in anti-court pamphlets, found its fullest expression in Milton's masque.

Milton's intervention in the genre which, since Shakespeare's late plays, had been the key dramatic site for disseminating chastity's tropes was itself a rejection of the cult of chastity on which the genre's continued popularity depended. His re-articulation of chastity's tropes as the means by which to resist precisely those values and practices which for four decades had been increasingly associated with chastity can be seen as one key step leading to the spread of Puritan, pro-Parliamentary opinion and the eventual realisation of the anti-theatricalist goal to silence the genre altogether. Although an apparently small act, Milton's translation of chastity's tropes from the spectacular conditions of tragicomedy and masque into the individualist conditions of print contributed to the cultural and political revolution from which the Civil Wars emerged. From Shakespeare's late plays through to the cult of chastity, the tragicomic and masque vision of God's providential love for his creatures made available a communal experience in which the tropes of chastity drew those present into the wonder of divine revelation and the personal and communal, physiological and spiritual, unification which the successful realisation of the tropes of chastity was designed to effect. Milton's recoding of chastity's tropes within the individual experience of reading, and the individuating resistance to the authority which his written text encouraged, introduced a radically new 'aesthetics of reception', to use Hans Robert Jauss's term. Thus, by giving chastity's tropes a new genre and a new individualising, masculine, and Protestant character, Milton paved the way for the 1640s attack on the court.

The connection between Milton's defiant vision of chastity in his 1637 masque and the trial and regicide of Charles I in 1649 is not direct. However, by following the history of chastity's tropes, a certain line between the two can indeed be traced. The tropes of chastity were clearly powerful concepts through which all early moderns understood their personal and communal, moral and physiological well-being. By fully utilising the tropes in all aspects of their religious, cultural and political lives, Charles and Henrietta Maria ensured the popularity and success of their cult of chastity

in the 1630s and it was by reclaiming the tropes for their own purpose that the monarchs' opponents began to win popular opinion.

What I hope this thesis has demonstrated is that the tropes of chastity were crucial to the moral and conceptual processes by which the theological, medical, and socio-political revolutions of the early modern period were enacted and that the many instances of chastity on the early-seventeenth-century stage demand to be considered in a context far broader than has hitherto been the case. Fundamentally, I hope I have demonstrated that if genre can be understood as a set of tropes rather than a formal pattern, and if these tropes can be seen working so extensively in fields beyond the theatre, then we must acknowledge that the contemporaneous rise of tragicomedy and the cult of chastity was in fact more than coincidence. We must also acknowledge that all genres can be understood as a vision or set of truths governed by tropes whose application extended beyond the walls of the theatre.

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