

WOMEN AND THE SOUL-BODY DICHOTOMY IN JACOBEOAN DRAMA

WOMEN AND THE SOUL-BODY DICHOTOMY IN JACOBEOAN DRAMA

By

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Abstract

Through examining various stage representations of women, this dissertation investigates both the limitations and possibilities that seventeenth-century conceptualizations of the soul-body relationship posed for female subject-positions. The gender-coded soul-body dichotomy lies at the root of many negative and disempowering depictions of women. And yet, this in many ways oppressive construct, I argue, could also function as an effective tool for radically redefining gender expectations. *Women and the Soul-Body Dichotomy* demonstrates how a critical awareness of a text's engagement with theories of the spirit-matter divide can suggest new readings of its representations of women – readings available to seventeenth-century audiences that we should not overlook. More specifically, I explore dramatic disruptions of the soul-body hierarchy, and the usual values attached to each “side,” that significantly challenge the patriarchal subordination of women. While the recent emphasis on the body in early modern studies has proven immensely productive, this focus tends to eclipse seventeenth-century concepts of the soul and the soul-body dynamic. I insist here that not only developing ideas about the body, but ideas about soul and body together are what crucially shaped gender ideology and cultural perceptions of women.

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Introduction

Women and the Soul-Body Dichotomy

The seventh problem of John Donne's *Paradoxes and Problems* asks why, in general, men attribute souls to women:

Why hath the common opinion afforded woemen Soules?

It is agreed that wee have not so much from them as any part of eyther of our mortall soules of sence or growth; And wee denye soules to others equall to them in all but Speeche, for which they are beholding onely to theyr bodily instruments, for perchance an Apes heart or a Gotes or a Foxes or a Serpents, would speak just so if it were in the brest and could move the tongue and jawes. Have they so many Advantages and meanes to hurt us (for even theyr loving destroyes us) that wee dare not displease them, but give them what they will, and so, when some call them Angels, some Goddesses, and the Peputian Heretikes made them Bishops, wee descend so much with the streame to allow them soules. Or doe wee somewhat, in this dignifying them, flatter Princes and greate Personages that are so much governd by them? Or doe wee, in that easynesse and prodigality wherein wee dayly loose our owne soules, allow soules to wee care not whome, and so labour to perswade out [sic] selves that sith a woman hath a soule, a soule is no greate matter? Or doe wee but lend them soules and that for use, since they for our sakes give theyr soules agayne, and theyr bodyes to boote? Or Perchance because the Devill who doth most mischeefe is all soule, for conveniency and proportion because they would come neere him wee allow them some soule, And so as the *Romans* naturalized some Provinces in revenge, and made them *Romans* onely for the burden of the common wealth: so wee have given woemen soules, onely to make them capable of damnation. (*Paradoxes and Problems* 28-29)

Donne is careful to prevent the uncontrolled circulation of early writings like this one, entreating Henry Goodyer in a letter to "let goe no copy of my Problems, till I review them. If it be too late, at least be able to tell me who hath them" (*Selected Prose* 384). Affirming that "evidence suggests that Donne did revise these Problems, most probably from fear of the backlash of offence," Helen Peters endorses Evelyn Simpson's earlier speculation that Donne, "through fear of offending a possible patroness or other persons who were in a position to help him

rehabilitate his career,”¹ cut material from certain Problems (namely, “XVIII on ‘Women and Feathers’” and “XII on the ‘Variety of Green’”) that conveyed “hostility” or “bitterness” toward women or toward the court (Peters xli-xlii). Despite Donne’s apparent unease about who might chance to read his Paradoxes or his Problems, literary critics of these works have emphasized that if we take their content at face value – if we dwell, for instance, on the blatant misogyny of Problem VII – we are missing the point. Instead, we should notice how Donne’s Problems work to parody or criticize the very scholarly practice and literary form they exemplify; we should recognize that they encourage the careful reader to resist their showy rhetoric.² Donne himself even calls his Paradoxes, closely related to the Problems in literary form and tradition, mere “swaggerers” that “do there [sic] office” if “they make you to find better reasons against them” (*Selected Prose* 378).

If we apply to Problem VII this reading of the *Paradoxes and Problems* as exposing the limitations or dangers of stylized rhetorical display, however, we risk brushing aside the fact that the Problem dealing with women’s souls flaunts adept skill at the type of rhetorical exercise that it purportedly parodies. Very little in this particular Problem suggests that its main purpose is to warn the reader about the potentially misleading qualities of rhetoric by showing how easily it can be mobilized to develop wrong ideas such as the doubtfulness of women

¹ Peters dates the Problems between 1603 and 1609 or 1610, “a gloomy time in Donne’s life for he lived in Mitcham with a sickly wife and an increasing family, without any proper means of support” (xv-xvi).

² See, for instance, James Baumbach, *John Donne and the Rhetorics of Renaissance Discourse* 16-17, 65, 242, and Peters’s introduction to her edition of *Paradoxes and Problems* xl.

possessing souls. Instead, in keeping with the classical and university traditions to which the Problem form belongs, the more obvious effect of Problem VII is to entertain the reader through its display of the writer's cleverness – a display that in this case takes place entirely at women's expense. Simpson traces the Problem as an educational tool from its classical origins to its use in early modern England. It was featured in "prescribed college and university exercises" and in "elaborate and ceremonial displays of argumentative skill and wit put on both for the visits of royalty and other important dignitaries to the universities and for the special disputations held annually." She notes the inclusion of a "humourist" at such events who would "amuse the audience by playing verbally upon the question to be disputed" (xxvii-xxx). Donne "would have been familiar with the disputation" and its "particular form of the Problem" as "a student at Oxford in the middle 1580s and possibly later at Cambridge" (xxxi). His letters show that he also participated in the Problem's development "as a means of social diversion, designed both to entertain and to sharpen one's wits, among friends, during leisure hours" (xxxi). Part of Problem VII's male scholar perspective comes through in its firm "wee" and "them" division that defines men as thinking subjects and women as interpretable material, a division very much in line with the traditional gendering of the rational soul as masculine and the body as feminine. George Parfitt claims that "as a category women are objects for Donne's wit and of interest only in that respect," and that the focus, here, is on "male commonplaces" or "characteristics men assign to women" and not on a

“real revaluation of Woman” (32). This distinction between the serious conceptualization of women versus simply the use of women-as-topic for an exercise in wit is a false one, I think, that, along with the characterization of Donne’s Problems as “clever trifles” produced nonchalantly “at odd moments in a busy life” (Simpson 132, 148), dismisses the real cultural impact that the literary circulation of such stereotypes could carry for real women.

The negative stereotypes packed into Problem VII include: women are primarily bodily creatures, akin to animals in their irrationality; the contrary association of women with non-physical figures like angels or goddesses is meaningless flattery; women are of consequence only in their relations to men; women are prone to losing their souls and jeopardizing men’s through their alacrity for bodily lust; etc. As this dissertation will seek to unfold, the treatment of women in much early modern writing, as in Donne’s “Why hath the common opinion afforded woemen Soules?”, is inextricable from common understandings of the soul-body dichotomy itself as gendered. I begin with Donne’s Problem VII in part because it starts to illustrate how the conventional gendering of the soul-body relationship is at once debilitating and deeply problematic for women, and yet something that risks being overlooked as mere convention, as unimportant because it does not really reflect sincere belief. Surely Donne, the future esteemed dean of St. Paul’s, would never have seriously entertained the idea that only men possessed souls? And yet, if the speculation that Donne worried about a “possible patroness” seeing some of his Problems and

taking offence does not convince that they are something more than harmless “trifles,” Simpson draws our attention to a telling passage in one of Donne’s later sermons that could almost be taken as Donne speaking directly to his younger,

Problem-writing self:

For, howsoever some men out of a petulancy and wantonnesse of wit, and out of the extravagancy of Paradoxes, and such singularities, have called the faculties, and abilities of women in question, even in the roote thereof, in the reasonable and immortall soul, yet that one thing alone [the questioning of whether women possess souls] hath been enough to create a doubt, (almost an assurance in the negative) whether S. *Ambroses* Commentaries upon the Epistles of S. *Paul*, be truly his or no. ... No author of gravity, of piety, of conversation in the Scriptures could admit that doubt, whether a woman were created in the Image of God, that is, in possession of a reasonable and immortall soul. (qtd in Simpson 142)

If an early modern reader of a writing like Donne’s Problem VII would inevitably view its misogynistic wit as unconnected to ideas about real women, and if few paid credit to the historical notion that women were soulless, despite this notion’s availability for use in rhetorical stances, Donne would not likely have needed to explicitly and publicly address – and firmly denounce – this position as he does here, in a sermon he gave on Easter, 1630. Even earnest rejections of the argument that women lacked souls somehow lend weight to the topic as legitimate and worth consideration to begin with. Regardless of how far Problem VII’s cynicism is from Donne’s personal belief about women and souls, the question about women’s souls, as I discuss in chapter two, actually received serious attention in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Indeed, despite Robert Ray’s characterization of Donne’s Problems as “usually pseudo-problems, false issues, and largely unexplainable,” developed

with “the most outrageous, illogical, and unexpected ‘reasons’ for the sake of entertainment” (191), Problem VII’s development is not illogical or unexpected. In the first line, Donne cites a consensus that men have not received “so much from [women] as any part of eyther of our mortall soules of sence or growth” – that is, that not even the lower faculties of the soul (according to the inherited Aristotelian model) come from one’s mother. Questions about the soul’s origin – whether a child received a soul from the mother, father, from both parents, or directly from God – were certainly not settled in the early modern period as this first line would suggest. In a treatise published more than three decades after the writing of Donne’s Problems, for instance, Henry Woolnor, in tackling the question of how one indivisible soul can emerge from two souls, admits that Aristotle’s denial “that females had any seede at all, being onely as the ground wherein seede is sowen” offers an easy answer, “for then the soule proceeding from the soule of the father onely, there shall not need be two soules, nor one mingled of two” (110-11).³ Woolner ends up rejecting Aristotle’s position in favour of a less male-centred view of “the spirituall seede of the soule” as something that is “not in the severall seede of either sex ... but rather in both when but one” – as something that only comes to exist, in other words, when the souls of two parents “cleave together ... at the instant of conception” (111-13). Around the same time, however, William Harvey’s influential medical writings countered this version of generation. As Eve Keller has shown, Harvey credited

³ Page numbers should be 210-11, but the page number after 208 reads 109, and the subsequent pages count from 109.

male semen exclusively as the “spark of life” and represented it as possessing “divinity” in contrast to the female, who served merely as a passive “incubator” for the foetus (112-19). That the debate over whether or not women shared with men the role of communicating a soul to their offspring continued to play out into the 1640s is one indication of how Donne’s academic joke is not detached from real questions and concerns that had serious repercussions for cultural perceptions of women.

In other words, separating the soul-body dichotomy as a literary convention or motif from more literal considerations of this relationship would amount to a false distinction akin, I think, to attempting to distinguish between the use of “women” as a topic or prop for rhetorical exercise and genuine attitudes toward women. In the following chapters, then, I work from the premise that literary and dramatic representations of women were deeply connected to the possibilities that real women could see for themselves and to the cultural attitudes they faced on a daily basis. This dissertation is, nonetheless, literary in focus and concentrates on dramatic treatments of the soul-body dichotomy as it underlies and inflects representations of women. I do not attempt to chronicle evidence of how real women might have received and responded to the texts I examine, nor do I survey or analyze the vast and complex corpus of early modern philosophical, theological, devotional, and anatomical⁴ writings on the soul-body

⁴ Recently Johnathan Pope, in *An Anatomy of the Soul*, has exposed a lack of critical attention to how early modern anatomical works were concerned with the soul as well as with the body and contributed to, or reflected, the shaping of early modern subjectivity, as unstable and elusive as that subjectivity is to define.

relationship, although an awareness of these discourses necessarily informs my readings of the plays and masques that I consider. This study is more concerned with how the pervasive early modern mode of gendering the soul-body dichotomy is at the heart of many negative or disempowering representations of women and justifications of women's supposedly inherent inferiority to men. But if the conventional gendering of the soul-body hierarchy served as a patriarchal tool for women's subordination (as it explicitly did), it carries equal potential to promote empowering ideas of women. Precisely because of its pervasiveness, its familiarity, this in many ways oppressive construct, I argue, also provides an effective tool for radical reconceptualizations of gender relations, in that alterations to the dominant versions of the body-soul relationship would be recognizable and loaded with meaning in their departure from the well-known standard. My dissertation aims to demonstrate how a critical sensitivity to a text's engagement with understandings of the soul-body, or immaterial-material divide, can suggest new readings of its representations of women – readings available to early modern audiences that we should not overlook. More specifically, I explore how literary and dramatic disruptions of the soul-body hierarchy and the usual values attached to each "side" of the divide often correspond with more positive and empowering depictions of women or with challenges to the patriarchal subjection of women.

My designation of the soul-body "hierarchy" and my references to the most "pervasive" or "predominant" cultural coding of this relationship as

gendered are not meant to belie the reality that early modern discourses concerning the body and soul are richly varied and complex, and even sometimes abandon altogether the model of this relationship as dichotomous. Nonetheless, when gender comes into play, as it so frequently does, the designation of the body as feminine and of the soul as masculine, in relation to each other, predominates, along with the assignment of certain key characteristics to each. Scholars such as Rosalie Osmond, Genevieve Lloyd, Thomas Laqueur, Ian MacLean, and W. Norris Clarke have already mapped the complex developments of body and soul theories from Plato (and earlier) into the early modern period, often with helpful attention to how these theories come to integrate gender.⁵ My dissertation does not aim to recapitulate or revise this important work, but to build on it, turning what we know about concepts of body and soul in early modern England to new

⁵ In *Making Sex*, Thomas Laqueur uses the term “one-sex body” to refer to the historical understanding of man as the standard against which woman was defined, often as a flawed or lacking version of man. Laqueur explores how bodies have been understood as functioning differently in reproduction not because of biological evidence, but because of cultural and philosophical beliefs about the nature of femininity and masculinity. Laqueur is an excellent source for nuanced explanations of the views of Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Galen – so influential in the Renaissance – on all aspects of generation. Historically, physiological and anatomical descriptions of the body, Laqueur argues, *had* to express women’s inferiority, an inferiority that was culturally and politically pre-established. Ian Maclean’s “The Notion of Woman” offers a comprehensive account of explanations in “medicine, anatomy, and physiology” of women’s constitution, especially those inherited from Aristotle and Galen, that contributed to the idea of woman as an imperfect or lesser version of man. “Even after the abandonment of the ‘imperfect male’ theory” (when, after 1580, the indication in most “ancient texts” that “woman is colder and moister in dominant humours” begins to be thought of as “functional” instead of as a “sign of imperfection”), MacLean finds that “physiologists retain the beliefs in the less perfect mental faculties of woman” (135-6, see also 143-7, and Kate Aughterson, *Renaissance Woman* 43). See also Mendelson and Crawford’s section on “Medical Understandings of Woman’s Body” in *Women in Early Modern England* for a lucid account of how “medical and popular theories of the body ... constructed women’s bodies as possessing dangerously unstable qualities. ... All assumed that women, unlike men, were created not as something in themselves, but rather for gestation and man’s bodily convenience” (18-30). Clarke’s “Living on the Edge” traces the idea of the human as “frontier being” straddling the dimensions of matter and spirit from Plato into the Enlightenment, with attention to the layering of Christian thought over the Platonic and Neoplatonic tradition.

use in literary criticism. In order to explain my frequent recourse to the “prevalent” or “familiar” conceptualization of the soul-body relationship as gendered and hierarchical, however, a very brief review of some of this scholarship is necessary here.

The topic of the body-soul relationship received intense focus in early modern England. In *The Passions of the Minde* (1604), Thomas Wright gives an idea of this preoccupation in his complaint about the failure to achieve clarity on the topic:

at least they [men] might have knowne themselves; for what was more neere them then their owne soules and bodies ... Yet the Ignorance and Errours, which both inchaunted them, and inveigle us, are almost incredible. I could propound above a hundreth questions about the Soule and the body, which partly are disputed of by Divines, partly by naturall and morall Philosophers, partly by Physitians, all which, I am of opinion, are so abstruse and hidden, that they might be defended as Problemes, and eyther parte of Contradiction alike impugned. (chVI p300)

William Hill conveys a similar sense of having to sort through a copious amount of material from a variety of disciplines in order to discuss *The infancie of the soule* (1605); he lists in his table of contents sections on poets’, philosophers’, physicians’, and Fathers’ positions on the soul, as well as canonical and scriptural positions. Despite the wealth of material on the topic, recurring ideas do emerge. Scholars often identify the two most influential strands of thinking on this vital soul-body relationship in early modern England as deriving from Plato and Aristotle,⁶ with due recognition that not every writer fits neatly into one or the

⁶ For a more in-depth explanation of Plato and Aristotle’s different takes on the soul-body relationship than I have space to offer here, and a full account of how Platonic and Aristotelian

other camp, and that further confusion arises from the frequent practice of “uncritical” borrowing of “snippets from different writers with contradictory opinions” (Osmond, *Mutual Accusation* 22). Both Platonic and Aristotelian schools of thought hierarchize the components of soul and body in a way that corresponds and contributes to early modern notions of gender hierarchy. Plato separates the soul into the frequently cited three faculties of reason, will, and appetite (or the rational, spirited, and appetitive elements), located in the head, heart, and stomach respectively. Osmond draws attention to the striking imagery that Plato uses to privilege reason and separate it from the other faculties. In the *Timaeus*, “the neck, which separates the rational faculty from the rest, Plato compares to an isthmus isolating it from contamination” (5). Similarly, in the *Phaedrus*’s famous chariot-and-horse analogy, the charioteer represents the “rational faculty of the soul” directing “the spirited element or will,” which is a “natural ally of reason” (a white horse), and “the appetitive element” (the dark horse), which is prone to falling and tripping up the ensemble (5). Plato again isolates reason from the other faculties by figuring it entirely differently as a human figure and not as a lead horse (5). He conceives of the soul as a hierarchy in which reason is at the top as the rightful governor of the other faculties, and hierarchy also structures his conception of the entire soul in relation to the body: “Plato is clear that the imperfections we perceive, both on the individual and

strains of thought came to early modern thinkers both directly and filtered through other philosophers such as the Stoics, Plotinus, St. Paul, Tertullian, Origen, Augustine, Aquinas, etc., refer to Osmond (7-17) and to Lloyd (8, 19-37).

cosmic scale, come from the material, not the craftsman. It is the function of the soul to impose form on recalcitrant matter” (6). Despite the fact that Plato’s theories of body and soul were both complex and shifting, as they “came to be selected by Christian philosophers, it was the dualistic elements that opposed a weak and fallible body to a soul with God-like affinities that predominated.”⁷ To put it basically, the Platonic view in the Renaissance saw the soul as the rightful moral governor of a body that was an encumbrance to it, a prison, clog, or dunghill that the soul longed to escape.

At first Aristotle’s emphasis on the body as necessary and good for the soul would seem to collapse Plato’s hierarchy. While the senses are unreliable for Plato, for Aristotle they are “our chief source of knowledge” (6). Aristotle holds that “neither body nor soul can be conceived of existing independently,” and the “intimacy” and “functionality” of the body-soul relationship as he conceives it prevent a “clear-cut, moral distinction” between the two of the kind that Plato describes (6-7). Like Plato, however, Aristotle divides the soul and privileges rationality. In place of Plato’s tripartite division, Aristotle imposes a binary separating the rational from the irrational soul. The irrational soul is composed of the vegetative and sensitive faculties “present in plant and animal life, so that nutrition, growth, and sense are all attributed to ‘soul,’” while the rational soul

⁷ 6. See also Lloyd’s observation: “In Plato’s later thought, the simplicity of [the] subjection of body to mind gives way to a more complex location of the non-rational ... within the soul as a source of inner conflict. On this later view, the struggle is between a rational part of the soul and other non-rational parts which should be subordinated to it. Later Judaic and Christian thinkers elaborated this Platonic theme in ways that connected it explicitly with the theme of man’s rightful domination of woman” (7).

separates into the active and passive intellect, with only the active intellect characterized by immortality (7). Despite Aristotle's emphasis on the inextricable union of body and soul, his account of the intellect (*nous*), as Osmond records, was "partly instrumental in reinforcing the passage of Platonic dualism into Christian thought" (7). A "confusion between 'mind' and 'soul'" led later Christian philosophers to "speak of the [entire] soul," and not just a fragment of it, as at once "naturally dependent on the body and yet retaining its qualities of immateriality and immortality" (7). Besides this available use of Aristotle to support a dualistic conception of human nature, Aristotle's notion that the soul generates from male semen⁸ lends support to a firm association of the soul with masculinity that held considerable sway in early modern England.

In claiming that women are physically incapable of producing seed to act as a vehicle for the soul in generation, and that the soul – along with that divine, active intellect – is passed down entirely through the father, Aristotle moves beyond the claim that women's bodies are inferior to men's. This bodily inferiority is an obstruction to complete affinity with the soul, an obstruction with which men do not have to contend. This idea "stuck," and Genevieve Lloyd gives

⁸ Osmond 7 n14 directs readers to a passage in Aristotle's *Generation of Animals* that explicitly designates male semen as the "vehicle" for the soul. See also Laqueur 29-30: with reference to Aristotle's claim that "the female always provides the material, the male that which fashions it, for this is the power we say they each possess, and *this is what it means for them to be male and female* While the body is from the female, it is the soul that is from the male," Laqueur comments that "these were momentous distinctions, as powerful and plain as that between life and death. To Aristotle being male *meant* the capacity to supply the sensitive soul without which 'it is impossible for face, hand, flesh, or any other part to exist' ... One sex was able to ... [produce] true sperma; the other was not." For a helpful overview of Renaissance debate over "female semen," how it compares to male semen (usually, it is "less active"), and what it contributes (apart from questions of the soul) to the foetus, see also Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* 35-7.

a brilliant account of it in her discussion of Augustine. Even while attempting to defend women as enjoying rational equality with men, Augustine cannot reject the notion of women as physically inferior to men nor escape the already deeply engrained cultural stereotypes of femininity that rest on the assertion of the weakness of female bodies. Augustine, Lloyd explains, tries to separate woman's subordinate position to man in terms of her bodily difference and her "help-mate" role in Genesis from her status as an equally "rational spirit":

In respect of her rational intelligence, woman, like man, is subject to God alone. But her bodily difference from man, and the physical subjection which Augustine seems to see as inseparable from it, symbolically represents a subordination relation between two aspects of Reason. ... Woman's physical subordination to man symbolizes the rightful subordination of the mind's practical functions – its control over temporal things, managing the affairs of life – to its higher function in contemplating eternal things. The Genesis story of a helper for man having to be 'taken from himself and formed into his consort' symbolizes this diversion of Reason into practical [and lesser] affairs. (30)

But, as Lloyd observes,

despite [Augustine's] good intentions, his own symbolism pulls against his explicit doctrine of sexual equality with respect to the possession of Reason. ... [F]rom our perspective ... mere bodily difference surely makes the female no more appropriate than the male to the symbolic representation of 'lesser' intellectual functions. What is operating here ... is the conceptual alignment of maleness with superiority, femaleness with inferiority. (32)

In this glimpse of Augustine, we can see an easy, unquestioned correspondence between the hierarchy of the highest part of reason over its more practical functions (and more generally of eternal over mundane affairs and of soul over body), and a physical hierarchy of male over female – a correspondence that

remained influential in early modern England. As with any analogy, however, this one works both ways.

Where Augustine claimed that men's physical dominion over women symbolized reason's proper governance over lower intellectual functions, and by extension intellect's governance over the body, the body's proper subordination to the soul, and the subordination of the soul's lesser faculties (more integrated with the body) to its highest faculty, reason, could equally serve to legitimize the subordination of women to men. "Of all the analogies for the soul/body relationship" current in early modern England, Osmond reports that the analogy comparing soul and body to husband and wife is "the most pervasive and resonant" (157). Because of the persistent categorization of all women in early modern England according to their marital status – they were either maids, wives, widows, or whores⁹ – the husband-wife / soul-body analogy applies to the position of men and women in relation to each other more generally.¹⁰ Significantly, "the one consistent feature" of the analogy's countless and varied instances is that

it is always the body or sensuality that is identified with Eve (woman), and the soul or reason that is identified with Adam (man). This is perfectly explicable within the context of the Adam/Eve story where it was, after all, Eve who, like sensuality, was attracted to a physical object and thus moved to disobedience. (157-9)

⁹ See Mendelson and Crawford 37, 66.

¹⁰ As future wives, past wives, or women judged to be "fallen" because they deviated from the proper progression of maid to wife, in other words, unmarried women were not exempt from this version of gender hierarchy. Even those who chose to remain maids were subject either to their fathers, uncles, or brothers, or, if entering a religious vocation, to Christ as divine groom.

The three main factors Osmond cites for “making the woman the body and the man the soul” in English writings include: a common “identification of soul and body with Adam and Eve”; the Aristotelian version of conception that I mention earlier;¹¹ and most importantly, the fact that this analogy reinforces “the need for proper subordination” both of wife to husband, and body to soul (159-60).¹² Even the emerging prominence of the Puritan model of companionate marriage, which opposed marriage as submission to a tyrannical husband with marriage as a working partnership, argued for a husband’s responsibility and respect towards his wife by appealing to Christ’s self-sacrificing love for his bride and body, the Church – an analogy that preserves the hierarchy of male over female, divine over earthly.¹³

An entire web of associations and assumptions forms around the conceptual alignment of women with the body and men with the soul. As allegedly more subject to the body than men were, women possessed less reason

¹¹ While this version of conception was certainly current, the more “favoured medical view during the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries stated that the child was formed from both male and female seed” (Mendelson and Crawford 27).

¹² Osmond provides numerous early modern English examples of the husband-wife / soul-body analogy throughout her study, including, in the section I am quoting from here, passages from Jeremy Taylor (“Sermons Preached at Golden Grove” 1653): “For the Woman that went before the man in the way of Death, is commanded to follow him in the way of Love ... For then the Soul and Body makes a perfect Man, when the Soul commands wisely, or rules lovingly [...] that Body which is its partner and yet the inferior; and Kenelm Digby (“Sir Kenelm Digby to Sir Edward Stradling 1663): And as the feminine Sex is imperfect, and receiveth perfection from the Masculine; so doth the Body from the Soul, which to it is in lieu of a Male: And as in corporal generations the Female doth afford but gross and passive matter, unto which the male giveth ... prolific virtue; so in spiritual generations ... the Body administreth only the Organs which, if they were not employed [sic] by the Soul, would of themselves serve to nothing” (160-1).

¹³ For a full discussion of the Puritan model of companionate marriage and the self-advocating ways in which women writers interpreted and made use of it, see chapter 1 of Erica Longfellow’s *Women and Religious Writing in Early Modern England*. See also Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* 2.9.2.

and lacked control of their own passions, determined in large part, of course, by the body's humoral balance. Not only were women more bodily than men, but their bodies were also physiologically inferior to men's bodies, weaker, softer and more malleable, matching their easily-swayed mental constitutions.¹⁴ While most early moderns understood their bodies as very permeable to environmental influences,¹⁵ women's bodies were pathologized as utterly incontinent in comparison to men's, as Gail Kern Paster's important work on humoral theory in *The Body Embarrassed* explores. The "liquid expressiveness" of the female body, Paster has convincingly demonstrated, discursively connects to the stereotype of women's "excessive verbal fluency" (25). "In both formations," she explains, "the issue is women's bodily self-control or, more precisely, the representation of a

¹⁴ On women's susceptibility to the passions, Schoenfeldt writes that women were "frequently assumed to be physiologically less capable of the regimens of self-discipline than were men. In *The Secret Miracles of Nature*, Lemnius gives an elaborate humoral explanation for what he believes to be women's innate inability to exercise self-control" (36). Lemnius claims that women's "loose, soft and tender" flesh facilitates the fast spread of choler "all the body over" as soon as it is "kindled," and that "the venim and collections of humours that she every month heaps together" are dangerously stirred by anger, which releases noxious vapours that affect the "Heart and Brain" (qtd in Schoenfeldt 36). Lisa Perfetti adds that, "thought to be less endowed with the rational faculties that enable one to control the passions, women were considered to be more emotional than men, a belief that persists in many respects today. One might even say that in the medieval way of thinking, emotions *were* female"; Perfetti also explains how humoral theory contributed to the idea that women's bodily constitutions made them more emotional (4-5). MacLean, Laqueur, and Paster all cover similar ground in their in-depth studies of how medical theory constructed women's bodies and minds as weaker than men's. Ian MacLean notes that "woman is considered to be inferior to man in that the psychological effects of her cold and moist humours throw doubt on her control of her emotions and her rationality; furthermore, her less robust physique," as defined in medicine, "predisposes her ... to a more protected and less prominent role in the house-hold and in society" ("The Notion of Woman" 147). See also McGrath, *Subjectivity and Women's Poetry* 40 for a review of how woman's "dominance by her body inhibits her moral and mental capabilities." For early modern, non-medical writings that defined the soul as free of passion and aligned passion squarely with the body, see Davies' *Nosce Teipsum* stanza 25, and Simon Harward's *A discourse concerning the Soule* 9-11.

¹⁵ See Schoenfeldt for an explanation of how people in early modern England conceived of their bodies as permeable to environmental influences which needed to be monitored and regulated (8, 14-15).

particular kind of uncontrol as a function of gender” (25). The notion of “uncontrol” attached to femininity and the body reaches back to Greek philosophical definitions of reason and articulations of the “form-matter distinction” (Lloyd 3). These articulations equated “maleness” with “a clear, determinate mode of thought” and “active, determinate form,” in contrast to “femaleness” and “the unbounded – the vague,” “passive, indeterminate matter” (3). Ben Jonson’s Ursula of *Bartholomew Fair*, whom I discuss in chapter one, exemplifies perfectly this notion of female boundlessness and uncontrol. She also exemplifies (albeit eliciting less sympathy than other examples the theatre provides) Gwynne Kennedy’s point that women’s expressions of emotion could be easily discredited on the grounds that they arose from women’s physiological weakness, along with Paster’s insight that women’s speech could be considered a shameful exposure akin to urinal incontinence and worthy of ridicule.¹⁶

Femininity’s associations with passivity and indeterminacy also underlie Francis Bacon’s articulation of “scientific knowledge” as male “control” over a feminized “Nature” that might begin as “mysterious” but is finally “knowable” and “manipulable” (Lloyd 10-17). The husband-wife analogy finds parallel in many more related analogies for the soul-body relationship current in early modern England that, while adding intriguing nuances, for the most part maintain the division between governor-governed, active-passive, or knower-known, that applies to the gendering of soul and body as husband and wife. Osmond’s work is

¹⁶ Paster develops this connection in her first chapter on “Leaky Vessels: The Incontinent Women of City Comedy.” See Kennedy’s *Just Anger* 8.

particularly useful for gathering together so many examples of these analogies in early modern writings, and even a cursory look at her index gives an idea of the relative consistency of the terms of the divide. Among the entries under body:soul and flesh:spirit analogies are: cage:bird; corporal love:spiritual love; grave:body; house:tenant; garden:gardener; lantern:candle; musical instrument:performer; ship:pilot; temple:priest; tool:artificer; and passion:reason; while listed under soul:body are: Christ:Church; heaven:earth; King:kingdom; etc. (273-4). My chapters are concerned with how similar forms of this conventional body-soul dynamic, such as puppet:puppeteer, tamed:tamer, and spectacle:observer, are both at work in, and yet challenged by, the representations of women in the plays and masques I investigate.

In my discussion of these works, I use the terms “soul,” “spirit,” “mind,” “intellect,” “reason,” and “immaterial” somewhat interchangeably, as with the opposing terms “body,” “flesh,” “matter,” and “material.” These terms indeed overlap on either side of the soul-body dichotomy that I briefly outline above and were often conflated in the language of early modern writers. So, while we must be aware of how “spirit” could designate a specific kind of bridge between body and soul, “a subtle and thin body always movable, engendered of blood and vapour, and the vehicle or carriage of the faculties of the soul” (Crooke 3.12.173),¹⁷ my usage reflects how alongside this definition, “spirit” could also

¹⁷ William Hill cites Hippocrates in his definition of “Spirit” as the chair and instrument of the soul, noting that the Spirit, taking the forms of vital or lively spirit in the heart, natural spirit in the liver, and animal spirit in the head, joins together body and soul, and when the spirit is weak, the body-soul connection weakens (C3r). Gail Kern Paster provides a critical assessment of the

simply be another word for “soul.” John Davies’ long poem *Nosce teipsum* (1599), for example, claims that “*The Soul a Substance and a Spirit is*” (C2v), a “*spirit... / Which from the fountaine of Gods spirit doth flow,*” and which is “not like *aire or wind,* / Nor like the *spirits* about the *heart or braine*” (i.e. the “spirits” of physiological discourse) (D3v). Davies also calls the soul “a *spirit* and *immateriall mind*” (E1r). Simon Harward’s *discourse concerning the soule and spirit of man* (1604) opens chapter one with the subheading “*How many wayes the words Soule and Spirit are synonyma*” and proceeds to give several examples, including that both words “point out” the intellect, that is, the “rationall soul and understanding spirit” (B1r, B4r).¹⁸ Some scholars warn that the opposition between spirit and flesh, however, is not always the same as the opposition between soul and body, primarily with reference to the Pauline tension between spirit and flesh as a tension between two different spiritual orientations, the way of the spirit leading toward God, and the way of the flesh leading away from

treatment of “spirit” in physiological discourse, focusing on Helkiah Crooke. “As properties animating, even defining the living body,” spirits, she points out, “like soul, eluded the anatomist; but, unlike soul, they mattered to his work because they were thought responsible for some of the body’s most important structures of visible and behavioural difference, inside and out.” Paster’s exploration of the physiological understanding of spirits leads her to posit that the discourse surrounding spirits “provides a historically specific rationale for strong, ethically loaded contrasts between paired traits like impulsiveness versus self-containment, spontaneity versus calculation or strategic thinking” (“Nervous Tension” 113, 121).

¹⁸ Harward also gives an account of the relationship between animal spirits and the soul, with an analogy cited as Galenic that the “spirit is in respect of the soule, as the sparkle in respect of the fire” (8). He provides a great summary of how the three types of spirits: animal, vital, and natural, served by sinews, arteries, and veins respectively, correspond to Plato’s three faculties of the soul: Rational, Irascible, and Appetitory (9). For further examples of the slippage between “soul” and “spirit” or “soul” and “mind,” see Nicholas Breton’s *A solemne passion of the soules loue* (1625) A2r; Henry Woolnor’s *The True originall of the soule* (1641) 13; John Woolton’s *treatise of the immortalitie of the soule* (1576) fol 14; and Thomas Wright’s *The Passions of the Minde* (1604), in which he cites “blindnesse of the Minde” as a proof of the imperfection of the soul, and, in a list of “Problemes concerning the substance of our Soules,” uses “Spirit” in the sense of “soul,” and then “spirits” to refer to bodily substances within the space of a few lines (297, 300-301).

God.¹⁹ The Platonic, Augustinian, and Aristotelian divisions of the soul into higher and lower faculties, however, corresponded with the values attached to the larger division between soul and body and thus facilitated the conflation of these parallel dichotomies. My position is that, in the same way, the use of “spirit” and “flesh” as metaphorical vehicles for positive and negative spiritual orientations cannot be finally isolated from thinking about the actual soul and body.

I want to address a question that, by this point, will have come up for someone familiar with explicit references to the soul in early English literature, and especially in devotional poetry: don’t most writers, poets, and even clergy always use feminine pronouns to refer to the soul, and don’t they usually depict the soul as a female figure? And do these references not overturn the claim that the body is most often feminized in contrast to a soul that is masculinized? Depictions of and references to the soul as female are certainly conventional, but often occur when the writer is either considering the soul in isolation, or in relationship to Christ; the soul as female, in other words, tends not to find an explicit contrast in emphatically masculine physicality or bodiliness.²⁰ The literary convention of making the soul feminine rarely produces empowering

¹⁹ See, for instance, Kate Narveson’s “Flesh, excrement, humors, nothing” 315-16, and Osmond 10, 21 & 35.

²⁰ A notable exception may be George Herbert’s “Church-Monuments,” in which the speaker describes his soul as repairing “to *her* devotion” while his body learns to “spell *his* elements” and “find *his* birth,” but the pronoun “his” might also simply be intended as a neutral pronoun, as “his” was frequently used in the way we would now use “its” (1, 7, emphasis added). The reference to the body as “it” instead of “he” in the preceding line supports the likelihood that “his” is a neutral possessive pronoun, here. Just as the soul is gendered feminine when considered in isolation, Osmond points out that the rare identifications of women with the soul in Jacobean drama are “normally limited to situations where they are viewed alone, apart from the context of their relationship with men” (167).

representations of women as possessing superior intellect, morality, or other faculties of the soul, in the way that the association of women with the body connects to such disadvantageous representations of women as weak, irrational, and lacking self-control. The biblical notion of God as “father, bridegroom, king,” and of “the human soul and the church” as “daughter, bride, and consort,”²¹ leads John Donne, “in his sacred poetry and prose,” to consider masculinity a kind of “spiritual liability,” as Elizabeth Hodgson explains (13), but not so much because women themselves were somehow inherently more in tune with the soul than were men based on their biological makeup. Rather, while Donne sees the “conventional values of feminine submission and interdependence” as necessary in an individual’s relationship with God, he maintains a “distinction between ‘women’ and ‘the feminine’” in his self-representations (Hodgson 14-15). For Donne the soul’s femininity, then, has less to do with an exalting of women’s spiritual affinity or capacity than with an affirmation of the feminine as a marker of subordination, weakness, inferiority – qualities that are desirable and appropriate for everyone in relationship to God, but only to women on a practical, everyday basis. Beyond Donne, as a literary convention, the feminization of the soul remains subject to male control. In her comprehensive survey of imaginative depictions of the soul in Western culture, Osmond notes that despite the varied characteristics and “multiple roles” of the feminine soul – she may be “a rather

²¹ DiPasquale, *Refiguring the Sacred Feminine* 1. In n.2 of this page, DiPasquale offers a useful reference to multiple Old and New Testament passages in which the figuring of the soul as daughter and bride appear.

remote figure, awe-inspiring in her beauty and purity,” or “of the more earthly feminine, seductive and approachable, but still refined beyond the merely sexual,” and she might appear to “inspire, advise, reproach,” or “condemn” – one thing remains the same. Clarifying that she is “not using the word ‘men’ in the inclusive sense,” Osmond asserts that “the feminine soul comes to *men*. They painted the pictures and wrote the texts” (*Imagining* 47). This tradition suggests that the feminization of the soul is wrapped up in male attempts to define or manage the very concept of the soul, to render visible and facilitate comprehension of – and thus to gain some control over – a complex and mysterious entity.²² In addition to being connected to male artistic control, the feminization of the soul might, paradoxically, stem from the association of women with the body. The soul is not the only abstract concept to be represented through female personification; the traditional representation of several emotions and virtues also personifies them as female figures, and James Paxson suggests that the gendering of the body as female lies at the root of such feminizations of abstract concepts. As Lisa Perfetti lucidly summarizes this point in her introduction to Paxson’s essay:

the tendency to personify abstract concepts like emotions as female came from the deep structure of classical rhetoric that hinges on a series of associations: since the body is female, and since the use of rhetorical figures is associated with the body because they give form to (or ‘embody’) abstract thought, then rhetorical figures are associated with femininity. (*Women’s Emotions* 4)

²² Also connected to the feminization of the soul as a measure of artistic control is Paul Martin’s suggestion that this gendering was invoked to avoid homoerotic tones for men expressing desire for Christ (102-3). Jonathan Goldberg’s *Queering the Renaissance*, however, cautions against critically reading homoeroticism in devotional expressions as something that writers sought to avoid.

For these reasons – the feminization of abstract concepts and ideals as circling back to notions of embodiment as female; the feminization of the soul as a measure of artistic control; and the distinction between feminine subjection as an ideal attitude to assume toward God versus feminine subjection as a consequence of real women’s supposed inferiority to men – literary references to the soul as female fail to significantly contradict the strong cultural alignment of women with the body and of men with the soul and the patriarchal subordination of women that this alignment underpinned.²³

Articulations of the overall relationship between soul and body, spirit and matter, which ran counter to the conventional structuring of the relationship as a hierarchical division, however, were also available. Continuing religious belief in the eventual resurrection of the body at the Last Judgment asserted the body’s value, along with the soul, as an integral part of the eternal self.²⁴ Writings on childbirth and nursing record the belief that “maternal imagination” during pregnancy could affect the child’s physical appearance, and that a child imbibed some of its mother’s (or wet nurse’s) moral disposition along with her breast-milk (Mendelson and Crawford 28-9). The fluidity between material and immaterial

²³ This is not to deny that the representation of the soul and of other abstract concepts as feminine could sometimes create an opening for the characterization of femininity as powerful and not subject to male control. The closest example I have found occurs in Jane Anger’s *Protection*: “if we women be so perillous cattell as they terme us, I marvell that the Gods made not Fidelitie as well a man, as they created her a woman, and all the morall vertues of their masculine sex, as of the feminine kinde, except their Deities knewe that there was some soverainty in us women, which could not be in them men” (B2v).

²⁴ Caroline Walker Bynum’s *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200-1336* provides a fascinating and comprehensive account of the history of belief in the physical body’s resurrection after death, investigating its many nuanced articulations, developments, impetuses, and implications.

apparent in these notions of motherly influence contravenes the notion that women only passively supply matter to their children, while men pass on the soul. And yet the blurring of a division between material and immaterial in this case can become a means to tack blame onto the mother for a child's poor disposition or perhaps abnormal appearance (28-9); it does not serve to dislodge the association between women and inferiority.

Nonetheless, similar muddyings of the soul-body dynamic, and especially artistic play with this dynamic in early modern poetry, prose, and, my current focus, drama, I argue, do carry potential to challenge women's subordinate position in patriarchal society. While this possibility has received attention in women's writing from Lynette McGrath, who has discovered a tendency for women to invest the body with subjectivity in a way that responds to the increasing association of women with the body by emphasizing the body's own complex wisdom as opposed to its inferiority,²⁵ the connection between literary engagements of the soul-body relationship and representations of women has not yet served as a focal point for early modern literary criticism.

In choosing this connection as my focal point, I am indebted to McGrath's findings and to scholars such as Paster, Lloyd, Laqueur, MacLean, Mendelson and Crawford, and others, who have drawn attention to the ways women were so persistently associated with the body or relegated to bodily roles in society, and to how that body was understood and pathologized. Their work is part of what Ewan

²⁵ See, for instance, *Subjectivity and Women's Poetry* 47, 64.

Fernie and Ramona Wray identify, in their assessment of the current critical landscape in Renaissance studies, as “a wider movement in the humanities, from the spiritual to the material,” a “shift” that is signalled by the body’s place at “centre stage” in criticism (9). While this shift has been immensely productive, the recent scholarly emphasis on the body and materiality tends to downplay early modern concepts of the soul, even when the relationship between the material and immaterial is broached. When Michael Schoenfeldt considers the relationship between “physiology and inwardness” in his study of early modern *Bodies and Selves*, for instance, he focuses on corporeality and favours terms like “inwardness,” “mind,” “emotions,” or “psychological interiority,” without always making clear where early modern concepts of the soul fit into this terminology.²⁶ In her study of early modern inwardness, Katharine Eisaman Maus acknowledges that for “many new-historicist and cultural materialist critics,” “soul” (along with the aligned terms “privacy,” “inwardness,” and “subjectivity”) is a suspicious term that “beg[s] to be debunked” (27). The translation of the soul into terms we are critically more comfortable with, however, is problematic given that, as Lisa Hopkins rightly points out, “the intensity of the early seventeenth-century interest in the body by no means precluded an equally eager interest in the soul” (118). Even more problematically, the critical elision of the soul in discussions of inwardness and subjectivity risks losing sight of how persistently early modern

²⁶ Schoenfeldt does refer explicitly to early modern treatments of the opposition between “body and soul” or “spirit and matter” but in isolated sections of his study (6-11, 40-1, 56-7, 60, 77-9, 98-102), as part of, but not central to a consideration of “physiology and inwardness.”

culture gendered the very components a predominantly Christian society would conceive of as constituting the self. One of the useful insights that Maus's work offers, for instance, is that a "connection between a challenge to authority and a highly developed sense of personal inwardness is ... intrinsic,"²⁷ but, as McGrath's readings of women's writings suggest, inwardness might not be part of female subjectivity in remotely the same way it might be for male subjectivity. My dissertation is more concerned with representations of women than with theories of early modern subjectivity, to which both Maus and Schoenfeldt contribute. Representation, however, can both reflect and suggest new subject-positions for women. In investigating the link between dramatic representations of women and engagements with the body-soul divide, I take the position that recent scholarly emphasis on the body needs to be balanced with new considerations of the body-soul dynamic.

My focus on Jacobean drama aims, in part, to highlight that the gendered soul-body dynamic plays a role in representations of and attitudes toward women beyond literature that engages explicitly and centrally with this relationship (such as devotional poetry, for instance, or philosophical and theological treatises). Theatre necessarily engages the interplay between material and immaterial more broadly, often drawing attention to the fluidity and tensions between the two. This quality of theatre makes it particularly fitting for an investigation of the cultural values inflecting the soul-body divide and their impact on representations of

²⁷ 70. On the connection between interiority and resistance to authority, see also Hanson 17.

women. Theatre constantly conveys the immaterial, whether emotions, dreams, or departed spirits, for instance, in very material ways, and conversely conjures certain material events through onstage story-telling or chorus narration as though to enhance their impact by leaving them to the audience's imagination. My first chapter elaborates on this spectral spectatorship by discussing the ghost-like qualities of Gloriana's skull in *The Revenger's Tragedy*. In concentrating on dramatic representations of women, I share Alison Findlay's position that:

the absence of women from [theatre] companies does not mean that professional Renaissance drama is an all-male activity. The meanings of plays presented on the commercial stages were not produced solely by the writers and actors. Spectators were an integral element in Renaissance drama ... [and] we do know that women made up a significant part of Renaissance theatre audiences. (1)

Women were not entirely excluded from participation in these representations, and indeed, their own writings bear the imprint of the same patriarchal ideology that the stage reflects. My focus on Jacobean drama for the angle it offers into my topic, then, does not mean to privilege these representations over women's self-presentations, but rather to produce new readings of the plays that might be productively put into conversation with female-authored texts. I am intrigued, for instance, by Jacqueline Broad's argument that particularly women writers and philosophers, of the second half of the seventeenth and into the early eighteenth century, reject post-Cartesian dualism in favour of a concept of flesh and spirit as more complexly integrated (10-12). Dualism, obviously, does not make its first entrance with Descartes, and I would posit that the seeds of what women such as Margaret Cavendish more explicitly and fully articulated later in the century are

already present in earlier dramatic play with body-soul concepts and representations of women, although my dissertation can only take a step in the direction of making such a claim conclusively. I am not the first to offer a reading of drama in terms of body-soul issues,²⁸ and am obviously not the first to consider dramatic representations of women's bodies or souls (though considerations of the latter are far less frequent). Where I depart from and build on this previous scholarship to offer something new is in an exploration of dramatic engagements with the body-soul construct as an opening for representations of women that challenged misogyny and patriarchal notions of women's proper place in society.

My first chapter on puppetry in Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy* and Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* argues that these plays subversively stage material escaping management. The relationship between puppet and puppeteer, lifeless material and an animating force which gives it motion and expression, emerges as an obvious though overlooked analogy for the body-soul relationship. These plays also render inescapable the connection between a puppeteer's exercise of control over his puppet, his property, and a husband's treatment of his wife as property under his control, so that puppetry offers a precise instance of the link between body-soul ideas and the representation of women. Despite the idea of puppetry as artistic control over material, however, the appearance of actual puppets onstage tends to captivate and fascinate the audience in a way that parodies and unsettles

²⁸ Osmond, in chapter eight of *Mutual Accusation*, has considered how conceptualizations of the soul-body divide can inform different types of dramatic conflict and the roles of female characters.

the spirit-flesh, controller-controlled distinction. Much like Donne's demonstration of wit in Problem VII at the expense of women in general, Vindice uses his dead fiancée's skull as a visual prop for his witty speeches, but the striking and macabre presence of Gloriana, his gruesome, grinning puppet, exerts a powerful, wordless impact on the audience that colours his speeches in a way to which Vindice is oblivious. The puppetry in *Bartholomew Fair* involves much more hilarity, but both plays invoke and considerably trouble the association of women with the material. Puppetry backfires in these plays in a way that also reveals the consequences of dismissing, or refusing to accept and learn from the material.

While chapter one considers how the signifying force of onstage material can wordlessly disrupt the conceptual soul-body divide, chapter two finds in Fletcher's *The Tamer Tamed; or, The Woman's Prize* a witty, rhetorical engagement of the soul-body relationship. In her battle of wits with her misogynistic new husband, Maria strategically employs rhetoric to insist on a rigid divide between her body and mind which forces Petruccio to engage with her intellectually despite his default-mode to engage with her physically. Conversely, she also uses rhetoric that confuses the line between body and soul when it assists her in trumping Petruccio's public insults. Fletcher's compelling staging of women overcoming men through skill in rhetoric progressively challenges the notion of a male monopoly on intellectual debate secured through the widespread exclusion of women from formal training in rhetoric. In *The*

Tamer Tamed, rhetorical skill makes it possible for female characters to insist on having it both ways, that is, to align women with the (superior) soul and men with the (inferior) body, and yet assign positive value to women's bodies. This possibility works to radically expose more conventional, negative views of women's bodies and the pervasive association of women with bodies as themselves mere rhetorical constructs mobilized to subordinate women – rhetorical constructs that can easily be met with new, anti-misogynistic ones. Indeed, the radical awareness of the body-soul dichotomy's use as a rhetorical weapon in *The Tamer Tamed* leads to the play's suggestion that ultimately, whether the line between body and soul is rigid or blurred matters less than who is in control of the rhetoric.

Chapter one's concern with the material and chapter two's concern with the rhetorical become fully integrated in my final chapter, which examines a visual rhetoric in masques in which Queen Anna and her ladies performed. Both Jonson and Daniel draw explicit comparisons between the masque's components of poetry in one category, and scenery and costuming in the other, and the soul-body dichotomy. They both also invoke the body-soul division thematically within the poetry of their masques, and these layered allusions to the body-soul division invite us to see yet another layer in the visual juxtaposition of the dancers' bodies with the impressive masque scenery. Visually, the female masquers, I argue, come to represent the soul within the framing body of a masculinized masque set. In light of the conventional notion of the soul's role of

governance within the body, this reversal carries potentially subversive implications, performed, as it was, before a king who was very clear in his view that women had no place in the governance of state affairs.

By focusing on a tragedy, two comedies, and a small selection of masques, I endeavour to provide thorough and nuanced readings of each work's representation of women in light of body-soul concepts, and at the same time, to demonstrate that this connection between body-soul concepts and representations of women spans a variety of theatrical genres. With the exception of Fletcher's play, each work I examine, moreover, has been read as forwarding particularly negative views of women. Courtly dance, especially in masque, enacted and reinforced existing social codes stipulating women's subordination and deference to men and stressing women's position as objects for the active male gaze.²⁹ In *The Revenger's Tragedy* two female characters' dead bodies suffer exposure as sensational spectacles subject to the male gaze and to male interpretation, and despite the virtue that Vindice's sister demonstrates – echoing Gloriana's actions in life – the witty protagonist delivers a litany of cleverly turned misogynistic claims in connection with Gloriana, his mother, and women in general, that do not meet with the slightest verbal challenge or contestation. *Bartholomew Fair* presents, in Ursula the pig-woman, the most extreme, over-the-top, literary example of the association between women and flesh that I can think of. And even while Fletcher's Maria is appealingly proto-feminist, Petruccio unleashes a

²⁹ See for instance Mirabella 415, 424-5; McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage* 55.

full arsenal of misogynistic jokes and threats to the amusement of his peers and the audience.³⁰ In each of these works, an underlying disruption or rethinking of the body-soul divide, I argue, functions as a strong undercurrent of criticism to effectively challenge such expressions of misogyny and the patriarchal subordination of women to men, as well as to open up alternate, more positive readings of the women represented.

³⁰ In a performance of *Tamer* at the Theatre Erindale (2009), the male characters often onstage with Petruccio would always laugh and jeer appreciatively at the insults Petruccio hurled at Maria, whose counter-remarks were boosted by laughter from her female allies. The audience laughed at the insults from both sides, perhaps encouraged by the onstage laughter.

Chapter 1

Souls, Bodies, and Puppetry in *The Revenger's Tragedy* and *Bartholomew Fair*

“Belike you mean to make a puppet of me.”

– Katharina in *The Taming of the Shrew* (4.3.103)

Puppetry brings to a sharp focus the interrelationship between representations of women and cultural inscriptions of the soul-body divide. This chapter locates Vindice's dark puppetry of Gloriana's skull in Middleton's *Revenger's Tragedy* (1606-7) and the comic puppetry in Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) within the contexts of the puppet's cultural history and of the puppet's facility as a metaphor for the soul-body relationship. I argue for a crucial and productive difference between how the puppet signifies as metaphor and how it signifies as performative object. Metaphorically speaking, to call someone a puppet in seventeenth-century England amounted to an insult, as it would today, insinuating mental vacuousness, superficiality, and an inability to act unless under someone else's control. One significant difference in early modern usage is that the term “puppet” was much more gendered than in today's usage. This metaphorical reading of the puppet as a sign for the empty, the subordinate, the controlled, does not, however, translate to the puppet onstage. The performing puppet often holds a special fascination for audiences and an uncanny capacity to signal meaning apart from the puppeteer's intentions. In light of the feminization of the puppet as it overlaps with the feminization of the body in the soul-body relationship, this

difference between the metaphorical invocation of the puppet and actual puppet performance – or to put it simply, the onstage puppet’s disruptive signifying power – holds radical implications for the representation of women more broadly. In both *The Revenger’s Tragedy* and *Bartholomew Fair* puppetry simultaneously presents a misogynistic view of women and works to finally overturn this view.

The appearance of puppets on the commercial playhouse stage is not the same thing as a puppet performance on a street corner or at a fair. The playhouse appropriation of puppet performance sets puppetry in critical or interrogative relation with other elements of the play’s wider narrative. To set up my discussion of what might be at stake for women in this metatheatrical engagement with puppetry, I turn first to Katharina’s recognition in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1592-4) that her new husband is like a puppet-master.

Although exasperated at being denied a desirable gown and cap through Petruchio’s pretences that the tailor has marred them, Katharina’s voiced suspicion that Petruchio must want to make her his puppet is a shrewd one. Beyond referring to how Petruchio is asserting control over her appearance, here, by refusing her the choice of her own garments, Katharina’s puppet metaphor points to something even more sinister in Petruchio’s treatment of her. Petruchio might initially imagine his “peremptory” nature meeting the “proud-minded” Katharina as “two raging fires” that “consume the thing that feeds their fury” when they meet, or as “extreme gusts” of wind which “blow out fire and all” (2.1.131-136), but clearly he is not interested in a mutual subduing; all of the

consuming or blowing out must take place within Katharina. Petruchio expects his will to replace Katharina's as the animating spark of her behaviour, and even take precedence over her own perceptions. This expectation is evident in his dizzying progression from deciding his wife's apparel to insisting that before he and Katharina will journey to her sister's wedding, "It shall be what o'clock I say it is" and not what time Katharina knows it is (4.3.191). In Plato's division of the soul, which remained influential into the seventeenth century, the will or "spirited element" is one of the soul's faculties, the "natural ally" of reason in the *Phaedrus* and corresponding to the body's heart in the *Timaeus* (*Mutual Accusation* 5). Ultimately, Petruchio seeks to empty Katharina of her soul insofar as it encompasses her independent will by making her body "passing empty" of food and energy – literally a weak and empty vessel ready to receive his inspiration or direction (4.1.178).

And yet, at moments when Katharina seems most puppet-like – as when on Petruchio's absurd command she throws her cap underfoot before her father's astonished guests and proceeds to lecture the women present on the "duty they do owe their lords and husbands" (5.2.135), again obeying Petruchio's order – she is perhaps most beyond her puppeteer's control. Petruchio could have ventriloquized her final speech, in that it praises husbands so cloyingly³¹ and disparages women at such length for not believing their husbands to be their infinite superiors. But

³¹ And also so falsely, considering that none of the husbands at the wedding feast have had to commit "his body / To painful labor both by sea and land" or "watch the night in storms, the day in cold" in order to provide for their wives (152-4). Instead, they have all enjoyed a significant increase in finances thanks to their new wives' dowries.

the excessiveness of this performance of Petruchio's will (depending on its delivery, and in keeping with Katharina's sharp wit) borders on sarcasm – and a sarcasm beyond credible reproach, since attacking it would force Petruchio and the men to admit that their own expectations sound over-the-top and unnatural. Instead of truly becoming a puppet to her husband's will, Kate arguably provides a puppet-like parody of Petruchio's notion of an ideal wife. If the implied mockery or criticism is lost on Petruchio and the guests of the wedding feast, it need not be lost on the audience.

Petruchio is not alone on the early modern stage in his desire to puppet a woman. In addition to the examples from *The Revenger's Tragedy* and *Bartholomew Fair* on which this chapter will focus, instances of men trying to puppet women both dead and alive turn up in a variety of Jacobean plays. In Marston's *Sophonisba* (1606), for example, Massina makes Sophonisba's body a trophy to his honour after she has consumed poison to save him from his dilemma of either rendering his wife as a prize to the Roman general Scipio or breaking his oath to that general. Massina carefully orchestrates the public presentation of Sophonisba's body to Scipio: after a dramatic introduction he parades her body to the accompaniment of music (perhaps carried in a chair, as her body was borne offstage in the previous scene), and "adorns" her corpse, most likely with the decoration he has just received from Scipio (5.4.44sd, 54sd). As he transfers his ornament to Sophonisba, Massina fittingly declaims "On thee, loved creature... / Rest all *my* honour" (5.4.53-4 emphasis added), explicitly appropriating her body

as an image of his own “glory,” “virtue,” and “fame,” and procuring the status of “Rome’s very minion” as a result (42, 47). In *The Tempest* (1610), too, Prospero uses a number of spirits as puppets to do his bidding,³² but perhaps he most resembles a puppet-master when he demonstrates his ability to effortlessly remove Miranda from the conversation by casting her into a deep sleep and then reanimating her when it suits him, much as a puppeteer might cast aside and later take up again his puppet. The Tyrant in *The Lady’s Tragedy*³³ (1611) tells the corpse of the Lady who to escape his lust committed suicide, “I will possess thee” (4.3.116); obsessed with her body – the “house” to which “the soul is but a tenant” (5.2.3) – he has it dressed, painted, and positioned (“Keep her up, / I’ll have her swoon no more” [5.2.115-16]) to his liking. And in Massinger’s *The Duke of Milan* (1621-2?), the perfidious Francisco, disguised as a doctor, brags that through artifice he can convince the duke that his dead duchess lives again. As a puppeteer animates the lifeless puppet’s body, Francisco claims that “by a strange vapour, / Which I’ll infuse into [the Duchess’s] mouth” he can “create / A seeming breath” and “make her veins run high too, / As if they had true motion,” and the duke’s friend Pescara confidently hires him to do so (5.2.146-9).

³² For a thoughtful discussion of Prospero’s spirit puppets, see Scot Cutler Shershow’s *Puppets and Popular Culture* 90-99. In Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, the false Una that Archimago fashions to carry out his deceitful plans, and the sprites he summons to assist him, are immaterial or spirit puppets along the same lines, as is the false Florimell the witch creates (book I, canto I.38 – I.II.9, III.VIII.4-10).

³³ I am convinced by Lisa Hopkins’s reasons for using the title *The Lady’s Tragedy* for Middleton’s play, which has also been referred to as *The Second Maiden’s Tragedy* and *The Maiden’s Tragedy*. Hopkins opts for *The Lady’s Tragedy* “to differentiate it securely from *The Maid’s Tragedy*,” and “because the heroine is in fact referred to as ‘the Lady’ throughout the play (she has no name), whereas it is not even absolutely clear that she actually is a maiden, at least by the close of the play, when she is referred to as Govianus’ wife (4.5.24) and crowned his queen” (72).

The early modern habits of thought that view puppets as feminine and women as more likely than men to be puppet-like are inescapably misogynistic. “Puppet” is a variant of “poppet,” a term of endearment, especially for “a child or young woman” with the sense of “darling” or “pet” (*OED* “poppet, n.” 1). “Poppet” – as well as similar words in other Romance and Germanic languages, such as the French “poupée” – likely derives from the Latin “puppa,” meaning “girl” or “doll” (*OED* “poppet, n.” a-d). Etymologically, then, femininity connects with the diminutive, the little – and relatedly, the inconsequential – in the word “puppet.”³⁴ Puppets, of course, are material objects fashioned to be controlled by an external agent. They are inherently manipulable and their purpose is often to please the sight and to entertain. Apart from its denotative meaning, by the late sixteenth century the word “puppet” held the derogatory connotation of “a person, *esp. a woman*, whose (*esp. gaudy*) dress or manner is thought to suggest a lack of substance or individuality” (*OED* “puppet, n.” 3 *emphasis added*). Besides the etymological roots of the word “puppet,” the puppet’s need to be externally governed, its passivity, and its superficiality fit well with women’s prescribed subordinate position to men in the patriarchal society of seventeenth-century

³⁴ A search for the word “puppet” in *Lexicons of Early Modern English* turns up results similar to the *OED* definitions that link the puppet with the feminine and the diminutive. An entry for “Pupa” in the *Dictionarium Linguae Latinae et Anglicanae* (1587) reads “A girle, a modder, a young wench: also a puppet like a girle.” An entry for “pupo” in John Florio’s *A World of Words* (1598) defines “Pupo” as “a pishsneye, a sweet-hart, a prettie musse, a daintie mop, a playing babie, a puppet.” Florio’s *Queen Anna’s New World of Words* (1611) repeats this definition of “Pupo” and notes that “Pupa,” a “babie or puppet like a girle” is “Vsed also for a lasse or wench.” Edward Philips’s *The New World of English Words* (1658) defines “Mammet” as “a puppet, from the Greek work Mamme, as it were a little Mother, or Nurse.” Shershow’s helpful consideration of the definitions of “puppet” and related words first prompted me to consult the *OED* and *LEME* definitions.

England.³⁵ The hand-puppet's hollowness without the puppeteer resonates with the early modern designation of woman as the "weaker vessel" in relation to man – a designation enshrined in the King James Bible that gained proverbial status through its ubiquitous use for over a century.³⁶ Puppet and vessel both represent physical surfaces, empty in themselves unless filled with "substance."

The puppet, in addition to its feminization and its resonance with the "weaker vessel," also works as a basic metaphor for the relationship between body and soul. At this juncture, puppetry, as both performance and literary motif, provides a useful focal-point to help illuminate the important connections between engagements of the body-soul relationship and representations of women. Just as hand-puppets might feature exaggerated physical features to catch the eye,³⁷ they can also foreground bluntly – which is not to say simplistically – questions about the relationship between inner and outer, spirit and matter, as these components made up the "self." As a hollow material body animated from within by the puppeteer, the hand-puppet is most obviously analogous with a dualistic model of the self as consisting of two distinct components, a purely physical form animated by a separate, internal intelligence. In that the hand-puppet permits the puppeteer

³⁵ Male characters are puppeted onstage too, although when men are described or visually presented as puppet-like, the effect is usually to emphasize their effeminacy or deride them as undeserving social climbers, as Scot Cutler Shershow explains, culling examples from early modern theatre and literature (*Puppets* 33, 72, 90). Shershow cites, for instance, satirical comparisons of "the specter of social mobility" with puppets, or "the performing object," in Marston, Chapman, and Middleton (73); Falstaff's "analogy between the diminutive and the artificial" in his descriptions of his page (76-7); and the "puppetlike gull" Sir Politic Would-Be who is mocked as a "rare motion" when found hiding in a tortoise shell (88).

³⁶ See Anthony Fletcher on the "common usage" of the term "weaker vessel" to designate women (60-1).

³⁷ Such as the puppets featured in Antoni Cimolin's recent direction of *Bartholomew Fair* at Stratford, for instance.

to express his creative vision, the puppet is also comparable to the more Aristotelian notion of the body as a useful tool for the soul-as-artificer.³⁸ Both models find correspondence in humoral theory, which provides a language for recognizing the body's powerful influences on thought and feeling, and for controlling those influences through carefully regulated diet and activity.³⁹ The humoral system exemplifies the early modern understanding of the body as useful, but at the same time requiring proper surveillance and governance. Women's bodies required the most surveillance and governance – humoral theory helped naturalize the construction of women as less in control of their own bodies than men were, and, as a result, more vulnerable to unruly passions which the body was believed to generate.⁴⁰ Men, who were supposedly not as prone to bodily influence, were considered more able to exercise reason, a faculty of the

³⁸ See Osmond, *Mutual Accusation* 6-7, 14-15, for a discussion of Aristotle's concept of the body as an instrument for the soul.

³⁹ For more on the measure of control over one's body and temperament that the language of humoral theory enabled, see Michael Schoenfeldt especially 11-13, 20-3. Further examples of the body as under the soul's control or instruction include the eighth emblem in book 5 of Francis Quarles's *Emblemes* (1635), which shows a skeleton (representing the body) waiting, in boredom, for the soul within its ribcage to finish praying, and George Herbert's "Church Monuments," in which the speaker directs his "flesh" to "learn" amidst entombed ashes "thy stem / And true descent" while the speaker's soul is praying.

⁴⁰ Gail Kern Paster discusses in *The Body Embarrassed* how "discourse about the female body" in texts including plays, "Renaissance medical texts, iconography, and the proverbs of oral culture ... [i]nscribe women as leaky vessels by isolating one element of the female body's material expressiveness – its production of fluids – as excessive, hence either disturbing or shameful." The "issue is women's bodily self-control or, more precisely, the representation of a particular kind of uncontrol as a function of gender" (25). While Paster is not interested in how this inscription might affect concepts of women's souls, Michael Schoenfeldt's convincing argument in *Bodies and Selves* that physiological experience and psychological inwardness are "fully imbricated," with Galenic medicine providing a discourse that articulated "human emotion in corporeal terms" (1, 6-11), would suggest that the construction of women as having no control over their bodies would translate to a corresponding lack of control over their spiritual states. Indeed, Gwynne Kennedy in *Just Anger* gathers persuasive evidence that women were thought to be more prone to unruly emotions because of their supposedly weaker minds, and likely to express inferior or more childish and less "legitimate" forms of emotion (namely anger) than men because of their "inferior" physical constitution (6-8).

soul, and theological ideas that God ordained the soul to govern the body, and man to govern woman, were naturalized through cross-reference or analogy.⁴¹

The puppet onstage, I argue, especially when that puppet represents an actual woman, must be interpreted in light of this network of associations that connected femininity, materiality, the body, and emotion, and placed them below masculinity, immateriality, the soul, and reason. These cultural resonances render the puppet a particularly potent metaphor for the use of a woman as a man's mere instrument to achieve his own ends, whether the goal be vengeance or social advancement. Indeed, because of these deeper associations, onstage allusions to puppetry render this treatment of women even more violent, aggressive, and dismissive of the complexity of female subjectivity than initially appears. The attempt to "puppet" a woman, in other words, conveys a complete denial of a complex subjectivity rooted at once in body and spirit. Puppetry is an emptying out of her soul, a reduction and simplification that equates her with her body, and attempts to ensoul that body with the puppeteer's self-serving agenda. Katharine Eisaman Maus identifies an early modern "sense of discrepancy" between "socially visible" exteriors and "invisible personal" interiors that influenced concepts of subjectivity reflected in Renaissance drama and poetry (12-13). The notion of inner "disposition" and outer "appearance" could be employed, she explains, for self protection, as one could conform outwardly to the government-imposed religion, for instance, while concealing within one's real beliefs (18-24).

⁴¹ See Kennedy 1-2, 4 and Osmond 157-60.

In some cases, a “highly developed sense of personal inwardness” is “intrinsic” to challenges to authority,⁴² and while selves were considered “obscure” and “hidden,” they were also considered “capable of being made fully manifest” (70, 28-9), as the violent plucking out of a traitor’s heart on the scaffold gruesomely dramatizes (Hanson 1). With similar violence, the onstage act of puppeting a woman effaces in her the kind of inwardness Maus and Hanson see as linked to rebelliousness by assuming, in its place, an inherent emptiness to be filled. The male character alluded to as the puppeteer of a female character takes to the extreme the cultural association of masculinity with superior reasoning ability and a closer proximity to the divine by assuming an almost god-like role, fashioning, in a sense, a woman that suits him and delighting in controlling her – that is, in constituting her inner animating force. As I will discuss further on, Vindice and Littlewit are both artist figures who express delight – absolute glee in Vindice’s case – in the artistic presentation of their respective female puppets. But the puppetry in both *The Revenger’s Tragedy* and *Bartholomew Fair* eventually (and perhaps paradoxically) works to expose the grave error of Vindice and the absurdity of Littlewit taking on this role of puppet-master in relation to women.

Indeed, while the puppet as metaphor seems a straightforward illustration of the conventional, gendered divide between body and soul, animated and animator, in performance the puppet does not always bear out these neat

⁴² For more on the “alliance between inwardness and agency in the service of self-interest” and on inwardness as the “subversive or even demonic” ability to operate secretly beyond the constraints of constituted authority” see Elizabeth Hanson, especially 16-18.

divisions; instead, it holds potential to radically subvert them. Puppets appearing alongside actors onstage – whether the puppeted skull (and eventually entire skeleton) of Gloriana in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, or Leatherhead's hand-puppets in *Bartholomew Fair* – can quickly take on personalities (or perhaps an aura, in Gloriana's case) all their own. Any clean distinction between animated and animator, dull material and immaterial force, becomes confused when the puppets seem to have a distinct influence over the puppeteer and a predominant place in the audience's attention.⁴³ As much as the puppeteer might emphasize absolute control over the puppet, just as Petruchio's figurative puppet, Katharina, moves beyond his intentions while seeming to execute his orders, puppets have a tendency to exceed authorial intention. This sometimes eerie tendency raises the possibility that the material might have a spirit and agenda of its own apart from the animation of the puppeteer (and even the playwright). The puppet, in other words, reverses the usual connection, identified by Maus and Hanson, between inwardness, mystery, and rebelliousness; while the puppet's interior is no secret, its exterior captivates the imagination and carries potential to signify something other than its governing interior intends. Before discussing the significance of specific examples to stage representations of women, I want to briefly suggest

⁴³ Puppets indeed held the potential to be "show-stealers" as Ejner J. Jenson's survey of reviews of Terry Hands's 1969 production of *Bartholomew Fair* at the Aldwych indicates. Despite several reviewers' objections to various aspects of the production, the puppet show was praised as "the best part of the play" and the point at which the evening "came to life," the puppets being "more alive and human than the characters in the play" (49). For a more general discussion of how the categories of "subject" and "object" – which the puppeteer and puppet fit into – are unstable in Renaissance England, and how subjectivity can both be constituted through objects and collapse into objects, see Margreta De Grazia, ed., *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*.

two sources of the puppet's subversive potential: its frequent parodic role in early modern puppet shows or "motions"⁴⁴ belonging to "low" or vulgar entertainment, and its similarity to – especially for Puritan antitheatricalists – an idol.

Early modern puppet shows were not performances one would attend for moral edification or the presentation of a serious narrative – or even a coherent or logical narrative at that. Rather, they were often hilarious burlesques of biblical, historical, mythical and literary narratives that "flourished," as George Speaight informs us, in "the sub-world of popular entertainment" (63). Motions were performed "in temporary booths or in hired rooms at fairs, at inns, and on busy street corners (60)."⁴⁵ Speaight describes the "Elizabethan motion" as "a robust, unsophisticated entertainment ... with no attempt at historical accuracy, and spiced with topical allusions" (17). Sometimes "subjects were ... borrowed from popular plays in the human theatre," and "heroes from the history of all ages might be ridiculously jumbled together in a slapstick buffoonery" with "the story ... conveyed in the crudest of jog-trot verse" (64).⁴⁶ An example showing the flavour of the giddy, "incongruous" mixture of "topical allusion" with biblical, historical, and literary narratives that Speaight cites is "when the notorious brothels of Sodom and Gomorrah were seen to be demolished by a crowd of

⁴⁴ A term referring to both puppets and puppet plays. See Speaight 54-5.

⁴⁵ Speaight establishes "five pitches in London at which puppet shows were given" from "the mass of vague contemporary allusions," but reminds us that "the London performances were, however, comparatively unimportant for the puppet showmen, and the majority of these made their living by touring the country" (60-2). See also Shershow 45 and n.1 for description of the venues and surrounding atmosphere of puppet performances and for further references.

⁴⁶ I am not repeating here the several examples Speaight gives from his extensive research into the history of the English puppet theatre to support these assertions. For these examples, see his chapter IV, "Puppets in England: From Chaucer to Cromwell" 52-72.

Elizabethan apprentices” (64). Leatherhead mentions this Sodom and Gomorrah action when reminiscing, in *Bartholomew Fair*, about the past motions he has performed and Speaight singles out Jonson’s play as a particularly illuminating contemporary source on what early modern English puppet shows would have been like (5.1.9-11, Speaight 57-60).

If Jonson’s puppet show of Hero and Leander in *Bartholomew Fair* indicates any regular features of puppet theatre, then the mere sight of a puppet poised to perform would undoubtedly excite in an audience expectations of parody; rebelliousness (the puppets repeatedly interrupt and beat their puppet-master); and an overall sense of bursting out of all bounds (the puppets cannot refrain from repeatedly beating each other up at the slightest provocation, their vulgar behaviour and language observe no limits, and limits also do not apply to what material can be blended together and burlesqued in their play). Puppet shows certainly took irreverent liberties with esteemed narratives by abandoning (if not outright mocking) whatever ideals, moral lessons, or tragedies could be found in the stories they adapted for “a more familiar strain for our people” (*BF* 5.3.96). They also included very physical, bawdy comedy. In this “debasing” process, which involved the audience by inciting their laughter, puppets might be seen to function as a kind of social levelling force. Overall, the puppet performing in fairs, at bridges, and on busy street corners was well-known for its traditionally parodic role, and when transferred to the human stage, the puppet’s connection to

parody and irreverence contributes to its potential to subvert the very dichotomies it at first seems to illustrate.

The puppet's strong connections to the profane, however, should not completely obscure its connections to the spiritual. Before the Reformation, puppets played a role in liturgical drama, perhaps even portraying the Passion, the visit of the three Marys to Christ's tomb, and the Resurrection, and they were probably "occasionally employed in the open-air miracle plays that succeeded the church performances."⁴⁷ The word "marionette" (little Mary) may have "referred originally to the sculpted figures of the Virgin" in crèches or nativity scenes.⁴⁸ Protestant denunciation of Catholicism's ritualistic use of material objects in worship as superstitious and idolatrous often compares Catholic ritual itself to the performance of puppetry.⁴⁹ Without retracing the well-documented invocation of

⁴⁷ Nelson 49; Shershow 40; Speaight 53-54. The evidence Speaight cites in support of marionettes in mystery plays consists of the Mayor of Chester's disapproving reference, in 1599, to "god on strings" and a "stage direction in a Cornish mystery of 1611" that "calls for 'every degree of devils of leather and spirits on cords'" (54).

⁴⁸ Shershow 40. Jonas Barish notes E.K. Chambers's earlier suggestion that "the use of puppets" to portray the nativity is a practice that "survives in the Christmas *crèche*" (14 n.21). Shershow 26-7 also draws attention to the word "mammet," a common early modern English word for puppet, which meant "a false god," "an image of a false god," or "an idol," and was derogatory, "in Protestant usage" for "an image of Christ or of a saint, etc., as used in Roman Catholic practice" (*OED* online, 1.a, c).

⁴⁹ Shershow even supplies two examples of the Catholic Eucharistic Host being likened to a kind of deceiving puppet: "The Host of the Catholic Eucharist, manipulated with ritual gestures and supposedly embodied with the divine spirit, could as such be dismissed as a kind of grotesque performing object. In John Bale's *King Johan* (ca. 1538), for example, the titular character admonishes the allegorical figure Clergy for corrupting England 'with your latyn howrs, serymonyes & popetly playes.' Here the speaker is clearly referring not just to doll-like images but specifically to puppet performance; indeed, he is making a near-pun on 'puppetry' and 'popery'" (38-9). In another example, Bishop Ridley, "one of the celebrated Marian martyrs of the English Reformation, is reported by John Foxe to have contemptuously referred to the sacramental Host of the Catholic Mass as 'Jacke of the box' ... Ridley's epithet repeats a rhetorical strategy... in which Catholic ritual was figurally reinterpreted as a kind of puppetry that animates the dead Host with apparent life" (79-80). Shershow examines in great detail the etymology of the word and name "Jack" and how it connects to puppetry (76-81).

the puppet as a prime symbol of idolatry, especially in anti-Catholic rhetoric (which, as *Zeal-of-the-land Busy* shows us, merges seamlessly with antitheatrical rhetoric),⁵⁰ I simply want to underline the point that, although not relics nor ritualistic objects themselves in Catholic practice, puppets became associated with the idea – so inimical to Protestant belief – of material, not animated by, or the mere shell of, a governing soul, but itself imbued with spirit or having potent spiritual significance.⁵¹

In performance the puppet can really come to life, in a sense, as material infused with spirit somehow beyond the movements generated by the puppeteer's hand and exuding parody that escapes the puppeteer's interpretations. In performance, puppets both emphatically foreground the material and unsettle the dominant construction of spirit or soul in opposition to material. This unsettling, I posit, has repercussions for the representation of women, who were aligned with the material and the body in opposition to men, aligned with the soul, and who

⁵⁰ Refer especially to Shershow 22-42. See also Zimmerman 26-7 and chapters 2-3 on "the corpse as idol"; Rist 3-26 on similarities between the performance of Catholic funerary ritual and theatrical performance of revenge tragedy; Gough 69, 71, 76, for a discussion of the temptress in anti-theatrical writings and epic romance as a figure associated with idolatry and parodied by the puppet; and Nelson 30-1, 42-3 on connections between puppets and idols apart from anti-theatrical or anti-Catholic rhetoric.

⁵¹ The Protestant invocation of the idol (and puppet-as-idol) as a sign of the mistaken belief or superstition that certain material objects held spiritual properties could, instead of foregrounding the emptiness or deadness of the material, paradoxically invest the idol with more sinister magical properties. In that the idol lured one away from true spiritual connection with God, it could be seen as a tool of the devil, as Milton makes clear in Book I of *Paradise Lost* in which hell's "chief leaders" are "named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining" (Argument). For a discussion of "image magic" and the belief that puppets were used as demonic tools in witchcraft refer to Shershow 33-7.

became puppets onstage far more often than did male characters.⁵² In what follows, I examine two vastly different instances of puppetry onstage – Vindice’s gruesome and silent puppetry of Gloriana’s skull, and Leatherhead’s boisterous and hilarious booth puppetry – to suggest that in these plays often noted for their pronounced misogyny, puppetry provides a strong undercurrent of challenge to the predominant system of thought that consistently subordinated the material, emotional, and the feminine to the spiritual, rational, and masculine.

Gloriana’s Grin

There is some hidden power in these dead things
That calls my flesh into’em.

– Amintor in *The Maid’s Tragedy* (5.3.181-2)

Vindice turns the bare skull – the body part Helkiah Crooke would later designate as the “mansion house” of “the soule” (Bk1 ch4 p10) – and, in Act Three, possibly the skeletal body of the murdered lady once betrothed to him, into his puppet,⁵³ a mere hollow tool he strategically employs to achieve his own ends. He “fashion[s]” this puppet himself by dressing it “*up in tires*” and (3.5.42 sd, 99), manipulating its physical movements, he both interprets its meaning to Hippolito

⁵² *The Revenger’s Tragedy* presents a rare case of a male character’s body being physically puppeted when Vindice and Hippolito dress up the Duke’s corpse as Piato (Vindice’s persona when disguised) and position it to appear as if it were alive and slouched over in a drunken stupor. This puppeting of the Duke, however, is a spontaneous act intended to deceive Lussurioso who has ordered the brothers to murder Piato before his eyes, whereas Vindice’s puppeting of Gloriana is an obsessive and long-drawn-out practice (she has been dead for nine years, and Hippolito’s comment that Vindice is “still sighing o’er Death’s vizard” suggests that he has not just recently unearthed her remains [1.1.50]).

⁵³ I agree with Speaight’s definition of “puppet” as “an inanimate figure moved by human agency” (22), a definition that excludes automata.

and the audience⁵⁴ and essentially animates it with his personal desire for revenge against the Duke (who poisoned Gloriana after failing to seduce her, and whom Vindice also blames for the death of his father).⁵⁵ Vindice appears as the dead Gloriana's puppet-master, rather than as her bereaved fiancé. He takes intense pleasure in the artistic set-up of his revenge against the Duke, and he delights in manipulating events to serve poetic justice according to his own script, a script, as Kathryn R. Finin puts it aptly, that is "primarily concerned with the aesthetics rather than the ethics of revenge" (par 3).

Beyond enabling the "aesthetically perfect" surprise that Vindice reserves for his enemy (par 21), a poisonous kiss from the very body the Duke himself poisoned for first refusing his lust, Vindice's puppet-master role also fits with his meta-theatrical attitude. More than once, Vindice draws attention to stage practice. Appalled by the depths of Lussurioso's depravity, he expresses "wonder" that "such a fellow, impudent and wicked, / Should not be cloven as he stood" and asks "Is there no thunder left, or is't kept up / In stock for heavier

⁵⁴ Puppet shows often featured an interpreter. In *Bartholomew Fair* Leatherhead is both puppet-master and interpreter as he explains and clarifies the puppets' lines for Cokes. Speaight discusses the possible origin and role of the puppet "interpreter": "some puppet shows were brought by foreigners, Italians or French, who could not speak English, and so hired a native to stand outside the booth to translate, or interpret, what was being said. But, quite apart from any difficulty of language, the interpreter seems to have been needed to translate the puppets' speeches even when they spoke in English," likely because of efforts to "give a distinctive tone to the puppets' speech" (67). Speaight lists several contemporary references to puppet interpreters and to the strangeness of puppets' voices.

⁵⁵ I agree here with Kathryn R. Finin, who claims that "critics (mis)led by Vindice have pointed to Gloriana's participation as an example of female agency, yet to call this her revenge further elides the violence enacted upon her mutilated corpse. Despite the rhetorical sleight of hand through which Vindice aligns Gloriana's interests with his own, his description of her 'ravishment' as 'delectable' and 'rare' directs our attention to the self-interested nature of his representation" (par.25).

vengeance?” Vindice is answered on cue with the sound-effect of thunder – “There it goes!” (4.2.193-8). For Jonathan Dollimore, “here the traditional invocation to heaven becomes a kind of public stage-prompt” and “the conception of a heavenly, retributive justice is being reduced to a parody of stage effects” (140). With reference to similar moments, (such as Vindice’s comments that “When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good” [3.5.199], or, upon the sound of thunder at the murder of the newly installed Duke Lussurioso, “Mark; thunder! Dost know thy cue ...? [5.3.43-4]), Dollimore notes that Vindice is “invested with a theatrical sense resembling the dramatist’s own” (140). When Vindice assumes the “identity” of dramatist, the effect is to “shatter” the “dramatic illusion” just when it “needs to be strongest” if “the providential references are to convince” (140). Vindice’s role of puppet-master echoes the role of dramatist he assumes in both the metatheatrical sense, and in the play itself with his glee at how well “suited” his revenge is to the Duke’s crimes (3.5.28-32). More importantly, Vindice’s puppetry of Gloriana reflects the hollowing-out effect that his dramatist attitude has on traditional notions of divine retribution. In the same way that his allusions to stage convention deny thunder any heavenly power, his callous use of Gloriana’s remains as “a thing” and stage “property” to assist in his plot denies her bones a sacrosanct status, presenting them instead as barren of any spiritual significance.

Vindice’s complete irreverence for Gloriana’s skull has led Thomas Rist to set *The Revenger’s Tragedy* apart from other early modern revenge tragedies

that, as Rist discusses, invest material with spiritual significance by placing importance on performative ritual practices in remembrance of the dead (4, 8, 14, 17, 100-5). The ghosts that often turn up in this genre, worried about being forgotten, suggest that “remembrance *effects* the dead” (14). The solemn portrayal of ritual commemoration of the dead, the appearance of ghosts anxious about the integrity of their corpses, and even the necessarily physical representations of ghosts onstage, resonate with Catholic emphasis on the interpenetration of spirit and matter.⁵⁶ Protestant thinkers, as Susan Zimmerman summarizes, viewed “the Catholic system of worship” as “hypostatiz[ing] the body, thereby privileging the material principle over that of the spiritual.” To “counteract the materiality of Catholicism” they “needed to draw sharper distinctions between the material and the spiritual” (25, 28).⁵⁷ Rist finds that *The Revenger’s Tragedy* has more affinity with reformist ideas in that it persistently demystifies and “mocks remembrances of the dead” as ineffective, as “bare and empty” as Gloriana’s bones, her skull “a plaything rather than a thing of honour,” and the dead powerless against the abuses of the living (98-106).

⁵⁶ See Peter Stallybrass, “Hauntings: The Materiality of Memory” for a fascinating discussion of the materiality of stage ghosts, which were often represented bearing the marks of their bodily deaths, and for a consideration of the material connection between the living and the dead that adhered through passed down belongings.

⁵⁷ Zimmerman explains that although “in early modern England, the categorical distinctions of Cartesian philosophy had not yet come to dominate any sphere of intellectual life, including that of religion ... Protestant iconoclasm shifted discursive emphasis from the interdependence of body and soul to the priority of the spirit, and in so doing established a prototypical paradigm for mind/body duality. None the less, the development of the reformist movement was hardly linear or univocal, so that the concepts and/or symbolic matrices of the old and new religions often fused in ways that defied categorical description” (45-6).

But Gloriana's status as Vindice's "plaything" – literally, his puppet, a performative object with the potential of materially signifying meaning to the audience beyond or contradictory to the puppeteer's voiced intentions – is precisely what should alert us to the important distinction between the effect Gloriana might have on the audience and Vindice's treatment and interpretation of her. In Gloriana, the uncanny, intermediary status of the puppet, with its traditional spiritual associations despite its blatant materiality, together with its capacity to confuse the lines between animated and animator, overlaps with the intermediary status of the human corpse. The corpse occupied a doubly liminal position between death and burial and, in its state of decomposition, between flesh and dust. A popular though unorthodox belief held that the soul might linger near its corpse prior to interment and perhaps even longer.⁵⁸ This notion about some form of continuing tie between soul and body after death, a connection between the "sanctity of the grave" and the "repose of the soul," is further evidenced in the intense controversy over human dissection.⁵⁹ Both Catholics and Protestants widely believed in the eventual resurrection of the body and its reunion with the soul at the last judgment.⁶⁰ This belief meant that the body was not irrelevant after death; it was an essential component of the immortal self, and as such, merited

⁵⁸ David Cressy notes that "some people believed that the soul still lingered in the vicinity of the body during the first thirty days after burial, a liminal situation requiring great ritual caution" (398). Similarly, "for people who believed that the soul or spirit was not fully detached, and might in some way hover or linger during that liminal interval between death and interment, the experience of watching [the body prior to burial] could be full of terrors" (428).

⁵⁹ Ruth Richardson 75-6. Richardson discusses "popular hostility to dissection" as constituting "a gross assault upon the integrity and identity of the body *and* upon the repose of the soul" (76). See also Gittings 74-5, Zimmerman 132-4.

⁶⁰ Cressy 387.

respect and safekeeping in a proper grave.⁶¹ In the overflowing churchyards of early modern England, of course, old graves were frequently disturbed as bones were inevitably unearthed in the preparation of new graves. The common practice of collecting these loose bones into charnel-houses to make room for new churchyard tenants meant that the prospect of disinterred bones, in itself, would not be especially disturbing to a seventeenth-century audience.⁶² Vindice's employment of Gloriana's skull, however, is not comparable to the inadvertent uncovering of random bones that were consequently bequeathed to the shelter of the charnel-house. Vindice targets Gloriana's body and intentionally keeps it from its grave, prolonging her liminal status as an unburied corpse. If Vindice exhibits no qualms in puppeting what he sees as an empty "shell of Death," the audience need not follow his lead: in fact, the discrepancy between the possibility that Gloriana's bones on some level remain of interest to her departed spirit and Vindice's callous and even bitter objectification of her remains can create a distinct atmosphere of discomfort. Several critics signal awareness of this

⁶¹ Cressy notes that "once buried, a body could not be exhumed without official permission." A body committed to the grave "belonged to no one. It lay, now, in God's freehold, and was subject to ecclesiastical cognizance if removed or abused" (389). Cressy explains that "though materially dead," bodies "deserved reverential treatment" as former "vessels of the soul" that were "destined to rise again." He cites Anthony Sparrow's illuminating description later in the century (1668) of the corpse "not as a lost and perished carcase, but as having in it a seed of eternity." Clare Gittings suggests that "no doubt some people, particularly among the uneducated, held extremely literal interpretations of the resurrection, making the correct burial of dead bodies a matter of vital importance in their eschatological scheme. In popular belief, a Christian funeral was held to assist the passage of the soul to the hereafter. Without these rites, it was felt, the soul might 'walk'" (60).
⁶² For details on the over-crowding of churchyards and the need for "bonehouses" see Clare Gittings 149-40 and Cressy 380.

discomfort when they speak about Vindice as desecrating, violating, or prostituting Gloriana's bones.⁶³

I want to suggest that a significant challenge to Vindice's misogynistic attitudes is bound up in the challenge that Gloriana's stage-presence poses to notions of the material as the binary opposite of the spiritual, inherently empty of any intangible influence. Despite most of its characters' clearly expressed misogyny, critics have suggested that *The Revenger's Tragedy* in some ways provides what Steven Mullaney calls "a critical examination of the tradition" of "stage misogyny" (259). Mullaney, Zimmerman, and Finin, for instance, notice that Vindice himself becomes the epitome of his own negative view of woman, Mullaney referring to how "Vindice ends the play as the leaky vessel he thought to distinguish himself from" by "dribbling away his secret."⁶⁴ Even before the play exposes Vindice's hypocrisy in this way, Gloriana presents him with an unheeded warning of his downfall. Lynette McGrath records how even though "the masculine soul, not the female body, was identified in the early modern period with the individual self, the mind, or the spirit," because women, "especially in Puritan ideology," were "ever more essentialized in physical

⁶³ To cite a few examples, Kathryn Finin discusses the "sexual violence" enacted upon Gloriana's remains and how Vindice's "restoring the female body...restores its rapable possibilities" (par. 24 & 25); Steven Mullaney describes Gloriana as a "representation of sovereign sexuality fully mastered and fully violated" (258); and Zimmerman also describes the skeleton as "violated" and Vindice as a "sacrilegious puppeteer" (135 & 141).

⁶⁴ Mullaney 259; Zimmerman "Representation of Horror" 174; Finin par 13. Karin S. Coddon argues that "necrophilia in *The Revenger's Tragedy* ... parod[ies]" and "interrogate[s] contemporary, increasingly scientific notions of the body" which tended to irrationalize the female body and converge with "means" to control it (71, 75). Coddon also points out that since "the skull is gendered only because we are told so" it exposes the contrivance of gender categories (76).

terms,” they found ways to “invest some sense of self in their physicality” (29, 31). The tendency to align subjectivity and intelligence with physicality and the body that McGrath discovers in women’s writing combats the denial of complex female subjectivity otherwise inherent in the misogynistic identification of woman as body. This challenge turns not on a counter-emphasis on woman as soul (which, as we know, only creates the problematic polarization of women into categories of either chaste maid or evil whore), but on the rejection of the body/soul, material/immaterial divide altogether. While I do not intend to claim any subjectivity or sense of self for Gloriana’s skull, I argue that in blurring the neat lines of this divide, Gloriana poses an eerie threat or warning to those who, like Vindice, both discursively link women to the material and devalue the material as void of and inferior to the spiritual.

Vindice’s soliloquies to Gloriana’s skull, which might be expected to suggest an immaterial bond to Gloriana that has outlasted death, really only reveal that Vindice identifies Gloriana “as body” both before and after her death, and serve to interpret her in these terms to the audience, much as an interpreter explains the puppets to the audience of a motion. Although alluding to the memento mori tradition by introducing (and possessively objectifying) Gloriana as “My study’s ornament” (1.1.15), Vindice overlooks the fact that, beyond reminding of the eventual decay of all things earthly, the memento mori should direct contemplation to the spiritual and the afterlife. Besides a brief mention of how Gloriana’s eyes were “heaven-pointed” and a vague reference to Gloriana’s

“purer part” which “would not consent” to the Duke’s lust, Vindice never elaborates upon or again refers to Gloriana’s soul or virtues (1.1.19, 33). Instead, he expresses disgust at the “ragged imperfections” or “unsightly rings” of her eye-sockets, and juxtaposes them with a memory of her living “face / So far beyond the artificial shine / Of any woman’s bought complexion” (18-22). This memory, however, immediately slides from expressing admiration at Gloriana’s superior natural beauty to associating it with temptation and deception: her beauty could cause “the uprightest man” to sin just “with looking after her,” and “she was able to ha’ made a usurer’s son / Melt all his patrimony in a kiss” (23-9). Tellingly, Vindice refers to the living Gloriana as “Thee when thou wert apparelled in thy flesh,” a description that emphasizes a passive physicality (her body is mere decoration or garment) and that could just as easily apply to a corpse, as the later appearance onstage of the fully fleshed corpse of Antonio’s wife reminds us (31). Of course, the soul could also be described as wearing a garment of flesh, but since Vindice is directly addressing Gloriana’s skull here, he seems to leave the soul out of the equation entirely. The possibility that he implicitly addresses Gloriana’s soul vanishes as Vindice continues his address with “Advance thee, oh thou terror to fat folks / To have their costly three-piled flesh worn off / As bare as this” (45-7). Not only is he clearly referring to the skull alone here, but with the words “advance thee” one could imagine him advancing towards the audience and thrusting the skull, his puppet, forward – but as grim spectacle and macabre joke instead of as revered relic of his murdered beloved.

Vindice does not discount the existence of souls altogether (to list only a few instances, he speaks of having to “blister my soul” [2.2.36]; of his father’s “smothered” “spirit” [1.2.124]; and of “torturing” the Duke’s “soul” [3.5.20]), but he only explicitly refers to women’s souls when their status affects his own male honour. He threatens Gratiana his mother with daggers for bending to the persuasions of a stranger (really Vindice disguised) and thereby consenting to pressure her daughter, Castiza, to offer her body to the lust of the Duke’s son Lussurioso in the hope of material gain. When Gratiana weeps out the repentance she has very much been forced to express, Vindice is content to take it as “a sweet shower, it does much good; / The fruitful grounds and meadows of her soul / Has been long dry” (4.4.47-9). He proposes to his brother to “now” kiss her and “marry her to our souls, wherein’s no lust, / And honourably love her” (57-9). Indeed, the brothers can “honourably” love Gratiana again, now that they have terrorizingly dealt with the threat to their honour that she was posing, and Vindice, positioning himself as knowing judge of her soul, has decided that it has been renewed and a “foul name” – for the family as much as for Gratiana – avoided. Vindice goes on to reflect bitterly on what Castiza would have become had Gratiana succeeded,

The duke’s son’s great concubine!
A drab of state, a cloth o’ silver slut,
To have her train borne up and her soul
Trail i’ the dirt: great! (71-4)

These strong terms of contempt to describe a completely groundless, imagined version of his sister frame a reference to her soul that presents its hypothetical fall

more as an almost-visible public embarrassment (like the exposure and dirtying of a private undergarment) than as a personal moral crisis for Castiza.

Vindice's conventional treatment of the female soul's virtue as inextricable from the honour or chastity of the body echoes in Antonio's interpretation of his wife's suicide: "She, her honour forced, / Deemed it a nobler dowry for her name / To die with poison than to live with shame" (1.4.46-8). In other words, no part of her could escape or exist separately from the "shame" of her body's rape except through death. The relentless correlation between the honour of body and soul while the woman is living,⁶⁵ however, gives neither man pause before subjecting her dead body to precisely the kind of dishonour that she died avoiding (Gloriana) or trying to forget (Antonio's wife). Antonio's wife kills herself after the traumatic experience of being "harried" and having "her honour forced" at a public event "amidst a throng of pandars" (43-6), only to have her body again displayed before a "throng" of men, this time exposed by her husband (perhaps with the dramatic flourish of a suddenly opened curtain) to "*certain lords*," Piero, and Hippolito (0 sd). As the Duke's younger son uses her body to serve his lust, Antonio appropriates his wife's body to serve and advance his own honour. He ends the sombre scene expressing "joy" that "being an old man I'd a wife so chaste" (75-8), and despite repeated references to how her death brings renown to her "name" (47, 50, 70-1), we never do find out what her name is: we

⁶⁵ Lussurioso makes this correlation explicit when hiring Vindice (disguised as Piato) to convince his own sister to offer herself to Lussurioso's lust. He instructs Vindice: "Enter upon the portion of her soul, / Her honour, which she calls her chastity, / And bring it into expense" (1.3.115-17). Here, "chastity" or bodily honour is the "portion" or dowry of Castiza's soul; Lussurioso couches the correlation between body and soul in financial terms.

know her only as Antonio's wife, and as her name is subsumed by her husband, so is her honour.

I have digressed to consider briefly Antonio's "reveal" because the play sets up thematically a double parallel between Antonio's treatment of his wife's corpse and her rapist's treatment of her living body, on one side, and Vindice's treatment of what remains of Gloriana's corpse and the Duke's treatment of Gloriana's body, on the other. The effect of these parallels is to invite criticism, or at the very least questioning, of the treatment not just of women's bodies, but of their dead bodies, as mere material – that is, material understood in opposition to spiritual significance.

Vindice mirrors the Duke who attempted to prostitute Gloriana to his lust and murdered her for resisting, by prostituting the physical remnants of Gloriana to his lust for revenge against the Duke. After dying to keep her body intact from the Duke's touch, Gloriana's skull-face is smeared with the very poison that killed her, and subjected to the invasive, "slobbering" tongue of her murderer (3.5.163).⁶⁶ The very act of puppeting Gloriana's skull, and possibly skeleton – if, taking a cue from Vindice labelling her "the bony lady" (120), we are to imagine a skeleton beneath her costume – potentially suggests that Vindice's manipulation

⁶⁶ Stallybrass ("Reading the Body" 138-9) and Mullaney (259), among others, discuss the phallic connotations of the tongue, here. Stallybrass finds in this deathly kiss an "inversion of sexual and social hierarchy" in that "the trope of the female seducer, impersonated by a tongueless skull, inseminates the Duke with poison" and so "the silent mouth of woman transfixes the tongue of masculine authority." This inversion, however, does not gloss over the reality that Gloriana's remains are forced into the kind of sexual encounter she died avoiding. The Duchess draws attention to a connection between the Duke's tongue and genitals early in the play: "Oh what it is to have an old-cool duke / To be as slack in tongue as in performance (1.2.74-5).

of Gloriana's remains has its own disturbingly sexual component. Is Vindice's hand up Gloriana's skirts in order to support and move her in a way not obvious to the Duke? This possibility might put us in mind of the later sexually charged image of De Flores "thrust[ing]" his fingers into the "sockets" of Beatrice-Joanna's glove in *The Changeling* (1.1.237-8) – a manipulation of material once attached to her that makes De Flores's violent lust for Beatrice-Joanna startlingly clear. And even if Vindice's method of puppetry does not involve a hand concealed in Gloriana's garments, does he move her in any way, or does he stroke her or engage in sexually provocative gestures towards her as he presents her, condescendingly, mockingly, and even vulgarly as "a quaint piece of beauty" ("quaint" punning on "the external female genitals" [OED n.1]) (3.5.53)? Could an obscene gesture emphasize the sexual pun on "doing," in Vindice's assertion to Gloriana that she should not worry about the "disgrace" of an illicit rendez-vous when "'Tis the best grace you have to do it well" (47)? Could a chilling caress accompany his blazon of the skull's features, including "A pretty hanging lip, that has forgot now to dissemble" (56)? While such questions can only remain speculative, taking such gestural liberties with the "bony lady" would certainly not be a far stretch from dressing up Gloriana's bones, parading her as a "concubine" (42), and holding mock conversation with her that is laced with contempt for women.

Indeed, Vindice's bitter reflections on his bony puppet soon conflate Gloriana with women in general in his expression of contumely for the entire sex.

“Does the silkworm expend her yellow labours / For thee? For thee does she undo herself?” (71-2); “Does every proud and self-affecting dame / Camphor her face for this” (83-4); do men turn thieves “To refine such a thing” (75-7), Vindice asks the skull, concluding:

Here might a scornful and ambitious woman
Look through and through herself; see, ladies, with false forms
You deceive men but cannot deceive worms. (95-7)

Not only does Vindice utterly degrade Gloriana’s bones as the most harrowing and ugly vision of the nothingness all living material must become, but in making her skeleton his ultimate proof that all women “deceive men but cannot deceive worms” and his illustration of women’s foolish presumption in wearing rich attire, Vindice constructs an image of Gloriana entirely different from the woman whose “purer part” refused to submit to the material temptations of a Duke.

This severance of Gloriana’s remains from any memory or association with “her purer part” is very much wrapped up in Vindice’s delight in demonstrating his own wit. Incessantly and emphatically in the above cited passages, Vindice directs our attention to the “bare bone” of Gloriana (“for thee,” “for thee,” “for this,” “a thing,” “here,” “look,” “see”). Vindice’s rhetoric, here, depends entirely on the shocking spectacle of the skull that he has just unmasked to maximum dramatic effect, leaving a surprised Hippolito – who clearly expected a living woman to be under the “*tires*” and behind the mask – lost for words: “Why brother, brother,” is the only verbal response Hippolito can manage (49). Overall, Vindice displays and celebrates his own wit and ingenuity. Wit and

ingenuity are qualities of the mind, and the mind was often interchangeable with the soul or considered the highest faculty of the soul (the rational soul).⁶⁷ Vindice uses Gloriana as his wit's main prop rather than as a token of continued emotional or spiritual connection with her. He is giddily "lost" in "a throng of happy apprehensions" at the mere thought of how well "suited" (both literally and figuratively) Gloriana is for the Duke in his revenge plot, and takes delight in sarcastically describing to Hippolito her "delicious lip" and "sparkling eye" (28-34). In a mock conversation with Gloriana, Vindice insinuates that Gloriana is seeking assurance that her affair will be "secret" and he contemptuously answers "Twill be worth / Three velvet gowns to your ladyship" and "Known? / Few Ladies respect that" (43-8). This pretend exchange strongly evokes a puppet-master interpreting his puppet to the audience and indeed serves little purpose besides Vindice's enjoyment in performing and setting up the surprise of Gloriana's unmasking for Hippolito, who responds by "applaud[ing]" the "quaintness"⁶⁸ of [his] malice, above thought" (107-8). Vindice takes equal delight in dramatically unmasking Gloriana to the agonizing Duke and in underlining the poetic justice of his death. Just as Antonio's unveiling of his wife before "*certain lords*" ensures that increased honour accrues to *his* name, both unmaskings of Gloriana are moments of triumph for Vindice, emphasizing his cunning rather than mournfully evoking the memory of the murdered Gloriana. Her skull and

⁶⁷ For discussions of the immortality of the mind and of the mind and soul as interchangeable concepts in Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas (whose divisions of the soul were so influential to early modern thinkers), see Osmond 5-7, 16; *Psyche and Soma* 46, 136-7, 142-3.

⁶⁸ Brian Gibbons glosses "quaintness" here as "witty ingenuity."

bones are emptied of spiritual significance in connection with Gloriana in order to serve Vindice's spirited wit.

While we cannot accurately describe an early modern audience's reactions to Vindice's treatment of the dead body of a loved one, if Hippolito's initial speechlessness at the sight of Gloriana dressed up is any indication, Vindice's unfeeling puppetry of the "bony lady" held much potential to disturb or create a feeling of uneasiness for the audience. Instances of adverse response to similar dramatic moments in other plays suggest this to be the case for *The Revenger's Tragedy*. In *The Duke of Milan*, for example, when Francisco paints the cheeks, lips and hands of Marcelia's corpse preparatory to deceiving the Duke, he pauses to ask his sister (whom he claims to be avenging in this act) "How do you like my workmanship?" Far from approving what is done in her name, her response is, "I tremble; / And thus to tyrannise upon the dead / Is most inhuman" (5.2.197-9). Similarly, in *The Lady's Tragedy* when Govianus paints the dead Lady's face to poison the Tyrant, Govianus confides to the audience, "A religious trembling shakes me by the hand / And bids me put by such unhallowed business" though "revenge calls for't" (5.2.91-3). The soldiers' jokes evince their extreme discomfort with obeying the Tyrant's orders to disturb the Lady's body from its grave in the first place; one soldier fears that the corpse will "rise / At the first jog" (4.3.76-7). The consequently "abused" "soul" of the Lady herself oversees the rescue of her corpse from the Tyrant's clutches (5.2.95), and onstage, her corpse and her ghost appear in identical attire. The ghost's concern for and visual

connection to the corpse suggest a continuing link between lifeless body and departing soul, and a sense of this link is what gives Govianus and the soldiers such unease.⁶⁹ Even Hamlet, who himself handles Yorrick's skull, is troubled by the grave-diggers' rough treatment of what they unearth in their digging: "That skull had a tongue in it and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if 'twere Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder!" (5.1.75-7), and the inscription over Shakespeare's own grave cursing "he that moves my bones" is well-known.⁷⁰ Staging uneasiness about disturbing dead bodies plausibly encouraged or elicited a similar unease from audience members, preventing them from dismissing Gloriana as empty material as brazenly as Vindice does. Vindice has intentionally plucked Gloriana's body from the basic dignity of Christian burial that even criminals facing execution were anxious to secure for themselves, believing the body's proper repose to be essential to the soul's peace and immortality.⁷¹ Does the atmosphere of discomfort stem, in part, from a latent fear of repercussions for purposefully disturbing the grave?

To examine the possibility of such repercussions, I turn to how Gloriana's physical presence as puppet onstage might signify in performance. Vindice repeatedly exploits the shock-value of Gloriana's skull-face, first with the surprise unmasking before Hippolito and then with the "dreadful" unmasking before the

⁶⁹ The Tyrant, the only one who is comfortable with puppeting the Lady's corpse, notably dismisses any lingering connection between body and soul, claiming "The house is hers, the soul is but a tenant" (5.2.3). In contrast, Govianus promises the Lady's ghost that her body "shall return [i.e. to its grave] to rise again," as if the body's proper burial was somehow necessary for its future reunion with the soul (A5.2.162).

⁷⁰ See lxxvii in the General Introduction to Bevington's *Complete Works of Shakespeare*.

⁷¹ See, for instance, Gittings 60-1.

dying Duke, at which point Vindice orders Hippolito closer with the torch so “that his [the Duke’s] affrighted eyeballs / May start into those hollows” (3.5.146-7). But is the frightful effect of Gloriana’s staring “hollows” always under Vindice’s precise control, as in these two carefully calculated unmaskings? There is strong potential, I would argue, for the grim, unchanging skeleton face to subtly undermine Vindice’s exuberant glee at how he has cleverly “fashioned” Gloriana to serve in his revenge plot. And what is the effect of Gloriana’s sombre, fixed grin as Vindice unleashes his tirade against the vanity and deceptiveness of women, holding her up as the support of his misogynistic rhetoric, casting her as prostitute and deriding her? Ironically, Vindice’s puppeting of Gloriana’s lifeless body, by creating the illusion that she is animate, calls attention to what an animate Gloriana’s perspective *would be* on Vindice’s role for her.

As puppet in Vindice’s revenge-show, moreover, Gloriana inherits the puppet’s associations with mockery. There is something grotesquely comic in the incongruity of the stark skull-face peering out from rich attire. As Vindice unloads his contempt for women onto Gloriana’s skull and delights in his ingenuity in suiting her up for the Duke, her perpetual, gruesome grin could very easily produce the effect of seeming to silently mock Vindice himself. Such mockery is in keeping with the daring vulgarity and rebelliousness that came to be expected from a puppet. At the same time, the belief in the corpse’s continued importance to the soul recalls and overlaps with what I have called the puppet’s “spiritual side,” that is, its earlier role in representing divine figures and its

consequent association with idolatry (and idolatry's attendant dangers), to give an edge of eeriness to the puppet skull's derisive grin. Although Gloriana is so blatantly, exaggeratedly material, then, she is not unambiguously material as it is understood in opposition to the spiritual. In this ambiguity she poses a challenge to Vindice's flippant use of her physical remains and to his contempt for women based on scorn for the material as inferior to the spiritual.

The material, the feminine, and death itself align in the figure of Gloriana according to Vindice's role for her in his revenge script, and in puppeting Gloriana, Vindice appears as attempting, and finally failing, to control all three. In an allusion to the traditional dance of death or *danse macabre* – visually depicted in familiar scenes of an animated skeleton intruding upon the daily activities of people from all levels of society to seize the person whose time it is to die – Vindice essentially sets up his own scene of death coming for the Duke.⁷² In the dance of death scene Vindice creates, though, Gloriana is both the allegorical representation of the abstract concept of death and Vindice's puppet and murder weapon. Here, the text underlines the arrogance of Vindice's assumption of

⁷² Hans Holbein the Younger's 1538 publication of woodcuts marks perhaps the most famous depiction of the *danse macabre*; the popularity of this series of illustrations is evident in the several editions and imitations that followed (see Gundersheimer's introduction to *The Dance of Death* ix-x). For more information on the *danse macabre*, see Sophie Oosterwijk's "Of corpses, constables and kings: the *Danse Macabre* in late medieval and Renaissance culture," which provides a fascinating overview of the roots, development, and spread of the *danse macabre* through various media (such as "murals, stained glass windows, illuminated manuscripts, early printed books, and sculpture"); Léonard P. Kurtz's *The Dance of Death and the Macabre Spirit in European Literature*, which also provides a useful overview, including a small section on the *danse of death* in England that lists numerous places and forms in which it appears; and Christian Kiening's "Le Double Décomposé: Rencontres des vivants et des morts à la fin du Moyen Age," which considers, in the skeleton, the interplay between the abstract and the concrete, the image of oneself in death and Death itself.

absolute control over Gloriana's body and its signification by overlapping it with his assumption of control over death itself. The scene that Vindice constructs reduces the usual allegorical representation of Death as a mysterious, often mocking, and entirely independent power (along with the remains of Gloriana's body) to a mere prop in Vindice's artistic murder. Vindice usurps Death's role in orchestrating every detail of the Duke's final moments – down to ensuring that he cannot even “wink” to avoid the sight of his wife's adultery with his own bastard son. To emphasize his position as author of the Duke's death Vindice pauses for reflection on the poetic justice of several of those details, such as the Duke's tongue rotting out after having caused Vindice's father “grief” that “made him die speechless” (3.5.196, 170). To the audience, the skeletal figure familiarly representative of Death loses its association with the unexpected to serve an entirely predictable role according to the plot that Vindice has previously outlined. Vindice's reduction of the traditional, allegorical representation of Death to a tool he physically and artistically controls in the authorship of his own dance of death scene resonates with both the way he empties Gloriana's bones of spiritual potency and the way he associates the concept of divine justice or retribution with hollow stage effects.⁷³

The play does not, however, entirely uphold this relentless hollowing out of the material of spiritual significance or immaterial potency. Antonio's wife's rapist, the depraved Younger Son, clearly shares Vindice's opinion that “wives,”

⁷³ For Tanya Pollard, the “hollowing out of the female body is mirrored in the hollowing out of the interior worlds of the play's other characters as well” (113).

or women in general, “are but made to go to bed and feed” (1.2.131): when the judge asks the Younger Son “what moved you to’t [the rape],” he callously replies, “Why flesh and blood my lord: / What should move men unto a woman else?” (47-9). This combination of the misogynistic reduction of women to the physical with flagrant disrespect for the justice system during his trial leads to an interesting warning (albeit from fellow-misogynist Lussurioso) to “play not with thy death” (53). In a sense, playing with death is precisely what Vindice is doing, both in taking justice into his own hands and in desecrating a woman’s bodily remains.⁷⁴ Literally, in playing with the skeletal figure he is playing with the most familiar allegorical representation of Death, turning death, along with his former fiancée, into his personal puppet to serve his own agenda. But in doing so, Vindice forms part of yet another dance macabre scene which appears clearly to the audience, but which he himself does not consider. Much like the scholar in one of Holbein’s famous woodcuts who is oblivious to the presence of death behind his own death’s head or “study’s ornament” (the skeleton is actually holding up the skull to the distracted scholar in the illustration [Fig.1]), Vindice cannot see in Gloriana a symbol or warning of his own death. And yet Vindice, more often than anyone else, appears onstage with the skull or skeleton in tow, creating a striking allusion to the dance of death tradition and its visual depictions. In this light, Gloriana’s perpetual grin, which I have read as having the effect of

⁷⁴ C.f. Govianus’s aside to the audience upon seeing the Tyrant’s use of the Lady’s corpse to decorate his court: “O who dares play with destiny but he / That wears security so thick upon him, / The thought of death and hell cannot pierce through” (*The Lady’s Tragedy* 5.2.57-9).

mocking Vindice when he draws attention to her skull-face as the main support for his misogynistic rant, gains additional significance. The grin becomes eerie in terms of the skull's potential connection to the spirit of Vindice's murdered fiancée now being co-opted into playing the part Gloriana died avoiding. But it is doubly eerie in that it also very much resembles the derisive grin of Death the skeleton as this figure integrates itself into the activities of its often unprepared and oblivious victims, on the verge of seizing them in depictions of the dance of death. In other words, the immaterial force of death (material only in its effects) becomes conflated with the uncanny power of the skull in connection with Vindice's dead betrothed (I am referring here both to the belief about the body's continued connection and importance to its departed soul and to the illusion of perspective produced by the animation of Gloriana's remains).

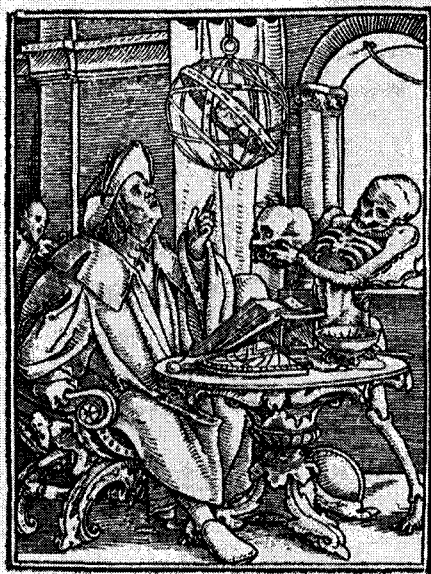


Figure 1: "The Astrologer," woodcut from Hans Holbein the Younger, *Les Simulachres & Historiees faces de la Mort* (Lyons, 1538); rpt. in *The Dance of Death* (New York: Dover, 1971) 132.

In using Gloriana's body as his tool and discounting the possibility of the spiritual potency of her relics, Vindice overlooks, to his own demise, the danger in playing with her. Hearing Antonio express "wonder" at the murder of his enemies, Vindice cannot resist exclaiming, "We may be bold / To speak it now: 'twas somewhat wittily carried / Though we say it. 'Twas we two [Vindice and Hippolito] murdered him!" (5.3.94-100). Tellingly, the same arrogant delight in his own ingenuity that governs Vindice's attempt to puppet Gloriana's body (and to puppet death itself) also leads to the boastful confession that brings about his own death. Death is no longer Vindice's puppet, but regains its quality of unexpectedness: Vindice is baffled at Antonio's fatal response to his confession, and arguably the audience is also stunned by how carelessly Vindice betrays himself after executing a flawless revenge without even incurring suspicion. At the same time, the earlier image of Vindice unwittingly performing a dance of death subtly anticipates this moment.⁷⁵ Another such anticipatory moment includes Vindice's orchestration of Lussurioso and his nobles' deaths through yet another, literal, dance of death in that they are murdered by dancing masquers. These moments keep the dance of death theme from slipping into the background with Gloriana's disappearance from the stage. Significantly, with Vindice's

⁷⁵ In light of Vindice's position in his own dance of death scene, the insistent connection of Vindice with "time" becomes interesting. Describing Vindice (as Piato) to the Duke, Hippolito claims "This our age swims within him; and if Time / Had so much hair I should take him for Time, / He is so near kin to this present minute" (1.3.24-6). As he is about to murder the Duke, Vindice incants "now nine years vengeance crowd into a minute" (3.5.121). While these references to time emphasize Vindice's determination to seize the opportune moment for revenge or "hold" "Occasion" by "the fore-top" as he puts it (1.1.98-9), time, of course, often accompanies death in its iconographic representations, as the grim reaper's scythe, for instance, or as an hourglass like the one tucked away in almost all of Holbein's dance of death illustrations.

condemnation his misogynistic rhetoric falls apart along with his control in dealing out death. Vindice's construction of women as "leaky vessels" in opposition to men who are "made close" to "keep thoughts in best" is evident in his oft-cited comment to Lussurioso, "Tell but some woman a secret over night, / Your doctor may find it in the urinal i'the morning" (Paster ch.1; 1.3.83-6). Vindice forces Gloriana's skull to represent women's treacherous openness by subjecting its poisonous mouth to the penetration of the Duke's tongue and possibly subjecting the skull to the penetration of his fingers as he holds it up to the audience's view onstage.⁷⁶ Mullaney finds that in "master[ing]" and "possess[ing]" Gloriana in this way, Vindice "proves himself all male, not at all dependent upon or in the hands of women" (259). But, as Mullaney also points out, after his perfect revenge Vindice is the one "cannot keep his mouth shut" and "ends the play as the leaky vessel he thought to distinguish himself from, dribbling away his secret, his carefully constructed maleness, and his life" (259). Vindice, the puppet-master, is finally overcome by precisely what he tried to puppet: both the construction of femaleness as distinct from and inferior to his male intelligence, and death itself.

⁷⁶ Mullaney discusses "Vindice's gross economy of tongue and genitalia" (257), and Coddon claims that Gloriana's "mutilated state...evokes contemporary depictions of anatomized female corpses, and while her sexual organs have presumably long turned to dust, the fact that the skull kills with its 'lips' suggests the *vagina dentate*, even without an actual vagina" (74-5). See also Stallybrass's interpretation of the poisonous kiss: "the trope of the female seducer, impersonated by a tongueless skull, inseminates the duke with poison. In this inversion of sexual and social hierarchy, the silent mouth of woman transfixes the tongue of masculine authority" ("Reading the Body" 139).

Overall, Vindice does not control or possess what remains of Gloriana's body as entirely as critics have previously asserted. Others have noted in Gloriana's silent stage-presence a strange power or even a threat to Vindice, but do not perceive her as ever really escaping his control. Finin, for instance, discusses "the potentially overwhelming presence of female power" which involves, through the very name "Gloriana," the "dread such a powerful female figure" as Queen Elizabeth "evokes, threatening as she does to overwhelm masculine authority" (par.1-2). Finin focuses on Vindice's response to this power, his need and "ability to manipulate Gloriana's remains with such mastery" (par. 3, 24). Tanya Pollard brilliantly describes how "in its very emptiness" the "skull possesses a curious power," drawing attention to how "Vindice implicitly likens" the skull's "effect to that of alcohol" (117). Pollard explains:

Upon seeing her mouth, he claims, a drunkard would stop drinking, suggesting both that she would inspire a virtuous horror of death and, implicitly, that she would make drink unnecessary by replacing its effect. (117)

For Pollard, though, Vindice is immune to the intoxicating effect of Gloriana,⁷⁷ and his position as "detached observer, contemptuously assessing the limited power of her morbid remains" serves as a "model – albeit an imperfect one – for how to approach spectacles without either consuming or being consumed by their taint" (117, 122).

⁷⁷ For insightful analyses of consumption and decay, poison and corrosiveness in the play, refer to Stallybrass, "Reading the Body" and Pollard, *Drugs and Theatre*.

Conversely, I am arguing that Gloriana can be read as a warning against Vindice's detached and dismissive treatment of the material, a treatment which is clearly bound up in his subordinating view of women. Onstage, the material remains of Vindice's fiancée are not *empty* material. As Vindice animates Gloriana as his puppet and tool of revenge, the skull is also strangely animated by the puppet's associations with mockery and rebelliousness, seeming to escape Vindice's control and subvert his flood of misogynistic words through the blatant materiality he so contemptuously emphasizes. The puppet's grotesque derision and the danse macabre's chilling quality overlap in the skull's grin. And in Gloriana's case the puppet's associations with the spiritual – whether through its more distant liturgical role in representing the divine, or the spiritual dangers posed by the puppet as idol – merge with the superstition or belief about the departed soul's continued interest in the body. For some audience members, these associations held potential to be more than mere associations and the dangers in using human remains unceremoniously as playthings – given added weight in that the skull was likely real and not a replica⁷⁸ – are in a sense confirmed by Vindice's death. Not only does Gloriana, as silent material, hold potential to mock Vindice, but in his arrogant pleasure in manipulating and mastering her remains Vindice is oblivious to having entered his own dance of death.

Gloriana is neither fully flesh nor fully spirit, but, as a human relic with a haunting effect on the audience, she occupies an intermediary position between

⁷⁸ See Rist 10.

the two. She is uncanny, in the Jentschian sense of the uncanny resulting from uncertainty as to “whether an apparently animate being is really alive” or “whether a lifeless object might not be in fact animate” (Freud 421). In this uncanniness, she poses a wordless threat or warning, unheeded by Vindice, but not necessarily lost upon the audience. Other women represented onstage share this threatening uncanniness. Frances Dolan discusses the possibility of a darker and menacing side to Hermione’s perhaps vindictive ghostliness in the final scene of *The Winter’s Tale*.⁷⁹ Leontes’ hesitation to touch Hermione⁸⁰ indeed suggests his fear at the moment the supposed statue steps off its pedestal, a moment which confuses categories of inanimate and animate and also matter and spirit: is the now moving figure a statue-come-to-life, Hermione’s ghost, or something else? Susan Carter’s corpse holds a similar uncanny power that quite unnerves her murderer in *The Witch of Edmonton*. After Susan’s ghost appears on either side of her bigamous husband’s bed, ghastly staring him in the face, her corpse is carried to his bedside – with one eye open, also staring him in the face. The audience might half-expect her corpse to sit up and accuse him, especially since the actor’s body, now portraying a lifeless corpse, was only seconds ago standing upright as Susan’s ghost. Indeed, the already-spooked Frank cannot bear the sight of the body, pleading “For pity’s sake, remove her” (4.2.149). Interestingly, before murdering her, Frank attempted to make Susan a kind of puppet-wife, wedding

⁷⁹ See, for instance, 227-9.

⁸⁰ Paulina: Nay, present your hand. / When she was young you wooed her. Now in age / Is she become the suitor? (5.3.107-9).

her to keep up the appearances of obedience to his father through a socially approved marriage, merely in order to secure financial security for himself and his real wife, Winnifrede. Frank objectifies Susan as a mere instrument in his plot to deceive his father, and ends up murdering her out of sheer annoyance when, as he tries to take his leave of her, she will not stop talking, expressing her emotions as a new wife. Prior to her murder, Frank reveals that he considers Susan as nothing but his “whore” since, unbeknownst to her, Frank already has a wife, which renders his marriage with Susan illegitimate. Correspondingly, before Hermione’s apparent death and uncanny reappearance, Leontes calls her a “thing” too vulgar to name. Although she interprets the tribulation she must endure as “for my better grace,” her spiritual constancy and integrity do not prevent Leontes from casting her away as a defiled object (2.1.83, 123). I discussed earlier how Vindice perceives Gloriana as “body” both before and after her death. While the uncanny collapse of matter and spirit does not seem a particularly productive or useful source of power for women if it can only be effected through their skeletons, corpses, or a seeming return from the dead, arguably these instances of the uncanny are so unsettling because in blurring the line between material and immaterial they confuse the categories so instrumental in subordinating and dismissing women.

At a time when, with the progression of religious reform sharper lines were being drawn between body and soul, and between the material and the immaterial, the early modern stage remained a place where, with the necessarily

physical representation of spirits or ghosts – or the use of a special fabric to signify a concept of the immaterial, such as a “a robe for to goo invisibell” – these lines were quite fluid.⁸¹ As women were increasingly relegated to the inferior side of this deepening body-soul dichotomy and in a genre often noted for its pronounced misogyny, this capacity for and even tendency toward blurring distinctions between the physical and spiritual could open a space for questioning, undermining, and even warning against, as in the case of Gloriana, the dismissal of the physical as empty of and inferior to the spiritual.

Inspired Puppets and “Greasy Soul[s]” in *Bartholomew Fair*

To persuade any matter we intend, or to stirre up any passion in a multitude, if we can aptly confirme our opinion or intention with any visible object, no doubt but the persuasion would be more forcible, and the passion more potent.

– Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde* (5.1.156-7).

The puppet Dionysius, engaged in a heated and hilariously absurd debate with Zeal-of-the-land Busy over its own status as “idol,” notoriously silences Busy, whose “main argument against you is that you are an abomination, for the male among you putteth on the apparel of the female, and the female of the male,” by lifting its garments to reveal its sexlessness beneath (5.5.55, 82-4, sd between 90-91). This sexlessness is represented by “the mere wood and cloth of the puppet’s body, or perhaps the smooth flesh of the puppeteer’s forearm” (Shershow 104). In

⁸¹ For an investigation into what such a robe – which we know Philip Henslowe “laid out part of a £3 10s sum” for – might look like or be made from, refer to Barbara Palmer, “Staging Invisibility in English Early Modern Drama.”

the latter scenario, Puppet Dionysius is not just exposing “his” puppet-body; rather, according to the familiar analogy that equates puppet and puppeteer, or tool and artist, with body and soul, “he” is ultimately lifting his body to expose his inner animating force, revealing it to be both physical and beyond gender. In *Bartholomew Fair*, as in *The Revenger’s Tragedy*, the performance of puppetry ultimately works to collapse the hierarchy of gender as it discursively connects to the hierarchy of soul over body. This section of the chapter seeks to investigate the links between Dionysius’s final moment of triumph and the play’s representations of female characters.

In his seminal article on “*Bartholomew Fair* and its Puppets,” Jonas Barish reads the play as bringing everything, including and especially the soul, to the level of gross physicality. He analyzes a “series of tropes which reduce first the brain and then the soul itself to the level of physicality.” These tropes include Wasp’s vision of the interior of Cokes’s head as “hung with cockle-shells, pebbles, fine wheat-straws, and here and there a chicken’s feather and a cobweb” (1.5.83-5); Quarlous’s reference to “a spoonful of brain” (123); and Wasp’s exasperated wish that his own “brains” had been “bowled at, or threshed out” when he first decided to take on Cokes as his charge (3.4.40-2; Barish 4). Most notably, Edgeworth “degrades the soul itself to the level of matter” in scoffing at Cokes: “Talk of him to have a soul? ’Heart, if he have any more than a thing given him instead of salt, only to keep him from stinking, I’ll be hanged afore my time presently” (4.2.46-8). For Barish, “with this view of the soul as a kind of

preservative in the blood, placed there to keep the body from putrefaction, the reduction of the spirit to the flesh is complete” (4). This emphasis on the “reduction,” “degradation,” or “debasement” of the spirit to the level of the material has become a critical commonplace in interpretive engagement with *Bartholomew Fair*,⁸² and understandably so, given Jonson’s “special decorum” in deliberately staging the play at the Hope. The Hope was also used for bear-baiting, “the place being as dirty as Smithfield” – where Bartholomew Fair was held – and “as stinking every whit” (Induction 134-5). The coarseness of language matches the filth of the physical playhouse, with Puppet Leander’s retort to Leatherhead the puppeteer to “*kiss my hole here and smell*” being a prime example (5.4.114-15). The articles adumbrated by the Scrivener in the contract between Jonson and the audience include one holding that audience members who “shall so desperately or ambitiously play the fool ... to challenge the author of scurrility because the language somewhere savours of Smithfield, the booth, and the pig-broth” must forfeit themselves to ridicule (Induction 125-8). The notion of language having a distinct taste seems to physicalize the abstraction of language itself.⁸³ But at the same time, the insistent critical emphasis on the play’s reduction or degradation of the soul to the level of flesh (and for Jonson, language

⁸² See also, for instance, the same argument in Mathew R. Martin: the play’s “pungent physicality,” he states, “bringing the high low and reducing the spiritual to the material, equates authority and judgment ... with folly and flatulence. The play appropriates the strategies of what Bakhtin labels ‘grotesque realism,’ whose essential principle is ‘degradation; that is, the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, abstract; it is the transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and the body’” (134).

⁸³ This of course is not unusual in Jonson, who delights elsewhere in the metaphor of language or writing as a feast that he, as the author/cook, has served up for his audience (see, for instance, the Prologue to *The New Inn*, or the Epistle in the front matter of *Volpone*).

was very much connected to the soul⁸⁴) assumes and maintains the dichotomy of spirit over matter. In this way, critics have overlooked how *Bartholomew Fair* actually works to undo this hierarchical structure in its defence of the theatre. Indeed, the frequent vulgarity and emptiness of language throughout the play could be interpreted as arguing for an imperfection or impurity of soul or spirit that everywhere accompanies displays of the physically gross or base. Thomas Cartelli's reading of the fair as a "gray world" is suggestive here:

Whereas Shakespeare takes his characters on a kind of therapeutic vacation halfway out of this world in order to make them whole, Jonson rubs the faces of his characters in the dirt of this-worldly experience in order to relieve them of their pretensions and unnaturalness, to make them, if not whole, at least a bit more acclimated to 'things as they are.' (157)

Instead of having a debasing influence, in other words, coming to terms with the physical might exercise a corrective or restorative effect on spiritual haughtiness and hypocrisy.⁸⁵

Bartholomew Fair does not appeal to any initial concept of the soul as superior to the flesh in order to stage a process of debasement; instead, it presents various images and examples of the immaterial as insubstantial and void of meaning. John Littlewit, for example, shares with Vindice a delight in pointing

⁸⁴ In *Discoveries*, for instance, Jonson writes that "Language most shows a man: 'speak that I may see thee.' It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the image of the parent of it, the mind" (45-6), while in the preface to the masque *Hymenaei* he describes the "riches and magnificence in the outward celebration or show" of a masque as its body, and the poetry, or "high and hearty inventions to furnish the inward parts" as its soul.

⁸⁵ Leah S. Marcus offers a related assessment of the fair's paradoxically curative effect: "Smithfield swirls with madness and disorder, but it is a madness that cures the mad. By bringing lost souls back to reason, the fair in fact recapitulates a specialty of its namesake St. Bartholomew, who was noted above all as a healer of the mad" (57-8).

out and celebrating his own wit and artistic creativity – qualities attributed to the soul – but as his name signals and his shallow and pointless puns and jokes confirm, little is worth celebrating. We first meet Littlewit applauding himself for “A pretty conceit, and worth the finding!” (1.1.1). This “conceit” is the coincidence that Bartholomew Cokes has taken forth a marriage licence to marry Grace Wellborn on Bartholomew Day. The “device” of “Bartholomew upon Bartholomew” as Littlewit puts it, is enough to elate him at the “luck” he has “to spin out these fine things still and like a silk-worm, out of myself” (1-2, 6-7). The proctor’s opinion of his own wit gives him a marked superiority complex: “Who would have marked such a leap-frog chance now?” he asks, as though he is the only one to perceive the obvious coincidence, and he is always explicitly drawing attention to his little quibbles with self-congratulatory remarks, “there now, I speak quib too,” “There I am again, la!,” “Good!,” “There I am again!” all appearing in his first speech alone (7-8, 13-15, 25, 27). Littlewit is an author-figure as writer of the puppet-play, but the “inspiration” he provides to animate the puppet players is hardly superior to their materiality (5.5.94); in fact, the script is drowned out when Leatherhead lets Dionysius’s pure materiality answer Busy’s charges (and this proves to be the most effective answer).

Littlewit’s authorship of the puppet play and his conviction of his superior wit correspond with his arrogant presumption in puppeting his wife. He dresses up his “little pretty Win” like his doll to show off to others (5.6.12), as when he shows her to Winwife in a “habit” she “would not ha’ worn” on her own, asking “Does’t

not fine, Master Winwife?" (1.2.3-5). As if Win were his object to share, Littlewit also orders her to kiss his friends as it pleases him despite her obvious discomfort. "I envy no man my delicates, sir" (11), he explains to Winwife upon instructing Win to let Winwife kiss her. When Win protests at Quarlous's unsolicited kiss, asking her husband to "help" her, to her frustration ("you are a fool, John") Littlewit insists she comply with "our worshipful good friends" and kiss Quarlous again (1.3.32-43). Needing an excuse to attend the fair despite the disapproval of Win's mother Dame Purecraft and Busy, the "Banbury man" and Purecraft's suitor, Littlewit has Win feign a craving for roast pig. When Win becomes inconvenient for him at the fair, he simply deposits her in Ursula's tent for safekeeping. To Littlewit, Win is a pretty doll he can pass around, brag about, use as a decoy, and then set down somewhere when he is finished with her to take up again at his later convenience.

The game of "vapours," so enjoyed by Wasp and Knockem, together with Busy's obsession with the "spirit," join Littlewit's shallow wit as further examples of the immaterial as disappointingly empty. Knockem's favourite word, "vapours," occurs sixty-nine times in *Bartholomew Fair* (Grant 72). While in one sense, "vapours" is a word for "a fancy or fantastic idea; a foolish brag or boast," the word also resonates with humoural theory, as Patrick Grant suggests.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ *OED* online 4. The *OED* cites *Bartholomew Fair* as an example of this meaning. The *OED* also defines "vapours" as "In older medical use: Exhalations supposed to be developed within the organs of the body (esp. the stomach) and to have an injurious effect upon the health" (3.pl. a). Examples include a 1530 reference to "humours and vapours that styre and move the ... phantasye" and a 1639 reference to "ill vapours of the stomach" that cause the "head" to "ache" (3.pl a).

Lemnius, in *The Touchstone of Complexions* (1576), explains “the Spirite is a certayne vapour, effluence or expyration, proceeding out of the humours” (qtd in Grant 68), and in 1615 Helkiah Crooke defines spirit as “a subtile and thin body always movable, engendered of blood and vapour, and the vehicle or carriage of the faculties of the soul.”⁸⁷ Significantly, “vapours,” in their connection with “spirit” understood not as an alternative word for “soul” but as a “corporeall” vehicle of “the finest and subtillest substance” (Crooke 3.12.174), a vehicle the soul uses to “execute her offices” (1.4.10), occupy an intermediary position between the physical and immaterial. Although in humoural context “vapours” refer to an ethereal force connected to the soul, in the play, they ultimately amount to a combination of tobacco fumes with the heady influence of “nonsense” (4.4.24-5sd). The actual “*game of vapours*” that takes place in Act Four calls for “*every man to oppose the last man that spoke, whether it concerned him or no*” (sd). The cantankerous Wasp seems to be playing a perpetual game of vapours with everyone he encounters, while Knockem inserts the word “vapours” into his every utterance until the word becomes completely meaningless. And yet, the absurdity or “travesty of reason” that “vapours” represent is a weakness that cannot be attributed solely to the “*physical excess*” of “humours, ale, and tobacco” (Martin 135 emphasis added). Instead, in their humoural sense vapours participate in a mysterious mingling of elements of body and soul. Elusive in both meaning and substance, “vapours” provide a contrast to the fair’s juicy

⁸⁷ Bk 3 ch 12 p 173. Crooke breaks down and explains this definition in complex detail on 174-5.

physicality, but not the moral contrast of pure spirit with sullied flesh; the play's sustained comic attention to vapours thus problematizes the view that

Bartholomew Fair presents the soul's degradation to the level of the physical.

Busy's very different invocations of the "spirit" are just as void of meaning as Knockem's constant references to "vapours." Busy claims:

I was moved in spirit to be here this day in this Fair, this wicked and foul Fair, and fitter may it be called a foul than a Fair. To protest against the abuses of it, the foul abuses of it, in regard of the afflicted saints that are troubled, very much troubled, exceedingly troubled, with the opening of the merchandise of Babylon again, and the peeping of popery upon the stalls here, here, in the high places. See you not Goldilocks, the purple strumpet there? In her yellow gown and green sleeves? The profane pipes, the tinkling timbrels? A shop of relics! (3.6.75-83)

Jonson is poking fun, here, at the hyperbole and repetition of public preaching, but Busy's "spirit"-inspired ramblings also betray an enjoyment of his own speech not unlike Littlewit's pleasure at his own "conceits." He holds on to certain words as if he particularly likes their effect ("fair," "foul," "trouble" – and "exceedingly" in almost every speech), giving the impression that he awkwardly makes up his objections as he speaks. Busy also decorates with alliteration wherever possible and often strews his rants with loose biblical allusions of a high-sounding, condemnatory strain but well-worn out in anti-Catholic invective, as with his construction of Trash with her gingerbread as the whore of Babylon, here, with her "merchandise" of "popery." In short, Busy's rants of the "spirit," or "sanctified noise" as he puts it, are as crowded with empty rhetoric and superficial

decoration as Wasp imagines Cokes's head to be crowded with feathers and cockleshells and other vain trifles.⁸⁸

Busy's exaggerated hypocrisy ultimately exposes the privileging of the "spirit" over the body as a false pretence in service of self-righteousness, and in particular, of masculine self-righteousness. Entering into "disputation" with Puppet Dionysius after interrupting the puppet-show, Busy again announces "I will not fear to make my spirit and gifts known! Assist me, zeal, fill me, fill me; that is, make me full" (5.5.26, 35-6). Questioned by the puppet as to whether his "*calling*" is "*lawful*," he answers "Yes, mine is of the spirit" (46-8). Of course, Busy is obviously only "moved in spirit" to "make" himself "full" of Ursula's roast pig. Just before Busy enters the stage for the first time, Littlewit informs us that he "found [Busy] fast by the teeth i' the cold turkey-pie" and that he is just taking a moment to clean his beard (1.6.31). Even after this snack, as soon as the prospect of eating Bartholomew pig presents itself, Busy fixates on the pig as something that "may be eaten, very exceeding well eaten" (46). He comes up with

⁸⁸ Leah S. Marcus demonstrates that Busy's hypocrisy stems from "deficient self-knowledge." "In Busy's superstitious eyes," she explains, "simple, innocuous objects become sinister and organize themselves into elements of a vast demonic landscape: a collection of pipes, drums, and rattles delineates the abhorrent figure of the Beast... Busy believes that people who participate in abominations like plays or Bartholomew pig do so from the same superstitious motives he avoids recognizing in himself" (51). Marcus interprets Cokes as "the only fairgoer we meet who conforms to Busy's pessimistic assessment of human nature," the only one "incapable of resisting the profane blandishments of drums, rattles, and gingerbread, and would indeed be better off (at least in pocketbook) if kept from the idols of the fair" (52). Overdo suffers from a very similar form of hypocrisy, and "what Cokes is to Busy, Trouble-all is to Overdo – he represents human nature as it would have to be in order for the justice's ideology to function as he wishes. Through the plight of the madman, Jonson invites his audience to recognize the twisting of human nature which can result from overvaluing judicial authority" (56). These insights form part of Marcus's larger discussion about how the play critiques various abuses of authority (in an ambivalent but eloquent defence of James's authority) and forwards a message of recognizing one's own faults before condemning others (38-63).

a ridiculous justification for “the public eating of swine’s flesh” – it will “profess our hate and loathing of Judaism” – enabling him to conclude “I will therefore eat, yea, I will eat exceedingly” (83-5). Busy then centres on pig as the “only” item “not comprehended in my admonition” of the fair (3.6.25), and correspondingly on the “good titillation of the famelic sense, which is the smell” (the stage direction indicates that *Busy scents after [the pig] like a hound*) – a sense which Busy claims it is “a sin of obstinacy” to “decline or resist” (3.2.70-2). Of course, all of the remaining senses must be blocked from the idolatry of the fair at all costs (Busy orders his group to “Look not toward” Leatherhead’s “wares of devils” and to “harken not” to his advertising cries [3.2.34-6]). When they have finally left Ursula’s booth, Busy, who ate “two and a half” pigs, has not shaken the craving:

PURECRAFT: Brother Zeal-of-the-land! What shall we do? My Daughter, Win-the-fight, is fallen into her fit of longing again.
 BUSY: For more pig? There is no more, is there? (3.6.43, 34-6)

Despite his over-the-top hypocrisy, Busy is, in a sense, correct, however, in attributing his presence at the fair to the “spirit,” in that appetite or desire was often attributed to the soul.⁸⁹ Indeed, in the genre of body-soul dialogue, a familiar complaint of the body to its soul is that the soul is responsible for first

⁸⁹ Appetite or desire could be considered a subdivision of the will (usually accepted as a faculty of the soul), or a separate and lower faculty of the soul in itself that was more closely aligned with the body and could strive against the will. Osmond finds that conflicting positions in separate works of Plato as to whether “the appetitive faculty is part of the soul, and hence desires logically come from it” or desires are “a phenomena of the body that can struggle against the soul” are a main source of the “uncertainty” providing “the intellectual essence of the body and soul debates. Who tempts? Who executes?” (*Mutual Accusation* 5-6). See also Osmond 14-16 & 37 and *Psyche and Soma* 46.

corrupting its once innocent flesh by bringing to it unwholesome desire. But Busy is busy covering up his own urges by projecting them onto the female body, and more specifically, onto Win. The “disease of longing” he preaches, “it is a disease, a carnal disease, or appetite, incident to women,” and as he is about to enter Ursula’s tent, Busy announces to Littlewit, “Enter the tents of the unclean for once, and satisfy your wife’s frailty. Let your frail wife be satisfied” (1.6.42-3, 3.2.74-5). Littlewit’s plan for getting to the fair relies on the common assumption that women, especially pregnant women, were extra-susceptible to the weaknesses and cravings of the body. Win does not really crave anything at the fair, though, and the fact that a blatant hypocrite (Busy) and a shallow wit (Littlewit) are the ones who construct her as particularly subject to the frailties of the flesh due to her gender and pregnancy, in order to satisfy their own cravings at the fair, works to debunk the legitimacy of such assumptions.

At first, this means of debunking the notion that women were more prone than men to the influence of the body might seem insignificant alongside the sheer presence of Ursula. Pronounced the “Body o’ the Fair” and “fatness of the Fair,” Ursula specializes in satisfying cravings for flesh, providing, for a price, both pigs to eat and women to have sex with (2.5.65, 2.2.106, 2.5.36-7). The excessively corpulent “pig-woman” and “she-bear”⁹⁰ of the fair is herself a

⁹⁰ 2.2.64, 2.3.1. Ursula’s name, of course, as modern editors point out, associates her both with the bear star Ursa Major and (as the largest figure on the stage) with the bears that were baited in the same theatre in which the play was performed. Helen Ostovich points out that Ursula is also further connected with pigs through her association with “Demeter of the Thesmophoria, or Eleusinian Mysteries: the Sow-goddess, goddess of women. Her worshippers, like the Thesmophoriazusae in Aristophanes’ play, celebrated the return of Persephone from Hades by

manifestation of the fluidity in her tent between human flesh for sexual consumption and animal flesh to eat; after scalding herself with drippings from her roasting pan during her furious attack on Quarlous and Winwife, she even calls for “some cream and salad oil” to treat her wound (2.5.145). This request, as Alexander Leggatt observes, gives the impression that she herself is an oversized slab of food that has just been cooked and is about to be seasoned (140). Something about Ursula’s undeniably extreme fleshliness, however, strangely undoes the conventional opposition between spirit and flesh, an undoing that culminates with Puppet Dionysius’s victory in his “disputation” with Busy.

In contravention to the familiar trope of the body as a restrictive cage for the soul, Ursula’s body and everything around her is uncontained: she is so unmanageably large that she must have her chair “let out o’ the sides ... that [her] hips might play” (2.2.58-9); her deliciously vulgar language, “greasier than her pigs,” seems to flow from her as endlessly as her shiny sweat (2.5.116); she feels as if she will “melt away to the first woman, a rib” (2.2.47-8); Knockem, too, jokes that “vexing” Ursula in “this hot weather” will amount to “melting down a pillar of the Fair” (2.3.45-7); and her pigs roast until they sweat, their eyes pop out, and they are about to fall from the spit. As if exercising a strange intangible influence, Ursula is able to powerfully entice people to her tent from far and wide with nothing more substantial than a scent on the wind. Every character ends up

purifying and sacrificing pigs, roasting and devouring them as a kind of sacrament” (2.5. headnote).

in Ursula's tent at one point; either lured there or compelled by bodily need, as with Mistresses Littlewit and Overdo, who must enter her tent to relieve themselves. Thus, something ubiquitous and inescapable emanates from Ursula and her tent and the corporeality, both succulent and disgusting, that she represents. Ursula's immaterial power of enchantment, furthermore, and her ability to provide assistance to women (albeit in a rather rough and short-lived manner, considering she ends up trying to enlist them as prostitutes) are part of what links her to sorceress and goddess figures. Her status as pig-woman luring customers to her booth to become drunk and over-indulge their carnal appetites connects her to the enchantress Circe who turned men into swine,⁹¹ while her constant cooking fire at the center of the fair community, which causes her to sweat profusely and "water the ground in knots as I go like a great garden pot" (2.2.48-9), links her to hearth-goddess and fertility-goddess figures. Ursula even resembles a fury brandishing a flaming torch or scourge when she emerges from her fire with the scalding pan to chase away Quarlous and Winwife (Winwife even ridicules her before the attack as "Mother o' the Furies, I think, by her fire-brand" [2.5.67]). These overlapping allusions paradoxically infuse the fleshly Ursula with an incorporeal potency that has nothing to do with moral purity.

Instead, impurity reigns at the fair. Jonathan Haynes draws our attention to a "theme of adulteration" in the play (123): Ursula adulterates tobacco with "coltsfoot" and mixes ale with extra froth (2.2.84), while Trash supposedly blends

⁹¹ Refer to Melinda Gough, "Jonson's Siren Stage" for a full discussion of Jonson's treatment of Circean and Siren myth in his defense of the theatre from Puritan antitheatricalists.

“stale bread, rotten eggs, musty ginger, and dead honey” into her gingerbread (2.2.8-9). This adulteration aligns thematically with the play’s insistence on the mutual adulteration of body and soul, as opposed to the critically favoured idea of the staged degradation of the soul. As already mentioned, in body-soul dialogues, the body often holds the soul responsible for corrupting it with desire. In this light, Ursula’s description of herself as “all fire and fat” could be significant. Flame and light are of course traditional symbols for the soul.⁹² While Ursula’s fat melts away before the fire, the fire, of course, is fed by such fat and oil, suggesting the fatal inextricability of body and soul. Ursula certainly does not view herself as flesh alone: “I can but hold life and soul together with this [ale] ... and a whiff of tobacco, at most” (2.2.74-5), she tells Nightingale, here again underlining the body and soul’s fusion in her notion that her physical vices are what feed her soul and keep it from departing.

Finally, the overall effect of Jonson’s constant and creative emphasis on Ursula’s “fatness” in her every mention and appearance is not so much to

⁹² Flame as symbolic of the soul is perhaps most evident in familiar descriptions of death as a “snuffing” out, as when Othello famously extinguishes a torch, lantern, or candle before killing Desdemona, reflecting, as he does so, that he will “Put out the light, and then put out the light” of Desdemona’s soul. The flame as metaphor for the soul, a spark of divinity animating human clay, is of course also familiar from Promethean myth, as Othello himself points out: “Should I repent me; but once put out thy light, / ... / I know not where is that Promethean heat / That can thy light relume” (5.2.7-13). Francis Quarles’s *Hieroglyphikes of the life of man* (1638) and Robert Farlie’s *Lychnocausia* (1638), both books of emblems, are entirely devoted to images of a candle and flame (or snuffed out flame and smoke) which refer explicitly to the body-soul relationship, likening body to tallow and soul to flame. Ursula is referred to as both “tallow” and “oil” and as an oily “lamp” (2.5.69, 114, 2.2.106-7). She shares this quality with Falstaff, who after Gadshill “sweats to death, / And lards the lean earth as he walks along” (2.2.108-9).

disparage the body as disgusting or corrupt as to delight in and relish the flesh in all its excesses. Elsewhere in Jonson, fatness, invoked as part of an analogy that describes the “flesh and blood” of language, is unmistakably preferable to a lean frame:

We say it is a fleshy style when there is much peri-phrasis and circuit of words, and when with more than enough it grows fat and corpulent, *arvina orationis*, full of suet and tallow. It hath blood and juice when the words are proper and apt, their sound sweet, and the phrase neat and picked ... But where there is redundancy, both the blood and juice are faulty and vicious... Juice in language is somewhat less than blood, for if the words be but becoming and signifying, and the sense gentle, there is juice; but where that wanteth the language is thin, flagging, poor, starved, scarce covering the bone, and shows like stones in a sack. Some men, to avoid redundancy, run into that, and while they strive to have no ill blood or juice they lose their good. (*Discoveries* 47).

Even though “fatty” language might contain some viciousness and faultiness, Jonson stresses the sad case of “thin” language, strongly implying that erring on the side of “redundancy” is better than losing all that is “good” in writing by trying to avoid it; ill blood is better than a complete absence of life or spirit in the writing. Critics have commented on the vulgarity of Ursula’s language matching the grossness of her physical appearance,⁹³ but Ursula’s body also lends a spirit of mirth to her language. Of course, Ursula has no qualms about cheating her customers with adulterated tobacco and ale to make more money, but with her friends and before the audience, her flesh itself represents a certain immaterial generosity in that, in a Falstaffian vein, she offers it as a source of laughter, the butt of her own jokes. This generosity contrasts sharply with Quarlous and

⁹³ See, for example, Mary W. Bledsoe, “Linguistic Enormity in Ben Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair*” 153.

Winwife, when, like vicious dogs baiting the “she-bear” for entertainment, they cruelly provoke her to the point of physical injury by jeering at her obesity.

Overall, Ursula’s abundant corpulence cannot be read as unequivocally conveying a negative view of the flesh.

As the play’s most extreme example of the cultural association between women and flesh, Ursula demonstrates a certain spiritedness suggesting that the flesh should not always be considered in opposition to the soul and that the soul can be present without being superior to and purer than the flesh, and thus degraded by it. Jonson, whose conversion to Catholicism in 1598 may have lasted twelve years (Harp 112), is even more explicitly playing with and poking fun at conflicting notions of the body-soul relationship through Zeal-of-the-land Busy (who is constantly spewing empty anti-Catholic rhetoric) and Bartholomew Cokes (who represents a kind of naïve, uncritical version of Catholic thinking) and what the puppets represent for each of them.⁹⁴ G. M. Pinciss establishes Cokes’s connection to Catholicism by persuasively arguing that, just as Banbury is an “appropriate” area of residence for Busy, being “a town in Oxfordshire closely identified in the public mind with both cakes and Puritan extremism,” Cokes’s frequently mentioned residence in Harrow on the Hill is not without meaning (346). “The association of Harrow on the Hill and covert Catholicism would have been as evident to Jonson’s audience as Banbury with Puritans,” Pinciss explains,

⁹⁴ In “Flaying Bartholomew: Jonson’s Hagiographic Parody,” Alison A. Chapman argues that *Bartholomew Fair* satirizes Catholic practices, especially saints’ legends and saints’ plays, in a way that justifies Jonson’s decision to renounce Catholicism and return to the Church of England in 1610.

giving several examples of Harrow on the Hill's notoriety as a harbour for recusant Catholics (347).

For Bartholomew Cokes, no distinct division separates the material from the immaterial, or flesh from spirit, as his attitude toward the puppets evinces. "I am in love with the actors already," he exclaims, upon seeing them lying inert in Leatherhead's basket, and when Leatherhead reprimands him for "*handling*" a puppet, Cokes assures him "I will not hurt her, fellow. What, dost think me uncivil? I pray thee be not jealous. I am toward a wife," as if the puppet possessed the sense to feel assaulted (5.3.108, 5.4.3-4sd, 5-6). Whereas Leggatt finds that Cokes lists people "as junk" by clumping persons and objects indiscriminately in his recital of all that he has lost at the fair (141), the reverse is true; Cokes elevates material objects to the level of the human, fastening on items as if they were living.⁹⁵ A typical and hilarious instance is when he cheers on his hobby horse as Puppet Dionysius scores a point against Busy in their dispute (before the argument interrupted the puppet-show, Cokes was using his toys as puppets of the puppets, in effect, with the hobbyhorse designated as Dionysius) (5.5.52). Ian McAdam links Cokes's treatment of the puppets with Catholicism:

the confusion between the literal and the figurative, the erroneous 'assumption that a visible sign is identical to the substantial thing itself... is the fundamental error that the Protestants ascribe to the Roman Church.' No one shows this tendency so clearly in *Bartholomew Fair* as (the Catholic) Cokes, who fails to discriminate reality from illusion when he

⁹⁵ One reviewer even found something admirable about Cokes as played by Alan Howard in the Hands production – "his gentle and touching recognition of the littleness of the puppets" (qtd. in Jensen 48).

discusses the puppets in Leatherhead's basket, before the performance, as if they were actual living actors with performance histories. (426-7)⁹⁶

In stark opposition to Cokes, "a child, i'faith" (5.4.187), thrilled with every instrument, hobby horse, and gingerbread person he sees, the Puritan Busy insists on a rigid incompatibility between matter and spirit through his construction of the materials of the fair as false gods that ensnare and mislead the soul to its damnation. He denounces Leatherhead's toys as "apocryphal wares," his hobbyhorse as "a fierce and rank idol," his drum as "the broken belly of the Beast" (with bellows, pipes, feathers, and rattles forming the Beast's lungs, throat, tail, and teeth), and Leatherhead himself as "the proud Nebuchadnezzar of the Fair" for encouraging the worship of idols (3.6.48-52, 59-62). Similarly, Trash's gingerbread is a "basket of popery," a "nest" and "idolatrous grove" of "images," a "flasket of idols" which must be (literally) overturned (64-5, 85-6). In destroying Trash's gingerbread before her eyes, Busy reacts more violently to her wares than to Leatherhead's. This reaction combines with his labelling of Ursula as "Flesh" "herself" and so "above all to be avoided" as one of the ultimate "enemies of man" (3.6.30-3), and with his projection of the "disease" of carnal longing onto Win and women more generally. Busy's insistence on the distance between the spirit and the flesh, in other words, involves a repeated (and as we have seen, both hypocritical and strategic) relegation of women to the inferior side of this binary. In contrast, Cokes, who has no concept of this binary, also has

⁹⁶ Throughout "Flaying Bartholomew," Chapman also discusses Cokes as a figure through whom Jonson relentlessly parodies distinctively Catholic practices.

no concept or ready means of constructing women as somehow weaker or inferior beings; his worse offence toward his fiancée Grace (aside from his inability to perceive her strong disinclination to marry him) is his neglect of her when he becomes helplessly distracted by the fair's many novelties.

Obviously, we are meant to see Cokes's and Busy's extreme views on the material objects of the fair as equally ridiculous. But while Cokes becomes a kind of unwitting "martyr" for his faith (4.2.60), stripped of his possessions and even his outer garments just as the apostle from whom the fair takes its name was stripped of his skin,⁹⁷ in his harmless naïveté he is never converted to see things differently. Entirely forgetting his humiliation, Cokes is at his happiest at the puppet show, asking Leatherhead whether the puppets get "flustered" and commenting that it would not cost much to feed them "by reason of their littleness," despite Leatherhead's frank efforts to explain "I am the mouth of 'em all!" (5.3.65-83). By contrast, Busy's less innocent view is the one most pointedly corrected at a climactic moment in the play.

Puppet Dionysius defeats Busy in their "disputation" by demonstrating at once with the lifting of its garment that its animating "spirit" is both physical and sexless. The puppet purports to prove to Busy through this gesture "*that I speak by inspiration as well as he*" (5.5.94-5). Indeed, by revealing the physicality of its

⁹⁷ Leatherhead explicitly refers to "Saint Barthol'mew" at 5.1.1. This saint is often depicted holding his own flayed skin, perhaps most famously in Michelangelo's *The Last Judgment*. For a fascinating and detailed account of the links between Bartholomew Cokes and Saint Bartholomew, a patron saint of the fair and its cloth-traders, skimmers, and merchants, see Chapman's "Flaying Bartholomew." Marcus also reveals, in *The Politics of Mirth*, the play's striking echoes of the liturgical texts read on the feast of St. Bartholomew, which reflected on the limits of earthly authority (58-9).

inspiration, Puppet Dionysius presents an image of the “inspiration” that has moved Busy through the fair – an inspiration fully bound up with his physical longing for pig. Puppet Dionysius also demonstrates his ability to speak by the “inspiration” of scripture as well as Busy,⁹⁸ alluding to Saint Paul – a main source for ideas about the necessity of renouncing the flesh to live by the Spirit⁹⁹ – in his assertion that “we [puppets] *have neither male nor female amongst us*” (88-9).¹⁰⁰ With a biblical affirmation that gender is finally insignificant in matters of the spirit, this response to Busy’s objection (and a conventional Puritan anti-theatrical objection) to cross-dressing on the stage not only undermines the objection, but also further challenges Busy’s tendency to attribute to women weakness of spirit because of greater vulnerability to the body. But ultimately, the physical act of lifting the garments – the surprising material image before Busy and not the puppet’s words – is what finally converts Busy to cease railing at the puppet show and “become a beholder with you!” (100-101).¹⁰¹ In a departure from his own

⁹⁸ As Debora Kuller Shuger asserts, Busy experiences a genuine, comprehensible conversion, precisely because the puppet’s behaviour exemplifies the kind of hypocrisy, associated with role-playing, that animates Busy (along with Overdo). Busy and Overdo, as Shuger points out, are constantly playing roles too big for them, aggrandizing trivial events and comparing themselves to heroes, saints, martyrs, and even Christ. “The puppets burlesque the friends and lovers of antiquity,” then, “in much the same way that Busy and Overdo caricature God’s saints and wise men. In both cases the vulgarity and triviality of modern life contrast painfully with the values and qualities associated with the roles assumed by the players” (“Hypocrites and Puppets” 70-3).

⁹⁹ On the early modern (mis)appropriation of Paul’s concepts of “flesh” and “spirit” refer to Osmond, *Mutual Accusation* 10, 21.

¹⁰⁰ Puppet Dionysius is referring to Galatians 3:25-8.

¹⁰¹ Alison Chapman insightfully reads Dionysius’s surprising physical act as a parody of traditional accounts of martyrdom claiming that the martyr’s sacrifice converted the main persecutor. In particular, Dionysius’s act alludes to Saint Bartholomew’s martyrdom, which involved his skin being lifted to reveal a sexless body and purified soul beneath. As Chapman explains, “the logistics of flaying entail removing the male genitals” (534), and the more a martyr’s body was destroyed the more his or her soul was considered sanctified in saints’ legends (531-41). Whereas Chapman reads Dionysius’s gesture as undercutting the “hagiographic view of

construction of poetry as the soul of a dramatic production, superior to the embodiment of costume, stage effects, and actors' bodies, Jonson seems to be conceding, here, the efficacy of material to instruct beyond words.¹⁰² Indeed, the puppet chosen to confute the antitheatricalist portrays not just Dionysius but *the ghost of Dionysius* in the motion (5.4.285). This detail explicitly draws attention to the most obvious instance on the stage – the representation of ghosts – of the necessary use of the material and the physical to convey and shape ideas about the

flaying" by ultimately revealing "nothing" of significance beneath the surface – that is, no purified, transcendent soul (535,536,539), I am arguing that the puppet's revelation does indeed mean something – both to *Busy* and in the context of the play as a whole. Nonetheless, tenets of Chapman's argument resonate with my contention that *Bartholomew Fair* denounces a hierarchical model of soul over body. She claims, for instance, that the play "satirizes the idea that material, physical identity and sacred identity stand in inverse relationship so that as one is diminished the other is reinforced. In medieval hagiography, this formula holds, for the more the saints lose things or body parts, the greater their holiness becomes. For Cokes, however, losing the outward signs of his physical identity – his purses and his clothing – does not further identify him with Christ; it just makes him more of a cokes, which the *OED* defines as a "silly fellow, fool, ninny" (536). From a different angle, then, Chapman sees the play as collapsing surface and depth, rather than treating body and soul as separate, antagonistic entities. For Chapman, *Bartholomew Fair* shows that "trying to get some transcendent human identity by piercing through or lifting off the surface is as futile as trying to skin a gingerbread man or a puppet (or even Cokes himself), for in the process of discovery, you end up with nothing more than dry crumbs and stuffing" (541). This conclusion returns us to a view of the physical as somehow debased and inferior, with the spiritual as simply absent. My argument, in contrast, is that the play treats body and spirit alike with equal ambiguity; more than mere "crumbs and stuffing," the body is irresistible and vibrant, as Ursula proves, while the wit, though sharp and amusing, can be cruel and pointless, as Quarulous demonstrates.

¹⁰² Thomas Cartelli's illuminating discussion of *Bartholomew Fair* as a saturnalian comedy that both critiques and owes a debt to the green worlds of Shakespearean romances includes a similar view of Jonson's comment on the didactic efficacy of theatricality. Cartelli suggests that Jonson could perhaps "recognize (and expose) various images of himself in the trio of mystified demystifiers who define themselves in opposition to the puppet-monsters of invention embodied by the Fair and its unregenerate inhabitants... [I]n reforming this trio ... [Jonson] may well be reforming himself as well: the 'old' Jonson who, like the old Adam, sees enormity in every stone or pebble of human imperfection. At the very least, Jonson comes into a clarification of his own about the saturnalian potential of satire and the theatrical measures – puppets and all – a playwright may need to take to make his representation of reality both applicable and accessible to the workaday world around him" (171-2).

immaterial or unseen.¹⁰³ Puppet Dionysius's garment-lifting compounds this point about the inextricability of spirit and material. In literally exposing its "inspiration" and animating force, and in thus providing an image of the soul as implicated in the physical and beyond gender, Puppet Dionysius confirms the view, pervasive in the play, of the body and soul as mutually "adulterated" for men and women alike.

Forwarding a notion of spirit and flesh as inextricable and equally imperfect from the start to oppose the conventional concept of the spirit as tainted and degraded by the flesh would seem an important tactic in defending the theatre from charges that it misleads and corrupts the spirit. Shershow has noted that Leatherhead, in filling the puppets with his voice, is a figure for Jonson as the "mouth" of the actors of his play (102, 104, 106). Lantern's decision to put Dionysius up as Busy's opponent is a decision to use a material, theatrical means to cure Busy's hypocrisy that proves effective when endless attempts to speak with him and punish him fail. This successful choice reflects on or justifies theatre's instructional role: stage behaviour can help to make a point or push towards a revelation not always possible or understood as mere words on paper or as oral lecture.¹⁰⁴ But the choice to frame an argument through the material

¹⁰³ The player's physical movement (does he walk lightly or seem to glide? Quickly or slowly? Restrict his motion or flit about the stage?) and voice (absent? Hoarse or pained? Altered from an earlier 'alive' appearance?), in addition to his garments (clanging armour? A thin shroud? The clothing he or she was murdered in? Of light or dark colour?), would shape the concept of a ghost or disembodied soul (though as Hamlet's anxiety reminds us, these two immaterial entities are not always one and the same thing), for instance, in quite different ways.

¹⁰⁴ Leatherhead even intimates the possibility that the material performance he is directing can convey a truth beyond his own knowledge: "I am not well studied in these controversies between

inevitably involves relinquishing absolute authorial control over the message, allowing the audience to interpret, for instance, the reasons Puppet Dionysius's self-exposure effects such a change in Busy.¹⁰⁵

In *Bartholomew Fair*, then, actual puppets expose the hypocrisy of attempting to puppet women on two levels: not only does Dionysius underline the absurdity of considering women to be more fleshly than men are, but even if this association were permitted to stand, the puppets, like Gloriana in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, also demonstrate the impossibility of fully controlling how the material signifies. Leatherhead might control the illusion of the puppets' insubordination when they beat him over the head at the slightest provocation, but he is quite unable to control how audience members, such as Cokes, for instance, read them,

the hypocrites and us. But here's one of my motion, Puppet Dionysius, shall undertake [Busy], and I'll venture the cause on't" (5.5.28-30). That Puppet Dionysius plays not the drunken god of wine but a former tyrant and educator in the motion further suggests how the material can dictate a truth or reality in a way that is impossible to ignore, forcing realizations when words fail. For a discussion of puppet Dionysius's literary antecedents and how they are merged in *BF*, refer to James E. Savage, *Ben Jonson's Basic Comic Characters and Other Essays* 146.

¹⁰⁵ As Ostovich observes, here, and also when "Overdo's oratorical attempt to mete out justice is silenced by his wife's vomiting," the "frailty of the flesh defeats the word. The appeal to the senses overwhelms the appeal to the inadequate intellect." Ostovich suggests that "Jonson seems to be directing us towards a recognition of our world's failure to find a moral centre" (46). I would add as a further possibility that Jonson allows the physical an instructive role in morality, namely, through forcing recognition of the dishonesty of the intellect that assumes detachment from and superiority over the rest of humanity.

In my position that Jonson relinquishes absolute authorial control in framing an argument through the material, I disagree with Shershow's position that "just as the king frames the whole play, secure in his entwined literary and political authority, so the author pervades the mere performance from his position of inviolable externality: a sovereign voice whose presence transcends (and also requires) its own absence, a voice that reaffirms its own mastery in the apparent act of relinquishing it" (106). Cokes, in a sense, signals in the extreme the "natural" response to the puppet as performative object – a fascination with the puppet itself in which the audience forgets about Leatherhead, even if he is not concealed (he certainly pops up frequently to translate to Cokes and get beaten over the head by the puppets), let alone the puppet playwright Littlewit and final author, Jonson. For an alternative view on the play's relentless subversion of all forms of authority and a final relinquishing of authorial control that is not just an illusion, as Shershow claims, see chapter six of Robert N. Watson's *Ben Jonson's Parodic Strategies*, "*Bartholomew Fair: The Theater of Forgiveness and the Forgiveness of Theater*."

as indicated by his failure to disabuse Cokes of his belief that they are alive.

Ursula shares with the puppets a materiality that eludes definition or even firm categorization as material in opposition to spirit. While Winwife might derisively label Ursula “an inspired vessel of kitchen-stuff” (2.5.70), out of all the play’s characters, she is the most difficult to imagine as puppetable, not just because of her fiery temper, but also due to her sheer material unwieldiness. Winwife’s label is only one of several bandied about Ursula by men in the play, demonstrating what Leggatt calls “an itch to interpret Ursula, as though this will somehow bring her under control,” but, as Leggatt puts it, “in the last analysis Ursula is Ursula, uncontrollably herself” (142). Significantly, when Mistresses Overdo and Littlewit emerge from Ursula’s tent, some of Ursula’s uncontrollability has rubbed off on them. Mistress Overdo, who has parroted her husband’s sayings and invoked his authority repeatedly throughout the play, ends up silencing her husband by vomiting just as he is getting started on his indictment of everyone’s “enormities.” For Lori Schroeder Haslem, this moment is part of the play’s overall construction of the female body as “a locus of shame” in a way that the male body is not (450). But the timing of Mistress Overdo’s sickness also makes it a very visceral rejection of her husband’s words of authority, which, until entering Ursula’s domain, Mistress Overdo herself was verbally regurgitating. Likewise, only when Mistress Littlewit emerges from Ursula’s tent does she clearly cease to be her husband’s puppet: she is no longer wearing the clothes Littlewit selected but is dressed as a prostitute instead. She neglects, moreover, to

compliantly remove her mask despite her husband's frantic and repeated inquiries into her whereabouts. Just as Puppet Dionysius's self-exposure silences Busy and Mistress Overdo's physical statement puts an end to her husband's self-righteousness, Mistress Littlewit's physical non-compliance foils her husband's ever-ready wit – he too has nothing more to say. Repeatedly, far from opposing the spiritual, the material instructs the spirit or mind much more effectively than words – and ignoring, dismissing, or presuming to control it can prove embarrassing, or in Vindice's case, fatal. Perhaps for Jonson an underlying message exists about the superior ability of the theatre, over the words of sermons (such as Busy's) to instruct, precisely because of the physicality that such sermons so often condemned.

Chapter 2

“A spirit to resist” and Female Eloquence in *The Tamer Tamed*

That woman is not worthy of a soule
 That has the sovereign power to rule her husband,
 And gives her title up

– *The Noble Gentleman* 3.2.103-5

A Womans humour hardly can Submit
 To be a Slave to One she do's Out Wit
 – Anonymous, “Advice to Virgins”¹⁰⁶

Maria, in John Fletcher’s *The Tamer Tamed or, The Woman’s Prize* (1609-10?),¹⁰⁷ makes explicit the connection between her will and her soul when she first declares her intention to resist her husband’s rule over her. In doing so, Maria announces a fundamental objective: to bring about Petruccio’s recognition and acceptance of her independent soul, encompassing, as it does, her will and intellectual powers. In his Shakespearean past, Petruchio¹⁰⁸ was clear about his project of quelling what Kate called her “spirit to resist” with the help of physical abuse in the forms of food and sleep deprivation (3.2.221). In Fletcher’s play, Maria immediately closes off this avenue of power; by barring Petruccio’s physical access to her body, she ensures that the ensuing battle between them will take place on the grounds of wit. On this battleground, Maria proves far superior to Petruccio, dominating him in a field formally reserved as the province of men: that of rhetoric. Maria’s rhetoric involves skilled reversals of Petruccio’s

¹⁰⁶ Qtd in Kelly and Leslie, *Menacing Virgins* 19-20.

¹⁰⁷ In their edition of *The Tamer Tamed*, Celia Daileader and Gary Taylor cite historical references indicating that the play “cannot have been written earlier than the last months of 1609” (8-9).

¹⁰⁸ I follow the spellings of “Petruchio” that the editions I am working with use. Thus, I refer to Fletcher’s “Petruccio” and Shakespeare’s “Petruchio.”

misogynistic assumptions, argumentative strategies, and former taming tactics in *Shrew*, reversals which carry radical implications for the social and ideological constructions of gender roles. Maria's central, most important reversal, as I will argue, inverts the associations of men with spirituality and rationality and of women with the body. The centrality of this reversal, however, does not necessitate that Maria reject or ignore the body, the body's position in rhetorical argument, or the impact that rhetorical argument can have on the body. On the contrary, Maria and her allies employ rhetoric that confuses the line between body and soul, and they supplement that rhetoric with pointed bodily gesture. In fact, insisting on having it both ways, that is, aligning women with the (superior) soul and men with the (inferior) body, and yet assigning positive value to women's bodies, is possible with rhetorical skill. The demonstration of this possibility ultimately works to expose negative views of women's bodies and the association of women with bodies as themselves mere rhetorical constructs mobilized to subordinate women – rhetorical constructs that can easily be met with new ones more advantageous to women.

This chapter focuses on rhetorical debate over gender roles that invokes conceptions of the body-soul relationship. Its concern with rhetoric moves away from chapter one's concern with material objects onstage that carried potential to undo basic distinctions between material and immaterial, object and subject, body and soul, in ways that counteracted misogynistic representations of women. As I will argue, Maria in *The Tamer Tamed* demonstrates that rhetorically, both a

sharp division between soul and body *and* erasures of that distinction can be forwarded to argue for a reconsideration of gender roles within marriage. This chapter shares with chapter one, nonetheless, the argumentative premise that negating conventional, misogynistic representations of women involves, at root, reconceptualizing the soul-body relationship in ways that reject, or at least revise, the hierarchical and gendered frameworks attached to it in dominant discourse (whether or not a theoretical dividing line between body and soul obtains). I will set up this chapter's discussion of strategic, goal-oriented invocations of the body-soul relationship in an onstage "battle of the sexes" by first highlighting the significance of Maria's early insistence on a connection between her "will" and her "soul." Second, I trace early modern understandings of the function and purpose of rhetoric that bear specific relevance to its use in Fletcher's play, and I review women's positions in relation to the study, practice, and definitions of rhetoric. Finally, I analyse in detail Maria's rhetoric of reversals and its implications for gender roles. This analysis will consider how Maria's eloquence, like that of other female characters, attends to and incorporates the body in her arguments, without becoming a rhetoric *of* the body or retreating from the front of intellectual, verbal sparring. Of course, the rhetorical techniques I will be discussing are not new tactics and are certainly not unique to female characters. I posit, however, that staging women's appropriation of these techniques from a position of social subordination sharpens and changes their critical and subversive impact.

Will and Soul

The Tamer Tamed, Fletcher's exciting revisiting of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1592-4), opens ominously for the widowed Petruccio's second wife, Maria. Sophocles and Tranio, gentlemen and friends of Petruccio, express "pity" and "fear" for the "poor gentlewoman" whose father has "dealt" "exceedingly harshly, and not like a father, / To match her to this dragon" (1.1.8, 22, 5-7). Now that Petruccio is no longer "the still Petruccio," having been "forced" by his first wife's "abundant stubbornness" to abandon his calm and calculated attempts to tame her and finally "blow as high as she," even his friends acknowledge frankly that "there is no safety" in being Petruccio's wife (37, 16-20, 29). Sophocles and Tranio rather coldly agree, in a sombre twist on the wagers that ended *Shrew*, that Maria, a "tender soul," will likely soon be dead:

Sophocles. He will bury her,
 Ten pounds to twenty shillings, within this three weeks.
Tranio. I'll be your half. (40, 47-9)¹⁰⁹

In contrast to the men's passive observations about Maria's disposition, her cousin Bianca offers constructive advice, urging Maria to "let not... / Your modesty and tenderness of spirit / Make you continual anvil to [Petruccio's] anger" (56-8).

¹⁰⁹ Pamela Allen Brown even finds that the men "hint strongly that Petruchio killed" his first wife, Kate (141).

Juxtaposed with these grim marital prospects Maria's announcement of her resolve to resist Petruccio's suffocating control¹¹⁰ sounds with exhilarating force:

Adieu, all tenderness! ...

.....
 Mistake me not. I have a new soul in me,
 Made of a north wind, nothing but a tempest—
 And, like a tempest, shall it make all ruins
 Till I have run my will out. (73-9)

At the important moment of Maria's conscious decision openly to defy her new, tyrannical husband, she makes a crucial connection between her soul and her will. Maria's insistence that before consummating her marriage with Petruccio her soul must storm¹¹¹ until her will is satisfied reinstates Katharina's repeated but unsuccessful insistence that she will not leave her own wedding festivities to join Petruchio in his home "till I please myself," along with Katharina's sense that "a woman may be made a fool, / If she had not a spirit to resist" (3.2.209, 212, 220-1). Maria's explicit connection between her soul and will, moreover, affirms Kate's suspicion that Petruchio, with his tactics of conditioning Kate to accept his governing will as a substitute for her own, essentially attempts to hollow out her animating force or soul in order to "make a puppet" of her, an idea which I discussed in chapter one. Maria's connection of spirit and will in her announcement of rebellion is not a fleeting or isolated reference. Revising Shakespeare's motif of the haggard in *Shrew*, Maria describes "the free haggard"

¹¹⁰ Tranio tells us about how "she must do nothing of herself, not eat, / Sleep, say 'Sir, how do ye?'," make her ready, piss, / Unless [Petruccio] bid her" (1.1.45-7).

¹¹¹ For a contemporary etymology linking the words "spirit" and "soul" with "breath," "blast," and "winde" see Simon Harward's *A discourse of the Soule and Spirit of Man* sigs. B1r-B2r.

as “that woman that has wing and knows it, Spirit and plume,” and who, “To show her freedom” will “sail in every air / And look out every pleasure, not regarding / Lure nor quarry till her pitch command / What she desires” (1.2.151-7). Having “spirit” translates here into acting in accordance with one’s own independent will rather than stooping to obey another’s. Maria indeed emphasizes her refusal of Petruccio’s will. She invokes Lucina, the goddess of childbirth, “never” to grant her fertility nor aid with labour pains “if I do / Give way unto my married husband’s will” (108-13). She also vows to confront Petruccio even if he had the power to “Cast his wives new again, like bells, to make 'em / Sound to his will” (168-70) – with the strong implication, of course, that he possesses no such power. Maria even confirms her resolve to Livia “By the faith I have / In mine own noble will,” designating her will as something sacred to be sworn by (137-8).¹¹²

The connection that Shakespeare’s Katharina and Fletcher’s Maria draw between the soul and the will is not a new one. A 1599 edition of John Davies’ *Nosce teipsum*¹¹³ lists the soul’s “powers” as: “*life, motion, sense, and will, and wit,*” claiming that the soul exercises the two latter powers without the body’s assistance: “Use of her bodies Organs she hath none, / When she doth use the powers of Wit and Will” (12, 14). In his 1604 *A discourse of the Soule and Spirit of Man* Simon Harward links soul and will when he clarifies that “The Lord saith

¹¹² Maria’s claim that she will not “lie” with Petruccio “till I list” (1.3.109) finds an echo in Bianca’s assertion that the “whole country” cannot “fetch” the women down “unless we please to yield” (129-31), once again signalling that at stake in this battle is an acknowledgement and acceptance of women’s independent wills.

¹¹³ *Nosce teipsum* went through at least four editions between 1599 and 1622.

by *Ezekiel*, that he had given up the Israelites ... to the soule, that is, the will and affections of them that hated them” (sig B3v). Harward’s treatise notes Galen’s reliance on Plato in his opinions on the soul and reviews in detail Plato’s standard division of the soul into three faculties, following Plato in his placement of the will as an “appetitive” faculty serving a “cognitive” faculty (the will desires what the mind and reason propound) (sigs B4r-C1r, C4r).¹¹⁴ But, adding that “some do more briefly bring it into a Dichotomy, making onely two parts of the soule, to witte understanding and will,” Harward seems to add his own caveat concerning appetite (included in the will) (C4v). He considers appetite to be “a natural faculty of the soul” only when it obeys reason and natural instinct; when it refuses reason, the appetite is not so much part of the soul as “a corruption” and “infirmity” (C4v). Writing almost three decades before Harward, John Woolton corrects what he perceives as the “faltes” of Plato’s explanation of the soul by insisting on a distinction between the “Reasonable soul” and “intellective sence.”¹¹⁵ Woolton is clearly of the opinion, described by Harward, that the soul has “onely two parts,” claiming that the rational soul consists of the “Mind understanding” and the “Will” (fol 9). Drawing added attention to the association between soul and will, like Harward, Woolton also feels compelled to explain the crux about the will as part of the soul – the divine, immortal part of human beings – and yet capable of

¹¹⁴ Harward does not limit his discussion of theories about the soul to Plato, but reviews the opinions of several Christian and Classical philosophers on each topic about the soul that he covers.

¹¹⁵ Fol 9. For Woolton, Plato’s main “faltes” consist of labelling the functions of three body parts: the brain, heart, and liver, as three separate souls, and of confusing the actions of the soul with the actions of the brain or “inner senses,” which we share with “beastes” (fol 9).

making wrong choices. Woolton's approach to this problem involves separating the soul and mind from the physical brain and bodily senses, arguing that the soul will only "erre" in judgment if presented with misinformation, or "false shewes and similitudes" which "deceyveth the minde, simple and sincere in itself" (fol. 10-11). Woolton pointedly sets his argument concerning the division of soul and brain "agaynst" the opinion of physicians who posit that the soul's "Actions" are "impaired" when the brain is "distempered" (fol.10). Indeed, King James's physician Helkiah Crooke blurs the distinction so crucial to Woolton with his conviction that God's image could be found in both body and soul; nevertheless, he too explicitly aligns the will with the divine (Preface to Book 1, 2). In his 1615 edition of *Mikrokosmographia* Crooke adapts Plato's tripartite structure of the soul to Christian doctrine by comparing the soul, which remains "one" in "substance" while containing "three essential and distinct Faculties or powers, intellectual, sensitive, and vegetative," to the Trinity, also "one in essence" yet "distinct in persons" (Preface to Book 1, 2). Crooke reproduces the familiar division of the intellectual faculty (or rational soul) into "Knowledge and Will," calling these "two essential attributes resembling their prototype or originall in God" (Preface to Book 1, 2).¹¹⁶ These examples might offer differing interpretations of Plato, but together they illustrate the continuing notion of the

¹¹⁶ Repeating his point about the soul's resemblance to the Trinity, Crooke later shifts his terms for the soul's faculties, but "will" remains grouped with intellectual capacities and aligned with the divine: "in [the soul] is a lively resemblance of the ineffable Trinity, represented by the three principall faculties, *Memorie*, *Understanding*, and *Will*" (Book 1, Chapter 1, B2v).

will as one of the soul's highest functions, either paired with or serving "reason," "understanding," "mind," or "knowledge."

Women and Rhetoric

Rhetoric, commonly defined as the art of persuasion, constituted an entire, fraught, and "distinctive" discourse in early modern England.¹¹⁷ The "essential subject" of all works participating in this discourse is, in Wayne A. Rebhorn's summary, "language (accompanied by supporting looks and gestures) as it is used to move people," or to "affect people's basic beliefs and produce real action in the world" (3-4). The practice of rhetoric aims to affect the will, in other words, and this understanding of its function will be important in light of the connection Maria makes between will and soul.¹¹⁸ Given the power rhetoric was thought to have over the will, early modern descriptions of rhetoric unsurprisingly construct it (or refute this construction) as a kind of deceptive magic in some cases, able to produce a physical or almost physical force out of mere words.¹¹⁹ While rhetoric can function as a tool in shaping an argument about such topics as the body-soul relationship and gender roles, comparisons of rhetoric's effect to physical force,

¹¹⁷Wayne A. Rebhorn develops the argument that "taken together, the hundreds of discussions of rhetoric produced during the Renaissance constitute a distinctive and recognizable *discourse*," a kind of "specialized language" with its "own distinctive lexicon of terms, its characteristic grammar, and its defining syntax of propositions and relationships" (2, see also 9-10).

¹¹⁸ Rebhorn later refers explicitly to rhetoric's effect on the will: "when ... rhetoricians define the nature and function of the art in their treatises and handbooks, they stress its power above all else, specifically the power it puts in the hands of the orator to control the will and desire of the audience" (15). Cf. Rhodes: "The ability to move – to affect the will – is the province of rhetoric," which, for Petrarch, meant that "wisdom and virtue" were necessary to "eloquence" (25).

¹¹⁹Such constructions are not new to the early modern period, but take their cue from classical precedents. Refer to Rhodes, *The Power of Eloquence* 8-10, 19-20.

along with the location of gesture firmly within the province of rhetoric,¹²⁰ already begin to suggest that the practice and reception of rhetoric itself involved a disruption of the line between abstract thought and physical expression and impact. Maria and her companions, as I argue further on, make effective use of this quality of rhetoric in their stance against Petruccio and like-minded men.

Most women were debarred from formal training in rhetoric, which was closely tied to the study of Latin and prioritized in the education of boys from a range of social ranks.¹²¹ Technical training in rhetoric was envisaged as the ideal preparation for a life of public service and political activities such as deliberating in councils or at public assemblies, or pleading in courts of law (Richards and Thorne 3).¹²² As Jennifer Richards and Alison Thorne point out, since schooling in rhetoric was primarily training for skilled public oration, women's exclusion from public office and the perceived incompatibility between public speech and those qualities valued so highly in women, modesty and chastity, could be cited

¹²⁰ Cicero, whose influence on early modern thinking about rhetoric is in Rhodes's words "impossible to overestimate" (13), places considerable importance on delivery, including the orator's use of voice, eyes, face, and gesture. For Cicero, "delivery" is the "dominant factor in oratory," and without effective delivery "even the best orator cannot be of any account at all, while an average speaker equipped with this skill can often outdo the best orators" (*On the Ideal Orator* 3.213. See also 214-223). Refer also to Rhodes for a discussion of the perceived similarities between rhetoric and stage performance (15-18).

¹²¹ "By 1575," Neil Rhodes reports, "there were some 360 grammar schools in England." This meant that boys "from relatively humble backgrounds, who would previously have had a minimal education, found themselves subjected to a quite extraordinarily intensive programme of verbal, rhetorical and literary training" (50). Jennifer Richards and Alison Thorne adopt a less optimistic view, noting that "men of middle rank and above who attended grammar school or were tutored at home would have received at least a rudimentary introduction to the classical art of persuasion" (2). Rhodes and Richards and Thorne agree that "few" girls had access to the study of Latin and rhetoric (Richards 2). Those who did were likely daughters of the nobility receiving instruction from a private tutor (Rhodes 44).

¹²² See also Rebhorn for the early modern view of rhetoric as "a particularly political art" (9).

when male educators cared to justify rhetoric's omission from the instruction that girls received (3-4).¹²³

Exclusion from technical schooling in rhetoric, however, did not prevent women from becoming competent rhetors. Technique was actually only part of rhetoric, and not the most important part, as Cicero makes clear in his *On the Ideal Orator (De Oratore)*, and Quintilian asserts in his *Institutio Oratoria*, both widely studied in the early modern period. Brian Vickers draws attention to illustrative passages in both to remind us that "rhetoric, the art of persuasive communication, has long been recognized as the systematization of *natural* eloquence."¹²⁴ While the term "orator" designated an actual diplomatic profession and humanists preferred to label themselves "orators" instead of "teachers," Rebhorn's affirmation that "in a sense ... almost everyone in Renaissance society could have been dubbed an orator, and, what is more important, Renaissance

¹²³ Girls' instruction, in contrast to the curriculum recommended for boys, usually aimed to prepare them to be competent in childcare, domestic chores, household management, and proper moral conduct for a wife, and therefore only necessitated the literacy skills necessary for tasks like record-keeping or reading "the religious and homiletic texts that would fortify them against the perceived weaknesses of their sex" (Richards and Thorne 3-4). See also Mendelson and Crawford 89-91 for a description of the content of girls' education.

¹²⁴ (1-2, emphasis added). In a passage from Cicero, just after outlining the "main doctrines of rhetoric," one of Cicero's speakers asserts:

the virtue in all these rules is, not that orators by following them have won a reputation for eloquence, but that certain persons have noted and collected the doings of men who were naturally eloquent: thus eloquence is not the offspring of the art, but the art of eloquence. (qtd in Vickers 1)

See Vickers 1-3 for reference to a similar point in Quintilian and for further discussion of the priority assigned to "natural" eloquence over the art or systematized technique. Early in *On the Ideal Orator*, however, Cicero maintains that "eloquence is founded upon the intellectual accomplishments of the most learned," as opposed to having "nothing to do with the refinements of education" and depending solely on "natural ability and practice" (1.5). See also Richards and Thorne on "ancient theoretician[s]" understanding of "eloquence," the "force, fluency or expressiveness of speech or writing," as "pre-exist[ing] its codification as 'rhetoric'" (11).

people knew it” (6), resonates with the priority given to natural eloquence over its codification into a technique that really only strives to reproduce or emulate nature. Rebhorn explains that beyond law courts, official assemblies, and universities, the “domain of rhetoric” could encompass “courtship ..., confession and prayer, interventions aimed at the management of the family ..., and the advising and even occasional rebuking of one’s superiors” (6). In short, rhetoric “could serve practically all individuals and fit practically all situations as it blithely crossed long-established boundaries among disciplines, professions, and social classes” (6). Rebhorn does not include gender in this list of boundaries, but the inherently subversive potential of the deliberate practice of rhetoric, given its goal of influencing the will of others and the difficulty of restricting it to men with technical training when natural eloquence trumps technique in importance, certainly lends itself to challenging gender boundaries as well.

In *De Oratore*’s proposition that practice, not just theorization, makes a good orator, Richards and Thorne perceive an opening for a feminist approach to early modern women’s participation in the discourse of rhetoric.¹²⁵ They call on early modern scholars to foster greater awareness of the variety and possibilities of women’s exercises in rhetoric by expanding our understanding of the term to

¹²⁵ 11. In particular, they point to a productive “change of emphasis” in the possibility of “appeal to Cicero’s endorsement of practice-based rather than technical training in order to challenge the traditional authority of the schoolmaster,” such as that found in Cambridge lecturer Gabriel Harvey’s writing (11). Even if Harvey’s discussion has in mind “a community of university-educated male disputants,” Richards and Thorne note that the “importance he attaches to ‘practice’ can be extended to include other kinds of speaker, other kinds of disputational context” (11). They go on to suggest that “this is already recognised in many of the handbooks and treatises that ‘theorise’ restrictions on female speech, for these also reveal a more complex engagement with the practice of women’s talk than is often taken account of in critical discussion” (11).

include the study of eloquence as it develops from “‘practice’ in a variety of contexts” and not just from “technical training and scholarly regimens,” an adjustment that enables us “to extend its exercise to women of all ranks” (12).¹²⁶ We might also elect for the term “eloquence,” as it opens up “a vocabulary and a way of thinking that bring into view the often untutored persuasiveness of women’s speech and its capacity for critical engagement with received ideas and structures of authority” (10). Nonetheless, women were not always entirely “untutored,” as Richards and Thorne are aware, since they could likely learn or gain familiarity with rhetorical strategy through other means, like attending plays; reading letters; listening to sermons; participating in litigation as witnesses, plaintiffs, or defendants; and taking part more generally and variously in oral culture.¹²⁷ These possibilities should not suggest that women’s rhetorical power was limited to a combination of natural talent with the techniques that trickled down indirectly from men. Instead, women’s “gossip,” a type of speech labelled as distinctly feminine, as Laura Gowing has shown, wielded power to define or destroy reputations, both of men and other women.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Richards and Thorne place the effort to expand the term “rhetoric” in the feminist critical tradition which worked to productively expand the terms “political” and “public” from previous narrow constructions that neglected women’s involvement in these spheres (10).

¹²⁷ Richards and Thorne suggest the first three possibilities and cite Laura Gowing and Tim Stretton’s findings on the “intuitive grasp” of effective “narrative strategies” evinced in testimonies from women who “flocked to the consistory and equity courts in unprecedented numbers in this period” (12-13).

¹²⁸ See, for instance, Laura Gowing, “Gender and the Language of Insult in Early Modern London” and *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London*. In their work to complicate the term “rhetoric,” Richards and Thorne seek to avoid the kind of oversimplification that defines rhetoric in opposition to “feminised political talk—gossip, slander, conversation, etc.” (10).

Recognizing that Fletcher's portrayal of women besting men through a competent use of rhetoric does not belong innocuously to the realm of hypotheticals – just as scholars have recognized that *Tamer*'s portrayal of female insurrection alludes to very real women-led rebellions over enclosures and food shortages¹²⁹ – is important to appreciating the subversive critical work the play is doing. Showing female characters succeeding on grounds from which they are traditionally barred both challenges the basis for their exclusion and registers the real failure of such exclusion.

Fletcher's decision to foreground women's skill in rhetoric is subversive on other levels too. The formal rhetoric most accessible to men was also subject to charges of being a negatively feminine practice. Just as misogynistic literature might berate women for bodily adornment or the use of cosmetics,¹³⁰ detractors of rhetoric attacked it as being concerned merely with the superficial decoration of language, and as working to (mis)guide the will by privileging technique, style, or a certain knack with words, over truth content, so that it was dangerously deceitful.¹³¹ Opponents of rhetoric also discounted it as unstable because of its

¹²⁹ For a consideration of such revolts in connection with *Tamer* see Molly Easo Smith, "John Fletcher's Response to the Gender Debate" (2-4); Fiona McNeill, "Gynocentric London Spaces" (215-18); Daileader and Taylor 8-9. For a historical account of women's rioting see Roger B. Manning, *Village Revolts* (96-8, 115-16, 281). For Fletcher's country sympathies and sensitivity to the Midlands Revolt of 1607 see Gordon McMullan, *The Politics of Unease in the Plays of John Fletcher* (54-5).

¹³⁰ For more on early modern "cosmetic culture" and on anti-cosmetic writings that address "what was ... perceived as a feminine desire for physical beauty" (37), see Farah Karim-Cooper's *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama*, especially chapter 2.

¹³¹ Rebhorn investigates in detail how early modern rhetoricians struggle "with the notion that rhetoric is, in some fundamental way, feminine" in chapter 3 of *The Emperor of Men's Minds* (9-10). He observes that even though rhetoricians defended rhetoric from the charge of being feminine, by defining their art in "'masculine' terms as a matter of violent invasion and conquest,"

explicit reliance on the passions – on stirring passions both in the orator and in the audience.¹³² Again, this means of discrediting rhetoric as an art is similar to the means of discrediting women for their supposed inability to control unruly passions, and thus legitimizing their subjection to men, who were purportedly more inherently reasonable beings, a problem I touched upon in chapter one. Women were excluded from formal training in rhetoric, but formal rhetoric was nonetheless attacked for being feminine. Paradoxically, rhetoric's proponents also appealed to misogynistic associations to instruct about proper technique. Tracing the "narrative topos of overcoming a female enchantress or obstacle en route to completion and ending" in textual precedents such as the Bible, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid* to make visible a connection between "female figures and the extension or dilation of the text in order to defer its end or 'point,'" Patricia Parker has demonstrated a "more specific link" between the female body and the "rhetorical tradition of the dilation of discourse" (253-55). Drawing on Erasmus's *De Copia* as "the readiest source ... for this rhetorical tradition," Parker explains that the "preoccupation of this massively influential text is not only how to

they could not resist "imagining important aspects of their art in what their culture would have thought of as 'feminine' terms such as procreation and bodily adornment" (16-17). Rhodes traces opposition to rhetoric based on its deceptiveness from Plato's early objections into the Renaissance with writers like Gosson, who claimed that "Plato banished the poets because poetry and drama 'are the cuppes of Circes, that turne reasonable creatures into brute beastes'" (8-19).

¹³²One of the speakers in Cicero's *De Oratore*, for instance, discussing how to best move the emotions of jurors in favour of one's argument, recommends that orators pay attention to what emotions the audience brings to the case, and that they genuinely experience and express the emotions they wish to stir in their audience (as opposed to pretending) (2.185-196). For information on early modern objections to rhetoric, refer to Rhodes, who connects the controversy over rhetoric to controversy over acting and poetry as part of the same, continuing moral debate (Stephen Gosson, a staunch antitheatricalist, for instance, also professed himself an enemy to rhetoric) (19).

expand a discourse ... but also how to control that expansion, to keep dilation from getting out of bounds” (255). She notes that this concern is reflected in “countless Renaissance rhetorical handbooks which both teach their pupils how to amplify and repeatedly warn against the intimately related vice of ‘Excesse’” (255). While dilation (amplification, expansion, and variation upon points), a part of rhetoric associated with the female body, was desirable in rhetoric, it is “always something to be kept within the horizon of ending, mastery, and control, and ‘matter’ is always to be varied within certain formal guidelines or rules” (255-6). A problematic association exists, in other words, between the need to master a woman’s potentially unruly body and the necessity of controlling one’s own potentially unruly rhetorical dilations.¹³³ When Fletcher champions women’s rhetoric as a tool for piercing through male deception and exposing, as opposed to enabling, unjust oppression, then, he radically re-evaluates the negative associations of rhetoric with femininity, framing this link in a much more positive light.

Fletcher was undoubtedly familiar with such conventions in rhetoric. Born into “an overwhelmingly ecclesiastical family” and educated at Cambridge from age eleven (McMullan 11), he probably received the education in rhetoric denied to most women. In *Tamer*, Fletcher takes what was already thought to be a

¹³³ For further cultural resonances of “dilation” see Parker 256-8. See also Parker’s *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property*. For more on rhetorical dilation or *copia* see Rhodes 41-8. Rhodes also discusses how “verbally elaborate styles began to be suspected of empty prolixity” in his discussion of “rhetoric in crisis” at the beginning of the 17th century, when scholars such as Bacon advocated “conciseness” over “amplification,” viewing such “earlier rhetorical values as obstacles to the objective pursuit of truth” (59-63).

potentially subversive tool (in its aim of exercising power over the wills of others and its dependence on inherent skill more than on class position) and intensifies its subversiveness by portraying female characters adeptly employing it. He cleverly reveals how some of the most basic ways of thinking about rhetoric make this tool especially suitable to Maria's cause. A common way of imagining rhetoric, for instance, saw it as weaponry, and rhetorical debates as martial battles. Indeed, in Tudor education, as Rhodes points out, "mastery of eloquence was clearly associated with development of masculine courage."¹³⁴ Facing Petruccio's incessant threats of physical abuse, Maria is in need of weaponry. Wresting it away from its connection to exclusively male courage, she proves capable of wielding rhetoric effectively in order to actually, not just metaphorically, ward off threats to her person; for Maria rhetoric is a weapon not in a school game, but in a real struggle for her safety. The overall effect of intensifying the subversiveness of rhetoric in this way is not to side with rhetoric's opponents, but to demonstrate the progressive social role that rhetoric could and should serve and to suggest the futility of attempting its suppression.

The Tamer Tamed or, The Woman's Prize

I focus on Fletcher's *The Tamer Tamed* in this chapter primarily as an important contribution to stage representations of women that engage ideas about the body-

¹³⁴ 44. Rhodes continues, "nearly all rhetoric books stress the importance of eloquence in the commandment of others, and a book such as Machiavelli's *The Art of War* acknowledges a similar relationship between military and rhetorical prowess" (44). See also chapter 1 of Rebhorn's *Emperor*, which discusses how "writers tirelessly restate, albeit with their own emphases and for their own purposes, Cicero's and Quintilian's notion that rhetoric is a weapon" (9).

soul relationship, and not to overlook or imply an absence of women's own rhetorical writings. My consideration here of Fletcher's representation of women recognizes, with Valerie Wayne, that "polarization" between scholars focusing on women-authored texts and those "addressing feminist and other political questions concerning male-authored texts" is "unnecessary" and "misrepresents the ways in which ideological construction crosses biological boundaries" (222). And yet actual women were not entirely absent from Fletcher's text if we follow Kathleen McLuskie, Alison Findlay, and Pamela Allen Brown in keeping in mind the important fact that women constituted a distinct and significant portion of the early modern audiences whose approval and patronage determined a playwright's financial success.¹³⁵ In particular, Brown's work on women and jesting culture defines a useful approach to considering women in the audience: "listening for women's laughter," she proposes, "forges an interpretive grid for resituating drama in relation to their desires and experiences. Women went to the theatre to hear plays that sometimes show signs of being tailored to appeal to their taste and judging wit" (4). *Tamer* could certainly be one of these plays, opening ample

¹³⁵ Findlay notes "the tastes of female spectators had to be acknowledged and catered for by the companies whose productions they paid to see" and refers to Richard Levin's work on prologues and epilogues indicating that "women spectators were thought of as a distinct constituency by those who worked in the theatre" (4, see also 1-3). Brown draws on McLuskie's work with her claim that "a truly vital feminist criticism must be inclusive, and it must consider women not only as authors and performers but as audiences" (31). A passage she cites from McLuskie's "Feminist Deconstruction" is worth repeating here: "It is not enough to reject all literature of the past as the product of 'male' culture or 'male' critical traditions ... It is clearly not enough simply to privilege works by women writers, many of which are far from feminist in consciousness or tendency ... The strengths of a feminist criticism lie in its rejection of pre-existing meaning created by assuming an audience is male, and the process of deconstruction that inevitably ensues" (qtd. in Brown 31).

space for women's laughter.¹³⁶ At least one woman's "judging wit" Fletcher might have had in mind was that of his patroness, Elizabeth (Stanley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon, with whom he enjoyed a "close and relaxed (while nonetheless respectful) relationship" if his surviving letter to her is any indication (McMullan 17).¹³⁷ If Fletcher sympathized with women,¹³⁸ as a man he could "afford to be a feminist" and was in a position to "go boldly where no woman in 1610 dared to tread: on to a feminist stage" (Daileader and Taylor 1, 3).

The juxtaposition of Petruccio's taking bets on his anticipated sexual performance with Maria on their wedding night with Maria's announcement to the audience that she has a "new soul" is the first hint that Maria's and Petruccio's clashing ideas about women's bodies and souls will be central to their battle. With their first verbal sparring match, Fletcher affirms that Petruccio's acknowledgment and acceptance of Maria's soul is her primary objective. In this first post-nuptial encounter, Petruccio reveals fully the attitude that, in Maria's eyes, needs correcting. After bootlessly threatening and pleading with Maria to come down from her fortified upper chamber in order to consummate

¹³⁶ Brown discusses *Tamer* in connection with her arguments on women and the culture of jest, 140-144.

¹³⁷ McMullan asserts that "Fletcher was certainly part of the fifth earl's milieu by 1609" (15), and Daileader and Taylor claim that "*The Tamer Tamed* cannot have been written earlier than the last months of 1609" (8). On Elizabeth Stanley see also Daileader and Taylor 2-3.

¹³⁸ Daileader and Taylor observe that Fletcher's own biography might furnish clues to his capacity to "see the inhumanity" in "traditional paradigms" such as wife-taming narratives, in that his lifestyle choices often went against patriarchal expectations. Fletcher never married, and Daileader and Taylor suggest that he therefore "imagined" marriage, "at its best, as a relationship between male collaborators: a 'due equality' that requires and enables both parties 'to love mutually' (5.4.97-8)" (2). And, "whatever the truth, the relationship between [Fletcher and Beaumont] was so close that it was suspected of being sexual. Their alleged ménage-à-trois with a shared 'wench' also scandalously violated the sanctities of monogamy" (Daileader & Taylor 1-2).

their marriage, a publicly humiliated Petruccio unleashes a rant debasing women's bodies and utterly dismissing their minds:

Now, if thou wouldst come down, and tender me
All the delights due to a marriage bed,
Study such kisses as would melt a man,
And turn thyself into a thousand figures
To add new flames unto me, I would stand
Thus heavy, thus regardless, thus despising
Thee and thy best allurings. All the beauty
That's laid upon your bodies, mark me well –
For without doubt your minds are miserable;
You have no masks for them – all this rare beauty,
Lay but the painter and the silk-worm by,
The doctor with his diets, and the tailor,
And you appear like flayed cats; not so handsome. (1.3.227-39)

Clearly, Petruccio has not the slightest inkling of Maria's viewpoint, as she expressed it to Livia just prior to her initiation of the barricade when she called that "woman" who "lives prisoner to her husband's pleasure" "childish," one who has "lost her making" and becomes a mere "beast / Created for his use, not fellowship" (1.2.137-41). Petruccio equates Maria's self with her sexual attractiveness, envisioning her turning "thyself" into "a thousand figures" to arouse him, and framing his response as an imperious rejection not just of her attempts, but of "*thee* and thy best allurings," as if Maria's self was wholly bound up in her best allurings (emphasis added). Once Petruccio reduces Maria to her body, he attributes all of the body's outward beauty to the intervention of male professionals such as the tailor and doctor, without whose help women appear as

“flayed cats.”¹³⁹ He dismisses women’s minds in a fleeting reference likening them to women’s “not so handsome” bodies, except lacking the “masks” of artificial beauty to hide their “miserable” condition.

In a move typical of her general strategy, Maria reverses the main points in Petruccio’s attempt to rhetorically reconstruct the unpalatable reality that she has presented him with. She begins by echoing words from his last sentence, as if signalling her project of rewriting his worn out, misogynistic construction of women:

And we appeare – like her that sent us hither,
That only excellent and beauteous Nature –
Truly ourselves, for men to wonder at,
But too divine to handle. We are gold,
In our own natures pure; but when we suffer
The husband’s stamp upon us, then alloys,
And base ones, of you men, are mingled with us,
And make us blush like copper. (1.3.240-7)

Maria counters Petruccio’s construction of women’s bodies as ugly without the aid of male intervention with the argument that only at the moment of male interference with women’s bodies, specifically through sexual intercourse, do women’s inherent beauty and divinity become tainted. Maria makes no distinction here between mind and body as Petruccio does. Instead, she compares women to

¹³⁹ Only “doctor” is explicitly gendered male, but “tailor” usually designates a male worker. The OED notes that “the ‘tailor’ is the *man* who sews or makes up what the ‘cutter’ has shaped” (1a), and provides examples of the title implying male gender. The following example suggests that “tailor” indicates a man unless explicitly noted: “**1530** PALSGR. 68 A tayllours wyfe or a woman tayllyour.” In another example “women” in general are set apart as a group distinct from the tailors who influence them: “**1611** RICH *Honest. Age* (Percy Soc.) 34, I doe see the wisdom of women to be still ouer-reached by Taylers...” (1a). Petruccio’s reference to “the painter” is more ambiguous. He is likely referring contemptuously to women’s practice of using makeup, but by grouping the “painter” with the “tailor” “doctor” and “silkworm” he frames painting, too, as something done *to* a woman, something that she cannot claim credit for.

“Nature,” an abstract ideal but an ideal that invokes concepts of very physical, earthy beauty. Her description of women as “too divine to handle” also mixes divinity with physicality. Maria’s metaphor of stamping for the change women undergo when they take a husband is fraught with cultural implications. She appropriates the conventional, often misogynistic notion of women as naturally softer, moister, more malleable, and hence more passive creatures than men, wresting these qualities away from a construction of women’s inferiority. Maria aligns these qualities instead with purity and a superior nature or essence, like gold more malleable than, but also more precious than, a harder metal used to impress an image into gold or to mix with gold to form a harder alloy.¹⁴⁰ The metaphor of stamping for sexual penetration, moreover, carries familiar connotations of a man marking a woman as his property and imprinting his image upon her through the production of children.¹⁴¹ Just as the sovereign’s image

¹⁴⁰ C.f. Donne’s explicit comparison of gold’s purity and malleability with the soul in “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning.” The speaker imagines he and his beloved will “melt” in their parting instead of unleashing “teare-floods” or “sigh-tempests,” contrasting their “refin’d” love to the “elemented” love of “sublunary lovers” that depends so much on physicality. The speaker picks up on the early imagery of melting and refinement with the assertion that:

Our two soules therefore, which are one,
Though I must goe, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,

Like gold to ayery thinnesse beate. (5-6, 13-17, 21-4)

¹⁴¹ Wendy Wall discusses “culturally widespread ideas about female impressionability” in relation to the printing press. Entering print was a sexualized act, since “to be ‘pressed,’ as Renaissance texts suggest, is to ‘play the ladies part,’ to undergo the ‘press’ of the male body during sexual intercourse” (219, 346). Maria’s metaphor of sexual intercourse as an imprinting or stamping of gold is closely related. The notion that women are designed to passively reproduce their husband’s imprinted image through their children carries enough weight that Lynda Boose suggests it helps give rise to racism. In her important essay “The Getting of a Lawful Race” Boose discusses white male anxiety over children produced from the union of a white man and black woman, due to the children’s closer resemblance to the mother, as opposed to the father. The “signifying capacity” of the “black female” “threatens nothing less than the wholesale negation of white patriarchal authority” and Boose posits a locus for emerging racism in “the white male’s discovery that not

stamped onto coin authorizes it as legitimate currency, through marriage a woman, in a sense, enters currency – following financial negotiations between her future husband and her father or his substitute – to gain status in society as a matron.¹⁴² Maria overturns such connotations by presenting the moment of rude “stamping” not as a social elevation but as a personal debasement resulting entirely from contamination with a man’s already base nature (she refers to men as “alloys” even before they are “mingled” with women), and not from any change that takes place in the woman’s nature. Less a defence of women than an aggressive counter-attack to Petruccio’s insults, Maria’s response focuses on an alignment of women with the spiritual or sacred and of men with an impure physicality that mars women’s superior natures— a response that perhaps takes a jab at just how fixated on the physical Petruccio’s defaming rant is.

Maria supports her claim that women’s perfect purity and divinity are only tarnished through sex with men by treating as sacred the barricaded space that

only was black more powerful than white and capable of absorbing and coloring, but that in this all-important arena of reproductive authority, black women controlled the power to resignify all offspring as the property of the mother” (46). For a discussion of how William Harvey, writing decades after Fletcher, “makes the offspring the exclusive image of the father, constructed on the near denial of the mother” (115), see chapter 4 of Eve Keller’s *Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves*. A 1632 tract by Moses Capell entitled *Gods valuation of mans soule* compares God printing his own image in man’s soul to an earthly king choosing the choicest metals on which to stamp his image (13), an analogy that similarly emphasizes stamping as an act of authority that leaves its image behind. See also *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* 1.1.46-51:

THESEUS: What say you, Hermia? Be advised, fair maid.

To you your father should be as a god –

One that composed your beauties, yeah, and one

To whom you are but as a form in wax

By him imprinted, and within his power

To leave the figure or disfigure it.

Another overtly misogynistic “stamping” metaphor occurs in *Cymbeline* 2.5.1-7.

¹⁴²For information on how wedlock “elevated women to a loftier rank in village as well as elite society,” with matrons, for instance, sitting “together” in Church, “in front of their single counterparts, to mark their higher standing in the community,” see Mendelson and Crawford 131.

both preserves her virginity from Petruccio and serves as a metaphor for her unstamped body. Livia must swear an oath and pass a rigorous round of questioning that tests her truthfulness and constancy before she can join the women in the upper room, and Bianca warns her in noticeably religious terms:

If ye be false, repent, go home, and pray,
And to the serious women of the city
Confess yourself. Bring not a sin so heinous
To load thy soul to this place. (2.1.85-8)

Once satisfied with Livia's sincerity, Maria instructs her to "fling ... away" any "fond obedience ye have living in you / Or duty to a man, before you enter," as "twill but defile our off'rings" (120-2), again underscoring the idea that Livia is setting foot on hallowed ground in that she must discard anything base and offensive before doing so, in preparation for the rituals or "off'rings" that take place within. Elsewhere, Maria, Bianca, and their allies appropriate military terminology: in warning Livia of the punishment of treason;¹⁴³ in their talk of "parley," "the foe," "treaty" and "conditions," "strengths" and "forces" (2.1.15, 75, 2.4.2,4, 2.5.93, 117); in one country wife's vision of a "glorious fall" in the event of failure, that would see her buried "with her distaff" (rather than sword) "stuck by me, / For the eternal trophy of my conquests" (95-100);¹⁴⁴ in their

¹⁴³ Bianca promises Livia that "if we do credit you / And find you tripping," she will suffer a fate worse than the assassin of "the Prince of Orange" who suffered dismemberment and disembowelment alive before being decapitated and quartered, a standard punishment for treason (as Daileader and Taylor observe in their note 44-5).

¹⁴⁴ A City Wife also conveys the seriousness of the women's resolve by telling the men that if the women give up on their cause the men can "degrade us of all our ancient chambering," "hew off" the "symbols of our secrecy, silk stockings," "our petticoats of arms / Tear off," and "our bodkins break / Over our coward heads" (2.5.105-10). As with the substitution of distaff for sword, here the City Wife lists traditional places and signs of women's authority in a way that references military practice and weapons, with playful puns on "coat of arms" and on "bodkin" as both

assumption of titles such as “soldiers” and “Joan of Gaunt” (2.5.164, 96); and so on. These military references simultaneously communicate the seriousness of the women’s resolve to battle for their “cause” while poking fun at the pretentiousness of a field considered,¹⁴⁵ at the time, the province of men. In the same way, Maria and Livia reference institutionalized religion, which was often exclusive of and oppressive towards women, while imagining a religion in which women are the priestesses conducting “off’rings,” confessors, judges, and prominent – or rather only – practitioners. They do not suppress the body, but fully include its free expression through rebellious merry-making in this quasi-sacred, upper-chamber space, likely the stage’s balcony. The balcony fortress appropriately presents a visual image that supports the theme of “woman on top” and the notion that women are closer to the divine, since we see them looking down at the men who call “up” from below.¹⁴⁶ Maria’s chamber is at once “the play’s inner sanctum,” as Daileader puts it, and a “sanctuary for [the women’s] own pleasure.” She likens the chamber to Ursula’s booth in *Bartholomew Fair*, which, “however profane” as a space for “riotously physical activities” also contains “a certain mystery” (55, 67). In troubling the line between spiritual and

“dagger” and “hairpin.” The Country Wife adds to this a reference to women’s “plackets” as “crests” (112).

¹⁴⁵ In Theatre Erindale’s production, the three county wenches who confer briefly to give us an idea of the women’s forces gathering in support of Maria creep stealthily onstage from three different directions and find each other using secret bird-calls. The bird-calls along with the women’s armour and weapons (they brandished kitchen utensils such as rolling pins, ladles, and pot lids, and one wore a colander helmet) won laughter from the audience. Their appearance effectively conveyed the creativity and spirited sense of humour of the women’s contingent, without detracting from a sense of their resolve and capability.

¹⁴⁶ For a discussion of “the long tradition of ‘women on top’ available to Fletcher and his audience from common culture” see Brown 141 and Natalie Zemon Davis’s “Women on Top.”

profane, soul and body, Maria troubles Petruccio's rhetoric as it depends upon a view of the body as entirely debased and a view of women as debased for being so caught up with the body.

Maria's prolonged virginity contributes to this liminal position that she emphasizes between body and soul, and suggests how this liminality threatens male authority. By extending the period of her virginity indefinitely beyond the wedding ceremony, Maria creates and occupies a threshold between maid and wife, effectively defying patriarchal definition and categorization of women according to their marital status.¹⁴⁷ In a spiritual invocation that centers upon her body, Maria asks the goddess Lucina to "hear me!" and "never unlock the treasure of my womb" until she has made Petruccio "easy as a child" (1.2.108-14).¹⁴⁸

Lucina is closely associated with Diana, who formed part of the triple Diana or triple Hecate, a goddess "concerned with the life of women" whose multiple

¹⁴⁷Kelly and Leslie describe an increasingly common early modern view of virginity as "a temporary stage through which a young girl passed on the way to chaste marriage" and as "a valuable commodity but with limited shelf-life" (21). Maria reclaims control over this "commodity" traded between fathers and prospective husbands and de-naturalizes virginity as a stage that both enables and ends with marriage. Kelly and Leslie add, however, that "to chart the history of virginity as a steady evolutionary progression from a religious ideal in the Middle Ages toward a more secularized ideal in the Renaissance would obscure the extreme instability of the concept of chastity in both periods. Medieval and Renaissance attitudes toward virginity are not generalizable and evolutionary but specific, changeable, and often conflicted, yet it is clear that virginity's signifying force is no way annulled by contradictions" (21). "Virginity's signifying force" in early modern England is itself a complex topic of wide scope, though it is not central to my current discussion. For further studies of early modern stage representations of virginity, apart from a concentration on Elizabeth I's "virginal politics" which has tended to dominate such study according to Kelly and Leslie (18), refer to Buccola and Hopkins, eds. *Marian Moments in Early Modern Drama* and Marie Loughlin, *Hymeneutics: Interpreting Virginity on the Early Modern Stage*. The latter explores the topic through a focus on Fletcher, examining his "characteristic" emphasis on "sexual violence" and the "female virginal body" in light of the close connection in many of Fletcher's plays between the "politics of body and of state" (22-3).

¹⁴⁸ This was a powerful moment onstage in the Theatre Erindale's production, with Maria advancing towards the audience to hold her arms out and gaze upwards intensely as she called to Lucina.

aspects could be appealed to for help in diverse areas, including fertility or childbirth problems, vengeance, and magic.¹⁴⁹ Enlisting Lucina's aid, then, Maria taps into the literary motif of the magic power of virginity, a motif Milton is still making use of in 1634 with his Ludlow masque *Comus*. This masque features a lady's decisive defeat of the carnally tempting Comus with her "rapt spirits" kindled to a "flame of sacred vehemence" in defence of the worth of her virginity (793-799). The lady is only fully released from the grip of Comus's venomous, smeared gums of glutinous heat, however, by a magical virgin's ritual cure: the nymph Sabrina touches these gums with "chaste palms moist and cold," and thrice sprinkles drops from her pure fountain on the lady's breast, fingertip and "rubied lip" (911-919). Just as the masque presents virginity as the source of a supernatural, conquering power (albeit represented in very physical terms through Sabrina), the choice to remain a virgin, which Maria adopts for "ten, or twenty" nights, "or say a hundred, / Or indeed till I list," was often a choice of bodily governance intended to attain and signify special spiritual status. Pre-reformation English women had the option of entering convent life as brides of Christ, for instance, and their physical abstinence could translate into considerable spiritual and mental liberty. As Kathleen Coyne Kelly and Marina Leslie note, during the Henrican Reformation "fear of women sequestered together running their own affairs contributed to arguments for disbanding what had become centers of female autonomy and learning" (20). Kelly and Leslie find that "in the

¹⁴⁹Morford and Lenardon, *Classical Mythology* 208-10 and 638.

Renaissance, virginity continued to be equated with sacred as well as secular capital, suggesting there was no complete rupture with the anxieties or representational strategies of the middle ages” (17-18). Maria’s decision to extend her virginity certainly arouses fear and confusion in Petruccio, as his concern not just for his lust but for his “reputation” evinces (2.5.9). And in her own way Maria certainly uses physical abstinence to secure spiritual and mental liberty, in that before Petruccio can “have me / As you would have me” he must submit to her will (4.1.152-3).

Maria also uses her physical abstinence as a pause, disrupting male control over her body’s transition from virgin to non-virgin, to demand proper recognition of the power, both physical and non-physical, that women wield in child-bearing and rearing. When Petruccio voices his expectation that Maria have “a noble care / Of what I have brought you and of what I am / And what our name may be” (3.3.106-8), Maria asserts her power over, not obligation towards, Petruccio’s name and status, telling him “that’s in my making,” with the explanation that:

... there was never man – without our moulding,
Without our stamp upon him, and our justice –
Left anything three ages after him
Good and his own. (108-13)

Maria revisits and again revises, here, the sexual metaphor of stamping.

Sophocles, too, adds to the stamping metaphor by discreetly advising Petruccio to concede temporarily to Maria’s demands from her guarded fortress, since, “When ye are once a-bed, all / these conditions / Lie under your own seal” (2.5.149-50).

Sophocles' reference to the document seal as an image for consummation recalls the legal precedence of a husband's official seal over that of his wife.¹⁵⁰ When he insinuates that as soon as Maria is "under" Petruccio during sex she will be under his power and he can discard whatever concessions he made to her beforehand, Sophocles also alludes to the legal practice of coverture, which subsumed a married woman's legal identity under her husband's.¹⁵¹ In her return to this stamping imagery, Maria, however, places men in the position of soft material amenable to "moulding" and receptive of "stamping," with women as the moulders and stampers. "Moulding" might refer to the shaping of a child within the womb, which was thought to be affected by the mother's imagination.¹⁵² It could equally refer to a mother's moulding of her children's characters as she raises them, a process that could begin with nursing, since children were thought to absorb the moral qualities of their mother (or wet-nurse) through her breast milk (Mendelson and Crawford 29). Maria's talk of "moulding" then, cites women's creative powers of "making" without designating these powers as strictly physical or spiritual; instead, the two are obviously inextricable in some of

¹⁵⁰ Brigitte Miriam Bedos-Rezak records that "by the mid-thirteenth century a regression in [high-ranking women's] seal usage had occurred, so that they sealed thereafter only in concert with their fathers, husbands, and sons, and only those *acta* involving their own property ... Quite often, documents issued in the name of both spouses were authorized by the seal of the husband alone." While "gentry and non-noble women seem to have had a more independent use of their seals," it seems their freedom became curtailed with marriage: "if unmarried, they sealed deeds in their own names; if married, they sealed ... deeds conjointly with their husbands" (*Women and Gender in Medieval Europe* 732).

¹⁵¹ On "the implications of the doctrine of coverture" see Mendelson and Crawford 36-7. "Common law," they note, "made a sharp distinction between single and married women, treating marriage as the norm: all women were either 'married or to be married'. Man and wife were one person, and that person was the husband."

¹⁵² Mendelson and Crawford 28. See also Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* 3.7.5).

the processes the word evokes. In the context of women's creative powers, Maria's claim that no man is left anything good "three ages after him" without women's "stamp" and "justice" suggests that: the only lasting legacy a man can hope to leave behind are his children; that all men and their offspring necessarily bear the "stamp" or image of their mothers, not just their fathers; and that women's discretion or "justice" ultimately controls children's "legitimacy" or even their very existence.¹⁵³ All this resonates with Maria's conviction, early in the play, that Petruccio, who has grown into too boastful a "breaker of wild women," needs a reminder of his origins, and her consequent determination to "Turn him and bend him as I list, and mould him / Into a babe again" (1.2.171, 174-5).

Petruccio himself also weighs in on the stamping metaphor with an extreme articulation of the very view that Maria's troubling of the soul-body distinction and her alignment of women with the "divine" work to oppose: the view that women are inferior to men because more bodily than men. "Then, and never / Till then," he retorts, referring to Maria's initial mention of women being stamped by men, "are women to be spoken of, / For till that time you have no souls, I take it" (1.3.247-9).¹⁵⁴ Where reference to the belief that women have no

¹⁵³ Indeed, when Maria delivers her hilarious eulogy for Petruccio when he fakes death, she applauds herself for being a "careful woman" who, "born only to preserve" Petruccio, "Denied him means to raise" any children, "Out of the fear his ruins might outlive him / In some bad issue" (5.4.36-9).

¹⁵⁴ Daileader and Taylor footnote this speech as registering "a position seriously maintained by some Christian theologians."

souls appears in Jonson's *A Masque of Beauty*,¹⁵⁵ Herford and Simpson note that "the dispute started from a passage in the spurious Ambrose ('Ambrosiaster') Commentaries on St. Paul, I Corinthians xi. 7 and xiv. 54," citing "the argument" as it appears in Donne's verse-letter "To the Countess of Huntingdon": "Man to Gods image; *Eve*, to mans was made, / Nor finde wee that God breath'd a soule in her" (qtd. in Herford and Simpson 464 n.370).¹⁵⁶ The earliest English reference to the theological argument that women were soulless, according to Herford and Simpson, appears in *Mary Magdalene* (1567), when Infidelity argues with Mary.¹⁵⁷ Further references to this belief (most often discounting it) can be found in several seventeenth-century texts, especially in those treating questions about the origin of the soul. In a 1599 edition of *Nosce teipsum*, for instance, John Davies lists among the "erroneous opinions" and "fond thoughts" of the soul's creation, the idea that God locks up "virgin spirits" in "a *secret cloister*" "untill their mariage day" (26-7), an idea which resonates with Petruccio's claim that women receive their souls during sex. Davies explicitly clarifies a few stanzas

¹⁵⁵ "Had those that dwell in error foul, / And hold that women have no soul, / But seen these move, they would have then / Said women were the souls of men" (306-310). I discuss this passage at the end of my chapter 3. Jonson himself notes of these lines that "there hath been such a profane paradox published" (ed. Orgel 514 n.308).

¹⁵⁶ Herford and Simpson also note that "Donne, dealing with this in his *LXXX Sermons* ... knew, probably from Erasmus, that the commentary was not genuine," and record that Paul Lorrain, who translated "the tract" into French, dedicated it to Pepys, saying that "he had heard Pepys say that women were not human beings or capable of salvation, but, till he found the tract, he had thought this paradox to be 'la production de votre belle humeur'" (464 n.370).

¹⁵⁷ (464 n.370). Evelyn Simpson also refers to 16th-century disputes over whether women possessed souls, the Ambrose commentaries on St. Paul, and *Mary Magdalene* in *A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne* 141-2. Mendelson and Crawford briefly discuss the idea that women had no souls as a "proverb or 'common saying'" in "plebeian settings," besides its currency as an "academic joke" (62). See also Ian Maclean's overview of theological and philosophical sources for the debate on whether "woman" is a "human being" 2.4.1-2.4.3 and on whether "woman" is "made in the image of God" 2.5.1.

later that no precedent exists for claiming a woman's soul comes from her husband, since the Bible is clear on the detail that when God took Eve from Adam's rib, "Doubtlesse himselfe inspir'd her soule alone: / For tis not sayd, he did mans soule divide, / But tooke flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone" (30).

Simon Harward repeats Davies' point when he too observes that no biblical reference exists stating that God took "soule from [Adam's] soule" along with bone of his bone. He blames the mistaken notion that women gain their souls from men – one of the "gross heresies" he tells us Augustine warns against – on the importance Tertullian attaches to the biblical description of God inspiring a soul into Adam, juxtaposed with the lack of any mention about God doing the same for Eve at her creation (VI. F1v-F2r).¹⁵⁸ Using much the same terms as Harward, William Hill, in his *The infancie of the soule; or, The soule of an infant* (1605), also faults Tertullian as a source for the position that Eve's soul derived from Adam (D2r), and actually credits the soul with determining an infant's sex, for "he is not a Man or Woman, before the soule be united unto the Body" (C2r).¹⁵⁹ Even if the position that men endowed women with souls through

¹⁵⁸ Harward simply dismisses Tertullian's argument by stating the needlessness of narrating the same point twice (F2r).

¹⁵⁹ Of interest in Hill is his refreshing attribution of authority to women on the issue of whether or not infants have souls. Hill cites women's experience of an infant moving in the womb to demonstrate the presence of the soul, and interestingly, he cites the biblical reference to John leaping for joy in Elizabeth's womb and the infant John's expression of a passion (joy) to prove the presence of the "rational" soul in the infant. His willingness to appeal to women's experience as authoritative evidence, however, falls apart when Hill begins describing how we can trust the words of Elizabeth and Mary during their meeting, because undoubtedly John and Christ were speaking *through* these women, as if using their mothers as conduits for holy writ (D2r, E2r).

intercourse was most often invoked to be discredited¹⁶⁰ it is clearly a recognizable stance with its own logic, and one that Petruccio is familiar with. That it is a position often discredited does not make it any less available for Petruccio's use. In fact, texts that cite, explain the sources of, and then discount this belief, paradoxically perpetuate it as a recognizable opinion. Petruccio's immediate, retaliatory invocation of the (readily available) position that women are soulless without men in his effort to save face before his peers and reclaim his sense of superiority by devaluing Maria's humanity is further evidence that women's souls and what they might represent are centrally at issue in the gender power struggle led by Maria and Petruccio.

Petruccio exemplifies an attitude that resonates with Lynette McGrath's claim that:

the dominant representations of early modern England essentialized women as their bodies for two material purposes ... First, as they are rendered in poetry, to function as objects of desire for male sexual release, and second, as they are directed by the law, religious treatises and conduct books, for use as chaste channels of production for male offspring. (*Subjectivity* 41)

McGrath has also argued that a "typical association of the self with the soul or the mind or the spirit" in the early modern period "would have inhibited women's

¹⁶⁰ If the idea that Eve had her soul from Adam was often discounted, the notion that infants' souls – or at least their "divine" sparks of life – were imparted through the father and not through the mother, while also contested, finds expression later on in the writings of prominent medical authority William Harvey, as Eve Keller discusses (see especially 112-15). For further references to (and an exciting rejection of) Adam as the source of Eve's soul and the implications of this view, see also John Woolton's *A treatise of the immortalitie of the soule* (1576), fol.21 & 27 and Henry Woolnor, *The true originall of the soule* (1641), 33, 49, 203-113 (it should be 203-214, but at what should be page 209 the page number reads 109 and the succeeding pages count from 109).

construction of the self insofar as the soul in relation to the body was seen as masculine in relation to the feminine” (47).¹⁶¹ She explains that

the gendering of masculine soul and female body feeds into an ideology that would deny women, essentialized as body, access to a legitimate sense of self, unless women were able to work out a strategy which would permit them to invest a positive sense of self in their very physicality. (47)

While an alignment of the self with physicality as opposed to with the mind or soul would seem to maintain the binaric model of the body-soul relationship which first hindered women’s “construction of the self,” McGrath also makes the important point that “in a crucial move asserting jurisdiction over their bodies, some women overrode the ‘male mind’ - ‘female body’ dichotomy by insisting on the interconnected functions of women’s minds and bodies in intellectual activity, and especially in the act of writing” (64). I cite McGrath at some length here because her argument about how the conventional gendering of body and soul directly impacts women’s sense of self makes visible how that construction of the body-soul relationship can be employed as tool of subordination. The strategy McGrath identifies in women’s writing corresponds with my findings in chapter one (that moments where the material-immaterial, body-soul divide became confused or collapsed were also the moments that most challenged or undermined misogynistic representations and treatment of women) and also resonates with Maria’s tactics, despite the fact that she (as with the boundary-blurring moments

¹⁶¹ McGrath notes the exception of the soul as feminine in erotic imagery describing it as the bride of Christ, but posits that in women’s writing, “this kind of imagery ... often becomes a metaphoric way of referring to the displaced or ‘lost’ body” (72 n.20). The soul is commonly referred to as female in male-authored devotional texts as well, though not in a way that contrasts a female-gendered soul with a male-gendered body.

on stage that I discussed) is a male playwright's construction.¹⁶² But with Maria, Fletcher imagines a woman resisting the values assigned to the dichotomy through sometimes troubling, and other times *maintaining* a conceptual distinction between soul and body. In other words, whereas McGrath investigates women writers grappling with and responding creatively to dominant ideology's alignment of women with the body, Fletcher's play is doing something different, but related: the play demonstrates an awareness of, and works to expose how, differing models of the body-soul relationship could be mobilized as rhetorical constructs in ways that subordinate women to men – and in turn, in ways that reject such subordination.

Indeed, a refusal to recognize a division between body and soul can prove as debilitating and oppressive to women as their relegation to one "side" of the divide. Consider the example of Shakespeare's Lucrece, who has internalized the cultural association of bodily chastity with spiritual integrity to the extent that she resolves on destroying her violated body as the only means to free her "pure mind" from contamination in a "polluted prison" (1653-9, 1701-1729). Dekker, Rowley, and Ford's Mother Sawyer in *The Witch of Edmonton* suffers accusations about the state of her soul that are grounded solely on her physical appearance. She herself knows that her neighbours label her a witch and assume she has sold her soul to the devil, only because her body is elderly, gaunt, and stooped (2.1.3-8). In England, many women were executed for having engaged their souls in

¹⁶² As I mention above, Fletcher could very well have in mind real women as inspiring examples for, or judging audience members of, his Maria.

traffic with the devil based on the evidence of bodily markings, assumed to indicate where demonic familiars sucked the witch's blood (Thomas 445-6). We could also claim that Shakespeare's Petruchio recognizes an "indissoluble connection" (McGrath 74 n.44) between Kate's spirit and body when he sets out deliberately to subdue her spirit by weakening her body.¹⁶³

By barricading her body from Petruccio, Maria effectively enforces a barrier between body and soul to eventually bring her new husband to recognize a crucial distinction between the two. Blocking access to her body, that is, forces Petruccio to recognize Maria's "new soul" by making him engage with her solely on the grounds of wit and hear what she has to say, instead of physically coercing her to say what he wants her to say. Later, once Petruccio has agreed to Maria's demands in writing¹⁶⁴ and she has descended from her fortress, she reiterates the body-soul distinction twice in response to his physical violence toward her.

¹⁶³ Hopkins also perceives negative consequences of the view of women's "physical and mental operations" as "never far apart," "indeed ... intrinsically linked." Hopkins notes that following Fallopius's discovery of the fallopian tubes in 1562 "medical writing increasingly presented woman, especially in her procreative capacity, as not the inverse of man, but his physical and temperamental opposite pole, and women's bodies thus increasingly become a favoured arena for medical investigation ... and provide the dominant discourse for describing their mental as well as their physical processes. Increasingly, then, bodies, and in particular motherhood, or at least the biological ability to be a mother, become perceived as both the defining characteristic of women and as the means of their pathologisation and indeed criminalization" (12-13). See also Ian Maclean's chapter on "Medicine, Anatomy, Physiology" in *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* on the link drawn between women's physiology and their supposed lesser mental faculties, especially 3.3.9 and 3.7.4.

¹⁶⁴ Molly Easo Smith perceives significance in the play's emphasis on the written word: "Fletcher ... rewrites the gender debate as a literal text rather than an oral one; marriage partnership in *The Woman's Prize* emerges as a direct result of texts first proposed by males and then rescripted by females: Maria insists on a signed contract from Petruchio ...; Livia's marriage to Rowland is accomplished by duping the men (her father, Moroso, and Rowland) into signing two separate documents devised by Biancha; the women talk about being chronicled and thus providing a textualized precedent for future generations of women; Petruchio himself concludes the play by promising to keep to his text hereafter in his treatment of Maria. In the women's insistence on written records to authenticate their marital agreements, we see a record of the increasing currency in seventeenth-century England of the written text" (50-1).

Petruccio has a revealing story for Sophocles, for instance, when his friend suggests that the reason Maria refused to have sex with Petruccio on their first night together “may be” that “her modesty required a little violence. / Some women love to struggle” (3.3.7-9). “She had it,” Petruccio assures Sophocles, but

She swore my force might weary her, but win her
I never could, nor should, till she consented;
And I might take her body prisoner,
But as for her mind or appetite – (9-15)

An exchange very similar to the one Petruccio relates here occurs in a powerful moment onstage. Petruccio, exasperated with how successfully Maria turned against him his feigned illness – a ploy he designed to shame Maria for her treatment of him – demands in a rage, “What punishment mayst thou deserve, thou thing,” and “If I should beat thee now as much as may be, / Dost thou not well deserve it, o’ thy conscience, / Dost thou not cry ‘Come beat me’?” (4.1.127, 140-42). Maria’s forceful response to Petruccio’s threat of battery echoes her response to his threat of rape:

I defy you.
And, my last loving tears, farewell. The first stroke,
The very first you give me, if you dare strike –
Try me, and you shall find it so – for ever,
Never to be recalled – I know you love me,
Mad till you have enjoyed me – do I turn
Utterly from you. (142-8)

Here and in the scenario Petruccio recounts for Sophocles, Maria makes clear to Petruccio that overpowering her body does not amount to enjoying control over her person; in fact, exerting any kind of physical force over Maria would entail permanently losing the chance of a privileged access to her “mind” and “appetite”

(often located in the soul). With the vow to turn “utterly” from Petruccio at the first blow, Maria similarly suggests a worse and more complete rejection of him than her present refusal to physically consummate their marriage. Petruccio’s delayed reaction gives evidence of Maria’s progress in her cause. Whereas at the beginning of her rebellion Maria deems it necessary to remain “a little guarded for my safety,” “fortified” against Petruccio’s “violence” (1.3.102-5), here, when a physical barrier no longer protects Maria, a baffled Petruccio withholds his fists to instead hurl an angry wish, only after Maria’s exit, for “witchcrafts, herbs, or potions” that “can again unlove me” (4.1.157-9). That Petruccio’s anger shifts to his own feelings, here, and that Maria’s warnings twice give him pause, indicate that she is bringing Petruccio to realize that an admiration of her “wit,” a “something / Certain” he “married for” (25-6), is incompatible with his urge to dominate her body.

Besides her strategic ways of both maintaining and blurring the line between body and soul, Maria’s rhetoric involves demonstrating a superior mastery, both in word and action, of her husband’s old taming tricks. Beyond forcing Petruccio to engage with Maria’s intellect apart from her body, Maria’s refusal to consummate her marriage constitutes a sophisticated reference to one of the old Petruchio’s taming tactics. Reasoning that Kate will become more amenable to his will and recognizant of his authority when “passing empty” and physically weak (4.1.190), *Shrew*’s Petruchio deprives Kate of food and sleep. Maria, in turn, resorts to “fasting” Petruccio (1.2.96), although she deprives him

only of herself. Unlike Shakespeare's Petruchio, Maria denies more than the satisfaction of a physical need. When her bridegroom threatens to satisfy his sexual craving elsewhere, for instance, she tells him frankly to do so, but to be prepared for her to retaliate with the same infidelity. Where Petruchio physically wears down Kate's body in order to restrain her raging wit, in other words, Maria places utmost confidence in both the capability and the attractiveness of her own shrewd wit to tame Petruccio's desire to physically control her body. Where Petruchio relies (rather pusillanimously) on physical coercion, Maria's taming strategy depends entirely (and more courageously) on her conviction of her own self-worth¹⁶⁵ – her assurance that Petruccio will not find her replaceable with another woman's body and that he will not risk losing her sharp and interesting mind.

Maria's method of fasting her husband is only the first of many taming techniques that she successfully appropriates. She controls all of her entrances and exits,¹⁶⁶ as when, after warning Petruccio (in the above example) of what he can expect if he strikes her and outlining expectations for his future behaviour, Maria ends with an abrupt "And so farewell for this time" before turning heels on him (156). In this she presents a pointed contrast to Shakespeare's Kate, whose exits and entrances are noticeably under Petruchio's control after her marriage, as when

¹⁶⁵ Maria does threaten to give her body to the first man she sees as payment for murdering Petruccio if he strikes her, but this would involve serious danger to herself and works less to threaten Petruccio than to effectively emphasize the baseness of physical coercion. Anyone can resort to it, and physical retaliation is not beyond women's reach; it is nothing worthy on which to base authority as Petruccio keeps trying to do.

¹⁶⁶ See Celia Daileader's related discussion of Maria's seizure of control over space (*Eroticism on the Renaissance stage* 57-8).

he hurries her offstage, away from her own wedding festivities unwillingly; permits her to return to Padua for Bianca's wedding only when satisfied with her willingness to affirm his every word; and commands her to return onstage for a demonstration of her obedience as part of the play's final bet, and then to exit and re-enter bringing the other wives. Conversely, in *Tamer*, Petruccio is the one whose entrances and exits are controlled. He is locked against his will into his own home under Maria's pretence that he suffers from the plague, and only bursts out, gun in hand, after everyone else has left. In the Theatre Erindale's production, a raging Petruccio erupts onto centre-stage with the flash and crack of gunshot and through clouds of smoke. These stage effects, juxtaposed with Petruccio's disappointment to see that no one remains to witness his fierce display (his first words upon storming onstage are "Are ye all gone?" 3.5.95), convey perfectly the impotence and futility of his male bravado. Later, when Petruccio lies about meaning to embark on a long voyage, really intending "nothing less" and only aiming to further "try" Maria, she goes along with his ruse, enthusiastically hurrying him on his way with a comical offer of a ready-made packed lunch and advising him not to miss the next tide (4.4.184-5, 198-9). Maria does not exit when Petruccio instructs her to "Get thee going," threatening to "kick thee to thy chamber" (210-12). Instead, she stays to make a joke of Petruccio under the guise of solicitation for his best interests, commending him for undertaking travels to mend the "flying fumes here of your follies, / Your gambols, and ill breeding of your youth" (216-18). Interrupting Petruccio's

parting curse to Maria to redirect it towards Petruccio himself, Maria again exits on her own terms, leaving Petruccio with no choice but to head to the docks to conceal his bluff. Maria even ruins Petruccio's carefully planned re-entrance in a coffin when he feigns death from his marital misery in a last-ditch effort to cast blame and shame on Maria. Rather than responding with remorse as Petruccio had hoped, Maria reflects (again, most hilariously) on the blessing of Petruccio dying before he could heap more dishonour onto his name, effectively forcing Petruccio's real and humiliating entrance when he springs from his coffin in despair. Adopting Petruchio's former trick in *Shrew* of signalling his control over Kate by directing her entrances and exits, Maria demonstrates that this ability is not a male's prerogative.

Maria challenges and overrides Petruccio's very credibility in the scenarios surrounding his controlled entrances and exits, turning yet another of Shakespeare's Petruchio's methods against him. In *Shrew* Petruchio successfully pits his word against Kate's in public when he explains away her fierce rejection of him in her vow to "see [Petruchio] hang'd" before she weds him, assuring the company that

'Tis bargain'd 'twixt us twain, being alone,
That she shall still be curst in company.
I tell you 'tis incredible to believe
How much she loves me. (2.1.304-7)

Maria more than matches this move when, elaborating on a cue Petruccio himself provides by pretending to be gravely ill, she turns his illness into the dreaded

plague. She easily convinces the guard to forcibly quarantine him and all of his acquaintance to flee his presence, and she orchestrates the removal of his household goods, all while Petruccio desperately protests that he is “as sound, / As well, as wholesome, and as sensible / As any of ye all” (3.5.55-7). The approach of pitting “my word against yours,” of discrediting an opponent’s words while conjointly bolstering one’s own credibility is part of an explicit contest of wills that plays out, in both plays, through the “tamer” imposing on the “tamee” an alternate version of reality. As I touched on in chapter one, Petruchio forces Kate to bend to his words as if they constituted her reality when he insists that it will be what time he says it is before they travel to her sister’s wedding, that the sun is really the moon, and that Vincentio is a young maiden. Maria adopts Petruchio’s old approach with Kate when she constructs her own version of the events surrounding her husband’s pretend sickness. Wandering onstage and speaking within Petruccio’s hearing, she puzzles about why Petruccio would “Not let his wife come near him in his sickness” while taking two old women to him as keepers, as if she is deeply hurt by this. She also taxes him for his “unkind meaning” in sending away all the “plate” and “household stuff,” which might have been lost had not Maria intercepted it (when we know she is the one behind the removal of the household stuff) (4.1.27, 59-60). In *Shrew*, Petruchio tests Kate’s submission by having her affirm his words even when they are blatantly false, and thus risks appearing as ridiculous as she does; to onlookers they come

across as playing a strange game in calling things their opposites.¹⁶⁷ Maria outdoes Petruchio by inventing a story of her husband's "sickness" that allows for her self-presentation as an innocent, admirable, and wronged wife while attaching plausible scandal to Petruccio with the suggestion of his preference for elderly matrons. She also embellishes on the invented scandal by including some truth, pointedly revealing to Petruccio her keen perception into the real motive behind his charade, and framing this motive as reprehensible, all while pretending to give her husband the benefit of the doubt:

I dare not
Believe him such a base debauched companion
That one refusal of a tender maid
Would make him feign this sickness out of need. (47-50)

With these packed speeches, Maria demonstrates to Petruccio her familiarity with and ability to play the socially approved role of dutiful wife to Petruccio's disadvantage. The plausibility of the version of reality that Maria imposes on Petruccio,¹⁶⁸ moreover, constitutes a significant departure from the absurdity of

¹⁶⁷ Even if Hortensio is aware of Petruchio's objectives, he expresses amusement at this training tactic in an aside, remarking, "Why, so this gallant will command the sun" (4.3.196). Later, when Petruchio halts the party's travel to Bianca's wedding yet again upon being contradicted by Kate, Hortensio does not lecture her to learn obedience to her husband, but advises her to simply "Say as [Petruchio] says, or we shall never go," that is, to at least superficially comply in the interest of practicality (4.5.11). Taking Hortensio's counsel, Kate's new "compliance" with Petruchio registers his absurdity and sounds rather like an exasperated concession to a fool with whom she is simply tired of fighting when she tells him he can call the sun a "rush candle" if he pleases and that "the moon changes even as your mind" but that she will go along with it, so long as they can continue on their way (4.5.12-22). Petruchio himself first addresses Vincentio at length as a "gentle mistress" in order to test whether Kate will follow his lead, and Vincentio addresses both "fair sir" and "merry mistress" when declaring how "your strange encounter much amaz'd me" (27-54).

¹⁶⁸ When alone with Petruccio, Maria is just as direct as Shakespeare's Petruchio about making her spouse conform to her words:

What I have said
About your foolish sickness, ere you have me

Petruchio's claims in *Shrew*, a difference which possibly lays claim to the very real power of women's speech or "gossip" to make or destroy men's reputations within a community.¹⁶⁹

Just as strategic as Maria's "gossip," her bodily carousing and gesturing move beyond unruly behaviour signifying a rejection of male authority to respond intelligently to yet another of Shakespeare's Petruchio's past taming techniques. Petruchio's "mad attire" and behaviour at his wedding (*Shrew* 3.2.124), along with Biondello's account of the diseased mount Petruchio rides to the ceremony, have been likened to a skimmington ritual that Petruchio himself performs. In order to avoid the potential shame of being married to a scold, "Petruchio seizes control of the community's most threatening weapon" of humiliation (Sloan par. 8). While skimmingtons shamed husbands who could not properly harness their wives, in Petruchio's hands the skimmington humiliates and dishonours Kate on her wedding day. Shakespeare's Petruchio continues this mad behaviour by railing at and beating his servants, and, in short, out-shrewing Kate, "kill[ing] her in her own humor" (4.1.85, 180). In Fletcher's play, when Maria is "i'th'flaunt" with the women, dancing with "their coats tucked up to their bare breeches" and

As you would have me, you shall swear is certain,
And challenge any man that dares deny it,
And in all companies approve my actions. (4.1.151-5)

¹⁶⁹ As Pamela Allen Brown observes, "The resolution [of Petruccio and Maria's stand-off] is brought about by liberal applications of social pressure through threats of gossip and loss of male honor. As one of Petruchio's friends puts it: 'Now you must grant conditions or the Kingdom / Will have no other talke but this' (2.4.84-5)" (145). Fiona McNeill gives an account of how Petruccio betrays his awareness of and anxiety over "female intelligence networks" in his urgent desire to "contain the labyrinth of secret female passages that lead through the city" (219-20). For the power of women's gossip to determine social reputations see also Laura Gowing, "Gender and the Language of Insult in Early Modern London" and *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London*.

“fir[ing] it / In wondrous ways” with a “stick of fiddles” (2.5.35-7), in a way she simply matches her new husband’s behaviour when he boasts of his sexual prowess by taking bets on his ensuing performance, thus “killing” him “in his own humor.” She responds even more directly to Shakespeare’s Petruchio’s use of his body to humiliate Kate and to pre-empt and avoid, by parodying, as Larue Love Sloan argues convincingly, the shaming ritual the community could potentially put him through, by similarly using her body against her new husband. Just as Petruccio is about to initiate his ploy to “vex” Maria by feigning an intention to undertake extensive travel, he receives word that she is “mad”:

As mad as heart can wish, sir. She has dressed herself
 (Saving Your Worship’s reverence) just i’t’h’ cut
 Of one of those that multiply i’t’h’ suburbs
 For single money, and as dirtily.
 If any speak to her, first she whistles,
 And then begins her compass with her fingers,
 And points to what she would have. (4.4.45-51)

Pedro cannot bring himself to tell Petruccio plainly that Maria is dressed like a prostitute, but first excuses himself and then explains her appearance in a more roundabout way, conveying his embarrassment and fear of Petruccio’s response. Pedro’s hesitation indicates an awareness of how Maria’s behaviour inevitably reflects onto Petruccio. Besides drawing negative attention to Petruccio in the way Shakespeare’s Petruchio did to Kate, Maria also willingly exposes herself to the public, here in a guise considered to be shameful, and earning her similar suspicions of madness. She too, then, circumvents by appropriating and outdoing the kind of social shaming the community might impose on her, which, for

unsubmissive women, usually centred around some form of embarrassing public display, such as being led through the town in a cart or wearing a scold's bridle. If the diseased, stumbling, unkempt horse that Shakespeare's madly dressed Petruchio reportedly rides to his wedding is Petruchio's way of representing and distancing himself from what disorderly marriage looks like,¹⁷⁰ the horse a detailed "caricature of an impudent wife" (Sloan 10), then what does Maria's equally deliberate appearance as a prostitute say about Petruccio and her marriage to him? If Shakespeare's Petruchio can demonstrate the unattractiveness of a marriage in which a wife refuses to submit to her husband, Maria demonstrates her vision of a marriage in which a husband objectifies his wife as his property, acquired for his use and pleasure, and bound to obey him. This is a timely demonstration in light of Petruccio's recent musing that he would prefer the "fair dealing" of buying sex when he has "need," over having to deal with a wife (4.4.9-10). Maria's refusal to speak during her display except by "tokens" might pre-empt or parody the punishment of the scold's bridle that she could expect as an outspoken woman, but it also underscores her comment on objectification and turns Petruccio's earlier injunction of silence ("If you talk more, / I am angry, very angry" [1.2.168-9]) against him.

Maria's rhetoric, then, uses both her wit and her body to trump Petruccio's wit. The Theatre Erindale's version of *Tamer* interpreted the "signs and tokens"

¹⁷⁰ This is Sloan's argument, which is more intricate and thorough than I have space to recapitulate here. Sloan explains how the mount in skimmington processions was understood to represent the unruly wife, the rider the henpecked, incompetent husband, and analyzes in fascinating detail the cultural and historical implications of every aspect of Petruchio's horse and his own attire.

with which Maria responds to Petruccio when dressed as a prostitute as a dance that perhaps referenced flamenco dance, with twirling punctuated by tambourine clapping and pointed stomping. The effect was to emphasize her ability to communicate through her body in a way that both baffled Petruccio and made clear to the audience a sense of confidence and authority. Indeed, in response to Maria's provocative and unsettling bodily display, Petruccio can only talk himself into a trap; he babbles on in the face of Maria's silence, which she only breaks when he finally mentions travelling, to hurry him on a voyage that he has no intention of making.

Maria proves she is more than the intellectual match for her husband's former, triumphant, Shakespearean self, mastering point by point his boasted taming techniques.¹⁷¹ She thus demonstrates that, in fulfilment of the rhetorical principle of "invention," she has been assiduously gathering from a "received bank of wisdom" or "storehouse of examples," which, despite her lack in formal rhetorical training, Shakespeare's Petruchio has amply supplied.¹⁷² More

¹⁷¹ Molly Easo Smith also sees Fletcher's play as a "pervasive commentary" on *Shrew*, a "calculated intertextual glance" that "comments, rewrites, and undermines the ideological assumptions in Shakespeare's" play (39). Similarly, Margaret Maurer perceives a "deeply concealed connection" between the two plays, and her argument that Fletcher was attentive to a particular construction of Shakespeare's Bianca that critics have tended to overlook demonstrates just how detailed Fletcher's revisiting of Shakespeare's text could be ("Constringing Bianca").

¹⁷² "Invention" is the first part of rhetoric for Cicero, and a basic principle of "invention" is the accumulation of knowledge:

To begin with, one must acquire knowledge of a very great number of things, for without this a ready flow of words is empty and ridiculous; ... Moreover, one must know the whole past with its storehouse of examples and precedents. (1.17-18)

Rhodes explains that "invention" is less associated with "originality" than it is today, and more with "having at one's disposal a vast bank of received wisdom" to draw from (14). In place of the "storehouse of examples" at a male scholar's fingertips, Maria substitutes "examples" from the education she and other women have received from men, both anticipating Petruccio's moves

radically, men in general have supplied a “storehouse of examples,” as Bianca suggests in her encouraging words for Maria:

All the several wrongs
Done by imperious husbands to their wives
These thousand years and upwards, strengthen thee!
Thou hast a brave cause. (1.2.123-6)¹⁷³

By portraying Maria as methodically taking on and besting Shakespeare’s Petruchio in each of his witty manoeuvres, Fletcher emphasizes that social advancement or triumph over one’s adversaries through the skilled exercise of eloquence and wit is not the prerogative of men solely. This emphasis restores rhetoric to its usefulness as a truly subversive, rather than oppressive and exclusive social tool.

The link that Patricia Parker demonstrates between the female body and the “rhetorical tradition” of “dilation” (253-55) provides a useful tool for perceiving a further level of subversiveness to Fletcher’s portrayal of women rhetors. One of several contexts for the idea of dilation that Parker identifies is the

putting off of coitus or consummation which Andreas Capellanus describes as a feminine strategy in the art of love, a purportedly female plot in which holding a suitor at a distance creates the tension of a space between as well as an intervening time. (258)

Although “this amorous dilation is a frequent part of the plot of wooing or courtship in Shakespeare,” critics “rarely” connect the “plot of feminine dilation or delay” with “the temporal and rhetorical dilation of the plays themselves,” even

based on “precedents” from his life with Katharina as well as from other husbands’ treatment of their wives, and turning Petruccio’s own “examples” against him.

¹⁷³ Gordon McMullan documents how, as in this example, “again and again, Bianca acts to escalate the subversiveness of Maria’s pronouncements by moving away from a focus upon the individual to a general assertion of women’s rights” (159).

though this link, according to Parker, is evident (259). Her recognition of this link in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* could almost as accurately describe *The Tamer Tamed*:

the erotic consummation promised in the play's opening scene is deferred for a time and space which coincides with that of the play as a whole and which is achieved only when a 'partition' or wall associated both with the hymen and with the rhetorical 'partition of discourse' is finally put 'down'. (259)

Although it seems to fit this pattern, Fletcher's play actually subverts a pervasive way of thinking that Parker alerts us to: the rhetorical handbook's exhortation to keep within bounds the technique of dilation as it is associated with the female body, and the closely related narrative topos of conquering or stripping the female enchantress in order to "penetrate a text's meaning" and reach the desired ending (253-5).

Maria delays the text's ending through the simultaneous delay of bodily penetration, but in her decision to "protract" the "offerings" of "Hymen" she seeks not to defer a resolution; rather, she actively brings about a resolution that would otherwise never occur. In response to her sister's advice that she simply "Divest [herself] with obedient hands: to bed" (1.2.101), Maria is unambiguous about the purpose of her "dilation" of the marital narrative in between ceremony and consummation:

To bed? No, Livia. There are comets hang
Prodigious over that yet. There's a fellow
Must yet, before I know that heat...
Be made a man, for yet he is a monster.
Here must his head be, Livia. (102-6)

Petruccio, not Maria, is the occasion of the dilation, the obstacle that must be overcome, the “monster” that must be conquered before the narrative can end properly. Perhaps pointing to herself as Petruccio’s new “head” here, Maria inverts the familiar Pauline injunction that a husband must be his wife’s head.¹⁷⁴ To prove the seriousness of her resolve to tame Petruccio, Maria asks the goddess Lucina, “when I kiss [Petruccio], till I have my will, / May I be barren of delights,” framing Petruccio’s bad behaviour as an impediment to *her* sexual pleasure that she must deal with in order to enjoy him (1.2.120-1). The description of Petruccio as “monster,” moreover, speaks to the construction of the female enchantress as monstrous beneath the surface, as Spenser’s Duessa exemplifies, whose “misshaped parts” are catalogued in detail in the narration of how she is “despoild” by Arthur and Redcrosse (I.VIII.46-8).¹⁷⁵ Petruccio envisions Maria suffering the shame of a similar public stripping when she has led everyone to believe he was plague-infected: “The blessing of her grandam Eve light on her! / Nothing but thin fig leaves, to hide her knavery!” (3.5.75-6). Despite this vindictive wish, Petruccio himself is the one who undergoes repeated and humiliating exposures at Maria’s hands.

Maria more than once exposes the “dragon” within Petruccio that Tranio warns of in the first few words of the play (1.1.7) – even when Petruccio tries to conceal it. Simply by maintaining her resolve to “dilate” on her marriage

¹⁷⁴ Ephesians 5:23: “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body” (5:23).

¹⁷⁵ See “Literary Fat Ladies,” especially 252-5.

narrative, Maria reveals how quickly Petruccio can shift from a sugary, “For your safety, sweetheart? Why, who offends you? / I come not to use violence,” to, before the end of the same scene, swearing to “devil” the women “By these ten bones,” to “starve” or “fire” them out, and to force them to beg mercy “on their bare knees” (1.3.103-4, 84, 274, 279-88). Maria later exposes before Sophocles the same insincerity and quick impulse towards violence in Petruccio. She carefully sets up this revelation by soliciting Sophocles’ opinion (while ignoring Petruccio’s remarks) about purchases for her new residence, and even flirting with Sophocles to increase Petruccio’s annoyance. When Maria finally directs angry attention toward Petruccio upon his demand of “obedience” from her, Sophocles attempts to intervene on his friend’s behalf, and Petruccio quickly loses his temper:

<i>Sophocles.</i>	Good lady, understand him.
<i>Maria.</i>	I do too much, sweet Sophocles. He’s one Of a most spiteful self-condition, A bravery dwells in his blood yet of abusing His first good wife; he’s sooner fire than powder, And sooner mischief.
<i>Petruccio.</i>	If I be so sudden, Do you not fear me?
<i>Maria.</i>	No, nor yet care for you—
<i>Petruccio.</i>	Does this become you now?
<i>Maria.</i>	It shall become me.
<i>Petruccio.</i>	Thou disobedient, weak, vainglorious woman, Were I but half so wilful as thou spiteful, I should now drag thee to thy duty.
<i>Maria.</i>	Drag me!
<i>Petruccio.</i>	But I am friends again. Take all your pleasure.
<i>Maria.</i>	Now you perceive him, Sophocles. (3.3.113-28)

Just before this outburst, Petruccio tried to mollify his demand for obedience by explaining that he did not “urge” it by “way of duty” but “of love and credit,” but here, Maria reveals beyond all question the falseness of such protestations by provoking a demonstration of the rage always bubbling just beneath their surface. Just as Petruccio flip flops on the question of “obedience,” once his fury surfaces in the remark that he should force Maria away “now” and essentially rape her (his return to the notion of “duty” belying his previous effort to emphasize “love and credit”), Maria’s indignant reaction causes his immediate attempt to re-conceal this emotional response. Maria, however, has already heard enough to make her point, and in drawing Sophocles’ attention to Petruccio’s abrupt shift in tone she makes it explicit that, through the entire interaction with the men, she is, indeed, making a point.

Later, Petruccio’s infuriated threat to beat Maria for leading everyone to believe he had the plague is another revealing response that Maria draws forth in order to make a point of defying. Maria cries as Petruccio unleashes a string of insults and seems to reply meekly to his ranting¹⁷⁶ until he speaks of physical abuse as the only just response to her past behaviour. The possibility that Maria feigns tears in order to encourage Petruccio to believe he is for once enjoying a position of dominance over her finds support in the fact that Maria does not cry at any other moment in the play in which she endures similar insults and threats. She

¹⁷⁶ See, for instance, 4.1.108-9: “*Petruccio*. Thou most poor, paltry, spiteful whore—do you cry? / I’ll make you roar, before I leave. / *Maria*. Your pleasure,” and 126: “*Petruccio*. Well, go thy ways. *Maria*. [*Going*] Yes.”

stops her tears instantaneously, moreover, to launch a powerful speech of defiance that maintains every word of “what I have said / About your foolish sickness” and repeats her earlier insistence that Petruccio confess to having wronged her by faking illness.¹⁷⁷ The only other time Maria cries occurs during Petruccio’s most humiliating exposure and at a crescendo of Maria’s wit. In this later instance, Maria exposes publicly Petruccio’s shameful fakery of his own death by weeping not with grief over losing him, but, hilariously, with thankfulness at the blessing of his death before he could commit any more foolishness. Only with the final exposure of Petruccio springing from the coffin, at a loss for words and lacking, for once, a violent, aggressive response, can the narrative finally find resolution. Maria’s treatment of Petruccio completely reverses the familiar motif of the female monster who must be unveiled for the resolution and ending of a narrative to occur.

Even aside from these exposures, Petruccio, not Maria, is associated with the negatively “feminine” practice of rhetorical dilation. Apart from conspiratorial conversation with Bianca and Livia, Maria does not reveal her plots or insights to the audience through monologues before we witness her publicly stating and acting upon them. Petruccio, on the other hand, is more akin to a weak rhetor who cannot control the length or direction of his own speeches. Upon breaking free from his quarantined quarters, for instance, Petruccio claims he “would now rip

¹⁷⁷ Before Petruccio notes that Maria is crying, she defiantly informs him that the only “submission” that will “mediate” for Petruccio’s “offence” against her in faking sickness will be “not to forswear your knowledge, / But ever to forbear it” (4.1.95-101).

up, from the primitive cuckold, / All [women's] arch villainies and all their doubles," except "that I should be thought mad, if I railed, / As much as they deserve against these women" (3.5.98-101). He then proceeds to disregard his own warning about the connection between ranting and madness to "rail" on women for the next thirty lines, providing a "catalogue" of their evil ways (102-131). Such rants from Petruccio betray unruly, irrational (and thus supposedly more bodily) passions, like rage.

In exposing Petruccio's penchant for violent outbursts Maria essentially exposes to what extent Petruccio's authority as husband depends upon physical coercion and how little it has to do with reason.¹⁷⁸ Petruccio's incessant rants and threats of physical abuse, in other words, combined with their main cause – his frustration at not being able to satisfy his bodily urges – associate Petruccio strongly with the body.¹⁷⁹ Maria, too, brings emotions into her rhetoric but she

¹⁷⁸ Indeed, Petruccio is so fixated on the physical from the beginning that when Maria first rebels on their wedding day, he cannot imagine it would be for anything but material gains and so assures Maria that he possesses adequate "means," "conditions," and "fortunes" for her physical comfort, and even "that mettle / A man should have to keep a woman waking" (1.3.139-49). Maria prods him to think differently by insisting that "the ends I aim at" are not such "idle outward things" (149-52). She then charges him by something intangible, that "duty or respect / To me from you again that's very near / Or full the same with mine," to "go to bed and leave me / And trouble me no longer ... / For know, I am not for you" (1.3.199-209). Instead of complying in demonstration of that "duty," Petruccio remains mired in the physical with his appallingly violent threats to "starve" the women "out," "fire 'em out," and "make 'em take their pardons ... / ... on their bare knees"; to beat Maria so severely with cudgels she will be bedridden; to confine her to a hard, uncomfortable bed to increase her pain; to make her sit on an uncomfortable wooden apparatus of punishment; to force her to eat food which will obstruct her stool for a year, etc. (1.3.279, 287-8, 2.3.20-23, 28-32).

¹⁷⁹ Fletcher bolsters the association between men and the body (as base and vulgar) that he sets up through Petruccio with the aged Moroso, who cannot stop obsessing about having sex with Bianca even though she might be young enough to be his granddaughter; with the men surrounding Petruccio and Moroso who make vulgar jokes about Moroso's sexual prowess and about the bodies of Maria's

employs them more effectively as tools under her manage, as when she stuns Petruccio with her abrupt shift from tears to angry defiance. Maria's anger is effective (stopping Petruccio in his tracks when he proposes to beat her), and she expresses it with control (directing angry speeches at Petruccio in response to something he has just said, and exiting before her speech turns into a rant or Petruccio has a chance to respond). Conversely, Petruccio's anger is ineffective and out of control; he shamefully tries to retract his rash statements and cannot prevent himself from venting at length to the audience when Maria is not even present. In this contrast, Maria's anger resembles what Gwynne Kennedy has called "just" or legitimate anger, spurring one to noble or righteous action – the type of anger normally attributed to men – while women's anger, which Petruccio more clearly exemplifies, was often discredited as irrational, rash, and under the unstable influence of the body.¹⁸⁰ Besides reversing Petruccio's past rhetoric by turning it against him, then, Maria reverses wider misogynistic assumptions in dominant cultural ideology. Nonetheless, Maria evidently does not shun the place of emotion in rhetoric altogether; she is just more emotionally savvy. In this sense, Fletcher perhaps draws on the strong cultural association between women and the passions and rhetoric's reliance on passions to suggest women's high

female allies (Jacques is especially forthcoming with such jokes); and with Petronius, who is as eager and insistent about cudgelling Maria as Petruccio is. Instead of neatly countering this association by aligning women entirely with the mind, as we have seen, Fletcher's Maria includes the body in her rhetoric in a way that, rather than degrading her wit or legitimacy, reconstructs or elevates the body, setting it quite apart from the base and vulgar.

¹⁸⁰ See *Just Anger*, especially 1-20.

potential to be the best rhetors. This suggestion is very subversive in light of rhetoric's aim of controlling the wills of others as a means of self-empowerment.

If women were supposedly more susceptible to the passions because of their greater vulnerability to bodily influences, they were also, according to Laurent Joubert's "encyclopaedic" *Treatise on Laughter* (1579), "more inclined to laughter than men because they 'engender much good blood'" (Brown 28).¹⁸¹ As with the ability to navigate the passions, the ability to elicit laughter proves to be a strength in the art of persuasion. Maria is not only at her wittiest during the speech that seals her victory and pushes Petruccio to his final exposure; she is also at her funniest, which highlights the importance of laughter in her rhetoric. Maria turns Petruccio's last effort to publicly shame her into a sophisticated and skilfully performed joke. Just as Petruccio momentarily believes that he has the upper hand when Maria cries as he berates her for having him shut in as a plague victim, Petruccio's fake death at first seems to have the effect he would desire. Pedro and Jacques want to "Hang her!" "Split her!" "Drown her directly!" "Starve her!" "[Shit] upon her!" and "Stone her to death" (5.3.5860). Maria's father calls her out to confront her with Petruccio's body and to admonish her before onlookers for killing a man that was "too good for ye" with "Your stubborn and unworthy way" (5.4.4-5). Again, Maria's response is to weep, but when her tears are met with the men's approval, she cautions them to "judge me as I am, not as you covet, / For that would make me yet more miserable," before launching into a

¹⁸¹ Erasmus's personification of "folly" as female in *The Praise of Folly* also forwards an association between women and laughter, though not for explicitly medical reasons.

delightfully hilarious speech of remembrance that, while shattering their expectations, is in perfect keeping with Maria's character. Maria demonstrates that her show of emotion is far from the sign of weakness that Petronius and Sophocles want to take it for. Instead, it is a powerful mode of expression that is entirely under her control, at the service of her quick wit. Indeed, Maria's bid for laughter in her eulogy depends upon the audience's appreciation of the irony in her words and the surpassing cleverness of a speech that interprets her tears – which the men expect to be tears of remorse – as tears of pity and thankfulness. Maria pities “How far below a man” Petruccio was. She is thankful that “He had a happy turn; he died” before having “begot more follies,” and that she had enough foresight not to let him reproduce foolish offspring (5.4.24, 27, 30).

Livia gives an equally funny and witty speech as she is poised to triumph over the alliance of her aged suitor and her father by marrying Roland, the man of her choice. Under guise of serious apology to Moroso while pretending to be on her death-bed (pulling off Petruccio's trick, only with more cause and with more success), Livia delivers an absolutely hilarious recapitulation of how she “abused” Moroso. She recounts how she gave him “purging comfits / at a great christening once, / that spoiled his camlet breeches,” and how she strewed a stairway with peas so that Moroso, “ev'n with his reverent head, ... / told two-and-twenty stairs, good and true, / missed not a step,” and at the bottom “had two stools, / and was translated” out of his senses, to mention just two items from her lengthy confession (5.173-95, 124-126). This confession really makes Moroso publicly

relive all of his past humiliation. Beyond cleverly continuing to mock Moroso at a moment she claims to be admitting guilt and acknowledging the authority of her father, Livia is targeting Moroso's bodily dignity, though not with the same sadistic violence as Petruccio's or Petronius's threats to Maria's body. Thus, she too turns a tactic the men use to attempt to dominate women against them: she takes from Moroso his bodily self-control (and in a way that emphasises how his old, spent body is unfit for a young bride), just as Petruccio fantasizes he will do to Maria with his cudgels and forced-feeding. Merry-making and eliciting the audience's laughter in response to the demands and claims of Petruccio, Moroso, and their male supporters identifies the men's expectations of women as ridiculous. Tricking the men to believe, for a moment, that they really do have authority and that the women really do repent affronting it, casts the men themselves as foolish dupes for imagining that Maria and Livia, and women in general, will accept their laughable demands.

Eliciting laughter from the audience aligns the laughers with the women's cause, in that "when we laugh we betray our inner-most assumptions" (Keith Thomas, qtd in Brown 10). While laughter might betray inner thoughts and indeed represent a mind-triggered response, especially in the case of Maria's and Livia's very clever humour, "Renaissance physicians were primarily interested in laughter as a physical process like breathing or digestion" (Brown 28). They saw laughter not as "Hobbes's brutal 'sudden glory,' which merely transmits the

laughter's attitude of cruel superiority,"¹⁸² but as "an awesome somatic force, sometimes mortally dangerous, sometimes beneficent, capable of breaking through paralysis and clearing fistulas" (28-9). To incite laughter, then, is to incite a response in audience members that eludes easy definition as mental or corporeal – a response which effectively confuses the gendered hierarchy of intellect or soul over body that serves as a basic justification of the wife's subjection to the husband.

Even the women's mirthful song and dance combines pleasurable physical abandon – which the audience is invited to join in by singing along – with a pointed and clever verbal resonance for the mentally alert. By the time Sophocles tells Petruccio that soon Maria will be under his "seal," for instance, the audience has already witnessed the kind of "seals" the women enjoy. Indeed, rather than sounding convincing, Sophocles' word-choice is a weaker echo of a word the audience has already heard repeated – or perhaps even joined in singing – in the women's lively song of defiance.¹⁸³

A health, for all this day,
To the woman that bears the sway,
And wears the breeches.
Let it come, let it come!
Let this health be a seal
For the good of the commonweal
The woman shall wear the breeches.

¹⁸² An understanding of laughter as indicative of scorn and a sense of superiority also appears in Philip Sidney's *A Defence of Poetry*, 68-9.

¹⁸³ In Theatre Erindale's production of the play, the women sang this song repeatedly and it was rather catchy. Pamela Allen Brown reads the song as "invite[ing] the audience to join in," remarking that "Ballads often featured a rousing call for participation by customers" and that "By singing along, as playgoers were known to do, Fletcher's female audiences could take an active role in the pleasurable duty of shaming the men for making violent threats" (143-4).

Let's drink then, and laugh it,
 And merrily, merrily quaff it,
 And tiddle and tiddle a round.
 Here's to thy fool
 And to my fool! (2.5.44-55)

In addition to its definition as a “device ... impressed on a piece of wax or other plastic material adhering ... to a document as evidence of authenticity or attestation; also, the piece of wax, etc. bearing this impressed device,” “seal” can carry a more figurative definition as a “token or symbol of a covenant; something that authenticates or confirms; a final addition which completes and secures” (OED seal, n.2, 1.a. and b). Thus, the phrase “to set one’s seal to” can mean figuratively “to avouch one’s conviction *that*” or “to express one’s assent *to*” (1.c). In the women’s song, toasts of “wine,” “beer,” “ale,” “cordials,” and “sack” convey their rowdy defiance (2.1.117, 2.5.41, 89, 87), procure their bodily pleasure, and increase their merriment, while at the same time marking and confirming their serious vow that women will gain ascendancy over men in power relationships – as if their “seal” is one of the ceremonial “off’rings” Maria refers to earlier.¹⁸⁴ As “seals,” in other words, their toasts constitute a token that affirms a vow, symbolically or spiritually, as well as a physical gesture affirming bodily liberty.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ That such alcoholic drinks were also referred to as “spirits” seems to contribute to their fittingness as yet another means of blurring the conventional divide between soul and body. For a discussion of the alehouse as a “vitally important site for women’s jesting and community life” that questions the critical treatment of “early modern drinking places” as “male-dominated milieus that were off limits and off-putting to ‘respectable’ women” (15), see chapter 2 in Brown’s *Better a Shrew*.

¹⁸⁵ Another meaning accrues to the song’s “seal” in that the women sing their song from within a space they have sealed off from men, just as Maria has sealed her body from what she describes as

As I mention at the outset of this chapter, the techniques I discuss as forming what Fletcher presents as the women's rhetoric are not new tactics, nor are they unique to female characters. Constant reversals of a male opponent's own ideas and expectations presented as wonderfully funny also predominate in published defences of women such as: "Jane Anger her Protection for Women" (1589); Rachel Speght's "A Mouzell for Melastomus" (1617); Ester Sowernam's "Ester hath hang'd Haman" (1617); and Constantia Munda's "The Worming of a mad Dogge" (1617). Turning an opponent's arguments against him is not unusual in rhetorical contest. When the debate opens a subject position for women through a female persona, however, such reversals gain the more radical implication of demonstrating how misogynistic and patriarchal arguments justifying the subordination of women to men are really nothing more than arguments – mere rhetorical constructs that can be dismantled and defeated with stronger rhetoric. *The Tamer Tamed* demonstrates a radical awareness that the hierarchical and gendered division between soul and body – which serves as a foundational model for the subjection of women to men – is just such a rhetorical construct available for manipulation. And the stronger rhetors in *The Tamer Tamed* are clearly women, with Fletcher tapping into cultural anxiety over the dangers of rhetoric as a tool that played upon the emotions along with the conventional notion that women were more under the influence of the body and its passions than were

male contamination. In this sense, too, "seal" contributes to the loosening of the body-spirit distinction, as this physical sealing off seems to preserve the upper chamber as a hallowed space and the female body as "too divine to handle" (1.3.243).

men. Fletcher's play imagines, then, or perhaps bears witness to, a versatile subject position for women that does not invest a sense of self in a positive valuation of the body, or in a construction of body and soul as inseparably merged, but rather in changing forms of opposition to the changing mobilizations of conventional patriarchal structurings of the body-soul hierarchy, which sometimes demarcate and sometimes collapse body and soul in ways oppressive to women. This position, Maria's position, should alert us to the need, then, to place updated considerations of the immaterial alongside the wealth of recent, stimulating study on early modern understandings of the body – to consider the role and meaning of Maria's "new soul," for instance, and how it defines a struggle that Petruccio mistakenly believes is all about the body.

Chapter 3

“Lay[ing] hold on more removed mysteries”: The Female Body as Soul in Queen Anna’s Masques

Ben Jonson refers to the poetry and written record of the masques he collaboratively produced with Inigo Jones as the “spirit” that remains long after the masque is over and its courtly participants dismantle or “deface” the masque’s physical “carcass” of elaborate scenery, costuming, and props (*Masque of Blackness* 6-19). Anna and her ladies’ “dominance over the masquing stage” in the first decade of James’s English reign (McManus 99), combined with Jonson’s explicit and repeated comparison of the masque’s material and immaterial components to the body-soul divide, opens another window onto the political and gendered nature of the body-soul dichotomy itself and, more crucially, onto the correspondence my first two chapters examine between the representation of this dichotomy and the representation of women. In this chapter, I will argue that in order to make a claim for women’s political relevance, that is, for the importance of women’s influence over and contribution to the state and its politics beyond their bodily roles, Anna’s masque performances and the texts surrounding them work to productively unsettle distinctions between body and soul, material and immaterial. My first chapter looked at two plays which staged a frustration of the male desire to puppet women, a frustration that resulted from the unmanageable signifying force of feminized onstage material, while my second chapter focused on a play that demonstrated an awareness of the body-soul relationship as a

rhetorical construct available for witty manipulation in gender-struggles for power. This chapter, in a sense, extends the insights of my first two chapters by interrogating how the silent, performing body of the female masquer itself engages in rhetorical manipulation of the gendered body-soul divide.

Current feminist masque criticism moves us away from the view of court masque as a monolithic expression of the monarch's will, to draw attention to Anna of Denmark's astute political uses of the masque as well as to her influence over its creative development.¹⁸⁶ My chapter will add to the critical work on women's contributions to governance and the state through masque performance by combining this area of inquiry with a consideration of masque's thematic and structural engagement with the soul-body divide. Masque criticism has not previously joined these two areas of study to the extent that I seek to develop their relationship in this chapter, unless to emphasize a fundamental disconnect between masque's written or spoken definitions of the soul-body divide and the masquers' physical performance. Recent scholarship has indeed helpfully

¹⁸⁶ See especially Barbara Kiefer Lewalski's exploration of Anna's "use of the court masque as a vehicle for self-affirmation and for subversive intervention in Jacobean politics" (*Writing Women* 15-43). David Bevington and Peter Holbrook, in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, write that "court masque needs to be viewed as a diverse expression of conflicting arenas of interest within court culture, rather than as primarily a symbolic ceremony vital to the reproduction of monarchical power" (8-9). They further claim that *The Masque of Blackness* "shows Jonson and Inigo Jones following the lead of Queen Anne," who used the masque to present herself as "unmanageable" and to "establish a new transgressive mode of womanliness, one calculated to arouse masculine anxiety" (11-12). Holbrook discusses *The Masque of Queens* as an expression of Anna's "views on the worth and dignity of women" and a "bid for transfer of power from King to Queen" (79). Leeds Barroll, in "Inventing the Stuart Masque," discusses "the first Stuart masques as a forwarding of the *Queen's* programmes. As a cultural activity primarily involving noblewomen, these royal spectacles deflected attention from the King and his own circle to focus on the new court of the Queen" and to "establish a context for the exercise of her own politics" (121, 132). Other scholars who attend to Anna's political uses of masque and her influence on its creative development include Clare McManus, Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, and Sophie Tomlinson.

addressed the problematic tendency for critics to privilege the masque writer's published account of the masque despite the fact that these accounts really only represent a fraction of the entire event, since the bulk of the masque was taken up with various dances for which detailed records and music compositions are not available.¹⁸⁷ Sophie Tomlinson warns, however, that the resulting "critical focus on the material dimension of the masque has occluded the richness of Jonson's poetic figuring of femininity" (25). In agreement with Tomlinson, I posit that Jonson's "spirit"- "carcass" construction of the masque form is not detached from the reality of performance, where the "the female body" is "the locus of action and meaning" (Lewalski 30). Instead, Jonson's text draws attention to the potential for the composite structure of masque's tangible and intangible elements to engage cultural notions of the body-soul relationship. These notions, as I have been arguing, directly impact representations of and attitudes toward women. Approaching women's political use of the masque and masque's engagement of body-soul ideas as deeply related offers insight into a form of productive female transgression other than the threatening display of aggressive sexuality that has, as I discuss further on, attracted critical attention. The transgressiveness I am interested in has to do with women's bodily representation of the soul – an object that was most often masculinised through its contradistinction from a feminized body. Combining these two areas of inquiry also leads me to think of dance in a

¹⁸⁷ Leeds Barroll, for instance, finds it needful to "correct the imbalance resulting from critical emphasis on the *word* by shifting the analytical focus to the masque's five distinct stages of organization, four of which "comprised activity not expressed or expressible in words alone" (84). See also Clare McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage* 18.

new way. Building on critical discussion of early modern dance as a physical mode of communication, I consider dance as an activity that bridges corporeal movement and abstract thought, body and soul. Dance is not only central to masque, but central to masque's engagement with the gendered soul-body divide.

The Soul of the State

As courtly art form and entertainment, the masque itself functioned more broadly as a representation of the "soul" of the state, or of the moral condition, in other words, of the state's governing power, its monarchy. The scriptural injunction that a wife submit to her husband just as the body submits to the head and the church submits to Christ, which I discuss in chapter two, mapped easily onto the model of a king's position in relation to his subjects.¹⁸⁸ The subjects form the body politic that the king governs as its head, which is synonymous, of course, with the intellect, chief faculty of the soul. In fact, insofar as Christ rules the "kingdom" of heaven and the divinely appointed king claims his authority to rule from Christ, the parallel relationships between Christ and church, and king and subjects, merge. To give only one example of the pervasive mental associations between these overlapping hierarchies, Thomas Adams describes how "in man there is a *kingdome*... The mind hath sovereignty over the body," and he locates this kingdom "within" as the first in an echoing series of kingdoms that progresses

¹⁸⁸ Ephesians 5:23: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body" (5:23).

from man over beast to husband over household, magistrate over community, king over realm, and finally God over everything (*Workes* 431). By analogy, then, the state's governing power equates with its "soul." Indeed, Jonathan Goldberg claims that James "was the soul of the masque" along with Jonson's poetic invention (*James I* 58). And yet the masque, as courtly entertainment designed to celebrate and affirm the monarch's "natural" and benevolent ruling power at the pinnacle of a divinely ordained hierarchy, could also reflect the health of the "soul" and moral guide of the state in critically suggestive ways. Stephen Orgel asserts that although as a genre masque "is the opposite of satire" with its harshly corrective aims, it still holds the capacity to educate and persuade through a strategic use of praise (*Illusion* 40).

Masque Structure and the Body-Soul Analogy

Masque as a genre foregrounds the physical and the dancing body through elaborate and extravagant scenery and costume, and yet relies on poetry to convey and preserve the eternal virtues and ideals that the spectacle represents. In this way, the genre engages a conceptual physical-spiritual divide on the level of structure. Jonson, the most prominent of masque writers at the onset of James's reign, draws attention to this divide. In its capacity to advise on and reflect the moral condition of the body and soul of the state, masque extends this structural

and thematic concern outward. While as performers and collaborators¹⁸⁹ women formed a part of the masque's structural and thematic engagement with the body-soul dichotomy, then, their masque participation also held potential to critically reflect or comment on the state.

How might the dance performance of female masquers critically comment on the governance or "soul" of the state, however, when pervasive cultural stereotypes, supported by contemporary religious and medical ideas, associated women with the body and therefore prescribed and justified their subjection to men, contrastingly associated with reason? Jonson's masques frequently stage the decisive triumph of perfect virtue, reason, order, and aristocratic decorum over vice, unruly passion, chaos, and bodily impropriety, making it clear that King James, the privileged spectator to whose gaze the entire masque is subject, is the ultimate source of the triumphing forces.¹⁹⁰ Can the silent, aristocratic female

¹⁸⁹ The queen and her ladies became involved in a masque's development long before final rehearsals. Jonson himself acknowledges Anna as the source of important artistic decisions (such as, for instance, the ladies' appearance in blackface in *Blackness* and the inclusion of an antimasque in *Queens*); Jones presented preliminary costume sketches to Anna for her approval and adjustments; ladies had a say in their own costumes and appearance, and may even "have offered other suggestions as the masques took shape" (Lewalski 28). Orgel offers the evidence of women's involvement in their costume decisions. At first "puzzled by the fact that Jones regularly did his costume designs in monochrome ... and indicated the colours with annotations," Orgel discovered that "Jones would do his designs, and submit them, with his suggestions, to the Queen. She then chose the colours, and made whatever changes in the design that she wished" ("Marginal Jonson" 151-2). Orgel also describes an illustrative instance of Lucy Harrington, Countess of Bedford, depicted wearing a single skirt for *Hymenaei* (1606), when Jones's original design called for a double skirt. "That is the way this aristocratic dancer preferred to appear," Orgel explains; "she paid for the costume, and her own dressmaker made it. The other dancers would have felt entitled to make their own alterations in their costumes as well" (153).

¹⁹⁰ On this pattern, see Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power* 40; Holbrook's "Jacobean Masques" 71; and McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage*, 120. The king "sits observing and yet informing the masque," and is "the moving power of its invention" according to Goldberg (*James I* 59). For more on James as the ultimate source and enabler of the masques, see Goldberg 62-5.

masquers move beyond a puppet-like signifying of the monarch's benevolent power when the "female body" itself was "subjugated to the monarch's will within the discourse of courtly magnificence" (McManus 120)? As I discuss in previous chapters, early modern humoural theory held that women were more vulnerable than men to the type of unruly passions and irrationality that Jonson's masques stage James's kingly power as conquering. With reference to *Titus Andronicus*, *Hamlet*, and *Cymbeline*, moreover, Susan Dunn-Hensley discusses how Shakespeare frequently "links the rampant, uncontrollable sexuality of the queen with the world of nature, and ... the chaotic world of nature and sexuality threatens to disrupt the ordered world of politics" (102). Katherine Eggert also discusses anxiety over female rule, noting that "Renaissance culture viewed women, usually with great suspicion, as inherently changeable and hence unreliable."¹⁹¹ How might female masquers' bodies resist their connection to political disruption and instability while challenging James's authority as "soul" of the state in order to make a claim for their own relevance to state politics?

James himself is clear on his view that women have no place in politics. In his advice on kingship addressed to his son, for instance, James gives counsel on how Prince Henry should treat his future wife:

And for your behaviour to your Wife, the Scripture can best give you counsel therein. Treat her as your owne flesh, command her as her Lord, cherish her as your helper, rule her as your pupil, and teach her in all things; but teach her not to be curious in things that belong her not: Ye are the head, shee is your body; it is your office to command, and hers to obey

¹⁹¹ 4-6, 21. Eggert discusses cultural anxiety over female authority as it influences literary forms, seeing in "feminized" literary forms increased opportunity for literary innovation (13-14, 20-1).

... [S]uffer her never to meddle with the Politicke government of the Common-weale, but hold her at the Oeconomicke rule of the house; and yet all to be subject to your direction. (*Basilikon Doran* 173).¹⁹²

For James, the conventional appeal to the hierarchy of head over body serves not only to legitimize a husband's pre-ordained authority over his wife, but also to bar women from participation in the politics of government.¹⁹³ Just prior to this passage, James emphasizes how a future king's marriage to an infertile woman would constitute a disaster to the commonwealth, effectively underscoring that the most important political contribution that the queen can ever make is a bodily one – the production of heirs.

Clare McManus finds that Jonson's division of the masque into "spirit" and "carcass," with its attendant "value-judgement," agrees with James's relegation of women to their bodily roles in that, according to the logic of Jonson's analogy, the female masquers, who were "denied access to spoken text," belong firmly to the "carcass" of the masque production (10). Like the "music for which no text survives," or the "scenery and costume" whose designs Jonson did not include in his publications, the "movement of the body, both danced and unchoreographed" had "no textual representation" and so was destined to fade away with the rest of the ephemeral (and by implication inferior) physical

¹⁹² See chapter one of Barbara Kiefer Lewalski's *Writing Women* for a discussion of James's lack of success in imposing these particular views on Anna, and on the Protestant clergy's attempts to frame her role in a similar way.

¹⁹³ Eve is another biblical source for women's subjection to their husbands and concomitant exclusion from political affairs. While "the most burdensome and wide-ranging effect of the malediction of Eve is the subjection of women to their husbands," Ian Maclean observes that "it is also inferred from the subordination of Eve that woman should not play any part in the running of the state or in public affairs, but should occupy herself with 'woman's work'" (*Renaissance Notion of Woman* 2.9.1).

elements of the performance (10). McManus asserts, however, that “Jonson’s framing statement offers a theorisation of the masque” that is simply “not available in performance” (10), where the silent but expressive female body, and not the poetry of the masque, commanded the audience’s attention.¹⁹⁴ Samuel Daniel attests to this reality in the preface to *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* (1604), the first masque Anna performed in, when he comments on the practicality of having Sybilla describe the goddesses (Anna and her ladies) *before* they descend onto the stage, as if viewing them through a “Prospective” glass prior to their appearance to the audience. If Sybilla instead described the goddesses *during* their descent, “the eyes of the Spectators” might “beguile their eares, as in such cases it ever happens, whiles pomp and splendour of the sight takes up all the intention without regard what is spoken” (*Whole Workes* 410). The centrality and signifying power of the performing female body in Anna’s masques might overshadow the written and spoken text, and yet this prominence of the body does not leave the “spirit” half of the familiar binary behind so as to make Jonson’s spirit-carcass theorization of the masque on paper “unavailable” in performance, as McManus would argue. I suggest, by contrast, that masque performance directly engages ideas of the body-soul divide as they intersect with representations of women, and it does so in a way that references, in order to push against, the conventional hierarchy of soul over body that is readily available to

¹⁹⁴ Indeed as McManus reminds us, inevitably “in a culture accustomed to transvestite male performance, and within which the staging of the female body was a rarity not legitimately witnessed beyond the confines of the court community, tensions surrounded the performance of the aristocratic female body” (99).

Jonson as a means of privileging the component of the masque for which he was responsible – its poetry.

Even Jonson's equation of the masque's poetry with its "spirit" and physical apparatus with its "carcass," however, is not a straightforwardly hierarchical division. Certainly, a sense of the superiority Jonson attributes to the immaterial and enduring written word over the masque's short-lived material beauty comes through in the assertion that "little had been done to the study of magnificence in these [masques]," that is, no one would be interested in these events, if their "spirits" had "perished" with the dismantling of the masque's physical trappings (*Blackness* 10-14). Jonson later emphasizes what he calls the "noble and just advantage" of "things subjected to understanding" over things "objected to sense" in the wedding masque *Hymenaie* (1606):

the one sort [things objected to sense] are but momentary and merely taking, the other impressing and lasting. Else the glory of all these solemnities had perished like a blaze and gone out in the beholders' eyes. So short lived are the bodies of all things in comparison of their souls. And, though bodies oftentimes have the ill luck to be sensually preferred, they find afterwards the good fortune, when souls live, to be utterly forgotten. (2-9)

Again, Jonson makes clear the superiority of the "spirit": anything perceived through the senses is "*but*" momentary and "*merely*" taking. That bodies have the "ill" luck to be sensually preferred implies a value judgement that they should not be preferred, and their "good" fortune in finally being forgotten while souls live on likewise conveys the sentiment that bodies should be forgotten. Of course, an underlying note of sarcasm might also be present in these lines, expressive of

derision for the body and its fate. And yet, in spite of this devaluing of and even contempt for the (masque) body, Jonson frames the “spirit,” his writing, as existing for and because of the body: he writes, here, precisely so that the “glories” of the masque “solemnities” will *not* perish “like a blaze” and go out “in the beholders’ eyes.” The body of the masque, to put it differently, is the predicate of this particular writing. Similarly, in *The Masque of Blackness* (1605), Jonson presents his writing as performing a “duty” to “that majesty that gave [the masques] their authority and grace” and as aiming to “redeem” the “solemnities” from “ignorance” and “envy” (14-19). His description, moreover, of the courtly audience tearing down the masque’s scenery after performance as a “defacing” allowed by their “privilege” presents the destruction of the scenery as a wasteful and almost violent act that his writing attempts to mitigate and not as the deserved fate of an inferior portion of the production (see *Blackness* 12-13). While Jonson’s language undeniably elevates “writing” and “spirit” over the masque’s “carcass,” then, his invocation of the body-soul dichotomy as a means of understanding masque structure also permits ambiguity, leaving open the possibility for conflicting interpretations.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ In “Ben Jonson and the Centered Self,” Thomas M. Greene observes an ambiguity in Jonson very similar to the ambiguity I am identifying here. He discusses Jonson’s characteristic emphasis on the symbols of the circle and its centre, representing “harmony and completeness ... stability, repose, fixation, duration” (326). “The associations of the circle – as metaphysical, political, and moral ideal, as proportion and equilibrium, as cosmos, realm, society, estate, marriage, [and] harmonious soul,” Green explains, “are doubled by the associations of a center – governor, participant, house, inner self, [and] identity” (326). Jonson usually privileges the ideal of the complete circle and what Greene calls the “centered” or “gathered” self, a self defined by inner stability, self-reliance, and stillness. And yet at times Jonson indulges in a “kind of witty complicity” with “his disguisers” “in spite of himself” (336). His “disguisers” represent a more “protean” or “chameleon” self that succeeds better than a fixed self “in the disoriented world of

In his preface to *Tethys Festival* (1610), Samuel Daniel inverts the value that Jonson attaches to the writing of masques in comparison to their physical performance. Significantly, this inversion coincides with a view of reason as subject to, rather than in control of, the passions. Daniel ends his preface with the assertion that:

in these things [masques] wherein the only life consists in shew: the arte and invention of the Architect gives the greatest grace, and is of most importance: ours, the least part and of least note in the time of the performance thereof. (E2r)

Not only does Daniel hold his written “part” as barely noticeable during performance, but as a writer, he counts himself among “the poore Ingeniers for shadowes” who “frame onely images of no result,” adding that “our greatest knowledges” are not “fixt” but “rowle according to the uncertaine motion of opinion, and controwleable by any surly shew of reason” (E1v). In Daniel’s juxtaposition of his writing with the architectural masque art of Inigo Jones, writing is the insubstantial and secondary element attempting to “shadow” with images “of no result” the primary, concrete images that by implication *are* “of result” or have a greater initial impact on their audience. Writing is not spirit-like here in terms of its enduring quality; rather, its immateriality translates into a lack

Jonson’s comedies,” a world where “the outer circle is broken” (336-7, 326). The world of the “uncentred and misshapen” circle is a world of “flux or ... mobility, grotesquely or dazzlingly fluid” (326). In this world, a self that is too rigidly isolated fails, as *Epicoene*’s Morose exemplifies (335). Greene notes that “to sketch these categories [i.e. circle and incomplete, off-centre circle] is to seem to suggest absolute poles, ethically positive and negative. But although much of Jonson’s writing encourages that suggestion, it does not lack its tensions, its ambivalences, its subtle shifts of emphasis” (326). The tension that Green perceives between “centripetal” and “centrifugal” images, that is, between durability and changeability, corresponds, I think, to the ambiguity inherent in Jonson’s seeming privileging of the permanent “soul” of masque over its more ephemeral body.

of consequence. Daniel's very different construction of writing connects with an unusual disparagement of "reason" as "double edged": it "strikes every way alike," and "when al is done," "understanding" remains "subject to al passio[n]s & imperfections" (E1v-E2r). Daniel presents reason as fallible in this way in order to insist, as part of his pre-emptive address to future critics of his publication, that no one is entitled to pass judgment as if his¹⁹⁶ reasoning ability enjoyed a place of primacy over everyone else's, or as if it were exempt from the influence of the passions. Daniel's strategy to avoid censure groups "reason" (chief faculty of the soul) with writing, and downplays these while acknowledging the greater impact of the "passions" (usually associated with the body) and the physical architecture of the masque. This strategy underscores the relevance of the body-soul divide as means of understanding masque structure. Both Jonson and Davies conceptualize their masques in terms of this divide even while taking up clashing critical positions on the role of each element.

Complicating the "Soul" of the State: The Masquing of Anna and her Ladies

In female masque performance, structure provides a means to counter the dismissive and delimiting cultural association of women with the body, an association which excluded women from official involvement in politics. Even though McManus is correct in pointing out that, according to the logic of Jonson's spirit-carcass theorization of masque form, female masquers belong to the

¹⁹⁶ Daniel is explicitly addressing male readers in this passage.

“carcass” part of the event (10, 37), Jonson himself seems to locate performers outside of this analogy. In *Hymenaei*, he follows his comments on the difference between body and soul (analogous with “things subjected to understanding” and “those ... objected to the sense”) with the claim that:

This it is hath made the most royal princes and greatest persons, who are commonly the personators of these actions, not only studious of riches and magnificence in the outward celebration or show, which rightly becomes them, but curious after the most high and hearty inventions to furnish the inward parts. (9-14)

Here, Jonson credits those who participate in and commission the masque with recognizing the importance of the “inward parts” in relation to the “outward celebration,” and with a resulting desire for both components to achieve “magnificence”; he does not present the participants as *constituting* the outward parts.¹⁹⁷ Likewise, Daniel’s division of the written from the physical masque, “images of no result” from images of result, is clearly a division between two art forms – his own and that of “the Architect,” Inigo Jones; bodies are not an explicit part of the equation (E2r). Instead, masquers’ dancing bodies disrupt the equation; they bridge the categories of the masque’s “carcass” and “spirit.” The dancing bodies are silent and physical as is the masque’s set, but they are self-moving rather than mechanical. Indeed they are as persuasive and communicative in their movements as are the masque’s words (if not more so, according to Daniel’s avoidance of setting his text in competition with the descent of the queen and her

¹⁹⁷ Similarly, in *The Masque of Blackness*, when Jonson describes the masque participants as exercising their privilege “to deface their carcasses” he is speaking of their practice of dismantling the masque’s scenery; they do not, of course, deface themselves. Again, Jonson does not group the masquers’ bodies with the masque body.

ladies). By placing the body in a liminal position between the masque's structural "carcass" and "spirit," masque permits the body itself to escape its own physicality and the values attached to the physical in contrast to the spiritual.

In support of the body's liminal position within masque structure, I turn to the early modern association between dance and speech. If dance functions as a recognizable language for the body, then the body is not a mere instrument or conveyer of the meaning mapped out in the poetry of the masque's narration, speaking parts, and songs, but a producer of its own text. Even Jonson, who takes the position that the dancing bodies carry out "the author's" "invention," admits that dance can cause confusion about the real source of meaning, recalling a segment in *Hymenaei* in which the masquers:

danced forth a most neat and curious measure, full of subtlety and device, which was so excellently performed as it seemed to take away that spirit from the invention which the invention gave to it, and left it doubtful whether the forms flowed more perfectly from the author's brain or their feet. (279-83)

Adding to this doubt is the construction of dance as a form of rhetoric in early modern dance treatises. In his dance treatise *Orchesography* (1588), Thoinot Arbeau calls dance a "dumb rhetoric by which the orator, without speaking a single word, can, by virtue of his movements, make the spectators understand that he is gay, worthy to be praised, loved and adored" (23).¹⁹⁸ To uphold his claim

¹⁹⁸ In John Davies' *Orchestra*, Antinous inverts Arbeau's claim that dance is a form of rhetoric by instead claiming that the art of rhetoric is itself a form of dance, or rather, adds complexity to the dance that speech itself constitutes (93).

that “dancing is a manner of speech,”¹⁹⁹ Arbeau provides examples of “the daughter of Herodias who obtained what she demanded of King Herod Antipas after she had danced” and of “Roscius” who, “in the opinion of the arbiters ... moved the spectators,” through “gestures and mime,” “as much as Cicero had been able to do by eloquence of his orations, or even more” (23). Here, dance is not merely an effective form of persuasion; it can be *more* powerful than speech as a form of persuasion – a radical possibility for women masquers when courtly decorum prohibited their verbal performance on stage. Thomas Elyot’s *The Book Named the Governor* furnishes an example of dance as speech that is explicit about dance’s subversive potential. When the “cruel tirant” “Niero” perceived his people’s “hatered” towards him and feared “lest by mutuall com[m]unication they shulde conspire agayne him,” he:

Prohibited ... that ... man or woman shulde speke unto a nother: but in stede of wordes, they shulde use in their necessarye affaires, countenances, tokens, and movinges, with their feete, handes, and eien, whiche for necessite firste used, at the laste grewe to a perfecte and delectable dauncinge. And Niero ... at the laste was slayne of his people moste miserably. (Kiiiij v)

Again, the understanding of dance as a communicative tool to resist political oppression that centred on the restriction of speech could lend radical implications to the dance of female masquers led by a queen whose views frequently opposed the king’s.

¹⁹⁹ McManus finds that Arbeau’s “comparison of the dance’s steps to a linguistic grammar ... makes the systemic nature of this communicative code and its independent generation of meaning explicit” (38).

Though less obviously subversive, John Davies' treatment of the connection between dance and speech exemplifies how this connection problematizes any definition of dance as strictly physical. In Davies' poetic celebration of dance, *Orchestra* (1596), Antinous presents speech itself as a dance of the air:

For when you breath, the *ayre* in order moves,
Now in, now out, in time and measure trew;
And when you speake, so well she [the air] dauncing loves,
That doubling oft, and oft redoubling new,
With thousand formes she doth her selfe endew:
For all the words that from your lips repaire,
Are nought but tricks and turnings of the aire. (44)²⁰⁰

While we might read the swirling dance of air as presenting speech and language in physical terms,²⁰¹ reading these lines as extending the act of dance beyond the visibly material to the immaterial is equally, if not more, plausible. This plausibility finds support in Antinous's assertion – immediately following his claim that “beauty” and “love” dance in all Penelope's body parts, her “pulses” and “vaines” – that “all the vertues” that “flow” from Penelope's “soule” also form a “measure,” a “Daunce” which Antinous cannot “conceive” with his eyes (105-8). Just as speech itself amounts to a dance, “Logick leadeth Reason in a

²⁰⁰ The notion of speech as itself a dance also appears earlier, in stanza 25:

the Queene with her sweet lips divine
Gently began to move the subtile ayre,
Which gladly yielding, did it selfe incline
To take a shape betweene those rubies fayre
And being formed, softly did repayre
With twenty doublings in the emptie way,
Unto *Antinous* eares, and thus did say.

²⁰¹ McManus adopts this reading. With reference to the stanza I quote in the note above, she comments: “In asserting speech's physicality, this passage also reinforces the contemporary association between feminine speech and sexuality” (38).

dance,” according to Antinous, in that “with close following and continuance / One reason doth another so ensue” in a dance-like formation conforming to logic’s guidance (94). *Orchestra* presents dance, then, as an activity that does not belong strictly to the body, but involves the unseen – speech, breath, the soul, reason – as much as the physical.

While early modern scholars agree on the connections between speech and dance²⁰² in early modern thought, they diverge in their interpretations of the significance of this connection. Skiles Howard argues that “courtly dancing was not only an aspect of elite culture related to linguistic forms, it was a discursive practice in its own right,” and as such had “power both to circulate social norms and to negotiate new formations” (22-3). With particular attention to the female masquing practice of tracing letters or forming symbols through dance patterns, a practice which “intensified the interaction of dance and language,” McManus draws attention to the “legibility of the body, and of the female body in particular” in masque, exploring the tensions between dancing body as passive, “legible” object of interpretation, and active agent of expression (36-43). Whereas McManus focuses on how the “text” of the female masquers’ performance often opposes or complicates the meaning that the published text imposes on the dancing body, Sophie Tomlinson points out instances where the particular expressiveness of the female dancing body and particular lines in the written

²⁰² Besides its connection to oratory, the “connection of dancing with writing,” and with poetry in particular, “was a Renaissance commonplace” and Skiles Howard reviews various examples such as Thomas Morley’s explanation of the galliard through reference to the trochaic foot in verse (22). Davies also likens dance steps to poetic feet when he compares “measures” to “Spondeis,” galliards to pentameter, corantos to dactyls, and lavoltas to anapests (*Orchestra* 65-70).

masque text could perfectly complement each other (22-3). I want to add to these rich interpretations of early modern dance's connection to speech a reading that takes into account the significance of dance not only as a physicalized form of speech (as McManus emphasizes [15-17]) but as an activity that, as Davies shows, was thought to bridge physical movement and non-physical thought, body and soul. In this capacity, dance, the central component of masque entertainment, is also central to my consideration of the intersection between representations of women in masque and early modern ideas of the body-soul dichotomy.

Bodily "speech" in masque performance, of course, comes in different forms. Stephen Orgel and Clare McManus, among others, have pointed out how female masquers' overtly sexualized appearance threatened to subvert conventional gender hierarchy. Orgel notes that the revealing costuming of Anna and her ladies in *Blackness* that Dudley Carleton famously criticized as "too light and courtesan-like" was objectionable because it was "too blatantly feminine, but also, in its aggressive display of sexuality – Queen Anne was visibly pregnant – paradoxically masculine as well" ("Marginal" 149-50).²⁰³ McManus underlines the connection between "public female speech and a dangerously liberated female

²⁰³ Orgel also notes that in *The Masque of Queens*, "the fearsome and the admirable share the same attributes of masculine vigor, strength and independence – the witches are the queens in reverse, literally, etymologically 'preposterous' ... [T]he witches, defining themselves as 'faithful opposites / To fame and glory,' produce their heroic antitheses ... And ... it is precisely the masculinity of the queens that constitutes their virtue: they are not Elyot's 'mild, timorous, tractable' creatures, but armed and aggressive" (*Impersonations* 110). Even though "man-like and unseemly clothes" such as those Anna wears in Paul van Somer's 1617 portrait of her, could "be an index to a much more dangerous kind of independence," Orgel also attends to the similarities between fashions worn by men and women (84-100). He stresses, more generally, the need to rethink "the gender assumptions of English theatre history on the basis of ... evidence" that women were not categorically excluded from early modern English stages as critics tend to assume (1-9).

sexuality in the open display of the gendered body” by citing Francesco Barbaro’s claim in *On Wifely Duties* that “the speech of a noble woman can be no less dangerous than the nakedness of her limbs” (6).²⁰⁴ In contrast to this transgressive potential of the body’s “speech,” McManus also emphasizes, along with Bella Mirabella, that courtly dance inscribes restrictive social codes onto the body and that the participation in public dance amounts to an enactment and affirmation of those codes.²⁰⁵ While I agree with these readings, I posit that the masquing female body could also “speak” transgression beyond appearing aggressively sexual and could, even while acquiescing to codes of gender and social hierarchy as these codes were built into the formalities of courtly dance, undermine a fundamental conceptual support for those hierarchies – the gendered concept of the soul-body divide. In several masque performances, the female body, far from serving as the usual counterpoint to “masculine” reason, visually and thematically comes to signify the soul, with subversive implications for gender relationships, implications which align with the political statements Anna communicated through her masque involvement.

²⁰⁴ This claim predates *Blackness* by almost two hundred years but, as McManus asserts, it “remained representative of prevalent attitudes which governed opportunities for women’s performance in the early seventeenth century; the danger of the female voice and body is powerfully constant” (6).

²⁰⁵ “When men and women of the Renaissance danced,” Mirabella notes, “they played out their assigned social and psychological roles in their dance steps” (413). McManus discusses how “dance’s social nature opened it to the female performer and sought to mark her as an acquiescent member of courtly society; dance training formed part of the literal incorporation into the individual of the controls exerted upon the noble body. The noblewoman’s danced participation was intrinsic to the masque genre ... for it to offer the social affirmation necessary to its existence as state ritual” (8). See also McManus’s description of “the reverence, or bow” at the beginning of each dance as “a gesture of respect to the dance partner, which, when performed to the monarch, was also an expression of the sovereign’s elevated status” and so “a bodily affirmation of the social order” (25-6).

Masques, as Daniel, Jonson, and Jones developed the form under Anna's patronage,²⁰⁶ visually juxtaposed bodies with scenery. Even though Jones mechanized the elaborate masque sets so that the scenery itself was impressively mobile, both moving and stationary parts of the set provided a definite and structured framework that contrasted with the fluidity of the masquers' bodies, a fluidity which both dance and costume emphasized. This contrast visually invoked the body-soul dichotomy in a way that aligns the female body with the soul. Explicit verbal references to the body-soul dynamic in masques, such as the River Niger's comparison of the "mixture" of bodies and souls to the mixture of freshwater and brine in *Blackness* (115-20), or Iris's description of the queen's and her ladies' bodies as "Temples" that receive the spirits of goddesses in *Tethys Festival* (420), complement and alert us to the masque's visual invocation of the body-soul relationship. Indeed, a song in Daniel's *Tethys Festival* reflects at length on the fleetingness of the masque's spectacle of beauty. Expressing confusion as to whether the "*figures*" we see are "*shadowes*" or "*bodies*" that cast "*shadowes*" of "*pleasure*," the song advises the audience to "*Take*" the "*Glory*" of the sight "*sodaine as it flies / Though you take it not to hold*" (F3v). The intangible, evanescent "*wonder*" of the dancing bodies, here, evokes the soul,

²⁰⁶ "When Jonson says that he 'apted' his invention to the commands of Queen Anne in writing *The Masque of Blackness*," Stephen Orgel observes, "he is acknowledging that his poetic invention follows, depends upon, and is subject to the authority of the Queen; the conceit of blackness is the Queen's. If we took the patronage system seriously, the Queen's invention would be as interesting to us as Jonson's" ("Marginal Jonson" 153). McManus notes that "the fluidity of the staging of the female body found in the distinct approaches of [Daniel's *Twelve Goddesses* and Jonson's *Masque of Queens*] ... ties them to the masque career of Anna of Denmark. On Anna's creative influence, see also Lewalski 28.

which, though eternal according to Christian belief, was also characterized as the body's temporary guest, and often pictured in its sudden and fleeting moment of departure.²⁰⁷

Tethys Festival, a masque in which Anna performed at the celebrations for Prince Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales, provides a striking example of the juxtaposition of fluid bodies with more rigid, stationary scenery. Two "great" statues "of twelve foot high" representing Neptune and Nereus receive first mention in Daniel's description of the masque's opening scene (E2v-E3r). "These Sea-gods," Daniel relates, "stood on pedestals and were all of gold," with "pilasters" behind them, which "bore up a rich Freeze" to form a frame for the "harbour" scene of the first part of the masque. Against the framework of this imposing statuary, "Eight little Ladies," about the height of the young Prince Charles (impersonating Zephyrus in the masque), perform their dance around the prince (E3v, F1r). Their "light robes adorned with flowers, their haire hanging downe, and waving with Garlands of water ornaments on their heads" convey their fluidity as "Naydes" or "Nymphs of fountaines" (E3r-E3v). The subsequent masque scene, featuring the grand revelation of Anna and her ladies, amplifies this initial juxtaposition of feminine fluidity with decidedly masculine statuary. Queen Anna and her ladies, as Tethys and her nymphs of English rivers, appear enthroned in five "Cavernes" or "Neeces" (three ladies to a niche, with Anna and

²⁰⁷ Rosalie Osmond, in *Imagining the Soul: A History*, gathers together several illustrations of the soul. For medieval and early modern examples of the soul depicted in its moment of departing flight, see illustrations VIII, 7, 27, and 31.

princess Elizabeth in the centre niche). While the prominent Neptune and Nereus may have “vanished” when “the whole face of [the port scene] changed,” the “pillars,” “Freeze,” “Cornich,” and statues framing the new scene echo the earlier frame, perhaps most notably in the “Great trident” on either side of Tethys’s throne and the “head of a Sea-god” in a “great Concave shel” positioned “betweene the frontispiece and the Architrave (F1r-F2r). Concave shapes feature prominently in this second set, including not only the separate caverns and the shape of the set as a whole (it “came into the forme of a halfe round”) but also the bowls of several fountains, “out of which issued abundance of water” so that “indeed there was no place in this great Aquatick throne, that was not filled with the sprinckling” of “naturall seeming waters” (F1v-F2v).²⁰⁸

Combined with the notion that Tethys and her river nymphs “invest[ed]” the bodies of Anna and her ladies (F4v), the scenic emphasis on concave, water-bearing shapes would seem to foreground the notion of woman as vessel, as “bearer of significance” rather than producer of significance.²⁰⁹ But if the masque invokes this association, it more persuasively disrupts it by aligning the female masquers not so much with the vessels, as with their contents. As river nymphs, the women descend from their structured caverns “with winding meanders like a River” to present their offerings at the “Tree of victory” (F2v). Their attire complements this fluid mobility: it includes a “waving” veil, “upper garments” of “sky-coloured taffetas for lightnes,” “halfe skirts” with “the grou[n]d work cut out

²⁰⁸ When describing the first fountain, Daniel notes that it used “artificiall water” (F1v).

²⁰⁹ McManus also discusses the female masquers’ challenge to this stereotype. See 10 and 16.

for lightnes,” and a “long skirt ... wrought with lace, waved round about like a River” (F2v). The alignment, here, of women with moving water, as opposed to with the scenery’s prominent vessels, associates women with active significance and mobility. For Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, the women’s representation of rivers and the sea, the “most valuable geographical features of a pre-industrial country,” is a means of claiming “socio-economic importance” (44). Lewalski finds that in representing Tethys and the ocean, Anna “claims as her own” an “alternative sphere of power and worth” to that of James and “embodies the quintessentially female waters of the oceans and rivers, with all their wealth and peaceful industry” (40).²¹⁰ Both of these readings point out that the masque’s presentation of women as watery naiads carries connotations of female self-assertion and agency. These empowering connotations, I posit, are very much connected to an alternative view of the gendered body-soul dichotomy, in that the alignment of women with water visually depicts them in the position of the soul, both constrained by and yet resisting the enclosing “body” of the set and scenery.

The gendering of that constraining “body” as masculine completes the reversal of the usual gendering of the body as feminine and the soul or reason as masculine. Neptune and Nereus, figures of male kingship and industry, are immobile statues, aligned with the passive stone of the great fountains in contrast to the dancing women aligned with the “spouting water” (F2v). Neptune’s trident

²¹⁰ The “quintessentially female” quality of the waters that Lewalski perceives is something positive here, opposing the tendency to pathologize and disparage women’s bodies and tongues as overly “leaky,” which Gail Kern Paster has investigated.

carries over to the two great tridents framing Tethys's throne, whose symmetry further echoes Neptune and Nereus's positioning at either side of the first scene. While these symbols associated with masculine authority frame Tethys and define her own position of authority, she and her ladies descend freely from the set's framing structure to present their offerings at the tree of victory. Before her appearance, Tethys / Anna also makes a gift through her messenger ("*Triton* in the behalfe of *Zephirus*") of a trident to James, and a sword and sash to Henry. As a gift, the trident becomes equally an "ensigne" of Tethys's "love" and of James's "right." The sword, derived from a female authority, "*Astraea*," comes with instructions: it must not be "unsheath'd but on just ground," and must be kept with the scarf of "love and Amitie," a scarf that figures forth the extent of the empire Henry will inherit, the limits of which he is forbidden to "passe" (E4v-F1r). Rather than constituting a willing affirmation of or acquiescence to a male authority to govern, then, these gifts and their accompanying messages present women as both enabling and circumscribing that power. Visually, this female self-assertion under the guise of an acceptance of the monarch's "right" to govern corresponds to the women's "winding" movement within, and yet in stark contrast to, the framing and masculinised set of tridents, pillars, and statues.

The Masque of Queenes (1609) features a similar pattern – evocative of the body-soul dichotomy – of fluid female movement out of a more rigid structure associated with masculine authority. In this masque Queen Anna and her ladies first appear enthroned in the House of Fame, a "glorious and magnificent

building” with “Men-making poets” for “columns,” as well as columns of “those well-made men / Whose strife it was to have the happiest pen / Renown them” (375-8).²¹¹ The women represent famous female warrior queens whose stories can all be found in established literary and historical canons, as Jonson’s extensive marginal notes with the publication of the masque text attest. This striking image of women framed within a structure that comes from the male literary canon (its precedent is Chaucer’s House of Fame [494]) and consists of famous male authors and their works, then, signals how, in McManus’s words, the masque “described [women] only through their representation in the male-authored texts of poetry and history; written about rather than writing, these women were subject to the authority of the male canon” (112). The female masquers’ departure from this structure, therefore, becomes loaded with meaning. McManus’s insight into the masque’s variation of “the gendered premises of Renaissance architecture” points to an inversion very similar to that in *Tethys Festival*. McManus explains that *Queens* reverses “the model of the Vitruvian caryatid”:

In the original model the female caryatid bore the building’s physical weight while the conceptual weight of that architecture’s aesthetic and ideological standard was borne by the male body. *Queens* reversed the passive weight-bearing of servitude, transforming the caryatid into an embellishing female statue, free to descend from Jones’s elaborate pedestal. In contrast, the inanimate, weight-bearing male poet-statues remained static. (117)

²¹¹ Homer, Virgil, and Lucan, formed some of the House’s columns, for instance, as did Achilles, Aeneas, Caesar, “and those great heroes which these poets had celebrated,” while “Between the pillars underneath were figured land battles, sea fights, triumphs, loves, sacrifices, and all magnificent subjects of honour” (487-92).

As in *Tethys Festival*, the framing structure of the set with its clearly defined shape is masculinized and contrasts with the fluid dance movements of the female masquers' bodies. The female masquers might start out as embellishing female statues, as McManus sees them, but, excepting Anna, they all represent historical figures now dead, who live "eternised" in the House of Fame and are "visible" for just this night; they represent spirits, in other words, a representation which adds to the female masquers' fluid, ethereal quality (403,419). Indeed, the use of male professionals to portray the "hags" in their excessive carnality sets off the "real" female bodies of the queens as comparably less carnal and further underlines the masque's association between physicality and masculinity. McManus describes the House of Fame in terms of "containment" and "restrictive boundaries" which the masquers negotiated and "finally abandoned" to "generate significance through movement in the masquing dance (social and performative) on the floor of the Banqueting House" (117-19). All of these elements: the positioning of women's dancing bodies as a vibrant, moving, "signifying force" (McManus 117) in contrast to the comparably more passive, less mobile scenery; the characterization of the women as spirits only briefly perceptible; and even the dancers' emergence out onto the dance floor from within the House (McManus 117) visually evoke the soul-body dichotomy.

In this evocation, women align with the soul insofar as early modern thinkers often conceptualize the soul as the active principle, responsible for thought (signification) and movement, and see the earthly body as the bearer, the

frame, and often the limiting cage for the soul (though a cage the soul will eventually escape). Francis Quarles's eighth emblem in the fifth book of his 1635 *Emblemes* shows a fully-fleshed human figure praying inside an oversized skeleton (272, Fig.2). This emblem exemplifies the continuing currency of the notion that the body is a limiting cage for the soul (the inner figure is trapped in the skeleton's ribcage). It also demonstrates the tendency to visually depict the soul as a body (in this particular emblem, the skeleton's posture suggests boredom, as if it has no choice but to sit around waiting for the fully-fleshed figure inside, as its soul and animating force, to finish praying). The masque's visual reference to the soul through the female body, in particular, directly opposes the denigration both of the body and of women through recourse to the gendered body-soul hierarchy, as I will discuss later in this chapter with reference to the masque's treatment of feminine "beauty." Here, I want to point out that the visual reversal, in both *Queens* and *Tethys Festival*, of the usual gendering of body or passive material as feminine, and soul or active force as masculine, ultimately corresponds with an image of female mobility and agency alongside male structures of restraint. This correspondence opens a space for comment or critique on the social and political restraints that patriarchal systems imposed on women, restraints that Anna herself felt and often actively protested. If a cultural conceptual alignment of women with the body and of men with reason could be so disadvantageous to women, justifying and naturalizing male authority to govern them, what might these masques say about that male authority in visually

reversing the usual alignment to present masculine restraint over women as similar to the body's restraint over the soul? Through their visual invocation of the soul with fluid dance mobility alongside masculinised framing structures, do female masquing bodies engage in a visual rhetoric questioning the authority for that restraint? The body might confine the soul, for instance, but not because of an inherent authority within the body itself or out of a need to keep the soul in check. Instead, a failure of body and soul to co-operate and balance each other leads to an unproductive impasse, as seventeenth-century body-soul dialogues make clear.²¹²



Figure 2: Emblem VIII, from Francis Quarles, *Emblemes*, Book 5 (London, 1635) 272.

²¹² On the unresolved incompatibility between body and soul in seventeenth-century body-soul dialogues, see Osmond, *Mutual Accusation*, 97-101.

Such a critique of the restrictions men imposed on women would likely be particularly welcome to Anna, whose own views about her self-worth apart from her connection to James,²¹³ and about her role as queen, frequently clashed with James's position that women had no place in the affairs of government and naturally owed obedience to their husbands. Scholars including Barbara K. Lewalski, Leeds Barroll, Clare McManus, and Sophie Tomlinson, have documented and examined specific instances of Anna's use of the masque, and other means available to her, to make political statements which often opposed and questioned James's absolute authority as husband and monarch. Anna selected her ladies-in-waiting and principal co-performers in the masque, for instance, not according to the political prowess of their male relations, but according to her own esteem for the individual women (Barroll 124-5) – itself an affirmation of women's independent worth. She used the “taking-out” moment of the masque (when the dancers select partners from the courtly audience) to conspicuously honour male individuals of her choosing, without always constraining herself or her ladies to James's personal favourites (Barroll 129-31). Anna's invitations to the masque itself sometimes caused problems for James with an offended French ambassador when she showed favour to the Spanish ambassador as an indication of her own “support for Spanish Catholic interests” (Lewalski 29).²¹⁴ Anna patronized the Children of the Queen's Revels, an acting

²¹³ Anna insisted on her royal identity as independent from her marriage to James, emphasizing her own family's lineage and her position in the Danish royalty. See Lewalski 16-19.

²¹⁴ Another possibility is that having Anna carry the blame for the Spanish ambassador's invitation to, for instance, *The Masque of Beauty*, was useful for James. Appearing, toward the French

company frequently reprimanded and censored for satire against James, which may indicate her own enjoyment of such satire (Lewalski 24). Leveraging a political situation to her advantage in her vehement opposition to James on a family matter – his decision to remove Prince Henry to the guardianship of John Erskine, Earl of Mar – Anna refused to accompany James to England for his succession to Elizabeth until Prince Henry was returned to her (Lewalski 20). While her earlier military attempt to retrieve Henry from his wardship was unsuccessful, this time James succumbed to her demands in order to avoid the political embarrassment of entering England with his consort noticeably absent (Lewalski 20). One of the most explicit instances of Anna's interest in politics and her confidence in her own governing capabilities is her earnest request to reign as regent in London during James's progress to Scotland in 1617 (McManus "Memorialising" 84). When James bypassed her to appoint Francis Bacon as "nominal head of state" along with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Anna retaliated, in a sense, by giving audience, in her own court, to a ladies' masque that her favourite, Lady Bedford, commissioned for her (McManus "Memorialising" 84-9). We can read Anna's occupation of the privileged

ambassador, "extremely sorry for the inconsiderateness of the Queen," may have been part of James's strategy to honour the Spanish ambassador at the masque while avoiding or lessening, as much as possible, the offence to the rival French ambassador (Sullivan 37-43). If this was James's strategy, however, it involved acknowledging to some extent Anna's power of political interference (the king had to admit that he could not override the queen and uninvite the Spanish ambassador to please the French ambassador) and left James open to the French ambassador's observation that the king was not "master in his own house" (Sullivan 37). For more on the political significance of the masques, the vying between the French and Spanish ambassadors for masque invitations, and the political importance of the least gesture of favour toward the ambassador and his family performed by members of the royal family during the masque, see Mary Sullivan, *Court Masques of James I* 1-82.

position of chief observer, reserved in every other Jacobean masque for James, as a means of symbolically and publicly reaffirming her own authority and capability of governing in the position that James denied her, as McManus has convincingly argued (“Memorialising” 84-9). This is only a brief review of some of Anna’s politically charged actions, but it demonstrates that within the masques that she played a key role in developing, a visual rhetoric of the body which subverts the usual gendering of body and soul in order to represent women more advantageously would accord well with Anna’s self-promotion and with her valuing of women independently from their connections to men.

Nonetheless, as Lewalski notes, “we need not suppose contestation and subversion to be fully conscious on the Queen’s or the authors’ parts” for the subversion to be present (29). So far I have focused on *Tethys Festival* and *The Masque of Queens* to develop my point about the visual alignment of women with the soul through the juxtaposition of bodies with scenery, but women consistently represent immaterial figures in Anna’s masques. Before *Tethys Festival*, in *The Masque of Blackness*, the ladies’ apparel as water nymphs, with its layered, flowing, and transparent materials, also emphasized the fluidity of the nymphs and their movements. *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* asks us to see the bodies of Anna and her ladies as making visible the spirits of twelve goddesses (414). Night and Slomber insist on the immateriality of these “Figures of the light” by making it clear from the outset that they will appear to the courtly audience in a dream that Slomber will induce (413-14). When female

performance on stage was a novelty not yet possible on the commercial stage,²¹⁵ then, the courtly women who could be physically present on a formal stage through masque redefined their physicality, using it to stand in for the spiritual and immaterial. In part, the personification of abstract ideals and virtues, often in the form of divine figures from classical myth, is simply a characteristic of the masque genre which aimed to glorify the monarch as the source and perfect embodiment of such virtues.²¹⁶ Nonetheless, we should not neglect the creative influence Anna had on the development of the genre, including her idea to have the antimasque in *Queens*, which had the effect of offsetting the ethereal physicality of the female masquers with the excessive corporeality of the hags that professional male actors represented.²¹⁷ And again, regardless of intention or female direction in this case, masque's immaterial figures carried special significance for female performance because of the usual gendering of material and immaterial.

²¹⁵ In chapter one of *Women on Stage in Stuart Drama*, Sophie Tomlinson discusses female masque performance as an important precedent that connects to and influences eventual female performance on the commercial stage.

²¹⁶ See for instance, *Queens* 415-422:

She [Anna] this [honour conferred by the eleven dead queens] embracing with a virtuous joy,
Far from self-love, as humbling all her worth
To him that gave it, hath again brought forth
Their [the queens'] names to memory; and means this night
To make them once more visible to light,
And to that light from whence her truth of spirit
Confesseth all the lustre of her merit:
To you [James], most royal and most happy king.

²¹⁷ The juxtaposition of bodily vice in the antimasque with ideal virtue in the masque recurs in later masques, perhaps most explicitly in *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, and continues as a theme much later, in Townshend's *Tempe Restored*, for instance, and Milton's *Comus*.

Whether or not it was deliberate, the masque's overturning of the common gendering of the body-soul dichotomy underlies and supports what Lewalski identifies as the masque's subversion of "the representation of James as exclusive locus of power and virtue by means of texts and symbolic actions which exalt the power and virtue of the Queen and her ladies – and, by extension, of women generally."²¹⁸ In terms of the body-soul relationship, the soul most often figures as the rightful governor of the body, not the other way around. Therefore, in making a visual claim for women's alignment with the soul, these masques decentre James as having the sole prerogative to rule, and challenge the notion that men are the only ones capable of contributing, intellectually, to affairs of government, while women are relegated to the bodily roles of child-bearing and rearing. Indeed, in *Tethys Festival*, Triton even calls "mightie Tethys" the "intelligence" that governs the ocean (or "moves the Sphere / Of circling waves") (E4r). If, moreover, masque is a reflection of the soul or moral health of a state, the very representation of women as the active, moving, "soul" or centre of Anna's masques implies that women are likewise central – and not just in a bodily way – to the state's well-being.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ 29. Lewalski suggests that this subversion results from "the need to please multiple audiences – King, Queen, male courtiers, court ladies – and from the complexities of shared authorial responsibility with the Queen-patron."

²¹⁹ Thomas Greene, in "Ben Jonson and the Centered Self," finds that "the great storehouse of Jonson's centripetal images is the series of masques which assert, almost by definition, the existence of an order" (326). With specific reference to *The Masque of Beauty*, Greene claims that the "choreographed" and "poetic" "circles of the masques have reference first of all to the central figure of the king, literally seated in the center of the hall and directly facing the stage area. The king, associated repeatedly with the sun, is himself a symbolic orb – fixed, life-giving, dependable" (327). For Greene, "the king's presence opposite the masquing stage ... represents a kind of metaphysical principle which the dancers attempt to embody" (327). I am suggesting a

Above, I cite the masquers' activity and movement (in contrast with the less mobile scenery that both frames and bears the weight of the masquers) as qualities aligning them with the soul, the active component of a human being whose definitive presence voluntary movement signalled. Helkiah Crooke, for instance, describes the soul as "incorporeal and diffusive, quickening, sustaining, governing, and moving the whole body and every part thereof, even as God supporteth and ruleth the whole world, being by a diffusive nature" (*Mikrokosmographia* preface to bk 1, p2).²²⁰ The explicit connection Crooke sees between "moving" and "governing," here, is part of what makes the representation of women as aligned with the soul an empowering one. Even while dance is communicative and active, however, it also poses a potential problem for the visual reading of the female masquers as aligned with the soul, in that conventionally, women's dance parts were passive and served to set off their male

different possibility here, namely, that the female dancers themselves represent "a kind of metaphysical principle." Visually, they also form the dynamic centre of the masque structure as viewed from the audience – an alternate centre that stands in competition to James as centre of the hall. (The notion that the masque functions as mirror to the audience further supports the idea of twin, competing centres, as I discuss further on). Greene argues that Jonson's ideal of being centred does not necessitate physical rootedness, but rather involves moving and acting always according to one's moral anchor (330-3). Thus, as much as James is a moral centre that the masquers reflect, the masquers themselves signify a moral centre for James and the state to reflect. In light of Greene's insights, the women's appearance as a moral centre need have nothing to do with physical confinement within the domestic sphere.

²²⁰ More examples of the view that movement signals the soul's presence appear in: Simon Harward's *A discourse concerning the soule*, which cites Aristotle's definition of the soul as the "continued motion" of the "organically body" and lists "voluntary motions" as part of the rational faculty of the soul according to Plato's division of the soul's three faculties (fol 7, 9). John Woolton's 1576 *treatise of the immortalitie of the soule* also cites Aristotle as source for the notion of the soul as "*the first Action or the continuall motion of a body organically*" and categorizes "movement" as a property of the rational soul according to Plato's theory (fol 5). William Hill's *The infancie of the soule* repeats the reference to Plato and Aristotle as authorities for the position that the soul is the body's "first moover" and refers to pregnant women's experiences of an unborn child moving within the womb as support for his claim that infants in the womb possess a soul (C1r, D2r, E2r).

partners' more complex and showy dance steps. A woman's "dance steps were smaller, lower to the ground, delicate and not rambunctious or too energetic," signalling that she "deferred to [her partner's] assumed greater talent and presence" (Mirabella 425). Pointing out that men were the dance masters, choreographers, and writers of dance music and dance manuals, Bella Mirabella argues that "dance was constructed to put women on display for those in power, for the male patriarchy" and that "dancing women, their movements under constant surveillance, were controlled and restrained" (415).²²¹ Mirabella focuses on how dance "support[s] male power" through the dynamics of the gaze, noting that women were not supposed to "return the man's gaze": "downcast eyes is the recommended behaviour for women in the Renaissance, and the dance masters are very clear on this point" (424-5). This dynamic between gazer and object of the gaze (the active gaze implying dominance, control, and the passive reception of the gaze implying submission) is especially relevant to a masque setting in which the king enjoyed a prominent seat of honour in the audience and supposedly the best sightlines.²²² Where we could cite the moment in which female masquers entered the audience to choose dance partners as an instance of female agency

²²¹ See also McManus *Women on the Renaissance Stage* 55: "The representation of dance in contemporary literature robbed the eroticised female dancer of agency, fetishising her and privileging the male author and dancer. ... Despite the necessity of women to the dance, theirs was a marginal and physical presence. Eloquently expressing her distance from representation, the female dancer was reduced to a bodiless hand at the edge of an illustration [in Arbeau]. Such strategies of exclusion were embodied in other dance manuals in rather more subtle ways than in Arbeau's, concentrating instead on the management of the female body."

²²² McManus points out that in some instances the spectators in the less-privileged seats in the galleries enjoyed the better perspective – as when the figures or patterns formed by dancers were likely easier to discern from above (42-3).

that breaks the power dynamic of the gaze, Mirabella would counter with her reading of stanza 112 in Davies' *Orchestra*:

What if by often enterchange of place
sometime the woman get the upper hand?
That is but done for more delightfull grace,
For on that part shee doth not ever stand:
But, as the Measures law doth her commaund,
Shee wheeles about, and ere the daunce doth end,
Into her former place shee doth transcend.

For Mirabella, when Davies "reassures himself" that even if dancing "might allow women some freedom and the chance to get the 'upper hand'," it will soon "right the situation and put the woman back in her place," he shows "how successfully dance functioned to maintain and enforce femininity" (424). The reassurance that Mirabella perceives in Davies' passage, however, marks, without entirely dissolving, an underlying anxiety about the possibility of a woman's brief dominance within dance.

The unease evident in Davies' need to emphasize the temporariness and the end of women's potential dominance in dance also arguably surfaces in treatises like Elyot's, which took pains to define the proper demeanour for a female dancer (with tactics like "lasse advauncing of the body," she must balance her male partner's "naturall" "*fiercenesse*" with "*mildenesse*," his "*Audacitie*" with "*timerositie*," his "wilfull opinion" with "*Tractabilitie*," etc. [fol 83]). The very effort to provide guidelines suggests that courtiers did not necessarily take these dance attitudes for granted or fall into such attitudes naturally through their supposed knowledge of "all qualities incide[n]t to a man and also ... to a woman"

(fol 83). Without dismissing the real obstacles that dance decorum based on conventional gender ideology posed to female masquers' expressions of assertiveness, we can read this concern to control or limit forms of dance expressiveness as indicative of the real possibilities dance opened up for challenging gender codes. Indeed, Barbara Ravelhofer objects to applying concepts of "the 'active male gaze' and its 'passive' female counterpart on the complex interaction of dancing" on the grounds that "certainties gained from the safe distance of a text or image appear less evident once the practical implications of actual movement come into play" (118). The passive demeanour that writing on dance recommended for female dancers, then, did not necessarily diminish an emphatic liveliness and energy on the part of Anna and her ladies, framed within the confines of the masculinised scenery.

The female masquers' alignment with the soul through active movement corresponds with female agency in the masque's narrative and helps to reconfigure the motif of possession or puppetry. Puppetry, as I discuss in chapter one, often gendered the passive material vessel or puppet as feminine, and the possessor or puppeteer as masculine.²²³ Daniel makes divine possession an explicit part of the narrative of both *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* and *Tethys Festival*. In *Tethys Festival*, when Tethys and her nymphs "sodainely vanish" after dancing their final "Measures Corantos and Galliardes" with the "Lordes" of their choosing, so that "all was thought to be finisht," Triton informs

²²³ For more on the connection between dance movement and female agency in the masques, apart from my focus on puppetry, see Sophie Tomlinson, 19-21, 30-1, 33, 36-7.

the audience that in returning to her “watery mansion,” Tethys and her company will “*shift those formes, wherein her power did daigne / T’invest her selfe and hers, and to restore / Them to themselves whose beauteous shapes they wore*” (F4r). Anna and her ladies are not merely the “shapes” that Tethys and her nymphs “wore” according to this account; instead, their “shapes” are distinguished from “themselves” in that Tethys’s departure restores the ladies’ “shapes” (the referent of “them”) to their “selves.” More importantly, the departure of goddess and nymphs does not leave behind diminished shells or even rob Anna and her ladies of any splendour: with the reappearance of the queen and her train “*in figures of their owne,*” the audience is treated to a “*transformation of farre more delight / And apter drawne to nature, then can be / Discrib’d in an imaginary sight*” (F4r). Daniel’s choice of the word “invest” to articulate the presence of the divine figures in the bodies of Anna and her ladies is also significant. Insofar as “invest” meant “to put on as clothes or ornaments,” it coordinates with the notion of goddess and nymphs “wearing” the shapes of courtly ladies, but “invest” also carried, at this time, the figurative sense: “to clothe or endue with attributes, qualities, or a character” (OED online I.1.a. *trans.*, 3. *fig.* a). This sense that the goddesses invest the ladies with their divine qualities (rather than controlling them) comes through in the masque. The first action of Anna and her ladies upon their reappearance is to “march up to the King ... in a very stately manner” (F4v). This direct advancement to the throne recalls the earlier progression of Tethys and her nymphs when they “march up” to present floral

offerings at the “Tree of victory” situated “at the right side of the state” (F2v), and the masque text emphatically presents this earlier progress as an action expressing Tethys’s will. Tethys “*daignes*” to make an appearance “*in glory*” at Prince Henry’s investiture (F3r); she “*resolves t’adorne the day / With her al-gracing presence*”; and she comes accompanied by a train of nymphs “*she pleas’d to call away*” (E4r-E4v). The song lyrics repeatedly foreground Tethys’s gracious choice to honour James, Henry, and the day’s event; she is not motivated by a sense of duty or obligation, but by her own desire to express “The vowes [of] her heart” (E3v). The repeated stately advance of Anna and her ladies confirms that the active will of Tethys and her nymphs carries over to the ladies as “themselves.” The motif of divine animation, here, instead of constructing the feminine as passive vessel, empowers the female masquers by highlighting their similarity to the divine force that inhabits them according to the masque’s narrative – a divine force that in this case is also feminine.

The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses similarly presents Anna and her ladies as temporarily possessed by the spirits of female deities and paradoxically stages this possession as empowering for the “possessed.” At the masque’s end Iris describes how “these divine powers ... cloathed themselves” in the “appearances” or “coverings” of Anna and her ladies. But in the dedication to the Countess of Bedford preceding the masque text, Daniel makes it clear that “her Maiestie chose to represent” Pallas, signalling that Anna is really the one who leads her ladies in selecting and appropriating the figures of the goddesses in order to present

themselves in a particular way before the court (419-20, 407). The masque identifies Anna's chosen goddess as "the glorious Patronesse of this mighty Monarchy" – that is, as a powerful help and support to the monarchy if respectfully appealed to (420). Again, the masquers' descent from a scenic structure (the mountain) corresponds with active feminine will. After expressing surprise that the goddesses would "visit this poore Temple," for instance, the prophetess Sybilla remarks that such "Powers," reliant only on "their owne gracefulness," "shine where they will" (415). If the goddesses' visit to the "Temple" of the masque hall is somewhat of a surprise (414), however, their choice to visit the bodies of Anna and her ladies, that is, the "best-built-Temples of Beauty and Honour," comes across as only natural – a choice undertaken for the goddesses' own "delight" (420). And while Iris prepares Sybilla and the audience to be overcome by the sight, "bereave[d] ... of all, save admiration and amazement," the female prophet figure (though a speaking part here performed by a male actor) is not entirely powerless; rather, she prepares the "Rites" necessary to properly honour the approaching deities and occupies the privileged position of seeing and describing the goddesses through a magic "Prospective" before anyone else can see them (414-15). As for Anna and her ladies, they do not appear as overcome by the goddess figures but as sharing a lasting affinity with them; their own physical appearance, which Iris tells us the goddesses borrow, is what Iris warns will strike wonder in beholders. At the close of the masque Iris explains that:

in respect of the persons under whose beautifull coverings they have thus presented themselves, these Deities will be pleased the rather at their invocation (knowing all their desires to be such) as evermore to grace this glorious Monarchy with the Reall effects of these blessings represented. (420)

The goddesses will lend their virtues to England “in respect of” or for the sake of Anna and her train, or perhaps even *through* Anna and her ladies, as the referent of “at their invocation” is ambiguous – “their” could refer to the goddesses or to the ladies as themselves. Together, the goddesses encompass the power to govern (Juno); wisdom and martial strength (Pallas); diplomacy and peace (Venus and Concordia); virtue (Vesta and Diana); wealth (Proserpina); good judgement (Astraea); and so on (415-17). This statement makes a claim, then, for Anna and her ladies as essential to the monarchy’s well-being, not peripheral to its power or relegated to roles of child-bearing or nurturing (in part Flora and Ceres represent these contributions, though they also stand for a non-physical fertility of “virtue” and “beauty” 417).

The idea that the masque form serves as a mirror in which the king and audience might see themselves extends the female masquers’ active role beyond the fiction of the masque narrative. Where critics have observed “legible” female bodies to be interpreted by the dominant gaze of the monarch (McManus 39), for instance, we might also observe a performance that aimed to turn that gaze back upon itself – an active reflection of the gaze, instead of a passive subjection to it. In a later masque, “Love’s Triumph Through Callipolis” (1631), Jonson asserts that “all representations, especially those of this nature in court, public spectacles,

either have been or ought to be the mirrors of man's life, whose ends ... ought always to carry a mixture of profit with them no less than delight" (1-7). Goldberg takes the position that the spectacle of the masque and the spectacle of the observing king are mirror images that "bear a single meaning" (57).²²⁴ Another possibility is that as a mirror the masque is not simply one with the king's mind, but reflects the monarch with a difference, whether it be a subtle suggestion or even a hint at a flaw. This possibility is more in keeping with early modern uses of the looking-glass metaphor in literary and theatrical contexts beyond the masque. Constructions of theatre and literature as a looking glass for the soul, exposing imperfections with the aim of correcting them, for instance, appear in connection with early modern satire, comedy, devotional poetry, and moral treatises.²²⁵ And even though masque does not operate in the mode of satire or comedy to correct vice and folly by exposing it to ridicule and scorn, Stephen

²²⁴ Orgel claims that masque form "was an extension of the royal mind" (*Illusion* 43), as does Goldberg, who writes that masque "represents the king," and "mirrors the royal mind" (55-57). See also Jerzy Limon on the masque as mirror: "Jonson considered these highly illusionistic and certainly nonmimetic spectacles 'mirrors of man's life.' What he actually means is that the laws that govern this artistic reality are by analogy the same as those governing the microcosm of man (who governs his body in the same way as the king his nation), the geocosm of earth, and the macrocosm of the universe" (74).

²²⁵ Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour* provides an obvious example through the playwright and actor figure, Asper, who announces his intention "t'unmask" "public vice" by "oppos[ing] a mirror" to the audience, "As large as is the stage whereon we act, / Where they shall see the time's deformity / Anatomized in every nerve and sinew" (Induction 20, 116-19). I. Lada-Richards draws attention to another excellent example in Thomas Randolph's *The Muses Looking-Glasse*, "a theatrically argued seventeenth-century defence of plays and players in which Roscius, chief actor and master of ceremonies, proclaims the comic stage a mirror for the audience's soul." Roscius calls "comedy" the only "glasse" in which "the soul sees her face" (346-7, Randolph qtd in Lada-Richards). Non-dramatic literary works also frequently employ the trope of literature as a mirror for the reader's soul. See, for instance, Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*: "To the Queenes Most Excellent Majestie" 37-44, "The Authors Dreame" 210-12, "To the Ladie Margaret" 27-34; and George Gascoigne's "The Steele Glas," which sets up his writing as offering an honest reflection of inner truths (within society and within people's characters) in contradistinction to the chrystal mirror which flatters with pleasing superficial reflections.

Orgel points out (as I cite earlier in this chapter) that through the very different mode of praise, masque could still influence the king and aim to promote desired behaviour. The masque dancers, furthermore, could perhaps lay special claim to the masque's mirroring function. I. Lada Richards identifies the "dancer as mirror" metaphor in Lucian's *De Saltatione* as "the most important Graeco-Roman pedigree of the 'mirror of drama' analogy that dominates the complex theatrical optics of the Medieval and Renaissance European stages" (335). In theory, then, the masque's representation of women as central to the state's political and moral health, as I have been discussing, could prompt in the audience members – through turning their gaze back upon them – a revaluing of their own views on women's roles in state affairs. *Tethys Festival* reflects the gaze even more literally in images that mirror James sitting in state. "The main visual feature of the masque," Stephanie Hodgson-Wright asserts, "is Anna enthroned with her daughter Elizabeth at her feet, a mirror image of the prime spectators, James and the heir apparent" (44). For Hodgson-Wright, Anna's counter-image foregrounds "the separateness and femaleness of Anna's court" (45), but it also provocatively opposes the image of James and Henry with a competing female image of monarchy. Tethys might be wife to the "Oceans King," Oceanus (the name by which her messenger addresses James), but here she appears enthroned alone, facing "Oceanus" with an image of female majesty that rivals his own (F3r, E4v).²²⁶

²²⁶ Jonathan Goldberg describes the masque as a "mirror of [the king's] mind" and as a "mirror"

This mirroring of the king's gaze finds complement in a repeated emphasis on reciprocity in *Tethys Festival*. Tethys's symbolic gift of the trident to Oceanus / James, as noted above, connects Oceanus's "right" to rule with Tethys's "love" – an indication that her acceptance and approval are necessary to validate that right. Tethys's / Anna's gift to Henry, symbolizing his future entitlement to a kingdom, stakes a claim that that "gift" comes from his mother as well as from his father, and then (as noted earlier) makes clear her expectations that in receiving such a gift, Henry will honour her political advice. The masque introduces this theme of reciprocity earlier on, when Triton (on behalf of Zephyrus) fulfills a "charge" from Tethys "to say, that even as Seas / And lands, are grac'd by men of worth and might, / So they returne their favours" (E4r). Reciprocity receives similar emphasis in *Twelve Goddesses*. When Anna and her ladies descend from the mountain to deliver "their presents," actors representing the three graces sing lyrics focusing on the back-and-forth pattern of "Desert, Reward, and Gratitude" (418). In this masque, the goddesses are the ones who decide on and reward merit, and Sybilla's role, on behalf of "the Sovereigne and his State," is to properly honour the goddesses with gratitude for their gifts (419). Critics have pointed out that the goddesses' gifts (representing "armed policie," "felicities," "Justice," and "*power by Sea*," among other ideals) imply that these benefits did not already exist with James's reign (Lewalski 30, Hodgson-Wright

that "elucidates the spectacle that the king presents sitting in state. The mysteries of the masque reflect the monarch's silent state: the masque represents the king" (57). The mirroring in *Tethys Festival* elucidates the spectacle of the king in state as a spectacle that need not be masculine by definition, but is equally effective and plausible in feminine form.

43). Instead, they arrive from divine (female) sources, and they arrive through women. Ultimately, the masque's mirroring action makes a similar point in that the idealistic reflection of James's rule as blessed with "true zeale," "concord," "plenty" (419), and so on is also a reflection that transposes women onto the centre of the picture.

Although the masquing, dancing female body mirrors the gaze of the monarch and courtly audience, this mirroring does not involve any erasure or concealment of the performers' gender. Instead, a sense of privileged access to the divine through the feminine pervades *Twelve Goddesses* and *Tethys Festival*. Rather than focusing on what McManus sees as a tension between the physical transgressiveness of the female masquers' bodily appearance²²⁷ and their performative role of representing abstract ideals (15-16), a more radical possibility to consider is that Anna's masques insist on the role of the physical as a means to the spiritual.²²⁸ McManus's discussion of Jonson's decision to have

²²⁷ This physical transgressiveness is especially apparent in *Blackness*, where Anna's visibly pregnant, blackened, and partially exposed body commanded attention with a "flagrant eroticism" (McDermott 37).

²²⁸ Mary Floyd-Wilson asserts that the female masquers' physical appearance signifies *internal* virtue, in her compelling argument about *The Masque of Blackness's* complex engagement with the pressing political and cultural anxieties over James's desired union between Scotland and England. "Jonson portrays the Ethiopians' complexion not only in terms of the western aesthetics of 'great beauty's war,'" she explains, "but also as a temperament associated with the inner qualities of wisdom, civility, piety, constancy, and a contemplative nature" (125). Floyd-Wilson suggests that "the deferred transformation of the Ethiopians' skin – from black to white – is only one half of the masque's imagined exchange: Britannia promises external whiteness, but gains the internal qualities of a black complexion ... Britain not only receives the Ethiopians' hieroglyphs, it absorbs their humoral qualities into its land and water – the very humoral qualities that should remedy the northerner's spongy nature and dull wits" (125-6). (The essay explores the masque's fascinating "geohumoralism" that sees the Ethiopians' environmentally influenced humours as balancing the humours of the "barbaric" Northerners – the Scots and Picts – and so enhancing the union of England and Scotland). Floyd-Wilson further demonstrates a link between the physical mark of unchanging blackness and the spiritual purity to which Niger lays claim when he speaks

the female masquers in *Blackness* approach the audience holding hieroglyphs indicating “their very essences” is relevant here (McManus 13). Early modern thinkers saw the hieroglyph, McManus explains, as “eras[ing] the gap between sign and signifier and ... offer[ing] what Bath terms a ‘natural, Adamic language’” (14). Jonson rationalizes his choice of expressing the female masquers’ “mixed qualities” through hieroglyphs that appear on their fans (as contrasted with “the imprese”), as “well for strangeness as relishing of antiquity, and more applying to that original doctrine of sculpture which the Egyptians are said first to have brought from the Ethiopians” (*Blackness* 253-9). For McManus, “Jonson’s alliance of hieroglyphs and sculpture resonates within the dynamics of the physical confinement of the female and the ready availability of meaning within *Blackness*” (14). “In line with the neo-Platonic embodiment of the ideal within the physical,” she continues,

and with early modern theories of sculpture which saw the artefact as pre-existent within the sculptural medium, the use of this physicalised discourse was an attempt to define the essence of the female masquers. The use of hieroglyphs – of linguistic sculpture – was an attempt to constrain the female to a single, predetermined and readily available authorial meaning, and to limit further the generation of significance through an apparently clear and available representation of what was defined as the feminine essence. (14)

While McManus acknowledges that the actual female performance thwarts this authorial “attempt” at exact definition, that the masque indeed presented

of his fresh stream as able to mingle uncontaminated with the ocean’s salt water, just as the soul mingles with but is uncontaminated by the body. “The nature of that uncorrupted substance is alluded to,” Floyd-Wilson claims, “when Jonson calls the Ethiopian nymphs ‘Daughters of the subtle flood.’ ... ‘Subtle’ humors are those which have achieved a thin, rarefied state, and the subtle qualities of Ficinian/Aristotelian ... black bile are what produce genius in a person’s body” (126-7).

“qualities of grace and fertility and spiritual beauty” through “female corporeality,” she perceives a fundamental conflict between the ideals signalled by the hieroglyphs (as dominant ideology defined those ideals) and the “open display of the gendered body” (again, as dominant ideology would define it – sexual, threatening) (6, 15). A counter possibility is that the evocation, through the hieroglyph, of a perfect, direct language with the elimination of any gap between sign and signifier, or between physical form and abstract ideal, makes a point about the female body as simultaneously the physical form *and* abstract ideal. This implication demands that we look beyond the initial tension between physical and ideal to see how their union, in the hieroglyph of the female body, necessitates a redefinition of both the ideal term and its physical representation. For instance, in *Blackness*, the hieroglyphs Anna bears on her fan indicate the name “*Euphoris*” (meaning “abundance” [McDermott 205]) and the symbol of a “golden tree laden with fruit” (261-2). Where McManus conceives a “destabilising” incompatibility between the women’s bodies, as “markers of a dangerous and open sexuality” (15), and the connotations of spiritual fertility, generosity, and purity in this and other masquers’ symbols (the golden tree, “traditional for fertility,” for instance, also evokes the purity of the Garden of Eden, as McDermott points out [205]), we might also perceive an assertive reclamation and redefinition of the exposed female body as something beyond and more complex than the purely sexual – as something, in other words, deeply

connected to spiritual abundance and generosity as signalled by the hieroglyph and its function.

The notion that the physically present female masquers are themselves realizations of the ideal, that rather than illustrating or bearing meaning, they *constitute* the meaning, also comes into play in *Twelve Goddesses*. Preparing the audience for the goddesses' entrance, Iris describes how the goddesses

are pleased to appeare in the selfe-same Figures, wherein antiquity hath formerly cloathed them, and as they have bin cast in the imagination of piety, who hath given mortall shapes to the gifts and effects of an eternall power, for that those beautifull Characters of sense were easier to be read then their mysticall *Ideas*, dispersed in that wide, and incomprehensible volume of Nature.

And well have mortall men apparelled, all the *Graces*, all the *Blessings*, all *Vertues*, with that shape wherein themselves are much delighted, and which worke the best Motions, and best represent the beautie of heavenly Powers. (414)

Daniel is evidently paying a compliment, here, to Anna and her ladies with the remark that female figures would of course traditionally represent the graces, blessings, and virtues, since they are closest to the "beautie of heavenly Powers." At the same time, however, this passage betrays how the conventional feminizing of abstract virtues is caught up with a sense of male control: "men" have actively "apparelled" blessings, virtues, the graces, with shapes of women in order to procure their own visual delight and to render such "mystical *Ideas*" more available, manageable, and "easier to be read." This dynamic closely relates to the widespread tradition of envisioning the soul as a beautiful woman.²²⁹ In her

²²⁹ Osmond reminds us that "the word 'soul' itself is feminine in Greek, Latin and all romance languages, German, and even Arabic" (*Imagining* 47).

extensive study of historical imaginings of the soul, Osmond concludes that “the feminine soul comes to *men*. They painted the pictures and wrote the texts” (47).²³⁰ As with depicting abstract ideals and virtues as female figures, envisioning the soul as a woman provides a measure of control over – a means of grasping, of containing – the concept of the soul. The image of the soul as a woman rarely translates into positive or empowering notions of femininity and carries little mitigating force for the cultural assumption that real women were in general more bodily creatures in comparison with men, who were supposedly more rational. That men could express admiration for a woman’s strong and independent intellect by claiming she had a “manly soul” speaks to the detachment of the image of the soul-as-woman from attitudes toward real women, or in other words, to its status as little more than a dead metaphor, a convention worn out to the point of meaninglessness.²³¹

Female masquing performance could reinvigorate the image of the soul as a woman. In *Twelve Goddesses*, male control over what can “best represent the beautie of heavenly Powers” ends abruptly with the appearance of Anna and her

²³⁰ Osmond explores some of the historical and cultural roots of this tradition throughout chapter 2.

²³¹ Ben Jonson, “On Lucy, Countess of Bedford,” 13. Jonson’s compliment to Bedford, Anna’s favourite, contrasts her “softest virtue ... / Fit in that softer bosom to reside” with her “manly soul” that “should, with even powers, / The rock, the spindle, and the shears control” (11-15). Her manly soul thus controls fate as fate is represented by feminine objects of authority. For another example, see Davies’ *Orchestra*, which describes the galliard as:

A gallant daunce, that lively doth bewray
A spirit and a virtue Masculine,
Impatient that her house on earth should stay
(Since she her selfe is fierie and divine)
Oft doth she make her body upward flyne.

Here, though Davies assigns feminine pronouns to the soul, he characterizes the attributes and expressions of the soul as “masculine.”

ladies, as Daniel signals with his explanation that Iris must describe the goddesses before they enter because “who can looke upon such Powers and speake?” (415). In personating various goddesses who traditionally epitomize specific ideals and virtues, such as Pallas (“Wit and Courage”), or Vesta (“Zeale” and “Purity”), Anna and her ladies reclaim these virtues and powers from feminized abstractions to qualities that real women – and especially women – possess. As Hodgson-Wright observes, “although Anna and her ladies are playing parts, it is their very likeness to those parts which makes their representation successful” (44). Indeed, Iris relates how the goddesses have chosen to manifest themselves through the queen and her ladies because, as the “best-built temples of beauty and honour,” they provided the best fit. In *Tethys Festival*, the reappearance of the ladies as “themselves” immediately following their dance as Tethys and her nymphs underscores the sameness between the real women and the goddesses known for their individual virtues. The link Iris draws between beauty and honour fits into a consistent thematic connection between beauty and virtue, harmony, and order, in Anna’s masques. Hodgson-Wright suggests that “Anna and her ladies ... create a female presence upon the stage by claiming beauty as innately feminine, a quintessential quality not easily imitated by male actors” (46). She cites as one example the triumph of the queens over the hags in *Masque of Queens*; instead of reading the hags’ defeat as the defeat of a form of unruly and threatening femininity, Hodgson-Wright reads it as “female performers whose power is epitomised by inimitable beauty” banishing “male performers impersonating a

stereotype of female transgression” (47). This focus on beauty gets to a deeper point that with female performance – with real women’s bodies taking the place of imaginary female figures – not only is the traditional feminization of abstract virtues no longer a worn-out convention under male control, but women appear as having a unique affinity for or privileged access to these virtues.²³²

A song between dance sets in Jonson’s *Masque of Beauty* announces:

Had those that dwell in error foul,
 And hold that women have no soul,
 But seen these move, they would have then
 Said women were the souls of men.
 So they do move each heart and eye
 With the world’s soul, true harmony. (307-12)

Jonson describes how the “*excellent graces*” of the preceding dance cause the song-lyrics to erupt: “*the music appointed to celebrate [the women] showed it could be silent no longer, but by the first tenor admired them thus*” (304-5). This passage cites, with exuberance, the women’s dancing as incontrovertible evidence of their souls. But more than this, the provocative claim that witnesses of such a dance would conclude that “women were the souls of men” suggests recognition of the women’s agency, particularly their power to “move” or persuade people (the word “move” receives emphasis through repetition and metric stresses). Of course, another implication of acting as the “souls of men” by moving them

²³² These masques’ positive emphasis on beauty as synonymous with virtue counters the “association of woman with sin through her beauty” found in “most [Renaissance] texts” (Maclean, *Renaissance Notion of Woman* 2.7.4). The kind of positive valuation of female beauty in the masques is perhaps similar to a neoplatonic treatment of beauty. Maclean finds that “the most potent refutation” of the association of feminine beauty with sin occurs in “neoplatonist writing, where the beauty of the female body is said to reflect the beauty of the soul, making beauty ... a step on the ladder to divine love” (2.7.4, see also 2.11.4).

according to “the world’s soul,” or “true harmony,” and indeed by correcting the view that women are soulless, is that women perform the role of a conscience. In a sense, women masquers did subtly move their audience to address a lack of conscience in attitudes toward women and their place in political affairs with their consistent referencing of the soul (associated with governing power and intellect) *through* the female body and not in opposition to it. An alignment of women with the soul to the disparagement or erasure of the body is as problematic as the pervasive early modern association of women with the body. Tellingly, regarding the use of body-soul rhetoric as a tool to subordinate women, the one-sided emphasis on women’s souls, and on women as having a special aptitude for virtue, instead of emphasizing the intellect, has tended to restrain women to an impossible ideal of spiritual purity and selflessness which culminates, perhaps, in the Victorian “Angel in the House” figure that Virginia Woolf so brilliantly rejects.²³³ At a time when women could not yet speak from a formal stage, however, the masques that Queen Anna creatively influenced and participated in were not one-sided in their alignment of women with the soul. These entertainments frequently make a point about women enriching the kingdom by actively bringing a long list of gifts or virtues. The visual invocation of the soul through the female body collapses the soul-body hierarchy in a way that helps to prevent such contributions from being dismissed as either entirely bodily and so

²³³ For an example of the problematic, unrealistic alignment of women entirely with the spiritual or the abstract, see Lisa Hopkins’s reading of *The Lady’s Tragedy*’s female ghost in *The Female Hero* (84-5).

not intellectual, or as entirely spiritual or immaterial in the more negative sense of unsubstantial or inconsequential.

Conclusion

“That great and true *amphibium*”

Early modern understandings of the soul-body relationship, as I indicated at the beginning of this dissertation, were multifold and complex. I have persisted, nonetheless, in calling this relationship a “dichotomy” because I have contended that when soul and body were juxtaposed – when they were defined against each other and not in isolation – they were split along consistent gender lines.

Recognizing the extent to which the body was feminized against a rational soul that was masculinised and the role that this habitual gendering of soul and body played in naturalizing women’s social and political subordination to men is important in itself. My dissertation has worked to demonstrate that this recognition also enables us to perceive the extent to which dramatic moments that pushed against the dominant gendered construction of soul and body in ways that involved representations of women could subvert patriarchal stereotypes and expectations at their root.

And yet the selections of drama that I have explored are not primarily concerned with the soul-body relationship. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts that do explicitly address this relationship, such as devotional texts, meditations, prayers, sermons, philosophical and theological treatises, are certainly not lacking. My focus on drama, though, exposes how the predominant gendered version of the soul-body divide – and noticeable departures from it – underwrite representations of women far beyond direct written engagement with

the nature of this divide. Rosalie Osmond suggests that in drama “one sees best the dynamic implications of the body/soul dualism worked out in its various guises,” because “conflict, essential to dramatic development, has a metaphysical foundation on which to base its human manifestations” (*Mutual Accusation* xii, see also 163). Others, such as Lisa Hopkins, examine the representation of women’s bodies or women’s souls in various plays. My dissertation has sought to forward a new way of combining soul-body scholarship with theatre criticism. Instead of considering how conflict between characters might resonate with a deeper metaphysical conflict between soul and body, I have pointed to how the very structure of theatre engages the body-soul, material-immaterial divide. To concentrate entirely on script would seem particularly incomplete in a consideration of dramatic engagements with soul-body concepts; just as script shapes an audience’s perception of the physical (recall Quarlous’s flow of epithets for Ursula), the physical can influence our perception of the script (as when Gloriana’s grin casts a critical shadow on Vindice’s diatribes). In itself, this competing significance between script and material echoes and carries potential to comment on ideas of the soul-body divide. Instead of analysing depictions of women’s bodies or souls, my thesis works to support the claim that creative re-evaluations of the relationship between material and immaterial, spirit and body, could present women in subversive, potentially empowering ways. This tool for subverting patriarchal gender expectations is, paradoxically, available to dramatists and perceptible to audiences because the counterpart associations

between masculinity and the rational soul, and femininity and the body, were so culturally engrained.

In focusing mainly on three seventeenth-century plays and a small selection of masques, my project has sampled how theatrical probing into the soul-body dynamic can translate into more positive representations of women and challenge oppressive gender ideology. My intention has not been to claim a comprehensive overview or definitive explanation of this correlation, but to demonstrate how an investigation into the impact of soul-body concepts on representations of women can open up new critical readings of plays, readings attentive to a viable, but hitherto overlooked means of questioning the patriarchal subjection of women. Looking at tragedy, comedy, and courtly entertainment has allowed me to indicate that the relationship between depictions of women and soul-body concepts is not peculiar to a particular genre or playwright. I anticipate, rather, that the readings I have offered here suggest a new interpretive slant that is widely applicable to other early modern dramatic and non-dramatic texts.

Despite the obvious differences between the texts I selected for investigation, common themes began to emerge through my concentration on women and the soul-body, immaterial-material dynamic. Puppetry was an explicit focus in the first chapter with literal puppetry – the puppet-play in *Bartholomew Fair* and Vindice's hand manipulation of Gloriana's skull in *The Revenger's Tragedy* – signalling a deeper and explicitly masculine assumption of a puppet-master-like position in relation to women. Puppetry resurfaced in chapter two

with Maria's emphasis in *The Tamer Tamed* on maintaining her own will in order to avoid the kind of abuse that her predecessor, Kate, saw as designed to "make a puppet" of her. In my final chapter I looked at how Daniel's masques for Queen Anna reframed divine possession – a form of the puppet motif – to make it an empowering as opposed to an emptying experience for women. Besides puppetry, rhetoric also ties together these plays and masques. Chapter two's focus on Maria's strategic reversals of Petruccio's past taming technique foregrounded rhetoric as extending to the soul-body construct at the heart of Maria and Petruccio's conflict. In *Revenger's* rhetoric is an exercise in which Vindice can delight, but an exercise entirely at Gloriana's expense; Vindice's display of wit requires a prop and he uses his dead fiancée's skull for this purpose, setting off his intellect by debasing the material. Dance becomes a form of rhetoric in Anna's masques, rhetoric that, like Maria's, manipulates body-soul conventions. And while dance is obviously more at issue in the masques, dance also produced significant moments in *Revenger's* and in *Tamer*. Gloriana has a revenge of sorts through the dance of death, a silent, invisible dance, but one that Vindice's staged, murderous masque dance evokes, while Maria and her army express their autonomy through mirthful dance and song. Because puppetry, rhetoric, and dance are all activities that bridge the categories of spirit and body, they are not surprising points of intersection for an investigation into the treatment of the soul-body dynamic in these very different entertainments. These intersections are of course not exhaustive, but they begin to speak to the wide variety of cultural

experiences, beyond strictly religious ones, to which imaginings of the soul-body relationship are relevant.

Agreeing with Deborah Shuger that “for exploring [dominant] culture ... it seems better not to put too much weight on theological labelling but instead to view religious discourse as a language of analysis or ‘ideology’” (8), I have focused throughout this project on how commonly circulating ideas about soul and body emerge in representations of women, rather than on attempting, very far, to disentangle the sometimes overlapping, sometimes conflicting nuances of specific religious orientations. These nuances, however, offer a fruitful site for future research into the interconnection between conceptions of women and gendered understandings of the soul-body divide. Do positive views of women coincide with similar treatments of body-soul in texts with very different religious or political leanings? Or do different political and religious leanings necessitate divergent constructions of the soul-body relationship to make it compatible with more egalitarian views of women? And if religious ideas of soul and body could impact cultural views of women, could changing perspectives on and of women push back and exert pressure on these ideas? Does a fundamental correlation exist between shifting concepts of soul and body and shifting perceptions of women?

Further research might shed light on such inquiries while generating additional questions by extending the interrogation of soul-body ideas and representations of women to female-authored texts and to non-dramatic texts. If male-authored and female-authored texts reflect shared cultural assumptions, do

certain fundamental differences distinguish women's literary treatments of soul-body in relation to gender? Some of this work has already been done. Lynette McGrath, as I touched on in chapter two, has considered how women's writings respond to their culture's tendency to essentialize woman as body. She finds that women increasingly insist upon an "indissoluble connection" between mind and body toward the end of the seventeenth-century (74 n.44). In her study of women philosophers in the latter half of the seventeenth century, Jacqueline Broad, too, explores women's complex views of spirit and matter as integrated. In part these views responded to Cartesian dualism and in part they drew influence from the Cambridge School's suspicion about "any philosophy that places a radical divide between spirit and matter," both intellectual movements that came after the period this dissertation examines (Broad 10-12). But is this later insistence, especially from women, on the indissoluble connection between spirit and matter somehow continuous with earlier theatrical representations of women that troubled the hierarchy of soul over body?

One significant difference, perhaps, between my findings and the observations of McGrath and Broad is that on the Jacobean stage, smudging the lines between spirit and matter might indeed challenge patriarchal stereotypes about women, but it can also underpin the forms of oppression that women faced. This difference makes sense in light of Shuger's assessment that, "in the long run, the movement from premodern to modern thought describes a thickening of boundaries, but the period between 1559 and 1630 is not the long run. Rather,

these years exhibit conflicting and contradictory tendencies” (11). If boundaries were increasingly sharpening post-1630, and the solidifying line between spirit and matter perpetuated the alignment of femininity with the senses and of masculinity with “rigorous thought,” opposing strict dualism would certainly be advantageous for women. But the earlier plays I have looked at tell a different story. The confusion of the boundary between spirit and matter in *Revenger’s*, for instance, questions Vindice’s dismissive treatment of Gloriana’s skull as pure material for his use, but in *Tamer* Maria’s first move in resisting Petruccio’s tyranny is to force his recognition of her spirit as something separate from her body – something he cannot control through physical compulsion. The plays demonstrate that, even with the consistent gendering of spirit and matter in relation to each other, when employed as a tool to support the subordination of women, both a rigid line between soul and body (to privilege a masculinised soul as separate from and superior to a feminized body) and the collapse of this divide (to define and control women’s souls through bodily surveillance and coercion) could be effective.

Even articulations of the soul-body relationship that placed soul and body on equal grounds and emphasized their mutual benefit for each other, which would seem to lend themselves to parallel articulations of gender equality – given the weight that the soul-body construction has born in upholding gender hierarchy – can be cut off from such uses. Thomas Browne’s *Religio Medici*, published only a decade after the death of King James, furnishes an illustrative example. Browne

views humans as “that amphibious piece, between a corporeal and a spiritual essence; that middle form, that links those two together, ... that jumps not from extremes, but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures” (30). This view is exciting for its potential to collapse body into soul and for suggesting something about the complexity of their fusion, even, perhaps, how the “middle form” that a body and a soul, fused, occupy is preferable to the “extremes” of spirit and flesh. But significantly, Browne’s opinions concerning women are far less hopeful: “man is the whole world, and the breath of God” for Browne, and “woman the rib and crooked piece of man” (55). Browne goes on to wish that humans could “procreate like trees,” without the “trivial and vulgar” act of physical intercourse – the “foolishest act a wise man commits in all his life” (55). To assure us that he has nothing against women, “that sweet sex,” Browne explains that he is “naturally amorous of all that is beautiful,” and to prove his point, insists that he “can look a whole day with delight upon a handsome picture, though it be but of an horse” (55). Through his association of men with “God’s breath” and women with a crooked rib and a horse, along with his regret that men are compelled to engage in such a “foolish” physical act with women, Browne dismisses women as distinct creatures of flesh, even in the midst of articulating a vision of humans as “amphibious,” complex, in-between creatures of neither flesh nor spirit, but fully both at once.

Browne’s denial, here, of the radical implications that this formulation of the soul-body dynamic might hold for gender relations does not mean that such

implications were unavailable for appropriation. On the contrary, my dissertation works to show that even when not explicitly spelled out, invocations of the spirit-matter dynamic, whether verbal or visual, inevitably impacted the way women were represented, and could open a space for positive readings of women even in texts with misogynistic overtones like *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Browne's word "amphibious" describes human nature at a point in between spirit and matter – not entirely one or the other. The term is also appropriate, however, to describe the versatility of the body-soul construct as a patriarchal tool of gender oppression. Jacobean dramatists, nonetheless – whether with the significant number of female audience members in mind, or perhaps a particular acquaintance or patroness, or even quite apart from any conscious intention – represented women in ways that challenged gender hierarchy through creative and subversive re-imaginings of the soul-body construct that were equally "amphibious."

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