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Satire and Anxieties concerning Female Sexuality and Transexuality in Late Elizabethan and Early Jacobean England

Part 1

Lynsey Dawn Blandford

PhD in Medieval & Early Modern Studies

The University of Kent

2010

Abstract

The thesis employs Marston's *Certaine Satyres*, *The Scourge of Villanie*, and Everard Guilpin's *Skialetheia* to expose satiric portraits of late Elizabethan characters and vices which in turn reflect themes of gender and sexual perversions. These themes are traced throughout contemporary literary works to expose their literary tradition and the development of their treatment. The location and exploration of types in literary traditions and society reveals evidence of a greater overarching fear of the malleability of gender through sexuality and social change, a process of transexuality. The examination of attitudes and fears surrounding sexuality and the self preceding from an enquiry of Marston's and Guilpin's satires is completely original and diverges from the general consensus of literary criticism of the satires. The works analysed within the thesis are from a wide range of genres spanning the period from 1580 to 1630, including satire, epic, lyric, tragedy, comedy and pamphlets, with the additional support of an eclectic mix of cognate visual and cultural material. By exploring the literary representations and cultural treatment of figures of gender and sexual deviancy the study contributes a greater understanding of the anxieties concerning female sexuality and transexuality in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean England.

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Lynsey Blandford
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Abbreviations

BL	British Library
CS	*Certaine Satyres* (Marston)
CUL	Cambridge University Library
CUP	Cambridge University Press
Edn	Edition
Ed(s)	Editor(s)
ELN	*English Language Notes*
ELH	*English Literary History*
ELR	*English Literary Renaissance*
EL WIU	*Essays in Literature (Western Illinois University)*
Fol(s)	Folio(s)
GLQ	*A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*
Met	*Metamorphoses* (Ovid)
MLA	*Modern Language Association*
MLQ	*Modern Language Quarterly*
MLR	*Modern Language Review*
MP	*Modern Philology*
MS	Manuscript
OUP	Oxford University Press
PhQ	*Philological Quarterly*
PLL	*Papers on Language and Literature*
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
PQ	*Philosophical Quarterly*
Pub	Publishing
RES	*Review of English Studies*
Repr	Reprint
S	*Skialetheia* (Guilpin)
SEL	*Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*
Sig	Signature
STC	Short Title Catalogue
SV	*The Scourge of Villanie* (Marston)
Tran(s)	Translator(s)
Vol(s)	Volume(s)
WS	*Women's Studies*

Introduction

The thesis was first formed by a desire to read early modern literature with the aim of discovering how far gender and sexuality were perceived to be constructed or innate, affected by other external or internal factors. The original area of focus was the literary representation of and reaction to female sexuality; however, it soon became apparent that the early modern concept of masculinity was inescapably connected, and therefore a feminist-focused approach was unsustainable in a context in which the identity of men and women were part of the same system. Researching the subject of censorship of political and sexual literature at the close of the sixteenth century became too restrictive, and so for my doctorate I embraced the opportunity to create a new, wide-reaching study, which encompassed a range of previously neglected texts or those studied in isolation, that impinged upon our conception of early modern ideas of sexuality and gender identity. The thesis aims to provide a resource for future academics and students that allows the reader to delve into sections for detailed textual examination of specific works, or alternatively to be consumed as a broader study which formulates a comprehensive analysis of the beliefs and anxieties of gender, sexuality and identity as revealed by diverse texts.

From the late Elizabethan to the early Jacobean years there was the threat and fear of political instability, partially caused by the presence of an ageing Queen with no confirmed heir. Furthermore, literacy and the availability of texts had increased, providing a greater opportunity for discontent to be disseminated amongst the literate. The satire of the 1590s expresses disillusionment with urban modern society, and in a larger sense the Bishops' Ban with other acts of censorship signals a concern amongst those in authority that individuals, both authors and readers, were threatening the status quo. James I's accession exacerbated fears of inadequate leadership and anxieties over male effeminacy with his elaborate court style and male favourites. For these reasons the selected time span of the thesis, ranging approximately from 1580 to 1630, is of vital relevance, as it was a period rife with expressions of anxiety concerning transformation, rebellion and instability in terms of the greater political situation and the state of the individual. It was a time of

change, fear and insecurity, even if only imagined and this is reflected within the literature of the period. The works that preoccupy the thesis all reflect an awareness of the belief in personal transformation especially in terms of gender and status. The movement towards a recognition of individual rights and the possibility of self-fashioning marks these decades as crucial stages in the beginnings of the early modern period. Throughout the thesis other texts which technically emerge before or after the framework period are included due to their close relationship to the issues and to reflect an awareness of the influences and effects of the texts which dominate the study.

The purpose of the thesis is to explore anxiety within late Elizabethan and early Jacobean literature that expresses contemporary perceptions of gender and sexuality. Transexuality is a term coined by the study to refer to the distinct belief in a transmutation or metamorphosis of gender which is exposed by these literary voices as a real threat to society. The extent of fear concerning the potential change of an integral element of identity and its implications for the concept of the self dominate the argument. Furthermore, the focus of anxiety upon female sexuality and the particular threat women were envisaged as posing through their sexuality are of great importance to understanding the contemporary belief in transexuality. An exploration of female sexuality, in addition to the role man was imagined to play, within the scheme of threatening deviancy and transformation, will reveal what risks or effects were believed to undermine his masculinity.

To explore literary expressions of anxiety concerning sexuality and gender, firstly the texts banned by the Bishops in 1599, including the satires of the late sixteenth century, were examined. Censorship of subversive material was targeted in the research as a site wherein to discover evidence either of literary expressions of prohibited sexual issues or of the denouncing of lascivious writing. The satires by Marston and Guilpin had been specifically condemned in the order and consequently burned on a fire between 1 and 4 June of 1599. The wit, vivacity, humour in Guilpin's case, and at times vicious depression in Marston's work warranted closer inspection.

Marston's *Certaine Satyres*, *The Scourge of Villanie* and Guilpin's *Skialetheia* have been critically treated, due to their genre, as typical yet uninspiring examples of satiric bile. After familiarising myself with the critical accounts of the work which focused upon the

Ban, accusations of their limited value or their place in the satiric genre of the late 1590s, it became apparent that one particular facet of these texts had been neglected. Most significant, in terms of my own area of interest, was the expectation in the works of the interrelationship between the exterior appearance and the interior spiritual or moral quality of the satirists' targets. The persona's tried and tested method of identifying transgressors was informed by assessing their visual appearance. Other contemporary works such as Stubbes's *The Anatomy of Abuses* reflect the perceived value of image to project identity. Therefore such writers discussed issues of sexuality, gender and morality through a literary dissection via the means of visual identification. The satires of Marston and Guilpin are overlooked works which offer an alternative, if extreme, contemporary attitude towards female sexuality. Sexuality and gender transgression consume the satirists, whose very attention as the scourges of vice emphasises their subject matter's contentious identity. The themes of gender and sexuality are constantly brought to the fore of the satires and epigrams, and their most intriguing statement was the expression of a fear of transformation of these elements of identity.

The use of Marston's and Guilpin's satires as a route to examining anxieties of transexuality in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean literature is completely original. The project diverges from the general consensus of literary analysis of the satires which concerns their classical structure, their place within contemporary satirical writing and the question of their censorship. The satires of Marston and Guilpin were selected, rather than other contemporary examples such as Hall's *Virgidemiarum* or even Donne's later published satires, due to their particular subversive nature and the sexual or gender issues which they address with a characteristic harsh misanthropy. Their relative obscurity in modern critical attention increases the value of the research, opening a detailed analysis to other scholars. In particular Guilpin's *Skialetheia* is largely ignored by literary critics and if mentioned is often referred to in relation to Marston's satiric writing. In opposition to this trend of neglect, the thesis re-evaluates Guilpin's work and exposes its cultural relevance in terms of exploring issues of gender and sexuality, while also revealing the wit and vivacity of his epigrams and satires. A greater familiarity with both writers' satiric works reveals their individual development of the satirist, notably the perverse appetite for vice of Marston's persona and the humour combined with hypocritical sexual desire of Guilpin's persona. Their extreme satirical portrait of the sexual deviancies within society is more enlightening than an accurate socio-historical portrayal, as it exposes an emotional

and cultural response. The satirical targets arise from current fears and as satire reflect topical issues designed to attract the reader who can share in the satirist's humour and savour the attack.

The portrayal of a society crumbling under the strain of a national inversion of masculinity and the newly asserted sexual freedom of women was an alluring theme to pursue in other contemporary texts. These vicious satires expose satiric portraits of late Elizabethan characters and vices, which are representative of larger contemporary themes of gender and sexual perversions. The satirist expresses attitudes towards topical sexual issues, which throughout the study are traced in contemporary literary works, revealing previously obscured literary traditions and their development. By discovering the same anxieties concerning sexuality and gender in contemporary and later literature the integrity of founding the study upon the evidence of the satires is vindicated. The location of Marston's and Guilpin's satirical targets in literary traditions is explored throughout the study as evidence of a greater overarching fear of the malleability of gender through sexuality and social change.

The Renaissance boom in print and the increase in levels of literacy emancipated the written word to a larger section of the population. Manuscript readership still remained confined amongst coterie social groups, yet these texts offer a form of literature which is directly shaped by its readers. Due to the increase in readership and production, the thesis's discussion of contemporary beliefs through the close analysis of the written word is a justified method of investigation. Alternatively, Renaissance drama reached a greater audience than pamphlets or poetry as it was accessible to all who could afford to see a performance, not solely to the literate. Norman Holland stresses, '[o]n a day when all nine public theatres in Shakespeare's London were open, it was theoretically possible for 10 percent of the population to attend.'[1] Theatre is an important and influential part of the contemporary culture and so must also be included in a literary exploration of attitudes towards female sexuality and transexuality. The study in essence closely analyses texts drawn together by their shared response to certain sexual and gender anxieties. It is guided by the principle that a writer creates works which are the sum of his cultural experiences, and therefore exposes either deliberately or subconsciously the contentious preoccupations

[1] Norman N. Holland, *The Shakespearean Imagination: A Critical Introduction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), p. 4.

of the day. By examining the text, previously unrecognised streams of thought are exposed which share the same recognition of the ever-present threat of female sexuality through its ability to change society and order.

Themes drawn from the satires made connections with other poems, plays, or documents that I had previously encountered through my wide reading of early modern literature and interest in issues of sexuality and censorship. After exploring suggestions from peers and supervisors, other works proved resourceful areas to pursue. Secondary reading also exposed potential routes to investigate, such as neglected plays or pamphlets which widened the perspective of the thesis. Due to the constraints of the size of the thesis and the demands of argument I selected those texts which were most illuminating, compelling and offered the opportunity to consider questions neglected by other critics. Each chapter offers a debate founded upon a primary group of works, with supportive evidence from other examples of contemporary text or image. The works analysed within the thesis are from a wide range of genres, including satire, epic, lyric, tragedy, comedy and pamphlets, which are examined according to their representation of recurring figures and anxieties.

Reflecting the development of the research, the main texts discussed in the first chapter are the satires of Marston and Guilpin: *Pigmalion and Certaine Satyres*, *The Scourge of Villanie* and *Skialetheia.* These works provide a starting point to explore the contemporary use of an aesthetic code to identify a person's status and morality, and the ways in which this belief system was being tested. The puritanical vein of Stubbes's *The Anatomy of Abuses* illuminates the anxieties surrounding the misappropriation of visual symbols to alter and usurp position.

The second chapter centres around the pamphlets *Hic Mulier* and *Haec-Vir*, discovered through references in secondary reading and later consulted in the original print at the British Library. These pamphlets prove fundamental to the study as they deal directly with the peak of the 1620 controversy surrounding the masculine woman and effeminate man. An equally relevant work, particularly in the debate surrounding the sexuality of the masculine woman, is Middleton's and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl.* While researching the real figure of Moll, the autobiography of Mary Frith came to my attention and proved a useful source in consideration of the conditions of her acceptance in society.

The third chapter on effeminacy is a natural progression from the discussion of the masculine woman and developed from close analysis of the *Haec-Vir* pamphlet in which his image is dissected and ridiculed, corroborating the strong mockery in the satires. The literary response to effeminacy cannot be explored without reference to Sidney's *Arcadia* and Pyrocles' transformation. The concept of love and imitation as corruptive is closely linked to the debate between anti-theatricalists and playwrights concerning issues of effeminacy, homoeroticism, the contemporary stage and boy actor. Additional sources including emblems, sermons, and examples from Shakespearean drama were discovered through a trail of research and selected to enhance the argument.

The title of the fourth chapter, the impotent man, was inspired by Marston's impotent and sexually diseased soldiers, especially Tubrio. Following the development of literary depictions of impotency or sexual inadequacy, the research exposed the use of the Ovidian trope in Marlowe's translation of the *Elegies*, Campion's song, Nashe's *Choise of Valentines* and the later examples of Rochester and Behn. An examination of early Jacobean drama through the form of the cuckolds Camillo of Webster's *The White Devil* and Morose in Jonson's *Epicoene* offered a fresh interpretation that extended the definition of impotency. Research on the contemporary French treatment of impotency via Darmon's study and Montaigne's theory of imagination offered a final point of comparison with the proceedings of the English annulment between Frances Howard and the Earl of Essex.

The original idea of analysing the figure of the enchantress for the fifth chapter derived from Guilpin's comparison of contemporary fashionable women with Acrasia. To understand his reference the study explored the classic and contemporary literary enchantress figures of Circe in Chapman's translation of *The Odyssey*, Alcina of Harington's translation of *Orlando Furioso* and Acrasia of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. The occult threat of women translated through these fantasies revealed a connection to beliefs of witchcraft expressed in the texts *Newes from Scotland* and *Daemonologie*. Printed reports of 'real' witches or murderesses, notably those commenting on Margaret Ferne-seede and the Flowers women, are also connected to this overall concept of dangerous and sexualised women. Journalism dealing with sexually threatening women provides an enhanced understanding of the anxieties surrounding those perceived to be real enchantresses in society.

The final chapter, the empowered whore, is deliberately provocative from the outset to encourage contemplation of the extreme reactions she inspires within early modern texts. In contrast to those castigated as prostitutes in the satires, early Jacobean drama presents images of strong sexual women who would have been seen and heard on stage, a far more tangible experience for a wider cross-section of the population. Middleton's *Women Beware Women* and to a lesser extent Webster's *The White Devil* show a complexity in the characterisation of women who have transgressed sexually. To explain the theme of tolerance which seems to emerge in Middleton's play the study draws upon Archer's research on the role of rich patrons in the proliferation of brothels. The key texts analysed within the thesis form the foundations of the study and yet the images and incidental, political and cultural evidence act to enrich the argument.

On first impressions the structural order of the thesis is prescribed by five types which title each chapter. These types, the effeminate and impotent man, the enchantress, the masculine woman and whore, are all prominent figures within the satires and their labels are either attributed within the text or applied as a title which can encompass the spectrum of the discussion within the chapter. Eugene Waith in his work *Herculean Hero* employed the method of searching for a type, yet my study moves beyond this agenda.[2] The types serve as a useful preliminary organising method and tool to spark a larger debate, providing an ideal starting point for exploring the themes which influenced their creation and reception within a variety of texts. The system of types organised my research with a focus which could be widened once the most relevant and fruitful works had been identified, while in the final version they signpost a clear approach to the question of the thesis for the reader. The advantages of the types as rhetorical categories are balanced by their limitations as analytical tools. Furthermore, other factors such as genre, context and the influence of audience are equally significant when considering a work, and often provide insights which explain the similarities or differences in representation of the figures. One risk of the type system is the expectation of the argument that within this wide range of texts are the exact same types, yet it soon becomes apparent in the study that the contrasting interpretations of certain traits, trends or movements associated with these types dominate the analytical debate. The use of types to create order in research could

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[2] Eugene M. Waith, *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962).

also be seen to restrict the spontaneity or creativity of thought; however, this drawback was countered by the flexible understanding of the types adopted within the thesis.

Marston's and Guilpin's satiric creations inevitably exaggerate the ridiculous, scandalous or sinful and as the origins of the research project it seems a natural approach to structure the chapters according to these satiric types. The chapters are each headed by a type; however, these have not simply been invented and placed onto the texts. Each 'type' is part of a larger preoccupation with female and male sexuality and a fear of their interaction. The satires feature both women and men who are seen to transgress the 'accepted' boundaries of gender and status. Those women who transgress through a sexual freedom are defined as whores, mistresses or prostitutes, while those who dress as men are characterised as perverse imitators. The progress of the study, if it had been purely restricted to the analysis of texts according to Marston's or Guilpin's templates, would have been of limited critical value. Aware of this hazard it soon became apparent that the types could only serve as an introduction into the theme of the debate.

Each chapter explores the theme or anxiety which surrounds its type and as a whole the chapters are ordered not by an unconnected listing of types, but according to their relationship to each other. The masculine woman is merely an overall title referring to the perception of modern urban women who were rebelling against male authority. The women who wore masculine clothing were attacked in church, on stage and in pamphlets under the authority of the King. The first chapter's discussion of the satires and their use of the aesthetic code to fashion and judge individuals is developed by examining the women who utilised masculine symbols. The real and literary figure of the masculine woman is explored to reveal her dual representation as a threatening and inspiring emblem of female rebellion and transformation.

The effeminate man is intrinsically connected to the masculine woman through a shared passion for fashion and as he also assumes an inverted gender image. The title of the chapter conveys the contemporary portrait of a man who embodies a perverse masculinity; one that threatens to undermine national security, heterosexual or familial relationships and the integrity or authority of men. He is also perceived in plays and pamphlets as the masculine woman's opposite and therefore a study of his representation advances the exploration of transexuality, particularly as a man corrupted by female desire and culture.

The theme of effeminacy is extended to encompass contemporary attitudes towards the boy actor dressing as a woman and in relation the homoerotic associations of the ganimede and ingle.

One stage further on the path of male degradation, impotency, forms the subject of the next chapter. The impotent man is a label attached to those men in the satires, the Ovidian poetic tradition and early modern drama who are condemned as sexually impotent and ostracised as inferior 'others' to secure the ideal of virility. While researching attitudes towards overactive male libido, the issue of impotency as a serious disability inflicted by the rapacious female desire was revealed. Early seventeenth-century drama exposes the power and prosperity associated with male sexual virility. In *Epicoene*, Morose's confession of impotency heralds the loss of his status in society including his wealth and authority. Similarly the cuckold is perceived as a victim of the machinations of rivals to assert their own mastery and enjoy the pleasures of other men's women. The close treatment of cuckoldry and impotency within Jacobean drama warranted its consideration under the overall theme of male sexual inadequacy.

The cause of male sexual failure is frequently women demonised for their selfish desire and ill intent. The enchantress is the title of the fifth chapter and refers to the iconic female figure of the chivalric romance poems that embodies male sexual fantasies, and yet on the counter side achieves this goddess status through witchcraft and deception. Guilpin links this alluring mythical figure to contemporary women whom he imagines employing cosmetics to entrap admirers. Reincarnated as a modern artificial woman she embodies the concept of predatory female sexual desire; transforming and consuming man's essence while leaving him impotent of life both in terms of self-will and semen. The discussion of the effects of female sexual desire is progressed by examining her mythic representation as Circe, Alcina and Acrasia in popular contemporary works and translations. The association between the fantastical and the real is further explored through popular pamphlets which condemned real women of murder, potion-making and witchcraft, the pastimes of the enchantress.

The anxiety provoked by female sexuality is fully discussed in the final chapter through the literary figure of the 'empowered whore', a term reclaimed to emphasise her paradoxical representation of sexual freedom and social condemnation. The two interpretations of the

sexual woman as an emancipated and strong woman, for example in Nashe's *The Choise of Valentines*, or as a lascivious yet dangerous servant of men, such as the prostitute in Greene's *Disputation*, are considered. The exploration of female sexuality is developed and completed in terms of its malleability and effect upon men, through the portrayal of the whore, mistress, lusty widow and adulteress. Analysis of women in Jacobean drama exposes the representation of female sexual development as a sequence of stages activated by men. The expectation and husbandry of the process of maid to wife to widow epitomises the belief in transexuality especially when divergent and unorthodox paths are taken or forced, such as becoming a whore or mistress. Middleton's *Women Beware Women* depicts the concept of female sexuality as a series of transexual stages triggered by men through a complex portrayal of sexualised women. By considering historical research concerning attitudes to prostitution, the chapter examines reasons for Middleton's more sympathetic depiction of women who have strayed beyond virtuous sexual expression.

Each chapter is organised to advance the argument that there is evidence for anxieties expressed within diverse texts over the connection between male and female sexuality and the ability of the latter to affect or mutate. Within each chapter the analysis is far more comprehensive than a hunt to find references to the types, and instead explores the significance of other factors crucial to an understanding of individual texts such as the implications of the genre, the context or circumstance of the work's production and also the effects of audience, most apparent in the case of plays but also in terms of the target reader. All these factors affect our understanding of a work as they clarify the design intended by those who create or present. A satiric figure or a professed personal experience of impotency cannot be treated as the true witness of the writer, and yet it does have an integrity even if crafted to sell to a particular market or to court a prejudice of humour, as it embodies a contemporary belief concerning sexuality whether manifested personally in the writer or not.

The connections made between the expressions of anxiety concerning gender and sexual transgression amongst contemporary texts has been illuminating and rewarding. The thesis employs a variety of literary sources of different genres encompassing comic and tragic drama, poetry, satire, popular pamphlets, biography, songs and the interrogation of current literary criticism. Contemporary historical records including legislation and writings of social commentators act in a supportive role, drawing comparisons between events,

situating texts within their environment or furthering the argument of the chapter. Images ranging from emblems to paintings are incorporated to illustrate the influences and cultural beliefs of the period. Historical research by scholars enables connections to be made between the analysis of the works and their context. Despite the vast array of evidence the thesis is not interdisciplinary as it is fundamentally a literature study focusing upon discovering anxieties and attitudes concerning female sexuality and transexuality by close textual analysis. The other evidence or sources incorporated into the study are valuable yet they act in a supportive and comparative role by corroborating the analysis of the texts or highlighting related or contrasting issues which act to advance the analytic process of the thesis. It is true that the study utilises material from different disciplines; however, significantly the approach is consistently from that of a literary critic assimilating these sources to develop the analysis of a number of significant works and arrive at insightful conclusions. The thesis situates the literary texts according to their representation of the types and treatment of gender and sexuality, with the additional support of an eclectic mix of cognate visual and cultural material.

Originally the motivation behind the thesis was to discover similarities between apparently divergent texts, and yet when comparing and closely examining these works the differences of approach within their similar choice of subject matter became intriguing. The methodology is formed of a close textual analysis and a comparison between a range of texts in order to extract the essence of belief within the written word, whether a product of one writer, or a number of writers throughout the production cycle. Many recent critical works are hyper-historicist, placing the text insistently within its historical context. The study was focused upon comparing a diverse range of texts to discover anxieties and attitudes through careful textual examination; therefore, in this case detailed historicist research did not suit the requirements of the thesis in its written form. The objectives of the thesis are vast, even simply through the number of texts examined which demanded that a focus upon the written word remained a primary aim. One drawback of such a method is a reduction of detailed cultural or historical discussion, apparent for example in the limited consideration of the Protestant influence over the representation of Duessa in *The Faerie Queene*. Yet this omission was influenced by the argument, particularly the text's reflection of eroticised stripping and images of deformed genitalia similar to that conveyed in reports of witch inspections, rather than an analysis of the witch as a point of conflict between the Catholic and Protestant churches.

The text is embraced as the main source of evidence which has been shaped for the reader, primarily a contemporary, and so offers a direct expression of beliefs and prejudices that had a particular resonance for that time and the people living through and creating its culture. To a lesser extent images and factual records are utilised to extract a concept of the environment of the period. The sense of place and time within the thesis is derived from intimacy with the writer or the persona they chose to fashion through their work, which is a much more intriguing construction of the past in a study of sexuality and gender than a more historicist methodology. Exploring literary criticism has consumed much of the research time of the thesis, providing alternative insights into the interpretation of the text, and often evidence of the effect of the critic's own environment upon the significance they derive from a work of the past.

The thesis is a product of many years of research and has its own distinct relationship to a wide field of knowledge which spans the disciplines of literary studies, historical and cultural research. Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980) is commonly associated with the beginnings of New Historicism which reads literary and non-literary texts of the same historical period as being parallel in importance.[3] In contrast my study focuses upon literary texts and utilises other evidence of the same period in a supportive role to advance the argument. The movement's original connections made between, for example, a historical document and a theme of a text are inspiring, but from a conservative perspective can be too localised or specific to be applied confidently to a wider context due to a lack of other evidence. Within the thesis, unlike New Historicism's detachment from previous literary scholarship, I consider other academic interpretations which can prove useful by revealing alternative perspectives and by inspiring debate. The method of the thesis draws comparisons, explores critical debates, and arrives at conclusions which have greater implications for understanding a variety of texts in terms of their representations of gender and sexuality.

The thesis values historical and cultural evidence as a tool to contextualise and also spark new connections with a text. Significantly, unlike New Historicist work, these ideas are applied to the text under analysis as the primary and privileged source. My approach

[3] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

shares the New Historicist interest in linking literature to the events of its time; for example, the masculine woman chapter reveals an awareness of historical context in terms of the perceived crisis in women's dress in the early decades of the seventeenth century. These connections with historical events are introduced only to enhance the argument of the thesis, which is fundamentally a literary and cultural, rather than historical study. The investigation also thrives on a close textual analysis of literary and non-literary works, often neglected, to derive new interpretations. It must, however, be noted that within the thesis the main works considered are literary and these are compared and contrasted as products or expressions of the same moment or era. The New Historicist concern with anti-establishment reactions or deviance against Foucault's concept of an overbearing state has influenced my own preoccupation with exploring expressions of anxiety within the realms of gender and sexuality. Despite the similarities, the thesis does not subscribe to a fixed concept of society or a political agenda but seeks to explore the text and through this process to reveal expressions of attitudes and anxieties concerning gender and sexuality.

The thesis is influenced by a twenty-first century perspective especially through the influences of feminism and psychoanalysis. The feminist perspectives of Lillian Faderman's *Surpassing the Love of Men* and Elizabeth D. Harvey's *Ventriloquized Voices* were thought-provoking, while Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* interprets women within a patriarchal society as artificial links between men, which encouraged an awareness of politicised theories.[4] There is a tangible resistance to adopting a concrete theory which is restrictive and prescriptive. For example, the thesis is not driven by a feminist theory that woman's sexuality was purely a construct of masculine writing, and instead focuses upon exploring expressions of anxiety over gender, female sexuality and transexuality while discussing their implications. These theoretical influences are only introduced in response to the text. In contrast to the political commitment to Marxism or feminism of some Cultural Materialist critics, the movement introduced by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield in 1985, the thesis does not force an agenda upon a text. The nearest comparison is the use of types to organise the development of the argument, yet even within these apparently rigid

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[4] Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: The Women's Press, 1997); Elizabeth D. Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

definitions of the chapters, close textual analysis always dominates and shapes the development of the argument according to evidence.

Both New Historicism and Cultural Materialism have, however, produced work that is based on the same premise as the thesis, that there was an awareness and willingness to perform identity. Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* has been instrumental in the exploration of ideas of shaping the self, while A. Jones's and P. Stallybrass's collaborative work introduced the overall cultural significance of clothing and appearance within the early modern world, contributing to the development of my interest in the belief of the power of exterior appearance over sexual efficacy or identity.[5] More specifically in 'Subjectivity, Sexuality, and Transgression: The Jacobean Connection', Dollimore's interpretation of 'transgressive reinscription' or the subversive reinscription from within to explain the transvestite provided an insightful political observation which, with his analyses of *Hic Mulier* and *Haec-Vir* as a vehicle for a variety of defences, contributed to the debate concerning the masculine woman.[6]

The thesis shares an assumption with a number of critical works published during the last century which hold sexuality and gender as being of great importance. Works such as I. F. Moulton's *Before Pornography* have opened a pathway to discussing eroticism or sexual desire in a close textual way.[7] Moulton's treatment of effeminacy in early modern works was instructive by example as it illustrated how similar and at times sensitive themes in different texts can be explored productively. Moulton's bold examination of wasted seed and sexual failure in Marlowe's *Elegies* and Nashe's *The Choise of Valentines* reflect my interest in interpreting the sexual or erotic content, particularly of neglected works or those pigeon-holed as vulgar, to expose the value such texts can bring to our understanding of the early modern culture.

The body of criticism defined as 'Gender Studies' was also influential. The example of Karen Newman's work, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama*, incorporating and comparing a vast range of texts concerning women, provided the

[5] A. Jones and P. Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003).
[6] Jonathan Dollimore, 'Subjectivity, Sexuality, and Transgression: The Jacobean Connection', *Renaissance Drama and Cultural Change, Renaissance Drama*, 17, ed. by Mary Beth Rose (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1986), pp. 53–81.
[7] I. F. Moulton, *Before Pornography: Erotic Writing in Early Modern England* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).

template for a viable and successful method to compare works and discover intriguing differences.[8] Linda Woodbridge's *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind* is an indispensible introduction to the study of women within early modern literature, and her vast coverage of a range of sources was a useful example for my expansive study.[9] The influence of critics who have written upon the gendered image of Elizabeth I, including C. Levin, Constance Jordan, Leah Marcus, Susan Shapiro and Mihoko Suzuki, contribute an important strand to understanding contemporary gender construction.[10]

The satiric works of Marston and Guilpin provide the foundations of the concept of the thesis. Critics of these satires frequently focus upon their role within the Bishops' Ban of 1599, such as Cyndia Susan Clegg, or within the genre of classical satire.[11] Cliff Forshaw vocalises the familiar interpretation of Marston's satire as dark and difficult while Guilpin's persona is described as a mere imitator.[12] The thesis carves out a new route of literary criticism of the satires, examining the text with a renewed attention to detail to discover social comments, even though satiric, upon sexual and gender transgression.

Historical research provides a valuable source which supports or suggests further dimensions to the textual analysis of the thesis. J. Todd's and E. Spearing's *Counterfeit Ladies*, which includes the first published autobiography of Moll Cutpurse since the seventeenth century, offered an alternative perspective upon the public figure through a

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[8] Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[9] Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540–1620* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1984).

[10] C. Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994); Constance Jordan, 'Representing Political Androgyny: More on the Siena Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I', in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. by Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), pp. 157–176; Leah S. Marcus, 'Shakespeare's Comic Heroines, Elizabeth I and the Political Uses of Androgyny', in *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Literary and Historical perspectives*, ed. by Mary Beth Rose (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), pp. 135–153; Susan C. Shapiro, 'Feminists in Elizabethan England', *History Today*, 27:11 (November 1977), 703–711; Mihoko Suzuki, 'Elizabeth, Gender, and the Political Imaginary of Seventeenth-Century England', in *Debating Gender in Early Modern England, 1500–1700*, ed. by Cristina Malcolmson and Mihoko Suzuki (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 231–253.

[11] Cyndia Susan Clegg, *Press Censorship in Elizabethan England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997).

[12] Cliff Forshaw, '"Cease Cease to bawle, thou wasp-stung Satyrist:" Writers, Printers and the Bishops' Ban of 1599', *EnterText* 3.1 <http://arts.brunel.ac.uk/gate/entertext/3_1_pdfs/forshaw.pdf> [accessed 27 February 2010] (101–131).

history presented as truth.[13] Rudolf M. Dekker's and Lotte C. Van de Pol's *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* proved an important historical source, providing a sense of the reality behind the figures examined within the chapter.[14] Furthermore, David Lindley's *The Trial of Frances Howard*, an expansive study of the Essex and Howard annulment and the later Overbury murder trial, was an invaluable introduction to the historical and literary portrayal of the events which contributed to understanding issues of impotency and the implications of female desire.[15] Pierre Darmon's study, *Trial By Impotence: Virility and Marriage in Pre-Revolutionary France*, was influential as a source of comparison, revealing similarities in belief between the French and English authorities which in turn directed the enquiry towards considering the extreme differences in application of law between the countries.[16]

Another significant study was Ian W. Archer's *The Pursuit of Stability*, which held court connections responsible for the failure of the campaign against brothels, as it influenced and related to my theory that Middleton's complex women reflected a recent alteration in attitude towards female sexuality.[17] In a similar manner Barbara J. Todd's social historical article, 'The remarrying widow: a stereotype reconsidered', added a further dimension to the discussion of female sexuality especially when considering both Livia and Mother in *Women Beware Women*.[18] Details of historical studies act within the thesis to place findings of belief and anxieties expressed within literature into context which through conflict or corroboration clarify the literary voices.

The thesis focuses upon female sexuality and the idea that it has corruptive and transformative qualities which are referred to as transexuality. Numerous critics examine the representation of female sexuality as a corruptive force which contributed to the development of the main thread of debate running throughout the thesis. Despite their diverse and specialised perspectives they present correlations, such as Dympna Callaghan

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[13] *Counterfeit Ladies: The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse, The Case of Mary Carleton*, ed. by J. Todd and E. Spearing (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1994).
[14] Rudolf M. Dekker and Lotte C. van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1989).
[15] David Lindley, *The Trial of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).
[16] Pierre Darmon, *Trial By Impotence: Virility and Marriage in Pre-Revolutionary France*, trans. by Paul Keegan (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985).
[17] Ian W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002).
[18] Barbara J. Todd, 'The remarrying widow: a stereotype reconsidered', in *Women in English Society 1500–1800*, ed. by Mary Prior (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 54–92.

in *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy*, who claims convincingly that in seventeenth century drama women were exiled from sexual behaviour due to male fears of dispossession, which is also reflected in the treatment of female sexuality within a number of texts analysed in the thesis.[19]

In terms of the dominant theory of transexuality espoused in the thesis, scholars have identified fragments of this theme in their studies. Ina Habermann perceives the individual's boundaries as set from without in *Staging Slander and Gender*, and similarly Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford maintain that maid, wife, widow were approved states defined by their relation to man in *Women in Early Modern England*.[20] In turn J. E. Howard observes that women and bastards were treated as a source of disruption and evil in 'Renaissance Antitheatricality'.[21] These ideas of female sexuality as controlled states influenced the thesis's argument on the development of feminine sexuality and strongly correlated with my interpretation of the process of female transexuality in *Women Beware Women*.

Equally significant is the debate between Callaghan, Catherine MacGregor, Frances E. Dolan, Jennifer Heller, Murray Biggs and Mark Hutchings concerning *Women Beware Women's* Bianca and the question of her agency in her sexual encounter with the Duke.[22] The thesis develops the discussion by extending Bianca's analysis to encompass other

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[19] Dympna Callaghan, *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy: A study of King Lear, Othello, the Duchess of Malfi, and The White Devil* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989).

[20] Ina Habermann, *Staging Slander and Gender in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Pub., 2003); Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550–1720* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

[21] J. E. Howard, 'Renaissance Antitheatricality and the Politics of Gender and Rank in *Much Ado About Nothing*', in *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*, ed. by J. E. Howard and M. F. O'Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 163–187.

[22] Callaghan, *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy*; Catherine MacGregor, 'Undoing the body politic: Representing rape in *Women Beware Women*', *Theatre Research International*, 23:1 (Spring 1998) <http:go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%7CA20876880&v=2.1&u=uokent&it=r&p=LitRG&sw=w> [accessed 6 April 2010]; Frances E. Dolan, '"Gentlemen, I Have One More Thing to Say": Women on Scaffolds in England, 1563–1680', *MP*, 92:2 (November 1994), 157–178; Jennifer Heller, 'Space, Violence, and Bodies in Middleton and Cary', *SEL*, 45:2 (Spring 2005), 425–441; Murray Biggs, 'Does the Duke rape Bianca in Middleton's *Women Beware Women*?', *Notes and Queries*, 44:1 (March 1997) <http:/go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%7CA19417469&V=2.1&u=uokent&it=r&p=LitRG&sw=w> [accessed 6 April 2010]; Mark Hutchings, 'Middleton's *Women Beware Women*: rape, seduction — or power, simply?', *Notes and Queries*, 45:3 (Sept 1998) <http://go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%7CA21274075&v=2.1&u=uokent&it=r&p=LitRG&sw=w> [accessed 6 April 2010].

female characters whose sexual state is far from autonomous. Richard Levin's alternative article, 'If women should beware women, Bianca should beware mother', maintains that Bianca's speech post-rape displays torturous interior changes, which endorses the thesis's theory of transexuality.[23] Levin's argument that Mother is complicit in Bianca's rape encouraged the study to move beyond typology, which led to the interpretation of these female misdemeanours as a response to their restricted lives, an idea Levin touches upon when describing Livia as a superior spirit in an inferior world. The final chapter is set at odds against Lorna Hutson, MacGregor, Callaghan and Anne M. Haselkorn who state that the conclusion of *Women Beware Women* neutralises the threat of the heroine and asserts a moral ideology over individual desires.[24] Yet Callaghan and Heller recognise the sympathy we feel for the guilty women. In contrast the chapter concludes that the conventional and incongruous repentance only further emphasises the restrictive environment, subsequent rebellion and condemnation of these women.

A wider perspective was introduced by Susan J. Wiseman's article upon incest and the belief that sexual deviance could be reflected in monstrous births.[25] When applied to *Women Beware Women*, Isabella's sin was contextualised which triggered the exploration of the contemporary anatomical investigation of women as a further area of control over female sexuality. Maurizio Calbi, Harvey, Katherine Eisaman Maus, Callaghan, Jonathan Sawday, Newman and Valerie Traub all consider female anatomies and the move to claim the practice of childbirth as a further field of male-dominated medicine.[26] An awareness of

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[23] Richard Levin, 'If women should beware women, Bianca should beware mother', *SEL*, 37:2 (Spring 1997), 371–89 <http://go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%7CA19587301&v=2.1&u=uokent&it=r&p=LitRG&sw=w> [accessed 6 April 2010].

[24] Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter: Male Friendship and Fictions of Women in Sixteenth-Century England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997); MacGregor, 'Undoing the body politic'; Callaghan, *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy*; Anne M. Haselkorn, 'Sin and the Politics of Penitence: Three Jacobean Adultresses', in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. by Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), pp. 119–136.

[25] Susan J. Wiseman, '*'Tis Pity She's a Whore*: Representing the Incestuous Body', in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c. 1540–1660*, ed. by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), pp. 180–197.

[26] Maurizio Calbi, *Approximate Bodies: Gender and Power in Early Modern Drama and Anatomy* (London & New York: Routledge, 2005); Elizabeth D. Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices*; Katharine Eisaman Maus, 'A womb of his own: Male renaissance poets in the female body', in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Images*, ed. by James Grantham Turner (Cambridge: CUP, 1995), pp. 266–288; Callaghan, *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy*; Jonathan Sawday, 'The Fate of Marsyas: Dissecting the Renaissance Body', in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c. 1540–1660*, ed. by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), pp. 111–135; Karen Newman, *Fashioning*

the history of female anatomy encouraged the development of the argument that female sexuality was treated as a mysterious threat partly due to her internally concealed reproductive organs.

A number of critics through their analysis of specific texts provided an awareness of diverse academic thought and the debate surrounding each work, enabling the research to progress. The thesis's exploration of the masculine woman encompassed a breadth of critical research including Marjorie Garber's *Vested Interests*, which considered the relationship between clothing, identity and transvestism; yet her explanation of the Moll/Mary reflections in *The Roaring Girl* were too theoretically abstract.[27] Stephen Orgel's theories in *Impersonations* surrounding clothing and sex also provided useful points to explore and often triggered debate.[28] Sandra Clark, Lisa Jardine, Woodbridge, M. White and Howard each analysed *The Roaring Girl* in terms of her power or threat and offered a valuable introduction to the debate surrounding the play and Moll.[29] The chapter shares a similar concept of the masculine woman's threatening image with Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus who cite a male response of fear to women writers and masculine fashions motivated by the belief that women were rebelling against male dominion.[30]

The anti-theatricalist attitudes towards boy actors, homoeroticism, cross-dressing and the stage, combined with the critical studies by Howard, Orgel, Jardine, Garber, Maus, Dollimore, L. Levine and Alan Bray, were invaluable when considering the image of the

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Femininity and English Renaissance Drama; Valerie Traub, 'Gendering Mortality in Early Modern Anatomies', in *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging subjects*, ed. by Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan and Dympna Callaghan (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 44–92.

[27] Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests, Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London: Penguin Books, 1993).

[28] Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996).

[29] Sandra Clark, '*Hic Mulier, Haec Vir*, and the Controversy over Masculine Women', *Studies in Philology*, 82:2 (Spring 1985), 157–83; Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and drama in the age of Shakespeare* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1983); Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540–1620* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1984); M. White, *Middleton and Tourneur* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1992); Jean E. Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 39:4 (Winter 1988), 418–440.

[30] *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540–1640*, ed. by Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985).

excessive effeminate man.[31] The significance of *The Arcadia* to the effeminacy debate brought a wealth of criticism to explore. Orgel, Elizabeth Dipple, J. F. Danby, Mark Rose, Tom Macfaul, Wendy Olmsted, and Winfried Schleiner exposed the current critical debates concerning classical ideas of amity and the representation of male transvestism.[32] The thesis moves the debate towards an examination of the work's implications upon the concept of masculinity in the literature that followed and in terms of its view of female sexuality.

The critical debate concerning virility and cuckoldry within Jacobean drama as advanced by Callaghan, Calbi, Douglas Bruster and Coppélia Kahn was integral to understanding the taboo of impotency and its treatment in early modern society.[33] The thesis also shares Mark Breitenberg's exploration of the concept of masculinity, anxiety and performance in *Anxious Masculinity*, which influenced the discussion of impotency.[34]

While researching the tradition of the enchantress, A. Bartlett Giamatti's study *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic*, which focused upon the garden and its inhabitants, offered a unique perspective that differs from the chapter's concentration upon the female

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[31] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England'; Orgel, *Impersonations*; Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters*; Lisa Jardine, 'Boy actors, Female Roles, and Elizabethan Eroticism', in *Staging the Renaissance, Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, ed. by David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (New York & London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 57–67; Garber, *Vested Interests*; Katherine Eisaman Maus, 'Horns of Dilemma: Jealousy, Gender, and spectatorship in English Renaissance Drama', *ELH,* 54:3 (Fall 1987), 561–583; Jonathan Dollimore, 'Subjectivity, Sexuality, and Transgression'; L. Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-Theatricality and Effeminization 1579–1642* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994); Alan Bray, 'Homosexuality and Male friendship in Elizabethan England', in *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. by Jonathan Goldberg (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 40–61; Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England with a new Afterword* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

[32] Orgel, *Impersonations*; Elizabeth Dipple, 'Metamorphosis in Sidney's *Arcadias*', *PhQ*, 50 (1971), 47–62; J. F. Danby, *Poets on Fortune's Hill: Studies in Sidney, Shakespeare, Beaumont & Fletcher* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952); Mark Rose, 'Sidney's Womanish Man', in *RES*, New Series, 15:60 (1964), 353–363; Tom Macfaul, 'Friendship in Sidney's *Arcadias*', *SEL*, 49:1 (Winter 2009) <http://go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/ps/start.do?p=LitRG&u=uokent> [accessed 10 September 2009]; Wendy Olmsted, 'The Gentle Doctor: Renaissance/reformation friendship, rhetoric, and emotion in Sidney's *Old Arcadia*', *MP*, 103:2 (Winter, 2005) <http://go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/ps/start.do?p=LitRG&u=uokent> [accessed 10 September 2009]; Winfried Schleiner, 'Male Cross-Dressing and Transvestism in Renaissance Romances', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 19:4 (Winter 1988), 605–619.

[33] Callaghan, *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy*; Calbi, *Approximate Bodies*; Douglas Bruster, 'The Horn of Plenty: Cuckoldry and Capital in the Drama of the Age of Shakespeare', *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 30:2 (Spring 1990), 195–215; Coppélia Kahn, *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

[34] Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996).

alluring figure and her effect upon man and his masculinity.[35] The strong relationship between the idea of the enchantress and potion-making, evident in the satires, extended the scope of exploration within the chapter. K. Armstrong's analysis of drugs in seventeenth-century drama and their use by women in 'Possets, Pills and Poisons' was a significant introduction to the traditional association of witchcraft with the female sex and triggered the idea of exploring the connection of female sexuality with sorcery in contemporary writing.[36]

Belief in witchcraft undoubtedly influenced the literary representation of the enchantress and therefore its expression in popular literature cannot be ignored. Levine, Lawrence Normand, Christina Larner and Newman analysed the witch, and the demonic narratives in *Newes from Scotland* and *Daemonologie*, which provided a route to considering texts purporting to inform the public of the true threat of women who were sexually and ethically loyal to the devil.[37] Reports of bodily and genital disfigurement of women immediately related to G. Kern Paster's study, *The Body Embarrassed*, in which women appear as leaky vessels in city comedy.[38] The influence of numerous critics of different disciplines range from slight to instrumental, yet all provided a rich background of debate which engaged and helped to develop the ideas and arguments that form this thesis.

The thesis is an expansive study which is founded upon a desire to learn more about the attitudes and fears surrounding sexuality and the self in the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods, combined with a passion for its literature and for the connection it offers us to a past culture. By exploring the literary representations and cultural treatment of the types of gender and sexual deviancy the study offers a greater understanding of the anxieties concerning female sexuality and transexuality in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean England.

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[35] A. Bartlett Giamatti, *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969).

[36] K. Armstrong, 'Possets, Pills and Poisons: Physicking the Female Body in early Seventeenth Century Drama', *Cahiers Elisabethains*, 61 (2002), 43–56.

[37] L. Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing*; Lawrence Normand, 'Witches, King James, and *The Masque of Queens*', in *Representing Women in Renaissance England*, ed. by Claude J. Summers, and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 1997), pp. 107–120; Christina Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984); Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama*.

[38] G. Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1993).

Chapter One
The Satires

The Bishops' Ban and Satire

In June 1599 John Marston's two satiric volumes and Everard Guilpin's *Skialetheia* were condemned to the fire by the literary censors of the time, the Archbishop Whitgift and Bishop Bancroft. Critics have debated the possible reasons for such censorship and have arrived at two explanations, that the works were either too sexually indecent or politically defiant to remain in print. Clegg treats the Bishops' Ban of 1599 as one of a few sporadic attempts to prohibit works from print due to their lasciviousness. Michel Foucault imbues the ban with a moral Puritanism which imposed 'taboo, non-existence, and silence'.[1] In 1580 Lambard proposed an act to suppress lascivious works partially due to the great attention they stole from 'godly' texts. Gordon Williams claims that lewd work threatened 'to be an alternative religion, and anything so potentially destabilising must be rigorously contained'.[2] Donald Thomas adds that until 1695 the 'censors could concentrate on the subject-matter of a book or pamphlet without having to consider whether or not it was safe to communicate such subject-matter to a mass readership'.[3] The concern paid to regulating the cheaper and more accessible printed texts particularly in the Bishops' Ban indicates an attempt to restrict the reading subjects of the literate mass. The satires were targeted as populist works, while their censorship also increased their notoriety. Crispinella of Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* astutely notes, 'those books that are call'd in, are most in sale and request.'[4] Modern criticism of the satires is largely dominated by a concern with their censorship or takes the form of a treatment based upon their place within the genre of satire. Forshaw expresses the conventional interpretation of 'the dark and difficult Marston and his imitator Guilpin', while within this study the satires of the two writers are discussed as comparable yet equally valuable to the investigation.[5]

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[1] M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 3 vols, trans. by R. Hurley (Suffolk: The Chaucer Press, 1978), I, 5.
[2] Gordon Williams, *Shakespeare, Sex and the Print Revolution* (London: Athlone, 1996), p. 34.
[3] Donald Thomas, *A Long Time Burning* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 8.
[4] John Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, ed. by Peter Davison (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1968), III. 1. 40–42.
[5] C. Forshaw, '"Cease Cease to bawle, thou wasp-stung Satyrist:" Writers, Printers and the Bishops' Ban of 1599', *EnterText* 3.1 (2003) <http://arts.brunel.ac.uk/gate/entertext/3_1_pdfs/forshaw.pdf> [accessed 27 February 2010] 101–131 (p. 104).

The Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image and Certaine Satyres was entered in the Stationers' Register on 27 May 1598 and was followed on 8 September by John Marston's second satiric work *The Scourge of Villanie*. Both works adopt a similar satiric persona, the first under the initials W. K. and the latter under the pseudonym W. Kinsayder. R. C. Horne observes that Kinsayder 'pours scorn [...] upon every current school of ethical thought'.[6] Marston employs a larger cast of characters than many of his contemporaries to illustrate vice and to provide ample opportunity to ridicule and condemn with a harsh, masculine satiric style. The satirist aims not to save the sinner but rejects them in favour of 'True iudging eyes, quick sighted censurers'.[7] Everard Guilpin's *Skialetheia or A Shadowe of Truth, in Certaine Epigrams and Satyres* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 15 September 1598 and published anonymously. Guilpin's work attacks characters cast between reality and type, and shares an affinity with Marston's satire. Guilpin completed seventy epigrams and seven formal verse satires influenced by Martial and Juvenal. 'It was among the first to sound that peculiarly negative, melancholic, and malicious note that we associate with the late nineties', remarks D. Allen Carroll.[8]

John Marston at the Middle Temple and Everard Guilpin at Gray's Inn represented a new group of men who rejected the amorist and Petrarchan traditions. Satire provided an opportunity for young men of the Inns of Court and the Universities to make their own mark upon the literary scene. Volumes of epigrams and satires by writers such as Sir John Davies, John Weever and Joseph Hall dominated the final five years of the sixteenth century. Marston and Guilpin through satire projected their independence from the establishment. P. Finkelpearl emphasises the influence of the Revels of the Middle Temple upon the satires, which targeted and reflected the interests of the young student: 'a world of amoral women, cuckolds, aphrodisiacs, whores, and venereal disease, a world where the right true end of love is the maximum number of female conquests.'[9]

Marston and Guilpin create a satiric persona that fuses the surgeon-barber who viciously treats social maladies with the lascivious woodland satyr. L. McGrath describes the

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[6] R. C. Horne, 'Voices of Alienation: The Moral Significance of Marston's Satiric Strategy', *MLR*, 81(1986), 18–33 (p. 23).

[7] John Marston, *The Poems of John Marston*, ed. by A. Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1961), *In Lectores prorsus indignos*, 87.

[8] Everard Guilpin, *Skialetheia; or, A Shadowe of Truth, in Certaine Epigrams and Satyres*, ed. by D. Allen Carroll (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1974), p. 3.

[9] P. Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 56.

persona as 'the satyr, [...] the Senecan, Neo-Stoic philosopher, [...] the rational, classically orientated humanist, [...] the Christian complainant'.[10] The moral preaching of the complaint tradition with the classical examples of Horace, Juvenal, Martial and Persius influenced both Guilpin and Marston. Despite these influences, *Friscus* the 'academian' is attacked by Marston's persona for his presumption to act as critic, which emphasises the satirist's arrogant display of his superior intellect:

> *that's prety, prety good,*
> *That Epethite hath not that sprightly blood*
> *Which should enforce it speake, that's* Persius *vaine,*
> *That's* Iuvenals, *heere's* Horace *crabbed straine,*
> Though he nere read one line in *Iuvenall,*
> Or in his life his lazie eye let fall
> On duskie *Persius*. O indignitie
> To my respectlesse free-bred poesie. (*SV*, VI. 93–100)

Even with the contemporary appeal of the satires, the classical satirists were the forefathers of late Elizabethan satire. The Elizabethan satirist saw the similarity between his experience of contemporary social excess with those of Juvenal's Rome where he wrote, 'we are suffering | The evils of too-long peace. Luxury, deadlier | Than any armed invader, lies like an incubus | Upon us still.'[11] Juvenal's vast portrayal of lust through sixteen satires influenced Marston and Guilpin. Another significant example for the Elizabethan satirist was Horace's eighteen reflective satires, particularly his 'cheerful sexual catholicity' as identified by R. Lyne.[12] They undoubtedly encountered the works of Horace in Drant's translation of 1566, *A medicinable Morall, that is, the two Bookes of Horace his Satyres, Englyshed according to the prescription of saint Hierome*. Horace's stance on love, his contradictory persona and his vow to attack those who present 'a shining show' impacted upon Guilpin and Marston.[13] The harsh, obscure and vigorous nature of formal satire was established in Persius's six satires. Marston's philosophical passages concerning reason and animal desires derive partly from Persius, yet his tempestuous attacks contrast with Persius's controlled style. Guilpin and Marston desired to publicise their familiarity with the classical satirists. Such a professed knowledge of classical formal satire would help establish the authority of these writers. Through the

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[10] L. McGrath, 'John Marston's Mismanaged Irony: The Poetic Satires', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 18 (1976), 393–408 (p. 400).
[11] *The Sixteen Satires*, trans. by P. Green (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982), Satire VI. 269–293.
[12] R. O. A. M. Lyne, *The Latin Love Poets from Catullus to Horace* (Oxford: OUP, 1996), p. 190.
[13] Thomas Drant, *A medicinable Morall, that is, the two Bookes of Horace his Satyres, Englyshed according to the prescription of saint Hierome* (1566) in *Tudor Verse Satire*, ed. by K. W. Gransden (London: The Athlone Press, 1970), pp. 53–57 (p.56) Satire II. 1. 140.

impressive display of wit in a classical form the satirists were able to convert the verse satire to express the contemporary experience of vice and deviancy in society. The satirists identify and expose 'types' through visual appearance as if they were spied parading the streets.

The Dress Code and Sartorial Rebels

Visual imagery was everywhere in Elizabethan society, not only in the form of paintings, but also upon garments adorned with heraldry or personal mottoes. The image within Elizabethan art embodied a unique code of meanings through allegorical and emblematic themes accessible to the educated. In a comparable manner the satirist who recreated a distinct image through his writing also took advantage of the implicit language contained within a subject's appearance. The late Elizabethan satirist created an individual through his outer show, his actions and words with a clear view to exposing his true detestable character to the reader. Similarly T. Cooper observes that 'portraits were always the tool of those who commissioned them' and so were shaped to portray a certain image and statement.[14] English Protestantism, by Elizabeth's reign, had influenced a movement towards abstract art that did not mimic real life, the divine creation, which was associated with Catholic images of 'idolatry'. As a result many Renaissance portraits for English clients neglect perspective and consist of linear outlines and block colours. Portraits often show a subject constituted through investiture, as Jones and Stallybrass observe: '[t]he sitters are permeated by what they wear.'[15] Nicholas Hilliard's technical instructions in *A Treatise concerning the Arte of Limning* stress the importance of the representation of clothing and jewellery. Jones and Stallybrass describe the miniature as a 'detailed portrayal of the material constitution of the subject: a subject composed through textiles and jewels, fashioned by clothes'.[16] M. Howard claims that Elizabethan portraits represent the public role of the sitter, often expressing 'male activity and achievement but female subservience to the family'.[17] In contrast, the satirist identifies the private or social life of the subject through the emblematic description of their appearance. The individuals that

[14] T. Cooper, 'The Queen's Visual Presence', in *Elizabeth: The Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum*, ed. by Susan Doran (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003), 175–182 (p. 176).
[15] A. Jones and P. Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), p. 12.
[16] Jones and Stallybrass, p. 35.
[17] M. Howard, *The Tudor Image* (London: Tate Pub., 1995), p. 42.

frequent the satires of the period cannot be described as realistic; however, the purpose of the satire was to highlight the ills of society in a powerful and amusing manner. The satirists personified the common human sins such as usury, promiscuity and dishonesty, depicting characters whose behaviour to the smallest detail of their apparel embodied their particular failings.

Fashion within visual art conveyed a meaning and those who saw a portrait would have searched for such symbolism. The satires of Marston and Guilpin present numerous characters primarily through detailed descriptions of their attire. Much as the artist included key emblems, the satirist provided a description of fashions, which to a contemporary would convey a strong impression of the wearer. Late Elizabethan satire by its nature encounters the extravagances of garments as a deeply interwoven thread of the city culture. Unlike the popular obscure references to classical mythology, which Marston condemned, an attack on fashion guaranteed the comprehension of his contemporary readers and even those he was attacking. 'Fashion', meaning a 'mode of dress', is recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary as being used first in 1568. The subject of fashion was contemporary and additionally offered vivid imagery with an element of the ridiculous.

In the view of the satirist clothing is not only a symbol of pride, it is reflective of all the wearer's flaws. John Marston's satires direct our attention to the costumes which he deems as signs of immorality, and they reveal that some wearers are proud to exhibit such an appearance:

> Yet *Ruscus* swears, he'le cease to broke a sute:
> By peasant meanes striuing to get repute
> Mong puffie Spunges, when the Fleet's defrayd
> His reuell tier, and his Laundresse payd. (*SV*, IV. 53–6)

Ruscus, possibly a satiric portrayal of the writer Thomas Nashe, hires a 'sute' which is beyond his status and means. The practice of hiring impressive clothing was not unusual; Fetter Lane and Birchen Lane were notorious for pawnbrokers and dealers in second-hand or hired clothing. His deception is explained scornfully as an attempt to gain 'repute' from the 'puffie Spunges' of society. His 'reuell tier' indicates an undisciplined lifestyle and exposes the symbolic power of clothing within society and even literature. The condition of apparel provides an insight upon the life of the wearer and the reader is expected to

interpret its symbolism. Everard Guilpin's *Skialetheia* of 1598 is founded upon the belief in 'this sinne leapered age, | Where euery Player vice comes on the stage: | Maskt in a vertuous robe' (*S*, I. 5–7). It is more than coincidental that those who sin also enjoy luxurious living and clothes. Fashionable attire is intimately allied with a corrupt lifestyle, as part of the same social malady. Guilpin incorporates a debate concerning the relationship between Reason and its slave or shadow Opinion. The false beauty of fashion conceals the true moral decay: 'Silken Reuellers' are as 'Light minded as their parts, their aires, their fethers.' Careful attention to appearance reveals enslavement to 'Opinion,' the vacuous approval of others (*S*, VI. 107–8). Attire can also unlawfully subvert position and Marston's satirist equally savours dissecting a false appearance to disrobe vice: 'To fish for fooles, that stalke in goodly shape, | *What though in veluet cloake, yet still an Ape*' (*SV*, VI. 71–2). Foelix of *Skialetheia* is another master of disguise who has ambitions beyond his station: 'he is the deuill, | Brightly accoustred to bemist his euill' (*S*, I. 69–70). Even naked truth has been undermined by the machinations of figures such as Foelix who 'Hath so bereyde the world with his foule myre, | That naked truth may be suspect a lyer' (*S*, I. 61–2). The satirists' fear of the power of clothing to manipulate status was shared by those in power who felt threatened by pretenders.

The authorities legally enforced conformity to traditional gender and status-defined rules of dressing. Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I had all passed Acts of Apparel and Elizabeth I issued Sumptuary proclamations. It was ordered in 1580 that 'no person shall use or wear [...] excessive long cloaks [...] nor great and excessive ruffs [...] upon pain of her high indignation'.[18] Sustaining the order of hierarchy involved restricting the visual power of an individual, as evident in the threatened taxation of 1584 to be calculated from a wife's wealth of apparel. A decree issued in 1597 states the official favoured code of dress for subjects, for example prohibiting men below the degree of Earl from wearing '[c]loth of gold or silver tissued' and '[s]ilk of colour purple' unless they were Knights of the Garter. Even the adornment of horses with velvet or 'damasking with gold or silver' was restricted to those above the position of a Baron's son.[19] The Benchers of Gray's Inn also prohibited their members from wearing light colours during 1574. Imported luxury fabrics were restricted to the elite due to fears for the English economy. Philip Stubbes in

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[18] Sumptuary Proclamation in L. Picard, *Elizabeth's London: Everyday Life in Elizabethan London* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), p. 135.
[19] *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 3 vols, ed. Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969), III, The Later Tudors (1588–1603), pp. 174–181.

The Anatomie of Abuses warns, 'we impouerish our selues in buying their trifling Merchandizes, more pleasant than necessary, and inritch them, who laugh at vs in their sleeues.'[20] Thomas Dekker similarly interpreted the new English fashions as evidence of treachery due to their emphasis upon foreign luxury goods:

> An English-mans suit is like a traitors bodie that hath beene hanged, drawne, and quartered, and set up in seuerall places: the collar of his doublet and the belly in France; the wing and narrow sleeue in Italy; the shorte waist hangs over a Dutch botchers stall in Utrich; his huge slopes speakes Spanish; Polonia gives him his bootes; the block for his head alters faster than the feltmaker can fit him.[21]

The royal proclamations were not just limited to men; women were also to follow certain guidelines of appropriate dress according to their degree. The specific nature of the proclamation is particularly evident in the case of pearl, gold and silver lace headdresses; they were restricted to a Baron's eldest son's wife, a Lady of the Privy Chamber and a Maiden of Honour. The rules extended to all stations, despite a lack of detail as to how such decrees would be enforced: 'the parties offending [are] to be further punished as violaters [...] of her royal [...] commandment.' [22] Transgression of the sumptuary codes was common in London, which led to the Privy Council ordering the city to select two watchers per parish with tax roles to enforce the correct laws, and there was also surveillance for a time at the city gates.

The *Homily against Excess of Apparel* enforced the same sentiment of the proclamations throughout the kingdom's churches as a mandatory part of services after the coronation of Elizabeth I in 1558. It asserted that 'all may not look to wear like apparel, but every one, according to his degree, as God hath placed him'.[23] These attempts to control dress suggest that those within the more powerful echelons of society felt threatened by the usurpation of their image and in turn privileges. By the end of the sixteenth century luxury goods were more affordable to those below the stations of the nobility and gentry. The rich attire of the lowly people undermined the belief that social position was fixed and god-given. The official acts to control apparel reveal a deeper fear that status could be altered and created simply by appearance. Jones and Stallybrass emphasise the power of fashion:

[20] Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, ed. by M. J. Kidnie, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 245 (Tempe, Arizona: Renaissance English Text Society, 2002), 662–665.
[21] Thomas Dekker, *The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London* (1606) in *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. A. Grosart, 5 vols (London: privately printed, 1885), II, 59–60.
[22] Picard, p. 137.
[23] *Homily against Excess of Apparel*, in Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, ed. by M. J. Kidnie, 29.

'[c]lothing is a worn world: a world of social relations put upon the wearer's body', which also 'has the force of an iron yoke'.[24] Livery affirmed social hierarchy through a definition of individuals by their connections with retainers, and accordingly, apprentices and wives were dressed by their male superiors. Clothing was the main signifier of personal identity and status, ranging from the white gown worn to enact penance for a sin to clothing inherited through a will. Attire also helped create the monarch, guild freeman or servant. Jones and Stallybrass emphasise investiture as 'the means by which a person was given a form, a shape, a social function, a "depth"'.[25] Fashion was not purely exterior; it could alter social position and was believed to affect the inner essence of a person. Newman suggests that fashion became 'an important arena in which collapsing systems of difference, social and discursive, were reconstituted in new ways'.[26] Greenblatt's landmark work, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, charts the emergence of a new perception of personal fashioning in which early modern men had the 'power to shape their worlds, [...] and it implied that human character itself could be similarly fashioned, with an eye to audience and effect'.[27] Fashion offered a means to reconfigure all aspects of life to the individual's taste, a monumental threat to a society sustained by the fulfilment of the individual's natural and divinely prescribed role.

Other contemporary writers also employed the satirist's aesthetic code in which fashion was a signifier. Stubbes's *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), as referred to earlier, exposes the way fashion represented the position, gender and morality of the wearer. As a contemporary of Marston and Guilpin, the text shares the same awareness of social and gender change through new fashions and their new owners. In *The Anatomie of Abuses* rich clothing that contradicts rank is a perversion of natural law which 'rather deforme, then adorne vs: disguise vs, then become vs: making vs rather to resemble sauage beastes, and bruitish monsters, then continent, sober and chast Christians' (565–8). The text was printed in May 1583, revised and expanded in August and again in 1584 and 1595 to meet public demand. The work has elements of the sensationalist news pamphlet and takes the form of an anatomy aiming to expose truth by tearing down appearances. Stubbes's focus upon a moral decline is common within the English Complaint tradition and his religious

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[24] Jones and Stallybrass, pp. 3–4.
[25] Jones and Stallybrass, p. 2.
[26] Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 111.
[27] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 162.

fervour places him between Protestant and Puritanical. Stubbes provides an astonishing amount of detail concerning all elements of dress. It is ironic that the very vices which Stubbes despised, he also preserved in print. Kidnie identifies the same paradox within the *Abuses* that 'provides the language through which change can be conceptualised'.[28]

Stubbes's text utilises classical, patristic and biblical testimony to prove the immorality of English excess. The character Philoponus condemns the luxurious clothing of individuals, the 'millions of sutes of apparell lying rotting by them, when as the poore members of Iesus Christ dye at their doores for want of cloathing' (1802–5). His moral judgement is topical as clothing starch required grain during manufacture and was a significant part of the economy during the 1580s. Cecil even commented on the immorality of applying grain to fashion rather than to feed the starving. The royal patent and monopoly of 1588 was revoked and starch making was banned in the 1590s due to famine and a public outcry in October 1595. Stubbes, with a puritanical zeal, attacks pride in appearance by emphasising the Christian concept of clothing as a concealment of sensuality and a result of the shame felt by man after his fall from grace.

In the *Abuses* English apparel carries a universal meaning which is fashioned by the wearer. As Garber suggests, 'a person's social station, social role, gender and other indicators of identity in the world could be read, without ambiguity or uncertainty.'[29] Stubbes cites the moral dangers of fashion: 'this sinne of the excesse of Apparel, remaineth as an example of euill before our eyes, & is a prouocation to sin, as experience dayly prooueth' (551–4). The bellied doublet, for example, reveals how the wearer 'is inclined, as namely, to gluttony, gourmandice, riote, drunkennesse, and excesse' (1640–1). Stubbes is horrified by the common practice of wearing clothes 'more gorgeous, sumptuous, and precious then our state, calling, or condition of life requireth, whereby we are puffed vp into Pride, and induced to think of our selues, more then we ought, being but vile earth and miserable sinners' (536–41). He reveals the fear which motivated the use of sumptuary laws. Elizabethan society was based upon the reassurance of fixed social identities signified by image. Disorder is threatened by the encouragement of freedom of choice in apparel: '[s]o that it is very hard to knowe, who is noble, who is worshipfull, who is a Gentleman, who is not [...]. And this I accompt a great confusion, and a generall disorder

[28] *The Anatomie of Abuses*, ed. by Kidnie, p. 22.
[29] M. Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 26.

in a Christian common wealth' (715–26). Stubbes attempts to curtail social deviation by claiming that clothes, which in appearance exceed the wearer's social identity, in fact reveal an excess of pride, deception and immorality.

The worst scenario for Stubbes is the social ascension of the 'base by birth, meane by estate, and seruile by calling' through usurpation of their superiors' clothing (723–4). Stubbes interprets displays of national prosperity as symbols of social rebellion. He asks, '[w]as there euer seene lesse obedience in Youth of all sortes, both men-kinde and women-kind towardes their superiours, Parents, Masters and gouernors?' (147–9). Stubbes develops the bond between clothes and chaos with a puritanical twist. He attributes the flamboyant styles of ruff and their supporting contraptions to Satan: 'the Deuill not onely inuenteth mischiefe, but also ordayneth instrumentes and meanes to continue the same' (1510–12). The style addicts who strive to acquire the latest fashions are driven to dangerous extremes: 'they will sell or at the least morgage their lands, on Suters hill, Stangate hole, and Salisburie plaine, with losse of their liues at Tyborn in a rope' (1527–30). The reference to notorious places frequented by highwaymen coupled with a hanging, draws attention to an assumed correlation between fashion and crime.

Stubbes proceeds to identify the threat of luxurious clothing to the gender boundary. The English are described by Spudeus as 'a nice, and womannish kind of people, who thus pamper their bodies in such daintie attire' (1573–5). The popular holland, lawn or cambric embroidered shirts 'transnatureth' men, and Philoponus warns that luxurious garments and fabrics are the corrupters of men, inscribing unnatural weakness and effeminacy (1577). Men who dress in delicate and sumptuous clothes assume the appearance and characteristics of women. Effeminacy is described by Stubbes as 'a pusillanimity and effeminat condition, as we may rather seeme nice dames, and wayrish girles then puissant, valorous and hardy men, as our forefathers haue bene' (1615–18). Stubbes also associates music and 'filthy dauncing' with effeminacy, directly connecting heterosexual lust with the emasculation of men (6600). Kidnie believes that effeminacy is 'defined in the *Abuses* not by homosexual desire but by a more general proclivity to material and sexual indulgence; virility, in contrast, resides in a stoic renunciation of luxury, beauty, and passion'.[30] A slavish adherence to fashion and all things female reduces a man into a woman.

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[30] *The Anatomie of Abuses*, ed. by Kidnie, p. 31.

In contrast the new styles for women are interpreted as signs of rebellious empowerment by Stubbes. His second edition of the *Abuses*, dated August 1583, included two new chapters entitled 'The dayly exercises of the Women of England' and 'Gardens in Englande', which Kidnie interprets as 'an attack on fashionably dressed women who wilfully assert their independence from male control'.[31] These women, unlike the effeminate man, actually assume an unlawful masculine authority. They argue with neighbours and family, are socially active and take part in illicit behaviour, threatening the patriarchal authority which Stubbes intends to defend. The chapter entitled 'Doublets for Women in England' focuses upon those who break from social convention and wear masculine attire. Philoponus condemns the cross-dressing London woman by adapting Gosson's attack upon a transvestite boy actor in *Playes Confuted in Fiue Actions* (1582). He asserts, '[o]ur apparell was giuen as a signe distinctiue, to discerne betwixt sexe and sexe, and therfore one to weare the apparell of another sexe, is to participate with the same, and to adulterate the veritie of his owne kinde' (2424–8). The symbolic independence from masculine husbandry of these women is most alarming. Philoponus interprets masculine dress as a female attempt to become a man:

> if they could as wel change their sexe, and put on the kind of man, as they can weare apparell assigned only to man, I thinke they would as verily become men indeed, as now they degenerate from godly sober women, in wearing this wanton leud kind of attire, proper only to man. (2413–18)

Jardine suggests that the doublet was 'morally indecent because it announced absence of difference between the sexes in a language only too readily understood by a contemporary'.[32] These 'immoral' women by inverting gender-specific clothing blurred the division between masculine and feminine and threatened to pervert the patriarchal order. Women through fashion have degenerated into 'Hermaphroditi, that is Monsters of both kindes, halfe women, half men' (2430–1). Not only are the women who dress in male clothes assuming masculine authority, they are also reflecting their degeneracy through the perversion of their own sex. The *Abuses* exhibits anxiety over the ability to mould and re-fashion one's social position through external appearance and Stubbes expresses a similar belief in terms of gender. If a man dresses and consumes the fashions associated with

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[31] *The Anatomie of Abuses*, ed. by Kidnie, p. 31.

[32] L. Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983), p. 155.

women he degenerates into effeminacy, an affectation associated with the sensibilities of the inferior sex. Alternately if a woman dons male clothing, she risks becoming a hermaphrodite, not a man but a monster. Jones and Stallybrass interpret Stubbes's belief: '[c]lothes give a nature to what previously had no nature; they take an existing nature and transnature it, turning the virtuous into the vicious, the strong into the weak, the male into the female, the godly into the satanic.'[33] The assumption that gender and status are not static but changeable explains the emphasis the *Abuses* placed upon the importance of apparel reflecting true identity.

A recurring criticism of women in the *Abuses* concerns the artificiality of cosmetics and clothing. After a very detailed survey of the fabrics, trimmings, pleats and styles, a final observation is offered:

> So that when they haue all these goodlie robes vpon them, women seem to be the smallest part of themselues, not naturall women, but artificiall women, not women of flesh and bloud, but rather Puppits or Mawmettes consisting of ragges and clowtes compact togither. (2484–9)

Fashionable women are attacked as fools for employing cosmetics. Stubbes asks, '[d]oe they suppose that they can make themselues fairer, then God that made vs all?' (2025–6). He enlightens the reader with the satanic truth of cosmetics: 'what are they els but the deuils inuentions, to intangle poore soules in the nets of perdition' (2144–6). Spudeus is the mouthpiece for the open association of the devil and female fashion. He exclaims, 'Proteus that monster, could neuer change himself into so many forms & shapes, as these women do, belike they haue made an obligation with hell, and are at a league with the deuill' (2399–2402). At one stage in the discussion women who wear the velvet visor are actually described as devils, as any man that stumbles upon them 'would thinke he met a monster or a Deuil, for face he can shew none, but two broad holes against their eyes, with glasses in them' (2706–8).

Cosmetics become entwined with the imagery of potions and witchcraft: 'they are made of many mixtures, & sundry simples, both farre fetched and deare bought, cunningly mingled together, and artificially tempered with many goodly condiments and holsome confections' (2065–8). Women are depicted as witches using human and animal hair to decorate their heads, and most terrifying of all, 'if any children haue faire haire, they wil intice them into

[33] Jones and Stallybrass, p. 4.

a secrete place, and for a pennie or two they wil cut off their haire' (2192–5). Cosmetics and female beauty are a physical reminder of women's sexual control over men. As a result the power of female beauty, commonly enhanced with ointments, is undermined as a façade by accusations of witchcraft, decay and lust. The negative construction of beauty relieves man of his responsibility for his own sexual desires.

The Anatomie of Abuses represents the stylish woman as the epitome of base female sensuality, the whore. Stubbes points an accusatory finger at the over-indulgent parent:

> This ouer great lenity, and remisse liberty of theirs in the education of youth, [...] may rather be counted an extreame cruelty, then a fatherly loue or pittie of them towards their children: For what maketh them so soone Whoores, Strumpets, Harlots and Baudes, as that cockering of them doeth? (2526–33)

The neglect of moderation and true guidance creates the depraved women who wear posies of flowers 'in their breasts [...] to allure their amorous Paramours to catch at them, and to smell at their breastes, whereby I doubt not but they get many a slabbering kisse, and peraduenture more friendship besides, they know what I meane' (2611–16). Stubbes recites a vast list of the damaging effects of promiscuity to discourage women who value their appearance from entering such a life, and to deter men from socialising with disease-ridden 'whores' (3410–21).

Gosson's *The Schoole of Abuse* (1579) shares Stubbes's attitude towards modern women.[34] Gosson in his preface adopts the surgeon facade comparable to the persona of the late Elizabethan satirist: 'I haue some experience in these maladyes, which I thrust out with my knife, and so ridde my handes of the cure, for it passeth my cuning too heale them priuily.' At the plays Gosson describes women as vain creatures whose modern clothes construct and alter. He advises, '[y]ou must not cut your bodyes to your garmentes, but make your gownes fit to the proportion of your bodyes' (Sig. F3). Fashion, the stage and 'lightnesse' are interlinked within *The Schoole of Abuse*. Gosson directly warns women that through exhibition and interaction at plays, 'you haue already made your selues assaultable, & yelded your Cities to be sacked' (Sig. F2^{v}). According to his work a fashionable woman in the public space of the playhouse advertises her salacious appetite and promiscuity, so instead she must 'keepe home, & shun all occasion of ill speech' (Sig. F4). Stubbes and

[34] *The Schoole of Abuse by Stephen Gosson and A Reply to Gosson's Schoole of Abuse by Thomas Lodge*, ed. by A. Freeman (New York and London: Garland Pub., 1973).

Gosson illustrate the power of fashion and appearance to define an individual. Stubbes in particular dedicated much of his anatomy to a condemnation of attire and an examination of its implications for social order and gender boundaries. The social threat of usurped clothing, as an act of rebellion against the bastions of tradition, is of paramount importance to the work. Gender is also revealed as a malleable entity that these same rebels are keen to alter through appearances. The *Abuses* and *The Schoole* share the same concerns and method of visual interpretation employed by Marston and Guilpin in their satirical works. Fashion's perversion of order through effeminacy, impotency, temptation, lasciviousness and artificial deception are potent elements within the satires. Stubbes and Gosson, to a lesser extent, identify the anxiety concerning female sexuality and transexuality, which the satires of Marston and Guilpin explore fully. It is the treatment of areas of gender and sexual transgression that inform the investigation of the thesis.

The Satirists and their Subjects

Marston and Guilpin do not portray accurate depictions of people of the past, yet their satires were designed to draw on the contemporary reader's familiarity with the real-life references, imagery and counterparts of the satires. These works offer us contemporary attitudes and perceptions of social spectacles and change. By examining the anxieties concerning female sexuality and transexuality we are discovering the thoughts and fears of people at that time, not a snapshot of 'true' past reality or a generalisation of national opinion. The investigation does not treat the satires as accurate portrayals, but examines the expression of anxiety through satiric attacks on vices and deviants, thus presenting a new subversive perspective to explore.

Guilpin and Marston throughout their satires treat the sexually illicit with an obsessive compulsion. Alvin B. Kernan notes how the satires of the 1590s frequently focus upon 'the more sensational varieties of lust, zoophilia, incest and homosexuality'.[35] Guilpin's persona, before he enters the world of vice, illustrates its dual attraction and repulsion: 'Tempt me not forth this Eden of content | To tast of that which I shall soon repent' (V. 3–

[35] Alvin B. Kernan, *The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 102.

4). William Keach considers the satire as 'parasitic on the writing it condemns'.[36] Newman also observes that those who attacked the fashions employed 'language as rhetorically excessive as the very fashions and spending they condemn'.[37] Both Guilpin and Marston enjoy chastising and dedicating their work to exposing lust and depravity. Horne emphasises that the 'attacks are couched almost exclusively in terms of sexual lust, particularly of course in its connexion with moral hypocrisy'.[38] Many critics have attributed the sexual obsession personally to Marston, which disregards the constructed persona and his devices, shock strategies and shifts of fundamental views. A. Axelrad claims that an attack on lust in *The Scourge of Villanie* reflects Marston's altered sexual experience; however, the satires within his first volume also contain disgust for the salacious.[39] A. Davenport alludes to a 'secret disgust for readers, and for amorous man and for sex itself'.[40] Yet such disgust is not hidden but freely exhibited, and the claim that a writer would use his first public works to pour out his personal sexual demons seems unlikely. As the pseudonym suggests, like the 'kinsing' castration of an unruly dog, and Guilpin's anonymity implies, the satirist persona was created to viciously attack and shock readers, with a dash of hypocrisy.

There is no genuine, sustained attempt to save the vice-ridden within the satires. Marston equally despises gallants as he does whores. He dissects the sexual vices of men with fervour, including amorist devotion, homosexuality, effeminacy, bestiality and prostitution. Guilpin's satirist in reverse displays a disrespectful companionship with his male subjects of ridicule. He treats their sins of visiting the prostitute, sexual jealousy and general licentiousness as an opportunity to ridicule rather than scold. *Skialetheia* assaults the effeminate and the homosexual with the same vindictive style that he uses to examine the painted whore. The masculine woman, the effeminate and impotent man, the enchantress and the empowered whore are all characters which we encounter through Guilpin's and Marston's satiric tour of a city on the cusp of change, London. These satiric targets provide a comprehensive definition of the satirist's perception of current sexual and gender transgression.

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[36] William Keach, *Elizabethan Erotic Narratives: Irony and Pathos in the Ovidian Poetry of Shakespeare, Marlowe and their contemporaries* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1977), p. 130.
[37] Newman, p. 111.
[38] R. C. Horne, 'Voices of Alienation: The Moral Significance of Marston's Satiric Strategy', *MLA*, 81(1986), 18–33 (p. 25).
[39] A. Axelrad, *Un Malcontent élizabéthain: John Marston, 1576–1634* (Paris: Didier, 1955), p. 55.
[40] *The Poems of John Marston*, ed. by A. Davenport, p. 11.

The masculine woman was a social phenomenon appearing in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and featured in contemporary literature. Marston within *Certaine Satyres* expresses an anxiety concerning the corruption of the feminine gender. Women who sport garments traditionally worn by men within his satires are shown to usurp a deviant and assertive masculinity. The satirist portrays a world of fashion in which the traditional images of masculinity and femininity are gradually being eroded. While exposing the cases of gender subversion, the satirist sarcastically commends the gallant's exhibition of his masculine virility through a codpiece:

> Ha ha, Nay then I'le neuer raile at those
> That weare a codpis, thereby to disclose
> What sexe they are, since strumpets breeches vse,
> And all mens eyes saue *Linceus* can abuse.
> Nay steed of shadow, lay the substance out,
> Or els faire *Briscus* I shall stand in doubt
> What sex thou art, since such Hermaphrodites
> Such *Protean* shadowes so delude our sights. (*CS*, II. 119–26)

Linceus the effeminate gallant is the only man who is not offended by the sight of a woman in breeches, yet his approval condemns the female deviants even further. These women are worse than the effeminate man as they are unnatural hermaphrodites. The shape-shifting '*Protean* shadowes' are subhuman creatures due to their ambiguous gender. In appearance the masculine woman is indistinguishable from the fashionable gallant Briscus, emphasising connotations of dissimulation, lust and bisexuality. Marston's term 'hermaphrodite' draws upon the classical myth of Hermaphroditos and a sense of gender monstrosity. Contemporaries were familiar with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the work of Francis Beaumont who retold the tale in 1602. The hermaphrodites of the satires threaten to alter the balance of power between the sexes. Visually they assert a masculine image of aggression and dominance, which symbolises a direct challenge to patriarchal authority.

The satires depict ideals of femininity and masculinity under attack from evil deviants. As espoused in the *Abuses*, women deceive by donning masculine attire and are branded hermaphrodites. The prostitute Lais is a culprit of gender fashioning by dressing in male clothing to attract gallants. Her transgressed gender appears monstrous and deceptive. Lais is not only an ambiguous hermaphrodite, but she also has the ability to mutate and confuse the sight as a '*Protean*' shadow (*CS*, II. 126). Both Marston's and Guilpin's satires allude to a fear of female sexual independence, which is revealed by their

suspicious and condemnatory approaches to women, often referring to prostitution and lasciviousness. Kinsayder's obsession pinpoints the start of what became a movement of masculine fashions for women. He castigates the masculine women who confuse the accepted gender boundaries by wearing clothes to accentuate and encourage deviancy.

Gender transgression in the satires of Marston and Guilpin is associated with femininity. The effeminate man is an example of the degradation of masculinity towards a feminised state, particularly through excessive heterosexual relations and a luxurious lifestyle. The appearance of the gallant tells a story of vanity, licentiousness and deceit, and often provides a farcical character to inhabit the satires; however, the gallant is not purely a comic invention and actually exposes an issue, which was of great concern to many, the inversion of masculinity. There is hypocrisy within the satirists' argument that the fashion-conscious man was, as a result of his obsession with luxury, effeminate. Both Guilpin and Marston exhibit a vast knowledge and fascination with all elements of clothing and pampering. The details of fabrics, weaves, patterns, styles of the past and present reveal just how immersed the satirists were within the gallant's social milieu and material culture. The fashion knowledge of both writers could rival any of the castigated gallants, and therefore if we follow the argument that the man is effeminised by his obsession with attire, then surely it must also be the same for the satirist. The Elizabethan taste for luxurious clothing even permeated into the lives of those who professed to despise vanity and of course hypocrisy was a useful facet of a satiric persona.

The Elizabethan court provided an ideal arena for the effeminate gallant to display influence, power and wealth. It was ruled by a dominant Queen, whose courtiers sought attention and favour partly by wearing the 'effeminate' fashions. Piso who creates and collects fashions is ridiculed for the excess of his obsession: 'This fashion-mounger, each morne fore he rise | Contemplates sute shapes.' Such a pursuit is not portrayed as a fit occupation of a man's time: 'O that the boundlesse power of the soule | Should be coop'd vp in fashioning some roule!' (*SV*, XI. 163–4, 175–6). Courtiers in general are frequently displayed as 'troupes of gaudie Butter-flies', one of which, Aulus, aims to 'iet it iollily, | In pie-bauld sutes, of proud Court brauerie' (*SV*, IV. 84–6). The courtiers are purely superficial and compared to frivolous animals in their 'pie-bauld sutes'. Cooper observes the development of the court into a feminine environment during the reign of Elizabeth I: 'young men could serve the purpose of ornament, delighting the female eye by being

elegantly clad in tightly fitting leggings (known as hose), silk stockings and jauntily worn feathered caps.'[41] Courtiers often represented their loyalty to the Queen within their portraits by wearing her miniature or simply pearls, a symbol of Elizabeth's purity. In literature the court was frequently depicted as the stars surrounding the central monarch, and paintings reflected this by employing white or silver to represent the court illumination radiating from the Queen. Spenser depicts an unpleasant court, which similarly contains lords and ladies indulging in fashion:

> Some frounce their curled haire in courtly guise,
> Some prancke their ruffes, and others trimly dight
> Their gay attire: each others greater pride does spight.[42]

The Elizabethan man's fascination with clothing can be partly attributed to the influence of a court which placed great emphasis upon the emblematic power of appearance.

Guilpin holds the effeminising culture of the day responsible for turning 'our gallants to *Hermaphrodites*' (*S*, *Satyre Preludium*, 2). He alludes to the national risks of such a phenomenon, notably the dearth of disciplined men capable of military service. In an epigram, which echoes Martial (2. 29) and Davies's *In Sillam* 28, Cornelius is a soldier in appearance only, who enjoys the pleasures of peacetime to the point of effeminacy:

> See you him yonder, who sits o're the stage,
> With the Tobacco-pipe now at his mouth?
> It is *Cornelius* that braue gallant youth,
> Who is new printed to his fangled age:
> He wears a Ierkin cudgeld with gold lace,
> A profound slop, a hat scarce pipkin high,
> For boots, a paire of dagge cases; his face,
> Furr'd with *Cads*-beard: his poynard on his thigh.
> He wallows in his walk his slop to grace,
> Sweares *by the Lord*, daines no salutation
> But to some iade that's sick of his owne fashion,
> *As farewell sweet Captaine*, or *(boy) come apace*:
> Yet this Sir *Beuis*, or the fayery knight,
> Put vp the lie because he durst not fight. (*S*, Epig. 53)

The detail of Cornelius's physical appearance conveys an overall impression of an experienced and proud knight of war. His clothes are presented as an inventory and he is classed as one of many modern gallants wearing the same fashions, 'new printed to his

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[41] Cooper, p. 181.

[42] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by A. C. Hamilton (London and New York: Longman Group, 1977), I. 4. 14.

fangled age.' Yet the oxymoronic description of him as a 'braue gallant' emphasises that Cornelius is a man of contradictions. 'Braue' suggests military heroism, whereas 'gallant' refers to the 'gawdy Butterflies' of the satires who are all show and no substance. His proof of military prowess is inscribed by his 'paire of dagge cases' and '*Cads*-beard' which adorned the victorious at Cadiz, June 1596. Despite these indicators of heroism, there is equal evidence of Cornelius's role as a 'gallant youth'. His fashionable Spanish style hat and his 'profound slop' are symbols of cunning. Cornelius, like Marston's Tubrio, 'wallows in his walk', and from Marston's perspective such a man is not to be believed (*SV*, VII. 103–4). The reference to a recipient of his flamboyant addresses, a jade who is 'sick of his owne fashion', provides an opportunity to ridicule Cornelius's appearance as a disease, 'fashion' being a term for an equine illness. Despite Cornelius's martial costume and his comparison to the legendary hero '*Beuis*,' he presents a superficial image of a soldier, a 'fayery knight,' who 'durst not fight'.

The satirists enjoy exposing these false warriors and Satire Five jovially narrates an encounter with another who announces his military prowess through his clothing:

> There comes one in a muffler of Cad'z-beard,
> Frowning as he would make the world afeard,
> With him a troupe all in gold-dawbed sutes,
> Looking like *Talbots*, *Percies*, *Montacutes*,
> As if their very countenaunces would sweare,
> The Spanyard should conclude a peace for feare:
> But bring them to a charge, then see the luck,
> Though but a false fire, they theyr plumes wil duck. (*S*, V. 75–82)

The reference to a Cadiz beard immediately alerts the reader to the man's projected military experience; however, unlike Cornelius he is not passive, and instead wears a ridiculous frown. An army of 'gold-dawbed sutes,' rather than men, accompany him. The man with his 'troupe' presents a theatrical show in which his followers assume the stage roles of notable military individuals and families, the '*Talbots*, *Percies*, *Montacutes*'. Their martial strength is a performance and importantly it is only their 'countenaunces' which would force a Spaniard to sue for 'a peace for feare'. In favoured fashion Guilpin ridicules their heroic image by claiming that the troop will flee for safety, 'theyr plumes wil duck', even in false fire. Their comparison to the stage representations of notorious fierce families immediately betrays the pretensions of their appearance. Guilpin paints contemporary military skill as a transparent performance, one that the satirists enjoyed shattering.

Marston's satirist decries the degradation of the nation's military men through effeminate lust. He depicts Martius who utilises tales, weapons and displays of 'fencing feates' to impress women. Martial skill is now a thinly veiled allusion to sexual penetration: 'Before he goes, he'le teach her how to fight | And hold her weapon' (*SV*, XI. 71–2). The effeminate warrior, Mavortius, who has 'metamorphiz'd quite | To puling sighes, & into (*aye me's*) state,' presents his 'feebled valour' in performed tourneys and tilts, while also 'dallying' with his beloved. The satirist scorns the new union between the court and martial skill: 'A poxe apon't, that *Bacchis* name should be | The watch-word giuen to the soulderie.' The satirist moves beyond merely ridiculing the soldier, and emphasises the risk to the nation posed by the effeminacy of these warriors adorned with the liveries of a mistress. He warns 'Albion' of the impending military defeat: 'Alack, what hope? when some ranck nasty wench | Is subiect of their vowes and confidence?' (SV, VIII. 51–2, 60–3, 77–83).

Tubrio is Marston's archetypal soldier in the satires, and Davenport has suggested his connection to the contemporary figures of Barnes and Hannam. His bravery is transient and characterised by his 'feather gallantry'. Tubrio's licentious nature is suggested by his 'twenty falls' referring to his collars but also indicative of his loose attitude. The great soldier returns from fighting in 'Netherland, from steaming stew', a strong indication of his real pursuits with prostitutes. Tubrio's arousal or '*resolution | Pricks him (by heauen) to this action*', not to a battlefield but to a brothel. Tubrio's extensive appetite for sensual pleasure is financed by the selling of his arms and uniform: 'Fie that his Ostridge stomack should digest | His Ostridge feather: eate vp Venis-lace.' He is ridiculed for his pathetic posturing as a man of military service when in fact he is a 'slaue at beastly luxury'. Tubrio leaves the brothel wounded with the 'French-pox' or in a more dramatic description has been '*Pusht with the Pike of the hote enemie*' (*CS*, I. 89–110). Any heroism is undermined by evidence of his appetite and venereal disease: '*Tis loose legg'd* Lais, *that same common Drab*, | *For whom good* Tubrio *tooke the mortall stab*' (*CS*, II. 117–18). His ridicule as a 'dread *Mauortian*' is continued in *The Scourge of Villanie* in which Tubrio bloated as a swine in 'swaggering slops | Wallowes vnbraced all along the streete' (*SV*, VII. 101–4). Despite his excessive image of lust and promiscuity, he is revealed to be physically and sexually unmanned: he 'out doth draw | His transformd ponyard, to a *Syrrenge* straw'. Furthermore, treachery is implied by Tubrio's use of French phrases such as '*Que va la*'

and his costume which is 'drawne, and quartered with lace'. Tubrio's lifestyle of sensual pleasure has destroyed his 'martiall spright' (*SV*, VII. 119). The satirist arrives at his overall social comment and blames the conditions of peacetime:

> Fat peace, and dissolute impietie,
> Haue lulled him in such securitie,
> That now, let whirlewinds and confusion teare
> The Center of our state, let Giants reare
> Hill vpon hill, let Westerne *Termagant*
> Shake heauens vault, he with his Occupant,
> Are cling'd so close, like dew-wormes in the morne,
> That he'le not stir, till out his gutts are torne
> With eating filth. (*SV*, VII. 129–37)

Peace allows time for the enjoyment of sensual delights which have rendered the nation's men, and specifically soldiers, effeminate. Marston depicts sin and foreign enemies destroying the centre of state; however, the luxury-inebriated Tubrio will be so immersed in consuming his 'filth' that he will be unaware of the impending danger threatening his nation. The reader now learns the implications of the imagery of treachery conveyed by his lace and French flamboyance. Tubrio and his fellow 'dew-wormes', the soldiers, will leave the country undefended, while he is literally consumed and 'torne' apart by his own excess in vice.

The example of the corrupted soldier powerfully illustrates the effects of effeminacy, yet all fashionable English men are shown to be infected with the traitor's malady. Guilpin's third satire upon 'courtship complements, and new | Antike salutes' exposes the treachery of the effeminate man who follows foreign fashion (III. 4–5). The satirist's personal address emphasises scorn:

> But this I wonder, that th'art so estrang'd,
> And thy old English looks to outlandish chang'd,
> Howsoe're thy selfe by English birth art freed,
> Thou hast neede to haue thy looks endenized:
> With thee I haue beene long time well acquainted:
> But those beyond-sea looks haue now disioynted
> Our well knit friendship, for whose sake I doubt
> Th'art quite turn'd Dutch, or some outlandish lowt. (*S*, III. 11–18)

The satirist expresses a streak of nationalism, which is aggravated by the display of foreign dress. He is amazed by the neglect of the native style of England and interprets such a statement as a rejection of English laws, liberties and heritage. The satirist shames the man with the reminder that he 'by English birth art freed'. The unfashionable 'old English

looks' are idealised as traditional, whereas the interpretation of foreign as 'outlandish' exposes his xenophobia. The acquaintance, by dressing in foreign attire with 'beyond-sea looks', evokes images of the Spanish Armada and the continental threat which casts him as a traitor at a time of political uncertainty. He is no longer just a man in 'ridiculous' dress; he now represents a disloyalty to the nation and this has damaged their relationship. Another effeminate man in foreign style presents a more comic characterisation: 'He is all court-like, Spanish in's attire, | He hath the right ducke, pray God he be no Frier' (S, V. 141–2). 'Spanish' dress and an extravagant greeting immediately identify the man as one of the fashionable elite frequenting the court circles, and the irony of his imitation of a possible national enemy is not lost upon the satirist. His fashionable greeting is mockingly compared to the Friar's submissive praying position and provides a later opportunity to include a crowd-pleasing jibe at Roman Catholicism:

> What needs that bownd, or that curuet (good sir)
> There's some sweet Lady, and tis done to her,
> That she may see his Iennets nimble force:
> Why, would he haue her in loue with his horse?
> Or aymes he at popish merit, to make
> Her in loue with him, for his horses sake? (*S*, V. 149–54)

He is literally compared to the Pope, the Protestant anti-Christ, as he lures his followers with 'horse tricks' rather than through faith. The man practises his vaulting not on a horse but 'some sweet Lady,' emphasising the inversion of masculine skills through fashion and sexual lust. Licus wears foreign finery in the poorest weather, reflecting his betrayal of English manhood: 'I heare thee say the foulest day that is, | Thou art shodde in Veluet, and in Naples bisse' (*S*, epig. 14. 9–14). Foreign fashion imbues effeminacy with treachery and alienation from English reason. In reality such clothing must have been popular amongst the political elite for it to even catch the notice of the satirist; however, in Guilpin's London foreign attire is a visual indication of vanity and disloyalty.

True to the satirist's contradictory nature, the powerful image of the malcontent who is 'cleane out of fashion' is not only reserved for moments of serious social and political comment (*S*, V. 89). In *Skialetheia* the satirist sets a tone of danger for the young malcontent Pansa who 'be so mad to walke the streetes,' although the reader's assumptions are soon dashed by a ridiculous image of Pansa who risks 'his sights life, [as] his hat becomes a toombe' (*S*, Epig. 52. 7–8). Pansa dons a style of hat which due to its lack of a hatband falls over his eyes and makes walking the streets inevitably perilous. The

combination of the humorous scene and the apparent gravity of the situation for Pansa successfully undermine the malcontent's solemn posturing. Guilpin does not yet neglect the comic potential of Pansa and continues to explore the reason for his sombre mood:

> Last night which did our *Ins* of court men call
> In silken sutes like gawdy Butterflies,
> To paint the Torch-light, sommer of the hall,
> And shew good legs, spite of slops-smothering thies,
> He passing from his chamber through the Court,
> Did spoile a paire of new white pumps with durt.
> (S, Epig. 52. 13–18)

The world of fashionable men is depicted as chaotic, immature and without reason. Pansa, the supposed serious thinker, is as equally consumed with his attire as a 'gawdy' courtier who partakes in torch-lit masques with an intention of exhibiting his graceful legs. Marston depicts the melancholic Bruto as another gallant who is created purely by 'his sad colours, [...] demurely clad'. The prize of his foreign travels, 'surpheulings, new paints and poysonings', are embroiled within the deceptive world of fashion (*CS,* II. 130, 144).

The effeminate man's use of cosmetics is predictably ridiculed in *Skialetheia.* Cotta is a humorous character who is angry at being ignored; however, with tongue in cheek, the satirist explains, 'Being so painted [...] I did not know him' (Epig. 13. 4). Pollio's main business in town is to impress the local tailors. His preparations for the urgent event are scrupulous as he issues strict instructions for his 'Boy':

> *Pollio* me thinks is going into the Towne,
> Boy, set your Maisters ruffe, and brush his gowne,
> Least some spruce Taylor sitting on his stall,
> Say, there goes a slouen, carelesse of all. (*S*, VI. 117–20)

Pollio's lack of occupation is reason for ridicule enough; although, the fact that he wishes to impress unfamiliar tradesmen is absurd. Pollio's greatest fear is being branded as a 'slouen' and he meticulously plans his appearance to prevent such an eventuality. Pansa joins Pollio in his attempts to perfect his appearance for an imagined critical audience:

> but I must craue
> *A little labour to be smug'd, and haue*
> *A blessing of Rose-water, ere I goe*
> *To see such and such Ladies, for you know*
> *Thei'le flowt a man behind his backe, if he*
> *Be not trim furbish'd, and in decencie.* (*S*, VI. 123–28)

Pansa also follows a detailed process of preparation for his overall image involving a barber, cosmetics and perfume. It is not the tailor, but the censure of ladies which spurs his vanity. Pansa aims to be aesthetically perfect to avoid their condemnation '*behind his backe*'. Throughout the sixth satire 'Opinion' directly influences and dictates fashion, and accordingly is placed as the enemy of reason and the soul. When reason is overpowered, as exhibited by the behaviour of Pansa and Pollio, the soul is obliterated and they are reduced to beasts. With such a theory, the satirist justifies his attack upon all fashion and excess as evil obsessions. The degradation of man is illustrated through the image of the fashionable effeminate as a common and disposable commodity in society:

> Thou art common, popular, in vse euery way
> Fitting the various world, but by and by
> Thou art disusde, growst stale, and too proudly
> Wringst thy selfe from the humorous worlds conceit,
> Now art thou like the wide breech, doublet strait,
> But er't be long, thou wilt estranged be,
> Like the French quarter slop, or the gorbelly,
> The long stockt hose, or close Venetian.
> Now fie vpon this pride, which makes wise men
> Looke like expired leases; out of doubt
> Thou wert wise, but thy lease of wit is out:
> For such fond toyes thou hast estrangde thy selfe
> For vaine braue Bragardisme, and durtie pelfe,
> And yet I thinke, thy pelfe with thee'le dispence
> To kisse the Counter, ere twill bale thee thence. (*S*, III. 106–120)

Objectified as an item of fashionable clothing, Fabian is 'common, popular, in vse euery way', a suggestive allusion to his sexual depravity and vacuous role in society. In the same way he discards outdated fashions, Fabian will also become 'stale' in the popular social scene. Pride of attire ultimately strips away his masculine identity; he has lost his wit and chosen to be 'estrangde', all for 'fond toyes' and a 'durtie pelfe' from the tailor. Fabian's vanity will 'dispence' or legally excuse him to the 'Counter,' the debtor's prison. Unlike previous examples, he was 'wise' and yet sacrificed his sacred wit for popularity. Fabian's decision created a life which now stands to warn others of the dangers of effeminacy.

Loving women is another potent cause of effeminacy for men in the satires. Marston and Guilpin condemn the effeminate male lover for his enslavement and for the greater implications upon the health of masculinity. The satires reveal the classical influences of Horace's second satire that attacks Sallustius the obsessive lover of Libertinae (I. 2. 47–9) and Juvenal's image of the effeminate man immersed within a phallic cult who drinks from

a glass phallus.[43] Marston imitates Juvenal's example with the effeminate Casca of *The Scourge of Villanie* who also 'each night drinkes in glassie Priapus' like a lascivious woman, in order to reflect the sexual depravity of contemporary men (*SV*, I. 19).

Marston's *The Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image*, which precedes the *Certaine Satyres* in the edition of 1598, attacks the unnatural rituals involved in Elizabethan courtship.[44] Love is satisfied with no more than a token of a woman's clothing which replaces physical affection: 'Loue is a child, contented with a toy, | A busk-point, or some fauour still's the boy' (19. 5–6). The 'busk-point' supports the ritual of artificial courtship, in which love is an affectation that eroticises the token, and Petrarchan sonnets. *The Authour in prayse of his precedent Poem*, which follows, utilises the imagery of clothing and its connotations to comment upon the stanzas of *Pigmalion*:

> March rich bedight in warlike equipage:
> Glittering in dawbed lac'd accoustrements,
> And pleasing sutes of loues habiliments.
> Yet puffie as Dutch hose they are within,
> Faint, and white liuer'd, as our gallants bin;
> Patch'd like a beggars cloake, and run as sweet
> As doth a tumbrel in the paued street. (*CS*, 20–6)

Marston compares the mock epyllion to the popular and beautiful garments of the heroic man of war and the 'pleasing' appearance of a lover. However the true character of the poem is revealed by a comparison of the stanzas to the overblown Dutch hose and the use of words 'puffie', 'faint,' and 'white liuer'd' conjure the sense of deceit. The apparently 'true' character of the poem is identified as the literary equivalent of the contemporary gallant. Both are a motley sight of fabrics and trimmings, 'patch'd' with disease, and with little substance apart from the implications of the comparison with a dung cart.

Marston mocks the Petrarchan style of lover as a shadow of a man. Lucian is one such 'inamorato' who is depicted on his sick bed in a room 'hang'd about with Elegies,' its windows 'strow'd with Sonnets, and the glasse | Drawne full of loue-knots'. Lucian is obsessed with his mistress, spouting poetry to 'perfume her rare perfection', and blocking the light with images of her love tokens. The satirist laughs at his extreme effeminate gestures: 'he weepes, and sighs', casts 'a melting looke', and in a moment of passion, 'riseth in his bed; | And hauing kist his hand, stroke vp his haire | Made a French conge,

[43] Juvenal, II. 95, 'vitrio bibit ille priapo.'

[44] *The Poems of John Marston*, ed. by A. Davenport, pp. 49–61.

cryes.' It is poignant that Lucian's moment of passion is solitary, dramatically frustrated and expressed with foreign pretentiousness such as the French salutation. Lucian's performance is ridiculed as a humorous illustration of a willingly enslaved man who is nothing more than a fool, 'naturall' in show and nature (*CS*, III. 54–74). Castilio, sarcastically termed the 'complete and perfect courtier', is another who lives purely for his mistress and only utters insincere displays of affection: '*Sweete Lady, faire Mistres, kind hart, deare couse.*' Castilio's lack of masculine reason is revealed by his practice of 'spruce capring skips' and his rejection of reading unless the words part from 'his Mistris lips' (*SV*, *In Lectores prorsus indignos*, 20, 17–18).

Marston's satirist takes great pleasure in mocking the lover Curio especially when he launches into the effeminate phrase: 'aye me!' He imagines Curio, the 'womans slaue,' delighting in the creation of elegies for her deceased monkey in order to ingratiate himself with his mistress. Curio is an emasculated '*Hermaphrodite*' whose fantasy eroticises a servant's task: '*Corinna*, daine the riband tie | Of thy Cork-shooe.' His love poetry is disregarded as 'Some puling Sonnet [...] | Some sighing Elegie', motivated by a sensual agenda. Curio employs fantastical threats of suicide to persuade his mistress to favour him with her love. He threatens to 'diue | Into the whirle-poole of deuouring death, | And to some Mermaid sacrifice his breath' (*SV*, VIII. 1–14). His childish epitaph utilises a familiar technique of love poetry, an attempt to incite the beloved's guilt and pity:

> *Heere lyeth hee, hee lyeth here,*
> *That bounc'd, and pitty cryed,*
> *The doore not op'd, fell sicke alas,*
> *alas fell sicke, and dyed.* (*SV*, VIII. 19–22)

Instead of inspiring a change of heart with the sudden realisation of the transience of time, Curio's epitaph invokes laughter. Publius, like Curio also derives a fetishist's pleasure, a 'strange villanie', from worshipping his mistress's possessions, her 'busk-poynt,' and her 'sacred relique' the 'itch-allaying pinne'. The beloved's power is embodied in her phallic hairpin, and Publius's praise exposes his fantasy of sexual penetration: '*Her haire imbrac'd it, ô thrice happie prick*' (*SV*, VIII. 94–5, 100–1, 106). Saturio similarly betrays his effeminacy with his longing to be an item of sexualised clothing:

> *Saturio* wish'd him selfe his Mistres buske,
> That he might sweetly lie, and softly luske
> Betweene her pappes, then must he haue an eye
> At eyther end, that freely might discry

Both hills and dales. (*SV*, VIII. 117–22)

Saturio's effeminacy is expressed through sensual desires and love poetry. Others who share his desire to be a mistress's dog, monkey or a flea, are morally corrupt, claims the satirist: '*For beastly shape to brutish soules agree.*' Marston attacks courtly devotion and terms the cherishing of a love token or 'the badge of base, effeminate' as a signifier of emasculation and enslavement to a woman. The Petrarchan mistress is ridiculed as a beloved who will coldly 'daine a kisse | To her enamor'd slaue' (*SV,* VIII. 79–82, 138–39). Guilpin, in consensus, condemns the popular 'whimpring Sonnets, [and] puling Elegies' for their effect upon gallants such as Mutio, who is effeminised after reading such work:

His valour's crestfalne, his resolues abusd,
For whatsoe're his courage erst did moue,
He'le goe no voyage now to leaue his Loue.
(*S, Satyre Preludium*, 11, 18–20)

Marston justifies his attacks in the name of his own sex:

Of him whose soule doth turne *Hermaphrodite*,
But I doe sadly grieue, and inly vexe
To view the base dishonors of our sexe. (*SV*, VIII. 146–7)

There is a potent sense of pessimism at the degradation of man into the lover, an effeminate beast driven by lust over reason.

The artistic pursuits of the fashionable gentleman are closely associated with effeminacy. Guilpin ridicules dancing in the characterisation of Cotta: 'Behold a wonder, neuer seene before, | Yonder's *Cotta's* picture, dauncing trenchmore' (*S*, Epig. 12, 1–2). The emasculating practice of dancing is emphasised by the other epigrams concerning Cotta, which ridicule his overuse of cosmetics and his gaudy dress. Another chastised for his emasculation is Licus who praises all: 'In dauncing, vaulting, and in riming too, | In theyr conceits there are as good as you' (*S*, Epig. 14, 9–10). His enjoyment of poetry and dance is associated with the suggestive 'vaulting' into a saddle, which alludes to whoring. Arion's epigram reveals his lustful nature through the language of music:

Arions thoughts are growne so musicall,
That all his talke's of crotchets, and of quauers,
His very words to sembriefe time doe fall,
And blowing of his nose of musicke sauours:
Hee'le tell you of well fretting of a Lute,
Euen till you fret, and of the harmonie,

Is either in a still Cornet or Flute,
Of rests, and stops, and such like trumperie,
Yet loues he more, for all sweet musick sence,
His mistris belly, then these instruments. (*S*, Epig. 29)

Guilpin employs the common bawdy interpretation of 'instrument' as genitalia and the final two lines confirm the suggestive tone of the epigram. Arion's musical knowledge is ridiculed by the comparison of his words and the blowing of his nose to sweet music and his sexual activities are evoked with the reference to keeping musical time with 'rests and stops'. Pompous music thinly veils the effeminate man's carnal lust for sexual indulgence with his mistress.

Marston in *The Scourge of Villanie* attacks attractive rhyme and song as false and misleading, with 'deceit | Inticing eares'. He sees no value in pretty poetry and justifies his satiric writing as an alternative to 'A gaudie ornature, but hast no part, | In that soule-pleasing high infused art' (*SV*, *Ad Rithmum*, 12–13, 31–2). Curio is chastised for applauding Marston's 'ironic' *Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image*, which he characterises as a 'fine smug ryme' of '*Paphian* showes'. The satirist castigates the 'loose lasciuious rime' due to its enticement of repulsive readers, the 'big-buzzing-little-bodied Gnats, | Yee tatling Ecchoes, huge tongu'd pigmy brats'. They are portrayed as irritating vermin with effeminate puny bodies which have large phallic female tongues that substitute for masculine virility. The writers of erotic works are equally despised when the satirist draws attention to their choice of muse ranging from the 'loose-legg'd dame' to the 'brothel drab'. He scorns the erotic writing that titillates and 'incends' the reader's 'lustfull blood', corrupting the nation's men (*SV*, VI. 11, 14, 68, 101–2, 33–4, 76).

The satires penetrate the pleasurable aspect of loving women by emphasising the physical disease associated with effeminacy. *Skialetheia's* Pansa, a slave to female opinion, is ridiculed as his 'haire's all short', hinting at his venereal disease a symptom of which was hair loss (*S*, VI. 123). Don Fashion is the archetypal effeminate man who is sprucely attired and promiscuous:

Neat as a Merchants ruffe, that's set in print,
New halfe-penny, skip'd forth his Laundres mint;
Oh braue! what, with a feather in his hat?
He is a dauncer you may see by that;
Light heeles, light head, light feather well agree. (*S*, V. 127–31)

As his Spanish name suggests, Don Fashion is a follower of the latest continental styles. He is as smartly fashioned from the Laundress as a new half-penny, which dually emphasises his debt. Don Fashion's clothes are directly linked to his intelligence and his morality. 'Light heeles, light head, light feather' associate the Don with a phrase used to describe promiscuous girls whose heels were said to rise as they lay down with a man. His characterisation is set in the social environment of dancing, seducing and lovemaking:

> He will so dawbe vs with his oyly tongue,
> For thinking on some of his Mistresses
> We shall be curried with the briske phrases,
> And prick-song termes he hath premeditate. (*S*, V. 131, 134–7)

The lover's sordid persona is portrayed through his animal and phallic tongue and his planned 'prick-song' performance with his many mistresses. Linceus reappears in the *Scourge of Villanie* to reveal more than the superficial detail of his appearance:

> Note his French-herring bones, but note no more,
> Vnlesse thou spy his fayre appendant whore
> That lackyes him. Marke nothing but his clothes,
> His new stampt complement, his Cannon oaths.
> Marke those, for naught but such lewd viciousnes
> Ere graced him, saue Sodom beastlines. (*SV*, VII. 20–5)

He perfectly conforms to Marston's image of the sensual animal, as beneath the usual 'sumptuous' facade lies the evidence of his lust. His 'French-herring bones' are not simply a reference to pattern, again there is the suggestion of venereal disease which was associated with the continent and diseased bones. The cause of his sexual infection is implied by his fashion accessory of an 'appendant whore' and the reference to 'Sodom beastliness', an expansive term encompassing all illicit sensuality and animalistic urges. Clothes inform Linceus's life, they are his 'Cannon oaths', and he projects the image of a 'compleat soule, of all perfection':

> What? mean'st thou him that walks al open brested?
> Drawne through the eare with Ribands, plumy crested?
> He that doth snort in fat-fed luxury,
> And gapes for some grinding Monopoly?
> He that in effeminate inuention,
> In beastly source of all pollution,
> In ryot, lust, and fleshly seeming sweetnes,
> Sleepes sound secure, vnder the shade of greatnes? (*SV*, VII. 30–7)

The prominent image of Linceus parading 'plumy crested' with an 'open' breast and ribbon earring, frames him as a flamboyant bird displaying to attract mates, a purpose which betrays his innate effeminacy. Linceus's bestial appetite is evoked by a reference to

his 'fat-fed luxury' and his effeminate indulgence is cited as the root cause of his other misdemeanours. Riot, lust and enjoyment of the flesh are all associated under the main sin of 'effeminate inuention'.

The sexual use of boys by the effeminate man is a crucial final stage of his sexual and moral decay in the satires. Similarly Juvenal's second satire stresses the draining effect of sexual promiscuity and sodomy, and expresses concern over the inversion of gender roles particularly through the story of Gracchus, a male bride in a homosexual marriage (II. 51–73, 117–48). The association of homoerotic desire and effeminacy is potent in the satires of Marston and Guilpin, and is embodied by the ingle or boy, a contemporary figure closely associated with the playhouse.

Homoeroticism surfaces in the *Certaine Satyres* in a section focused on one youth who is consumed by the styles of attire and cosmetics: 'His clothes perfum'd, his fustie mouth is ayred, | His chinne new swept, his very cheeks are glazed' (*CS*, III. 29–30). The youth's effeminacy increases his debt with feared repercussions:

> Crost, and recrost with lace, sure for some feare,
> Least that some spirit with a tippet Mace
> Should with a gastly show affright his face. (*CS*, III. 20–2)

He is consistently contrasted with the classical and traditional ideals of masculinity:

> His ruffe did eate more time in nearest setting
> Then *Woodstocks* worke in painfull perfecting.
> It hath more doubles farre, then *Aiax* shield
> When he gainst Troy did furious battell weild.
> Nay he doth weare an Embleme bout his necke.
> For vnder that fayre Ruffe so sprucely set
> Appears a fall, a falling-band forsooth. (*CS*, III. 11–17)

The ruff, more complex than Henry II's bower for Rosamund, is ironically compared to Ajax's shield, which Shakespeare's Antony describes as the legendary 'sevenfold shield of Ajax'.[45] Ajax wielded the great shield with the Greeks against Troy, whereas the youth employs his ruff in a less inspiring war of fashion between the gallants. His falling band, a type of collar beneath his ruff, is an emblem of his moral decay while the feathered hat is a further 'signe of a fantasticke still, | As sure, as (some doe tell me) euermore | A Goate

[45] William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, in *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, ed. by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson and David Scott Kastan (London: Arden Shakespeare, Thomson Learning, 2006), pp. 121–60 (IV. 14. 39).

doth stand before a brothell dore' (*CS*, III. 26–8). Such a comparison implies the youth's lax morals, which the satirist confirms: 'But ho, what *Ganimede* is that doth grace | The gallants heeles. One, *who for two daies space | Is closely hyred*' (*CS*, III. 31–3). Ganymede, the beautiful young man that Zeus abducted to become his cupbearer and lover, in this instance refers to a page. Yet the detail that he is 'closely hyred' suggests his private role to satisfy his master's sensual desires. The satirist affects surprise that the gallant would advertise his hireling: 'O age! in which our gallants boast to be | Slaues vnto riot, and lewd luxury!' (*CS*, III. 31–3, 47–8). One reference implies the popularity of the effeminate boy, 'Yon effeminate sanguine *Ganimede*, | Is but a Beuer, hunted for the bed' (*SV*, VII. 158–9). He is conveyed as a fashionable commodity, a hunted trophy to be displayed to the envy of other gallants and his destiny for the bed as a cover leaves little doubt of his erotic role.

Guilpin's Pollio provides a perfect example of the partnership between sexual depravity and vanity. His effeminate style leads him into debt and imbues him with homoerotic desire and appeal:

> Th'art a fine fellow trust me *Pollio*,
> And euery one reputes thee so to be,
> Both for thy ingles face, and goodly show,
> Of thyne apparraile and thy napery:
> Then, for thou pertly knowes to wagge thy head,
> Like some old palsey-strucken vsurer,
> Chiefely, for that this Christmas thou hast led
> An vnthrifts life, (gramercy Creditor,)
> But for this last thou must be faine to goe,
> Into the country for a yeere or two. (*S*, Epig. 26)

Pollio's epigram is an adaptation of Martial's 'bellus homo' epigrams and is applied to the Elizabethan 'fine fellow' who enjoys the company of a handsome boy and flamboyant fashion. The facade of his 'goodly show' is soon shattered with the knowledge of his extensive debt and subsequent two years retreat to the family home. Pollio's fine reputation is founded upon his appearance and his attractive boy companion, an ingle. Pollio's pronounced homosexual desire is simplistically emphasised by the satirist's focus upon his 'wanton face and curled haire,' with a padded 'fatte buttocke' that alludes to the suggestion of anal intercourse (*S*, Epig. 27. 2–4). Another 'fine fellow', Licus, also excels in love and sexual appetite:

> He's a fine fellow who is neate and fine,
> Whose locks are kem'd, & neuer a tangled twine,

> Who smels of Musk, Ciuet, and Pomander,
> Who spends, and out-spends many a pound a yeare,
> Who piertly iets, can caper, daunce, and sing,
> Play with his Mistris fingers, her hand wring,
> Who companying with wenches nere is still:
> But either skips or mowes, or prates his fill,
> Who is at euery play, and euery night
> Sups with his *Ingles*, who can well recite,
> Whatsoeuer rimes are gracious. (*S*, Epig. 38. 3–13)

The 'fine' and effeminate man takes meticulous care of his appearance, while he is also educated in all the entertainments and leisure activities. Sexually, he is equally at home with his mistress as with his ingles. The emphasis on Licus's energy when entertaining 'wenches' alludes to his sexual expenditure, while his association with the stage involves eating with desirable 'Ingles' who entertain by reciting effeminate poetry. Licus's homoerotic desire is intimated with the concluding statement: 'For a fine fellow, is a fine foole mongst men.' The comment also reflects his inadequacy when compared to 'true' men. Del Phrygio, suspected to represent Lodge, is another who is associated with homoerotic activity:

> He with a spade-beard can full mannerly,
> Leade the olde measures to a company
> Of bare chind-boyes, and with his nimble feete,
> Make our fore-wearied Counsellours to sweat:
> For enuie at his strange actiuitie. (*S*, III. 87–91)

Phrygio's style of beard suggests his effeminacy through its allusion to the word 'spayed', while his 'mannerly' instruction of boys in gymnastic dancing to measures carries a homoerotic undertone, which is further emphasised by the councillors who 'sweat' in 'enuy' at his physical activity with the youths.

In a more sinister depiction, Marston's Luscus blatantly resorts to the services of an effeminate boy when his father forbids the use of his 'Pickhatch drab':

> Alack, alack, what peece of lustfull flesh
> Hath *Luscus* left, his *Priape* to redresse?
> Grieue not good soule, he hath his *Ganimede*,
> His perfum'd shee-goate, smooth kembd & high fed.
> At Hogsdon now his monstrous lust he feasts,
> For there he keepes a baudy-house of beasts.
> *Paphus*, let *Luscus* haue his Curtezan,
> Or we shall haue a monster of a man. (*SV*, III. 36–44)

Luscus translates as 'one-eyed' which through its phallic connotation reflects his focused pursuit of penetrative sensual desires. He, driven by the appetite of his suffering '*Priape*'

and bereft of his 'drab', looks for a replacement. The Ganymede serves as flesh to be pampered with perfume, food and luxuries, and can be transformed into a 'shee-goate,' an emblem of prostitution. Luscus quenches his 'monstrous lust' for the boy at his 'baudy-house of beasts' at Hoxton, a place of reputed illicit sexual encounters. Marston's satirist considers a courtesan as a lesser evil in comparison to Luscus's homosexual appetite, which threatens to create a 'monster'. When isolated in a tower Luscus resorts to 'Cynick friction', masturbation, which is scorned as a waste of masculine efficacy (*SV*, 3. 52). In an abstract moment of anti-Catholicism the satirist attributes the introduction of male brothels to the Catholic missionaries: 'O now yee male stewes, I can giue pretence | For your luxurious incontinence' (*SV*, III. 53–4). Douai seminary educates in 'impuritie, | And monstrous filth,' while the seminary at Valladolid allows the freedom to 'snort in source of Sodom vilanie'. He imagines their influence extending to English college fellows with the introduction of luxurious aphrodisiacs aimed to 'Inflame our backs to itching luxurie'. The satirist warns that he would take action 'Before some pedant-Tutor, in his bed | Should vse my frie, like Phrigian *Ganimede*' (*SV*, III. 57–60, 72, 77–8). Marston's satires expose the perceived popularity of the homoerotic boy amongst the modern gallant and the associated fears conjured by illicit sexualities for the integrity of English male youth.

The effeminate immersion in illicit sexualities not only inverts the masculine gender, it also instils impotence. Virility as expressed through rationally controlled and conventional sexual relationships is an integral factor of idealised masculinity. Marston and Guilpin emphasise the destruction of masculinity through impotency and cuckoldry. The cuckolded husband was made impotent by implication, as he was perceived as either unable to sexually satisfy his wife or too effeminate to rule her desires. Within *The Scourge of Villanie* the satirist depicts the cuckold or emasculated father as a pimp through his neglect of his patriarchal duty: 'Straight prostitute thy daughter, or thy wife, | And soone be wealthy, but be damn'd with it' (*SV,* VI. 95–6). In contrast adultery frequently provides an opportunity for humour in *Skialetheia*, especially through the figure of Fidens, the music instructor, who is unaware of his wife that 'learnes to play false' (*S*, Epig. 33. 3). Guilpin ridicules the diminished masculinity of the cuckold and jealous man. A husband so consumed with fear and jealousy is portrayed examining a fly which has landed in his wife's hair, to see 'Whether t'were male or female' (*S,* IV. 38). Guilpin also implicates the jealous husband who beats his wife for fear of adultery. The satirist exposes the man's

own hypocrisy as to 'know their stratagems and shifts,' he must also have been unfaithful (*S*, IV. 93).

Marston's satires project impotence as a self-inflicted illness of the effeminate, which threatens individual and national masculinity. The now familiar Tubrio succumbs to 'lust' which physically weakens his virility:

> That *Westphalian* gamon Cloue-stuck face?
> Why, he is naught but huge blaspheming othes,
> Swart snowt, big lookes, misshapen Swizers clothes,
> Weake meagre lust hath now consumed quite,
> And wasted cleane away his martiall spright,
> Infeebling ryot, all vices confluence,
> Hath eaten out that sacred influence
> Which made him man. (*SV*, VII. 115–122)

Marston vividly compares his poor complexion to a ham pierced with cloves, which is symptomatic of the sores derived from sexual disease. Effeminacy and its symptom lust, robs the English man of his 'martiall spright,' undermining his masculinity and national security in a realm threatened by invasion and rebellion. Accordingly he is described as 'wasted', 'drawne,' 'Weake', and 'eaten' by 'Infeebling ryot'. Death and war imagery was traditionally employed to represent the debilitating effects of sexual intercourse for men. It was imagined that man was left emasculated through the woman's absorption of semen, the male life source. The satirist stresses the serious effects of the effeminate lifestyle which destroys the physical and 'sacred influence' that defines a 'man' and connects him to God.

Women within the satires of Marston and Guilpin are disconnected from God, with no equivalent masculine 'sacred influence' and their sexual power is conceived as corruptive. The figure of the enchantress embodies the portrayal of woman as man's sexual temptation through her pagan sorcery of deception. Juvenal dedicates a whole satire to the discussion of female sexuality and vehemently attacks the deceptive female fashions and cosmetics (VI. 186–213). He presents a misogynistic portrayal of female sexuality; as E. Courtney comments, 'other crimes characteristic of women, such as dabbling in magic and poisoning, fade into insignificance beside those due to their lust.'[46] Juvenal compares the application of cosmetics to constructing a mask that conceals disease and draws upon ideas of potions, poisons and witchcraft (I. 51–76, VI. 460–488, 601–629). Women's unnatural

[46] E. Courtney, *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal* (London: The Athlone Press, 1980), p. 254.

devices of birth control and abortion in Juvenal's satire are used to enable sexual freedom and avoid any repercussions (VI. 349–77, VI. 571–600). Juvenal expresses the familiar myths and misogynist arguments which influence Marston's and Guilpin's distrustful treatment of female beauty and sexuality, yet inspired by a contemporary anxiety over the new threat posed by deviant women.

Marston's satires attribute man's effeminacy to female bewitchment: 'for *Circes* charme | Hath turn'd them all to swine.' The female sorcery to which Marston alludes includes 'vile impietie, | And muddy durt of sensualitie'. Gallants in their 'effeminate inuention' have been transformed by the vision of female beauty: 'Since last *Medusa* turn'd him to a stone' (*SV*, VII. 4–5, 11–12, 34, 45). Marston creates women whose appearance portrays them as 'angelicall':

> Alas, her soule struts round about her neck,
> Her seate of sence is her rebato set,
> Her intellectual is a fained nicenes.
> (*SV*, VII. 175–8)

All that appears good is false and constructed by the superficial. Marston's focus upon cosmetics deconstructs the fashionable woman as an artificial facade:

> Her maske so hinders mee
> I cannot see her beauties deitie.
> Now that is off, shee is so vizarded,
> So steep'd in Lemons-iuyce, so surphuled
> I cannot see her face, vnder one hood
> Too faces. (*SV*, VII. 164–9)

Beneath her hood and mask is a further cosmetic disguise; her true face and identity is impenetrable. The imagery created by 'vizarded,' 'painted' and 'surphuled', emphasises her artistry of deception with the aid of exotic potions and creams. The combination of fashions with the knowledge of her 'loose-lying body,' creates a sense of artificial and ensnaring beauty, as in the previous case of Laura whose painted lip secures her enamoured lover (*SV*, VII. 166–85). The woman who conceals her face is unnerving to the satirist of *The Scourge* who will only trust the naked truth. Women are the originators of cosmetics, a very real mode of concealment in the Elizabethan age:

> Thou sweet Arabian *Panchaia*,
> Perfume this nastie age, smugge *Lesbia*
> Hath stinking lunges, although a simpring grace,
> A muddy inside, though a surphul'd face. (*SV*, I. 54–7)

The satirist illustrates female artificiality by exposing Lesbia's offensive breath and 'stinking lunges' that are disguised and transformed by the sweet incense from *Panchaia* and a 'surphul'd face'. Her bad breath may be due to rotten teeth, which can signify decay through age or luxurious living. Female deception is a potent anxiety as Lesbia's infectious 'muddy' corruption is hidden behind a 'grace' and superficial beauty that allures man.

Guilpin also asserts the deceptive use of cosmetics to entice men, claiming, 'A painted wench is like a whore-house signe, | The old new slurred ouer' (*S*, II. 69–70). The satirist proceeds to target the fools who are enthralled by the masked woman:

> I had thought the last mask which thou caperedst in
> Had catechiz'd thee from this errors sinne,
> Taught thee S. *Martins* stuffe from true gold lace,
> And know a perfect from a painted face:
> Why they are Idols, Puppets, Exchange babies,
> And yet (thou foole) tak'st them for goodly Ladies. (*S*, II. 7–12)

The satirist equally abhors the painted ladies and the fools who are bewitched by their arts. Cosmetics are fervently attacked as one of the main weapons against truth. He makes a potent comparison between the 'rough worme-eaten table, | By well-mix'd colours [...] made saleable' and the faces who 'From dawbing pencils doe deriue their graces' (*S*, II. 19–24). Castiglione's *The Courtier* voices the same anxiety describing a painted woman as 'like an image of woode without moving, shewing her self onely in torche light, as craftie marchantmen doe their clothes in their darke lights'.[47] Similarly the painted Nigrina suffers a harsh satiric criticism of her aged appearance in response to her attempts at enhancement:

> The cherry of her lip's a winter Cherry,
> Then weather-proof, & needs no masks defence:
> Her cheeks best fruit's a black, no Mulberry,
> But fearelesse of sharp gustes impouerishments:
> And to be briefe, she being all plaine *Ione*,
> Why is she mask'd to keepe that where is none?
> O sir, she's painted, and you know the guise,
> Pictures are curtaind from the vulgar eyes. (*S*, Epig. 57. 5–12)

Nigrina vainly wears a fashionable mask to 'conceal her beauty' from the eyes of the undeserving. Guilpin creates the image of a woman who despite her cosmetic

[47] Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. by Hoby (New York: J. M. Dent & Sons Press, 1967), p. 66.

enhancement and shielding of her face from 'sharp gustes' is in the winter of her life. Her 'winter red' lips and the 'black' fruit of her cheeks are both natural signs of winter and metaphorically of old age. The satirist dismisses Nigrina as 'plaine *Ione*,' an unflattering comparison that contradicts his apparent hate of fashion and beauty treatments. The misogynistic attack moves to focus upon her sexual conduct:

> Because *Nigrina* hath a painted face,
> Many suspect her to be light and base:
> I see no reason to repute her such,
> For out of doubt she will abide the tuch. (*S*, Epig. 65)

The satirist endorses the common assumption, shared by Marston, of the connection between cosmetics and promiscuity. Nigrina 'will abide the tuch', as emphasised in a previous epigram: 'Her tendrest poultry may endure the touch' (*S*, Epig. 57. 3). Poultry refers to the debtor's prison and the debased coin which must be touched to check its authenticity. The satirist also asserts twice that Nigrina will abide an intimate touch and therefore is implicated as a poultry maid, otherwise known as a prostitute. The connection of cosmetics with sexual promiscuity is a natural assumption of the satirist who associates female beauty with the power to enchant men.

Female sorcery is entwined with the feminine associations of deception and sexual corruption in *Skialetheia*. The satirist invokes the enchantress Acrasia of *The Faerie Queene* as the archetypal cosmetic woman who can 'bewitch' men with her magic. Guilpin adopts the enchantress figure to emphasise the evil intentions of women who disguise their true character to bend men to their will. *Skialetheia* explores the female origins of cosmetics though a magical history of their creation:

> Their beauties are most antient Gentlemen,
> Fetch'd from the deaw-figs, hens dung, & the beane.
> Nay, this doth rather prooue them bastard faires,
> For to so many fathers they are heires,
> Yet their effronted thoughts adulterate,
> Think the blind world holds them legitimate. (*S*, II. 25–30)

Natural and base ingredients enforce the sense of pagan female witchcraft by women intent on enchantment. By referring to the myth of generations of women creating these ancient concoctions, he condemns feminine beauty as a facade, created from ingredients including 'dung'. The satirist terms these painted women as adulterators of the truth who successfully deceive while the 'blind world holds them legitimate'. Women are

generalised and chastised for their crime of deception and the satirist assumes an avenging role to educate and defend men:

> They know your spirits, & your distillations,
> Which make your eies turn diamonds, to charm passions,
> Your cerusse now growne stale, your skaine of silke,
> Your philterd waters, and your asses milke,
> They were plaine asses if they did not know,
> Quicksiluer, iuyce of Lemmons, Boras too
> Allom, oyle Tartar, whites of egges, & gaules
> Are made the bawdes to morphew, scurffs & scauls.
> Then whats a wench but a quirke, quidlit case,
> Which makes a Painters pallat of her face? (*S*, II. 35–44)

The vast list of deadly ingredients associates cosmetics with *maleficium*, and with the treatment of old age and venereal diseases. The woman's individual identity is wiped away with the final image of her making 'a Painters pallat of her face'. Cosmetics are a subject utilised by the satirist not only to expand upon the idea of deception, but also predominantly to denigrate and subjugate the women that use them. The treatment of female fashion and cosmetics by both satirists reveals an anxiety over the sexual influence of female beauty, a power which symbolised the inversion of natural gender roles. The satirist of *Skialetheia* shares a fear of the inversion of natural female propagation through potions that manipulate the womb to prevent conception and cause abortion (*S*, II. 88). The Elizabethan satirist fears the woman, as she is not only a deceiver, and a sorceress but also a lustful creature intent on ensuring sexual freedom.

Marston and Guilpin generalised all women within the satires as sexually lascivious, and presented their insatiable desires as corruptive for man and society. The whore is a familiar type of the early modern period and the misogynistic treatment in the satires is symbolic of an attempt to suppress the threat of the sexually empowered woman. Marston's satires create and treat lascivious women as endemic of all society: 'lust doth sparkle from our female eyes | And modestie, is rousted in the skies' (*SV*, II. 108–9). His use of scatological and shocking sexual imagery implicates his persona's interest in the salacious, without admitting any guilt. The satirist of *Skialetheia* in contrast exposes his own misdemeanours and licentious activity, in a similar manner to Horace. He invokes Aretino as an ideal satirist despite the Elizabethan perception of him as a salacious writer, and flirts with his own moral contradictions, becoming involved in the vices he relishes to castigate. The persona illustrates his sexual appetite when he procures the prostitute Lydia's services, 'we'le haue about', and when he recounts, 'I told *Chrestina* I would lie

with her' (*S*, Epig. 48. 10, Epig. 39. 1). In a *Conclusion to the Reader* the lewd epigrams are blamed upon 'my *Muse* [who] swaggers as in her ruffe' in the image of the prostitute (*S*, Epig. 70. 2). The promiscuous behaviour which the satirist attacks is professed as a driving force motivating the epigrams. The satirists exhibit varying levels of complicity in the enjoyment of female sexuality, yet they both condemn women's innate lust as antisocial.

The satirist employs bawdy puns objectifying the woman in sexual terms, which are thinly veiled by a critique upon the desire for the Petrarchan style of mistress. The female body is sexually objectified by one who desires to be 'his sweet Ladies verdingall | To clip her tender breech' (*SV*, VIII. 131–2). Marston's satirist employs the techniques used in the 'lewd' works, yet also claims to take a defiant stand: 'I craue no Syrens of our Halcion times, | To grace the accents of my rough-hew'd rimes' (*SV, Proemium in librum tertium.* 9–10). Bawdy humour would entertain those 'gaping eares that swallow vp my lines', the readers whom the satirist vociferously rebukes during *Pigmalion* (St. 38. 2).

Guilpin also takes advantage of the erotic female body to evoke bawdy humour. Orpheus has married a 'young lusty wife' and suggestively plays 'vpon his Lute [...] both night and day', a reference to the female body or male genitalia (*S*, Epig. 34. 1–4). Guilpin does not focus upon the wife; she is defined by Orpheus as his possession and by his desire. In the same vein Gellia finds her sexual fulfilment 'twixt her legs [when] she holds her instrument' (*S*, Epig. 46. 7). The threat of female masturbation is nullified by the conversion of an independent act into one for male titillation. The garments of the Elizabethan woman are integral to *Skialetheia's* lewd puns:

> Wanton young *Lais* hath a pretty note,
> Whose burthen is, pinch not my petticoate:
> Not that she feares close nips, for by the rood,
> A priuy pleasing nip will cheare her blood:
> But she which longs to tast of pleasures cup,
> In nipping would her petticoate weare vp. (*S*, Epig. 32)

The key item of the petticoat directs the reader's attention to the eroticised area of the female genitalia. Lais is described as wanton and objectified by what lies beneath her skirt, which implies a sexual connotation of 'close nips' or theft. A private 'nip will cheare her blood' and allow her to taste 'pleasures cup,' both euphemisms for sexual arousal. The

final line portrays a sexualised image of Lais evoked through innuendo and the eroticised petticoat with the aim of titillating the male reader.

Guilpin's persona deprecates and ridicules the salacious female who seeks pleasure from instruments or secret 'nips,' ultimately to entertain his readers. Marston's satirist viciously condemns all female perversions, especially masturbation via the dildo, an unnatural usurper of man. *The Scourge of Villanie* alerts the reader to a 'smug wench' who quenches her 'sanguine heate' using 'her instrument | Smooth fram'd at Vitrio' (*SV*, III. 29–33). Even the married Lucea rejects her husband and their 'luke-warme' marital bed in favour of self-satisfaction: 'hurried, | In ioulting Coach, with glassie instrument' (*SV*, III. 122–3). The satirist sarcastically claims, 'Nothing but goodness raigneth in our age, | And virtues all are ioyn'd in marriage' (*CS*, V. 159–60). His sarcastic praise of modern marriage signifies to the contrary and emphasises that adultery is common. Marston's attack upon the independent masturbation of a woman reflects an anxiety over the female freedom to satiate desires without a man. *Skialetheia* represents the fear of female sexual autonomy particularly in the example of prostitutes whose 'lothsome playstered skins,' allow them to parade as 'goodly Ladies' and feed their desires while escaping censure (*S*, II. 83, 12). Guilpin presents the 'old widow Æagle' who refuses Zeno's proposal, to ridicule a contemporary fortune hunter. The epigrammatist concludes, 'In my mind shee's the wiser of the two' (*S*, Epig. 28. 1, 4). Guilpin focuses upon Zeno; however, he reveals a perception of the financial power and autonomy of the widow, who could command the service of the effeminate man. Other contemporary works emphasised the unquenchable sexual appetite of the widow, and although Guilpin neglects such an opportunity he does expose the concept of the inversion of the balance of power between the genders.

The Satirist as Scourge

A comparison of the attitudes exhibited within the satires of Marston and Guilpin concerning gender and sexuality, has highlighted some unexpected differences. Many critics have examined the satiric work of Marston and cast the general assumption that Guilpin, due to his connection, the time and genre, produced a similar work if not an inferior version. However the satiric personas within the satires exhibit fundamental yet relatively concealed differences, which affect their treatment of sexual sin. Marston

creates a satiric persona who vehemently attacks sexual and gender transgression, through which he exposes a relish that is never overtly expressed. Guilpin equally condemns the blurring of the gender boundaries and sexual immorality, and yet bawdy humour and a shared sexual appetite motivate his persona.

The satire was intended to purge society's ills without mercy. Guilpin and Marston are not educative through a positive example but corrective by castigation. The numerous examples of immoral dress by implication suggest that there were positive images of clothing. Modesty appears to be the correct path, although not to the extreme of the Puritan who is ridiculed as an actor. Fashion within the satires is treated as an incurable illness within society. It cannot realistically be erased and the satirists would not wish it to be, as the individual is defined by society through their appearance. The satirist in contrast emerges without a physical exterior, and only gains a sense of personality through the satiric attacks he focuses upon others. He criticises all fashions, so he is either a hypocrite or the epitome of moderation, while any ideas of a moderate nature are soon dismissed by his vicious and unbridled attacks upon the guilty. Guilpin's satirist reveals duplicity with his attacks upon promiscuity and subsequent involvement with a prostitute. He revels in his duality and proudly flaunts his familiarity with those he enjoys castigating. Another element of the hypocrisy of Guilpin's and Marston's satirists is revealed through their detailed virulent attacks upon fashion. Both expose a real familiarity with specialised garments and a personal knowledge of the fashionable world, which betrays their own involvement in the vice-ridden society they seek to expose.

Gosson, Stubbes and the sumptuary laws share the anti-fashion view held by the satirists. All these writers and the authorities felt a need to illuminate and control the world of fashion, which suggests that it was seen as a common affliction that reached a climax towards the end of the sixteenth century. In fact those guilty of following fashion were only conforming to the modern gender ideals, which were influenced by the presence of a female monarch, foreign imports and social change. One example can be seen in the fashions of the courtiers, which alluded to their increased role of adornment within court to attract favour. Furthermore, the wealth of the Elizabethan reign was deliberately expressed through all the visual arts, especially dress. Portraits and miniatures increasingly placed clothing as the most dominant feature, often monopolising two thirds of the image. The visual developments in clothing during the Elizabethan reign were extreme and blatantly

signalled that the times were changing. Stubbes and Gosson represent a traditional viewpoint in which men should appear manly, and women modest. Gosson attributes blame to the contemporary culture which will be further explored in the third chapter. The new trend of accessible, elaborate fashions blurred rank and gender distinctions and visually undermined gender ideals. The satirists and Stubbes directly shame the new fashions as anarchic threats to the natural laws. Women within the restrictions of conventional feminine clothing and under the control of masculine men would be submissive and confined, thus removing the means to act as independent consumers of subversive fashions or deviant desires. The writers attack the manipulators of clothing as they represent change and threaten the collapse of the traditional patriarchal order.

Guilpin and Marston adopt the persona of the satirist as a device in which serious social issues can be exposed alongside vindictive, titillating and misogynistic humour. Their main aim was ultimately to gain recognition for their work and writing skills, not necessarily to expound their own personal beliefs. Yet the issues raised within the satires undoubtedly represented the anxieties pervading areas of Elizabethan society. Fashion is consistently portrayed through all the texts under consideration as an indicator of pride and personal flaws. Clothing moulds the individual and expresses a common language, which, as shown by its ample use in the satires, was universally understood. A man within the satires will betray his immorality, debt, and even bisexual promiscuity purely by the styling of his clothes. The fashionable woman in the satires is associated with lust, the usurpation and corruption of masculinity. Woman is demonised as the creator of falsity and enslaver of man, while her feminine desire is cast within the criminal world of whoredom. Marston's stylish women are loose and only 'angelicall' in appearance, most notably through the deception of cosmetics (*SV*, VII. 175). Guilpin recites a mythical history of female pagan sorcery in the creation of their beauty treatments and methods to harness sexual autonomy. These demonic portrayals of fashionable women succeed in condemning feminine beauty as a facade and diminishing the sexual power of women.

Reason, perceived as a masculine trait above fashion and sensuality, is held in high esteem throughout the satires: '*True iudgement, slight regards* Opinion' (*SV*, To *Detraction*, 17). Opinion, in contrast, is shown to enslave those who focus upon their appearance and diminish their rational senses to impress others. Marston and Guilpin assert the power of appearances, and cite numerous examples in which the inferior usurps a superior's image

and privilege or a woman assumes a man's attire. David Kuchta maintains that effeminacy was the 'misuse of these arbitrary status symbols, and thus a threat to the social order by the base materiality of the nouveau riche'.[48] Marston disdains the 'shallow head' that accepts the parading false images as truth (*SV*, VII. 60). Stubbes fears the consequences of the increased access to rich garments and emphasises the social disorder caused by 'lesse obedience' (147). The visual presence of men and women who utilise dress to alter identity contests the traditional assumption that gender and rank is fixed and divinely chosen. In a hierarchical society the idea that status could be achieved simply through clothing, if given any currency, would concern those who had privileges to lose.

Gender, another bastion of social order, is inverted by clothing within the worlds of Guilpin, Marston and Stubbes. The man who slavishly follows the fashions within *The Abuses* transforms into a woman. Guilpin imagines effeminacy in the form of a man such as Don Fashion who is sprucely dressed and licentious. Marston's effeminate man is compared with traditional ideals of masculinity and found wanting in essence and morality. The effeminate man is overpowered by his lust for both his 'ganimede' and whore, which ultimately emasculates and weakens his virility (*CS*, III. 31). In contrast, women who cross the gender boundary do not become men, an improvement for one of the inferior sex, but instead mutate into 'Monsters' (Stubbes, 2430). Stubbes is astounded by the guile of women wearing garments traditionally worn by men and his literary protest will be considered in the following chapter. Marston terms these hermaphrodites as whorish deviants and protean shadows deceiving through their appearance. By wearing masculine garments, with their associations of power, the hermaphrodite threatens to unbalance the idealistic and traditional gender roles. She assumes assertiveness, which Guilpin and Marston aim to suppress through humiliation. The witch-hunt of the cosmetic woman reveals a further attempt to quash the increasing influence and ambitions of the women who exaggerate their beauty for personal gain at the cost of men. The anxiety over female sexuality and the changeability of gender permeates the satires.

It is too simplistic to suppose that all Elizabethans viewed women who exhibited traditionally masculine features as antisocial. Possibly the highest position in the realm

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[48] David Kuchta, 'The Semiotics of masculinity in Renaissance England', in *Sexuality and gender in early modern Europe, institutions, texts, images*, ed. by James Grantham Turner (CUP, 1995), pp. 233–246 (p. 241).

during the sixteenth century was held by two Queens regnant in England and one Queen in Scotland, while Jordan claims that Elizabeth I emphasised an 'extensive rhetoric of political androgyny'.[49] Elizabeth's most praised qualities included rationality, strength and courage, were all conventional male traits. In contrast to undermining order, her image was created to reaffirm patriarchal dominance. The acceptance of the virile woman was not only limited to the Queen. Women who partook in trades, which required masculine strengths, were a constructive and valuable part of society. Yet the woman who dressed in a man's clothing was a threat to social harmony, as she was undermining the conventional gender images, and therefore questioning the rights attributed to the different sexes. Kuchta claims, '[a]ffectation and impersonation were condemned because they drew attention to the theatricality, the self-fashioning, the created image.'[50] The presence of 'hermaphrodites' who altered gender introduced the idea that the behaviour and appearance of men and women was due to convention rather than a divine or natural law. The sexual deviancy and gender transgression signalled by the new fashions was concerning as it revealed a greater move towards the rights and expressions of the individual over the rights of the society.

Guilpin's *Skialetheia* and Marston's *Certaine Satyres* and *The Scourge of Villanie* expose the contemporary anxiety over female sexuality and transexuality in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean England. Five categories of transexuality, the transformation or inversion of gender, become prominent in a close examination of their selected victims. The masculine woman usurps the man's dominance and autonomy; the effeminate man is her inverted counterpart who has transgressed into a feminine state. The impotent man represents weakened male virility which when challenged by female desire is overpowered. The Enchantress embodies the feared power of female beauty and its uses against man. The empowered whore encompasses the anxieties evoked by unleashed female desire, especially sexual independence from man. The satirists reveal these areas of anxiety in extreme forms with equally harsh treatment, and yet their perspective polarises the fears aroused by such sexual transgressions. The following chapters will explore the contemporary treatment of these areas of 'transexuality' and examine the continuance of expression of anxiety concerning gender and sexual deviancy. The thesis will place the

[49] C. Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism: literary texts and political models* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 137.
[50] Kuchta, pp. 236–237.

fears within the satires in a context of shared attitudes from their past, present and future to gain an overall understanding of the contemporary anxieties concerning female sexuality and its ability to imitate and threaten the power and integrity of man.

Chapter Two
The Masculine Woman

Society's Response to the Masculine Woman

The masculine woman's conspicuous appearance established her notoriety, which developed from the end of the Elizabethan reign and peaked during James I's rule. By assuming men's apparel or masculine-styled clothing for women, she attracted the attention of the satirists who interpreted the negative connotations of lust and rebellion from her deviant appearance. In the satires she is the monstrous partner of the effeminate man, associated with prostitution and bisexuality. Other writers also considered and harnessed the strength of her figure as an ambiguous and independent character. The existence of the masculine woman represents the belief in the possibility of female sexuality to alter and transform, to embody the processes of transexuality. It is her transsexual potential that inspires anxiety and intrigue in the period. The implications of her masculine usurpation both inspired and concerned writers and commentators of the period. The investigation will explore her complex image as a sexually threatening creature and alternatively as a noble figure striving towards gender perfection and equality.

The significance of clothing not only to mark but also to enforce distinction is evident from the actions of the authorities. Laws were created throughout Western Europe aiming to define distinctions between levels of wealth and gender in a period of disturbing social change. 'The institution of clothing, while it conceals anatomical difference, may be said to institute sexual difference, as a properly semiological distinction, as socially constructed', observes John Guillory.[1] In contrast, Harvey claims that the ideology of clothing caused writers to assume that sexual distinctions of clothing were naturally rather than culturally prescribed.[2] It was the transformation by the female transvestite of clothing as a natural symbol to a changeable custom which incited a legal and literary response.

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[1] John Guillory, 'From the Superfluous to the Supernumerary: Reading Gender into *Paradise Lost*', in *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth-Century English Poetry*, ed. by Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katharine Eisaman Maus (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 68–88 (p. 76).

[2] Elizabeth D. Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 34.

Manipulating symbolic boundaries of gender and status through clothing was a threatening trend. The Elizabethan period has more surviving royal orders associated with dress than any other reign in England.[3] *The Second Book of the Homilies* was produced by Elizabeth's bishops under the leadership of John Jewel in 1563 and contained a homily against excess of apparel that guided women to dress simply. Jardine interprets the sumptuary laws as a reaction to the uprising wealth and influence of the new mercantile order; she claims that the 'control of dress [...] was seen as a significant control of real social power and influence'.[4] Garber identifies the codes as attacking '"conspicuous consumption," the flaunting of wealth by those whose class or other social designation made such display seem transgressive', while also supporting local commerce rather than foreign imports.[5] The sumptuary laws exerted control by enforcing divisions of status and sex, which reflected contemporary concern over the misappropriation of powerful symbols. The category of gender, Garber remarks, 'enters into such codes [...] usually as a subset of class, status, rank or wealth — that is to say, as a further concomitant of either the subordination or the commodification of women.'[6] She refers to a '*transvestite effect*' by which gender and status are transgressed, which marks 'the transvestite as an index of category destabilization'.[7] The legal attempt to control apparel revealed the reservation of luxury for the elite and also the designation of clothing according to social gender expectations. Newman claims that the reaction against cross-dressing was 'an objection to women's sharing in the male privilege of *excess* in dress [rather] than to specifically masculine attire: farthingales and the voluminous breeches of the 1590s and first decade of the seventeenth century have more in common than they do differences'.[8] Elizabeth's sumptuary proclamation of 13 August 1597 attributes social disorder, including crime and inhospitality, to the desire for excessive apparel. Specifications of dress for men and women expose the anxiety over status and gender transgression, as in the case of the *Homilies* which expresses the fear of 'the meanest' being 'as richly dressed as their betters'.[9]

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[3] M. Garber, *Vested Interests, Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 26.
[4] L. Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1983), p. 142.
[5] Garber, p. 21.
[6] Garber, p. 23.
[7] Garber, p. 36.
[8] Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 121.
[9] *Sermons or Homilies appointed to be read in Churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1814), p. 267.

Elizabeth's successor also impacted upon the gender boundaries of the early seventeenth century. Woodbridge claims that James I's misogyny, homosexuality, effeminacy and pacifism fragmented gender definitions.[10] Misappropriation of traditional gendered clothing was deemed a transgression, despite the repealing of the sumptuary laws in 1604. The controversy reached a peak by 1620 and provoked King James I to attempt to end female cross-dressing, as a letter written by John Chamberlain on 25 January 1620 recorded:

> Yesterday the Bishop of London called together all the clergy about this town, and told them he has express commandment from the king to will them to inveigh vehemently and bitterly in their sermons against the insolency of our women, and their wearing of broad brimmed hats, pointed doublets, their hair cut short or shorn, and some of them stilettos or poniards.[11]

King James I clearly felt compelled to curtail the 'insolent' women who provokingly dressed as men. Their assimilation of masculine clothing greatly threatened the King, whose 'sexual tastes' led to 'an inner anxiety about how fixed gender identity actually was', claims J. Todd and E. Spearing.[12] It is certain that the masculine woman represented a social threat to man's privileged position of authority, which justified the King's response. Chamberlain on 12 February 1620 commented upon the campaign:

> Our pulpits ring continually of the insolence and impudence of women, and to helpe the matter forward the players have likewise taken them to taske, and so to the ballades and ballad-singers, so that they can come nowhere but theyre eares tingle; and if all this will not serve, the King threatens to fall upon theyre husbands, parents, or frends that have or shold have power over them, and make them pay for it.[13]

The extent of the campaign enacted by influential men in authority and popular culture to suppress the masculine woman emphasises her perceived danger to gendered power. Mary Beth Rose explains that she 'had assumed threatening enough proportions in the conservative mind to be singled out in a conscientious and thorough attempt to eliminate the style from social life'.[14] At the end of Elizabeth's reign the educated woman was often a figure of ridicule, while women's work opportunities were limited. The female role was

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[10] L. Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1984), p. 144.

[11] J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 25 January 1619/20, in *The Chamberlain Letters*, ed. by Elizabeth McClure Thomson (London: John Murray, 1966), p. 271.

[12] *Counterfeit Ladies: The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse, The Case of Mary Carleton*, ed. by J. Todd and E. Spearing (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1994), p. xxiii.

[13] McClure Thomson, p. 271.

[14] Mary Beth Rose, 'Women in Men's Clothing: Apparel and Social Stability in *The Roaring Girl*', *ELR*, 14:3 (Autumn 1984), 367–91 (p. 370).

marginalized and therefore the usurpation of masculine clothing, a symbol of status and power, offered a method of protest and emancipation.

The campaign to contain the female transvestite intensified the potential for transgression through clothing. Dollimore asserts, 'the more elaborate the classifications, the more opportunity there was to transgress, and, quite possibly, the greater the attraction of transgression.'[15] He places the transvestite within the context of '[t]ransgressive reinscription', a mode of 'transgression which seeks not an escape from existing structures but rather a subversive reinscription within them, and in the process their dislocation or displacement'.[16] The transvestite utilises the images of authority, the image of man, yet her masculine usurpation defines her position as an outsider. Social order is maintained, defined and re-legitimised by ostracising the deviant. In contrast Dollimore identifies the hermaphrodite as a symbol of 'transcendence' of the existing order.[17] The female transvestite was attacked as a 'hermaphrodite' converting her into the abstract monster rather than the inverter of social order and difference, which was a far more political and anarchic persona. Dollimore emphasises her threat: 'the female transvestite inevitably put masculinity itself — and sexual difference more generally — under scrutiny.'[18] The female transvestite questioned and altered her own gender and through her spectacle encouraged others to question the existing beliefs and culture. Dollimore offers two explanations of the female transvestite: 'as a classic instance of self-oppression — the woman can only conceive her equality by taking on masculine guise — or as a claim to equality made possible by a gender inversion which is simultaneously a demystification of sexual difference itself.'[19] The masculine woman challenged the concept of fixed gender by the visual proof of her ability to alter her prescribed female role.

The existence of the masculine woman undermined essential ideas of order. Vocal traditionalists of the Elizabethan age referred back to earlier doctrines such as the gender definitions made by Sir Thomas Elyot in 1531:

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[15] Jonathan Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), p. 290.
[16] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 285.
[17] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 297.
[18] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 306.
[19] Jonathan Dollimore, 'Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism, Feminism and Marxist Humanism', in *Renaissance Drama and Cultural Change, Renaissance Drama 17*, ed. by M. B. Rose (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1986), pp. 482–493 (p. 483).

> A man in his natural perfection is fierce, hardy, strong in opinion, covetous of glory, desirous of knowledge, appetiting by generation to bring forth his semblable. The good nature of a woman is to be mild, timorous, tractable, benign, of sure remembrance, and shamefast.[20]

Male and female were presented as binary opposites by Aristotle and the Hippocratic corpus, while Galenic belief even claimed female genitalia as an inverted male penis and testes.[21] Scientific attempts to investigate gender divergence showed a desire to accommodate new discrepancies alongside traditional beliefs. The effeminate man, the masculine woman and the hermaphrodite were explained as imbalanced anomalies or monstrosities.[22] Renaissance stories of sex change often portrayed women developing into men to move towards perfection or, as Orgel suggests, 'toward completion.'[23] The concept of the man transforming into a woman was inconceivable as it undermined his superiority.[24] One case recorded by Paré concerned a peasant girl Marie who, while chasing pigs, leapt over a ditch and developed male genitalia. Her story appeared in Montaigne's *Essais* in 1588 in the essay 'De la force de l'imagination' from Book One. Patricia Parker emphasises the essay's insistence on the power of belief, or a 'strong imagination', to transform gender.[25] Greenblatt considers other cases of early modern female transvestism and concludes that 'individual identity in the early modern period served less as a final goal than as a way station on the road to a firm and decisive identification with normative structures'.[26] Gender was believed to be the natural distinction between man and woman and the existence of androgyny, transvestism and sex change needed exploration and assimilation into the belief system to maintain order.

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[20] Sir Thomas Elyot, *A Critical Edition of Sir Thomas Elyot's The Boke named the Governour*, ed. by Donald W. Rude (New York: Garland Pub., 1992), I:xxi, p. 93.
[21] Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life* (Cambridge: CUP, 1980), p. 3.
[22] Maclean, p. 39.
[23] S. Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p. 23.
[24] Androgyny and cases of gender deviance were a focus for numerous works including Gaspard Bauhin's *De hermaphroditorum monstrosorumque partium natura* (1604; Oppenheim, 1614) and Johann Schenck von Grafenberg's *Observationes* (1584–97) (pp. 573–5).
[25] Patricia Parker, 'Gender Ideology, Gender Change: The Case of Marie Germain', *Criticial Inquiry*, 19:2 (Winter 1993), 342–3.
[26] Stephen Greenblatt, 'Fiction and Friction', in *Reconstructing Individualism: Automony, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, ed. by Thomas C. Heller et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), p. 75.

Dekker and van de Pol discovered 'a deeply rooted tradition' with 'fifty authentic cases of female transvestism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Great Britain'.[27] Transvestism was a viable option for women in poverty who were confronted by limited work opportunities and also offered a way to enable lesbian relationships. Dekker and van de Pol maintain that lesbianism was not a recognised sexual category; therefore, it would be logical for a woman to think, 'if I covet a woman, I must be a man.'[28] The early modern belief in the ability to transform gender through clothing, imagination, heat, sexual over-indulgence and luxury supports the theory that some women adopted dress to become men. Cross-dressing enabled poorer women to express their lesbian desires, while their richer counterparts took advantage of its accompanying sexual freedom as a hierarchical privilege. Some female transvestites joined the Forces to stay with or escape husbands or simply to defend their country. Dekker and van de Pol attribute the prevalence of cross-dressing in northwest Europe to 'the late age of marriage for women, the relatively great freedom accorded to them, and customary female migration patterns'. They assert that these factors 'put young lower-class women in real risk of finding themselves destitute and friendless far from home'.[29] Masculine clothes also allowed women involved in crime to disguise their identity and to partake in conventional male offences. Dekker and van de Pol discovered evidence of transvestism in judicial archives and so conclude that criminal women 'felt less intensely the social pressure which impelled individuals to behave in a way consistent with their sexes'.[30]

Dekker and van de Pol distinguish between prostitutes who imitated boys for titillation and the female transvestite: 'those who became prostitutes followed the female, passive, sexual path, while those who "became men" followed the male, active and sexless path, at the same time preserving their sexual honour.'[31] Jean Howard validly notes that poorer women may have adopted the fashion to work, ultimately turning to prostitution as a necessity. Garber suggests, 'one semiotic benefit [...] of this transvestite outfit was that it presented the courtesan as both woman and boy — both sexually enticing', and would

[27] Rudolf M Dekker and Lotte C van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1989), p. 1.
[28] Dekker and van de Pol, p. 57.
[29] Dekker and van de Pol, p. 102.
[30] Dekker and van de Pol, p. 38.
[31] Dekker and van de Pol, p. 39.

therefore have imbued a dual sexual appeal for the male client.[32] The satirists evoked a similar interpretation of the masculine woman.

The example of a powerful Queen who emphasised an ambiguous gender contributed to the phenomenon of the masculine woman and its literary treatment. All Elizabethan men were subject to a woman through her royal birthright, which granted power over their lives and desires. Louis Adrian Montrose suggests that 'the rule of a woman would generate peculiar tensions within such a "patriarchal" society'.[33] Past hermaphroditic or assertive female figures were incorporated in the construction of the Queen's image in the guise of female saints and the Virgin Mary. Elizabeth's success was greater than her European female counterparts, partly due to her refusal to marry. Levin attributes her determination to remain single to the example of her mother and stepmothers, which illustrated the dangers for a woman caught between the 'intersection of sexuality and politics, of gender and power'.[34] The cult of Elizabeth ultimately focused upon the female personification of chastity; as Jardine notes, 'the most powerful stereotypes of female heroism for the Renaissance all involve sexuality chastened in one form or another.'[35] Elizabeth promoted art that emphasised her legal male body and her virginity 'gave credibility to the spiritual maleness of her second body by obviating the possibility of an actual pregnancy'.[36] In contrast rumours of sexual immorality, love affairs, illegitimate children, and an inability to consummate, focused attention upon the Queen's female body; it was an unavoidable contradiction to the royal princely persona, and so undermined the Queen's constructed androgynous image. Hostility over her unconventional role led critics to attack her through accusations of sexual and genital deformity. In 1562 there were five broadsides describing Elizabeth's monstrous childbirths and these types of rumours threatened the Queen's authority, as Levin suggests, by describing her 'as "different from other women," less than them in the most fundamental sense of the ability to be wife and mother'.[37] It was a

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[32] Garber, p. 87.
[33] Louis Adrian Montrose, '"Shaping Fantasies": Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture', *Representations*, I:2 (Spring 1983), pp. 64–5.
[34] C. Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), p. 1.
[35] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 186.
[36] Constance Jordan, 'Representing Political Androgyny: More on the Siena Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I', in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. by Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), p. 161.
[37] Levin, p. 86.

reaction partly characterised by the male subject's sense of degradation in serving a woman who rebuked her traditional roles of mother and wife.

Elizabeth's male body politic and virginal female body proclaimed a positive image of androgyny, which she consistently emphasised through speeches. She assumed a warrior image to lead her army on the threat of invasion, and on news of disorder on 9 August 1588 reviewed and addressed the levies. The Queen's speech at Tilbury has been disputed; however, Leonel Sharp's letter to the Duke of Buckingham written before 1631 claims that she pronounced: 'I have the heart and stomach of a king.'[38] An alternative version published in 1612 from a 1601 sermon by William Leigh follows a similar vein: 'I haue beene your Prince in peace, so will I be in warrre.'[39] The Queen revealed the power of masculinity and how man's military courage could be usurped to idealise a woman. Jardine warns against converting Elizabeth into a feminist: 'none of the royal queens, or nearly-queens ever advanced (or even considered advancing) a woman to any position of prominence within her administration except the traditional one of lady-in-waiting.'[40] Elizabeth was not an active feminist and such a public conviction would have been dangerous and unpopular amongst the powerful men of the realm who sought favour and influence.

However, Levin and Leah Marcus have noted Elizabeth's effect upon gender roles in the female characters of Shakespeare's drama through 'cross-dressing'[41] and their 'sexual multivalence'.[42] Susan Shapiro identifies the influence of an androgynous female ruler upon the emergence of women dressing as men to gain freedom.[43] Levin also interprets the hostile reaction to the cross-dressed woman as partly influenced by the example of a Queen who 'was a potential model for many sorts of unwelcome behavior'.[44] Literary attacks during the controversy suggest that writers, audiences and society were responding to what they perceived as a fragmentation of conventional gender ideals. The existence of

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[38] 'Dr. Sharp to the Duke of Buckingham', in *Cabala, sive, Scrinia sacra mysteries of state and government: In letters of illustrious persons and great ministers of state* (London: G. Beddell and T. Collins, 1663), Wing / C185, Huntington Library <http://eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 7 January 2010] (pp. 372–74).
[39] Levin, p. 144.
[40] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 170.
[41] Levin, p. 4.
[42] Leah S. Marcus, 'Shakespeare's Comic Heroines, Elizabeth I and the Political Uses of Androgyny', in *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Literary and Historical perspectives*, ed. by Mary Beth Rose (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), pp. 135–153 (p. 137).
[43] Susan C. Shapiro, 'Feminists in Elizabethan England', *History Today*, 27:11 (November 1977), 703–711.
[44] Levin, pp. 137–8.

Queen Elizabeth revealed the possibility of an expansion of the concept of the woman while her powerful public image dually acted to naturalise and provoke anxiety concerning the assertive woman within society. Suzuki comments, 'Elizabeth's "effect" indeed had a profound influence on the ability of women to counter misogynist attacks such as Swetnam's and even to imagine political possibilities for themselves in the generations that followed her throughout the seventeenth century.'[45] Elizabeth was the first Queen since the conquest to reign absolutely in her own right, and although she may not have been as obviously rebellious as the masculine woman, she still posed a similar threat to patriarchal power, but one that could not be removed so instead was displaced onto the acceptable target of normal women. Marie Delcourt shares this observation of androgyny: 'pure concept, pure vision of the spirit, it appears adorned with the highest qualities. But once made real in a being of flesh and blood, it is a monstrosity.'[46] The androgyny of the Queen commanded respect while the reality of a woman with no impressive station wearing masculine clothes evoked repulsion and fear.

The threat of women dressing as men was a primal fear expressed through religion in the early sixteenth century. John Louis Vives's *Instruction of a Christian Woman* (1529) issues an ultimatum:

> A woman shall use no mannes raymente, elles lette hir thinke she hath the mans stomacke, but take hede to the woordes of our Lorde: sayinge, a woman shall not put on mans apparel: for so to do is abhominable afore God. But I truste no woman will do it, excepte she be paste both honestee and shame.[47]

The Bible makes a clear prohibition of cross-dressing, while the custom of long hair symbolised female modesty by covering their bodies.[48]

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[45] Mihoko Suzuki, 'Elizabeth, Gender, and the Political Imaginary of Seventeenth-Century England', in *Debating Gender in Early Modern England, 1500–1700* ed. by Cristina Malcolmson & Mihoko Suzuki (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 231–253 (p. 233).
[46] M. Delcourt, *Hermaphrodite: Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity*, trans. by J. Nicholson (London: Studio Books, 1961), p. 45.
[47] John Louis Vives, 'Of raiments', in *Instruction of a Christian Woman*, trans. by Richard Hyrde (1557), Bk II, Chap. viii, in Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 28.
[48] Deuteronomy 22. 5; I Corinthians 2. 7–10.

The Controversy in Literature

In the sixteenth century clothing gradually became more unisex, with men at the close of the century wearing broad-skirted coats, lace collars, wide breeches and long hair. The 1570s witnessed the start of a 'transvestite controversy' when women began to dress in masculine styles and critics identified them as a threat to order. George Gascoigne's satire *The Steele Glas* (1576) expresses suspicion and animosity:

> What be they? Women? masking in mens weedes?
> With dutchkin dublets, [...] and with Jerkins jagged?
> With high copt hates and fethers flaunt a flaunt?
> They be so sure even *Wo* to *Men* in dede.[49]

As previously discussed in Chapter One, Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) reveals the feared implications of the masculine woman upon gender definitions, which forms part of his greater anxiety over the disruption of order. The female transvestite embodies and heralds unnatural transformation, and Stubbes fears the usurpation of power by such ungodly women. Howard stresses that he vents 'anger at women who exercise independence, anger at women who assume male prerogatives, anger at women who will not hold the shapes men have constructed for them'.[50] 'Hermaphroditi, that is Monsters of both kindes', was Stubbes's definition of women who assumed masculine appearance.[51] William Averell in *A Meruailous Combat of Contrarieties* (1588) continued the monstrous theme:

> though they be in sexe Women, yet in attire they appeare to be men, and are like Androgini, who counterfayting the shape of either kind, are in deede neither [...]. While they are in condition women, and would seeme in apparrell men, they are neither men nor women, but plaine Monsters.[52]

'Androginis' and 'Hermaphroditi' are the authorities' labels for deviant women, marking them as unnatural and monstrous. Howard points to a move to contain gender, 'to make certain behaviors unthinkable for "good" women and to marginalize and make monsters of

[49] George Gascoigne, *The Steele Glas* (1576), ed. by Edward Arber, English Reprints no. 11 (London: Edward Arber, 1868), V, 82–3.
[50] J. E. Howard, 'Renaissance Antitheatricality and the Politics of Gender and Rank in *Much Ado About Nothing*', in *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*, ed. by J. E. Howard and M. F. O'Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), p. 168.
[51] Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, ed. by M. J. Kidnie, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 245 (Tempe, Arizona: Renaissance English Text Society, 2002), 2430.
[52] William Averell, *A meruailous combat of contrarieties* (London: I. C[harlewood] for Thomas Hacket, 1588), STC (2nd edn) / 981, Huntington Library <http://eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 7 January 2010] (Sig. B1v).

those who *do* engage in such behavior.'[53] Harrison's *Description of England* (1587) emphasises the disorder racking society and gender relations: '[t]hus it is now come to pass that women become men and men transformed into monsters.'[54]

John Williams's sermon before the King on 22 February 1619 directly addressed the issue of female transvestites and their role as the Devil's monstrosities made from God's creations:

> In a word he had divided male and female, but the Devil had joined them, that *mulier Formosa* is now become, *mulier monstrosa superne*, half man half woman, all (outwardly) of her new maker.[55]

Female transvestism was less threatening as a popular literary device (most notably employed by Shakespeare) of temporary disguise as a means of escaping oppression or avoiding rape. After 1610 the heroine in disguise was mostly abandoned in favour of the more assertive masculine woman.[56] In the play *Epicoene* Jonson attacks the collegiate women who assume the male right to assert opinions and become involved in politics: they 'cry down or up what they like or dislike [...] with most masculine or rather hermaphroditical authority' (I. 1. 74–6).[57] The Collegiate usurps her husband's name and money, and acts with a masculine sexual freedom. Epicoene is advised as to the sexual mantra of a Collegiate: '[w]hy should women deny their favors to men?' (IV. 3. 30). Epicoene proceeds to expose the association of the masculine woman with the unnatural manipulation of procreation:

> EPICOENE ...And have you those excellent receipts, madam, to keep yourselves from bearing of children?
> HAUGHTY Oh yes, Morose. How should we maintain our youth and beauty else? Many births of a woman make her old, as many crops make the earth barren.
> (IV. 3. 50–5)

The secrecy of these women's unnatural powers of birth control evokes fears of witchcraft and female self-gratification through sex. The Collegiates compete for the sexual company of Dauphine by inviting him to their chambers. Haughty's hints are unmistakable:

> HAUGHTY Sir, I can distinguish gems from pebbles—

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[53] Howard, p. 168.
[54] William Harrison, *The Description of England*, ed. G. Edelen (Ithaca, New York, 1968), p. 147.
[55] John Williams, *A Sermon of Apparell* (1620), pp. 6–7, in *Renaissance Woman: A Sourcebook*, ed. by K. Aughterson (London and New York: Routledge, 1999) pp. 77–9.
[56] Woodbridge, p. 156.
[57] Ben Jonson, *Epicoene; or, The Silent Woman*, ed. by L. A. Beaurline (London: Edward Arnold, 1967).

> DAUPHINE [*aside*] Are you so skilful in stones? (V. 2. 7–8)

She asserts her sexual experience and her preference for Dauphine with the bawdy reference to testicles. Dauphine's aside emphasises his amusement at her professed sexual 'skill' and his feminine role as the lover to be wooed. Centaur attacks her companion Haughty as old and diseased to improve her own chances of luring him to her chamber first: '[b]esides, her physicians give her out to be none o' the clearest; whether she pay 'em or no, heav'n knows; and she's above fifty too, and pargets!' (V. 2. 30–3). She is accused of harbouring sexual disease and disguising her ailments by bribery and with 'pargets' or plastered cosmetics. Mavis's scheme instead involves the conceit of an Italian riddle, and the ruse of resting in her sick bed to procure the opportunity of sex with Dauphine (V. 2. 53–60). The Collegiates are independent and predate their own choice of sexual mate. They are scheming and competitive in the pursuit and act to dominate a man as their personal sexual 'servant'.

Truewit's moralistic conclusion to the play claims to protect slandered women by attacking Daw and La Foole through the figure of Epicoene:

> this Amazon, the champion of the sex, should beat you now thriftily for the common slanders which ladies receive from such cuckoos as you are. You are they that, when no merit or fortune can make you hope to enjoy their bodies, will yet lie with their reputations and make their fame suffer. (V. 4. 212–17)

As protector of slandered womankind Truewit is unconvincing, considering his previous misogynistic rants and that all the women assembled condoned sexual favours and were accordingly despised by the men. He laments the poor women whose reputation is ruined by desperate men. Daw's and La Foole's claims of intimacy with Epicoene are undermined by the revelation of her true male sex. Truewit's assumption that homosexual intimacy is impossible contrasts with the ease of Epicoene's earlier condemnation as a whore. She is an 'Amazon' and 'the champion of the sex' who would beat the 'cuckoos' who steal other men's women, plant rumours and bastards for other men to rear. The Collegiates are mute, a further point to undermine Truewit's 'feminist' speech:

> Madams, you are mute upon this new metamorphosis! but here stands she that has vindicated your fames. Take heed of such *insectae* hereafter. And let it not trouble you that you have discover'd any mysteries to his young gentleman. He is (a'most) of years, and will make a good visitant within this twelvemonth. In the meantime we'll all undertake for his secrecy, that can speak so well of his silence. (V. 4. 222–9)

The ladies are silenced by the realisation that their confidant is in fact a man to whom they have revealed 'mysteries', particularly their 'excellent receipts' to prevent pregnancy and secure sexual freedom (IV. 4. 51). Truewit's description of Epicoene as a 'good visitant' is ambiguous, commending his role as a good 'servant' or as a veiled statement of his position to bribe: 'we'll all undertake for his secrecy, that can speak so well of his silence.' Mark Johnston emphasises Epicoene's exposure as a process which also unveils the construction of the Collegiates' gender: 'the revelation of Epicoene's illusory gender status metatheatrically draws attention to the constructed quality of their femininity in relation to hers.'[58] Now that Epicoene is defined as male he is heralded as a greater champion of women, yet when a woman he was praised by the ladies and the Knights, characters of dubious morality and of constant ridicule. A gentleman's son masquerading as a woman for six months is deemed a trustworthier model and champion of women than a real collegiate woman. Such a statement strips women of the ability and right to self-assertion and rule. Masculinity imbues the Collegiates with man's sexual licence and the consequent impact upon the identity of men in *Epicoene* will be analysed in the following two chapters. Levin observes, '[c]ross-dressing sometimes represents not power but a sexual freedom that delimits autonomy and power.'[59] Being sexually assertive had its drawbacks; as Woodbridge notes, 'the man-clothed woman herself was branded lecherous on account of her aggressiveness.'[60]

The extremes of sexuality ranging from an excessive lust to chastity were associated with the masculine woman, depending of course upon the perspective of the person making the association. Her appearance proved a stimulus to desire and venomous attacks aimed at her sexuality; amongst some writers she was a sexually lascivious creature, either titillating or corruptive. One literary representation consciously emphasised sexual fantasy: 'the fact that it was just possible to see through their masculine appearance was considered erotically titillating.'[61] Such a concept informs Donne's elegy 'On his Mistris', which was omitted from the 1633 collection of his poems. It assumes the sexual association of the hermaphrodite as a universal concept, despite his mistress's intention to cross-dress as a sign of loyalty and devotion.

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[58] Mark Albert Johnston, 'Prosthetic Absence in Jonson's *Epicoene*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair*', *ELR*, 37 (2007), 401–428 (p. 417).
[59] Levin, p. 126.
[60] Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540–1620* (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1984), p. 179.
[61] Dekker and van de Pol, p. 54.

> Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
> Thy bodies habit, nor mindes; bee not strange
> To thy selfe onely; All will spye in thy face
> A blushing womanly discovering grace.[62]

The words 'dissemble', 'change', and 'strange' signify the attraction of sexual possibility and uncertainty while her demeanour also suggests the true woman beneath. The persona insists that her disguise as a page would not protect, but instead threaten her chastity by evoking men's 'lust and hideous rage' (Elegy XVI. 40).

Woodbridge explains the conditions which allow a positive literary representation of the masculine woman or 'aggressive virago': 'she is usually a single woman — Long Meg of Westminster, Moll Cutpurse, Bess Bridges, Rosalind; if such a character eventually marries, she is expected to hand over the sovereignty to her husband forthwith, if she hopes to retain that admiration.'[63] *The Life and Pranks of Long Meg of Westminster* (1582) reveals how Long Meg, who wore masculine clothing, fought against the French army at Boulogne but, once married, surrendered to her husband in obedience. In contrast, the satirist Hall referred to the trend of 'mannish Hus-wiues' in his *Virgidemiae*.[64] Women who had refused the conventional roles of the wife and mother were deemed lesser women, even monsters. Many of the negative critiques argued that a female assuming masculinity could only ever amount to a poor imitation and the worst example of man. The female transvestite employed the symbolic power of man's clothing to proclaim her aggression and assertiveness, a blatant challenge to her designated role in the patriarchal society. Woodbridge states that many interpreted this challenge as 'the herald of impending chaos'.[65] The antithesis of the cross-dressed woman was found within the home, silent and chaste. By assuming a man's clothes these women rejected their submissive role. Howard emphasises the implications of their transformation: '[t]hey became masterless women, and this threatened overthrow of hierarchy was discursively read as the eruption of uncontrolled sexuality.'[66] The cross-dressed woman undermined the hierarchical system in the same way that the bastard threatened the accepted order, which is an interpretation

[62] John Donne, *The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets*, ed. by Helen Gardner (Oxford: OUP, 1966), Elegy XVI. 27–30.
[63] Woodbridge, pp. 200–1.
[64] Joseph Hall, *Virgidemiarum*, in *The Collected Poems of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter and Norwich*, ed. by A. Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1949), IV, 6. 15.
[65] Woodbridge, p. 218.
[66] Jean E. Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England', *Shakespeare* Quarterly, 39:4 (Winter 1988), 418–440 (p. 424).

shared by Howard: 'the polemics signal a sex-gender system under pressure.'[67] Jardine identifies the blurring of the distinctions between man and woman, his subordinate, as 'the implied threat which is attacked in pamphlet after pamphlet addressed against fashionable excesses in the early seventeenth century'.[68] Underlying all these attacks upon masculine women is a fear for the sanctity and nature of masculinity: Dusinberre claims, '[a] woman in disguise smokes out the male world, perceiving masculinity as a form of acting.'[69] Orgel similarly asserts, 'clothes make the woman, clothes make the man: the costume is of the essence.'[70] The masculine woman through her own fashioning exposed the threatening realisation that masculinity was a construction and could be usurped.

The erosion of traditional hierarchy in terms of rank and sexuality unnerved moralists, satirists and preachers, and they predictably saw the masculine woman as another element of the trend. Public and literary interest in the masculine woman reached a peak between 1615 and 1620. The publishing of Swetnam's *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward and Unconstant Women* in 1615 marked the start of this preoccupation. Four significant texts of the female transvestite controversy, two of which were anonymous pamphlets, one an autobiography, and one a play, will reveal the contemporary anxieties aroused by the sexual efficacy and threat of the masculine woman.

Hic Mulier and *Haec-Vir*

Hic Mulier and *Haec-Vir* epitomised the climax of the transvestite controversy, a trend which Clark claims, 'provoked immediate and emotional literary response.'[71] Both anonymous pamphlets were licensed to John Trundle: *Hic Mulier* on 9 February and its reply *Haec-Vir* on the 16 February 1620. Louis B. Wright claims that both texts 'were designed as a bookseller's effort to capitalize on popular interest in both sides of the controversy over the position of women'.[72] Read together, the two essays sought the

[67] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre', p. 418.
[68] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 156.
[69] Juliet Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 244–5.
[70] Orgel, p. 104.
[71] Sandra Clark, '*Hic Mulier, Haec Vir*, and the Controversy over Masculine Women', *Studies in Philology*, 82:2 (Spring 1985), 166–167 (p. 158).
[72] L. B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935), p. 499.

punishment of all gender transgressors yet their contrasting style and argument suggests that there were two writers. By focusing upon the question of what makes a woman and a man the pamphlet would undoubtedly attract female readers. Clark pinpoints middle-class women as 'a ready audience for pamphleteers and playwrights, available to be rebuked, harangued, and corrected, but also to be stimulated and amused'.[73] The first pamphlet *Hic Mulier* aims to chastise and correct women, while the second *Haec-Vir* vocalises varying female counterarguments. Woodbridge treats the masculine woman as 'the great symbol of the age, often feared and hated but sometimes approved and welcomed'.[74]

Hic Mulier attacks the masculine woman who cross-dresses and behaves inappropriately for her sex. Numerous contemporary accounts support the fact of her existence although *Hic Mulier's* portrayal of the female transvestite is driven by an objective to discredit. The title page woodcut depicts two women at the barbers whose full skirts betray their true gender while the doublet, plumed hat and masculine hairstyle indicate their transgression. The women's excessive height dominates the weak and noticeably small serving men, emphasising their unrestrained masculinity and disruption of the gender balance. Men are ruled by the wishes of the consumer woman, a perverse reversal of social hierarchy.

The writer taps into the contemporary fear of social ascent via usurped clothing from those of a superior status. The masculine woman is guilty as she employs the 'false armoury of yellow Starch (for to weare yellow on white, or white vpon yellow, is by the rules of Heraldry basenesse, bastardie and indignitie) the folly of imitation, [...] and the grossest basenesse of all basenesse, to do whatsoeuer a greater power will command you'.[75] The socially inferior are chastised for imitating and usurping status, and the masculine woman is defined by her stolen clothing:

> For these at the best are sure but ragges of Gentry, torne from better pieces for their foule staines, or else the adulterate branches of rich Stocks, that taking too much sap from the roote, are cut away, and imploy'd in base vses; or, if not so, they are the stinking vapours drawne from dunghills, which nourisht in the higher Regions of the ayre, become Meteors and false fires blazing and flashing therein, and amazing mens mindes with their strange proportions, till the substance of their pride being spent, they drop down againe to the place from whence they came, and there rot and consume vnpittied, and vn-remembred. (Sig. B)

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[73] Clark, '*Hic Mulier, Haec Vir*,' p. 158.
[74] Woodbridge, p. 145.
[75] *Hic Mulier: Or, The Man-Woman and Haec-Vir: Or, The Womanish Man* (Ilkley, Yorkshire: The Scolar Press, 1973), Sig. A4. Reproduced from Huntington Library *Hic Mulier* (61256) and *Haec-Vir* (61257) and referred to throughout text by original printed title.

The writer attempts to suppress the efficacy of Hic Mulier's image, painting her clothing as rags, the corrupt part torn from the fabric of the Gentry. She is a poor imitation, an unaware lampoon of her superior, yet one which projects the potential of a social climber. With her illegitimate masculine identity she is compared to the bastard, a product of unsanctioned lust through 'the adulterate branches of rich Stocks'. The writer is not so confident in the masculine woman's ineptitude for imitating the gentry. He resorts to images of defecation in an attempt to defeat her threat; she is the miasmic vapour of 'dunghils' drawn above its place to form superficial '[m]eteors and false fires blazing and flashing'. She 'acts' the part of a superior, exuding a perverse influence by 'amazing mens mindes'. The writer fantasises about their demise into insignificance, 'vnpittied, and vn-remembred.' He is motivated by the belief that female transvestism infects all levels of society: 'an infection that emulates the plague, and throwes it selfe amongst women of all degrees, all deserts, and all ages; from the Capitoll to the Cottage' (Sig. B^{v}–B2). Female disorder transcends class and poses a serious threat to the integrity of the hierarchical society.

The writer also implicates the 'great' public figures in the sin of masculine fashion:

> O yes, a world of other, many knowne great; thought good, wisht happy, much loued, and most admired, are so foulely branded with this infamie of disguise, and the markes sticke so deepe on their naked faces, and more naked bodies, that not all the painting in *Rome* or *Fauna* can conceale them, but euery eye discouers them almost as low as their middles. (Sig. B^{v})

Even the greatest woman is physically corrupted by the masculine styles, which is epitomised by her blatant display of an open doublet. Sin cannot be concealed by painted cosmetics or a grand persona. Harvey suggests that it is 'as if disguise penetrated the very flesh it covered and then manifested itself as a sign of shame that could be discerned by all eyes, [...] concealment turns into a transparency of deformity'.[76] The fashion and its attributed vices are etched upon the wearer's essence and unlike the clothing cannot be removed or remodelled. The writer does not envisage any redemption for these women as they offer body and soul in exchange for the fashion: 'she that will giue her body to haue her bodie deformed, will not sticke to giue her soule to haue her minde satisfied' (Sig. B2). Hic Mulier trades her chaste female form to feed her appetite for an unnatural usurpation. She becomes 'man in body by attyre, man in behauiour by rude complement, man in nature by aptnesse to anger, man in action by pursuing reuenge, man in wearing weapons, man in

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[76] Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices*, p. 45.

vsing weapons' (Sig. B2). Through clothing the masculine woman becomes a man. Harvey pinpoints the wider context of anxiety: 'the threat registered in the disturbing representations of the gender hybridism is a more fundamental threat of ambiguity, of sexual indeterminacy.'[77] The writer fears the effects of indiscriminate gender altering society irrevocably, through the misappropriation of symbols which inscribe masculinity.

Hic Mulier establishes a contrasting feminine ideal to the masculine woman who has 'holy thoughts, modest carriage, and seuere chastity' (Sig. A3). Her controlled sexuality stands out and is immortalised in divine and ethereal 'golden pen, on leaues of golden paper' in comparison with the masculine woman condemned by 'a rough quill, and blacke Inke, on iron sheetes, the iron deeds of an iron generation' (Sig. A3^{v}). Harvey describes the ideal woman as 'unknowable, impregnable, and invincible', yet the emphasis upon the containment and preservation of her rare and precious nature suggests the contrary.[78] The chaste woman is penetrable and must form a defence through clothing: 'hauing euery window closed with a strong Casement, and euery Loope-hole furnisht with such strong Ordnance, that no vnchaste eye may come neere to assayle them' (Sig. B4). In contrast, the masculine woman is converted into a deformed man who can penetrate with her phallic weapon. Jardine qualifies the attack on women bearing arms and insists that they were following the contemporary male fashion of wearing 'dress-weapons so ornate and lavish [...] [to] suggest decorativeness, not use'.[79] Despite the importance of adornment, the image of real women with weapons rather than mythic Amazons clashed greatly with the idealised image of the mother and healer. In a sense weapons were the clearest way to reject society's designated role for women. The phallic sword is powerfully contrasted with the vulnerable tear:

> the weapon of a vertuous woman was her teares, which euery good man pitied, and euery valiant man honoured: the weapon of a cruell man is his sword, which neither Law allowes, nor reason defends: and will you leaue the excellent shield of innocence for this deformed instrument of disgrace? (Sig. B3)

The woman who sacrifices her passive plea for mercy to gain man's weapon also assumes his illegality, irrationality and 'disgrace'. The loss of the ideals of womanhood serves as a warning; the masculine woman will 'lose all the charmes of womens naturall perfections,

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[77] Harvey, pp. 45–6.
[78] Harvey, p. 44.
[79] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 158.

haue no presence to winne respect, no beauty to inchaunt mens hearts' (Sig. B3^{v}). All men will disdain and be repulsed by masculine women, which if true why is it necessary to expose their base deformity? Cross-dressing is unnatural as it perverts a woman's appeal and disrupts gender relations:

> The long hayre of a woman is the ornament of her sexe, and bashfull shamefastnesse her chiefe honour: the long haire of a man, the vizard for a theeuish or murderous disposition: and will you cut off that beauty, to weare the others villainy? (Sig. B3)

All that is masculine and usurped by woman taints her most significant virtues of modesty and chastity. The masculine woman demanded attention and was physically free to express male assertiveness and aggression, all advantages which the writer neglects to mention.

The writer predicts the fragmentation of relations between men and women through Hic Mulier's disruption of gender ideals. Rose perceives the fear that 'faithful erotic relations between the sexes will become impossible and the integrity of the family will consequently disintegrate'.[80] Rachel Trubowitz further exposes the masculine woman's corruption of motherhood: 'the female transvestite allies sartorial deviance with nonmaternal female unnaturalness, which *Hic Mulier* equates with both the origin of evil and evil origins.'[81] The writer asserts that the English man would 'blush' to see 'that in a full fourth part of the world there cannot be found one piece of a Character, to compare or liken with the absurditie of their Masculine Inuention' (Sig. C3–3^{v}). The claim that English women were uncivilised in comparison to their foreign counterparts is deliberately provocative. Trubowitz observes how the transvestite's naked breast 'takes on the same errant maternity and malevolent motherhood stereotypically imputed to Catholics, Jews, and other domestic "exotics"'.[82] She is defined as a heathen other, a perverse stranger within and one to be crushed into submission or expelled.

Anxiety over her threat is translated through the image of an army of masculine women of all ages revoking God's original female template:

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[80] Rose, p. 371.

[81] Rachel Trubowitz, 'Cross-Dressed Woman and Natural Mothers: "Boundary Panic" in *Hic Mulier*', in *Debating Gender in Early Modern England, 1500–1700,* ed. by Cristina Malcolmson and Mihoko Suzuki (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 187.

[82] Trubowitz, p. 196.

> For since the daies of *Adam* women were neuer so Masculine; Masculine in their genders and whole generations, from the Mother, to the youngest daughter; Masculine in Number, from one to multitudes; Masculine in Case, euen from the head to the foot; Masculine in Moode, from bold speech, to impudent action; and Masculine in Tense: for (without redresse) they were, are, and will be still most Masculine, most mankinde, and most monstrous. (Sig. A3)

The extremity of the situation is emphasised by the image of the mother and youngest daughter, the embodiments of maternity and chaste naivety, as members of the monstrous rebellion. The writer paints all women as willing to convert into 'mankinde,' emphasising their 'monstrous', 'impudent' and 'bold' nature, the last two traits being acceptable in a man, but unnatural and repulsive in a woman.

The masculine woman is her own architect, supplanting God with cosmetics and fashion to create 'new *Hermaphrodites*,' 'Maskers, Mummers, nay Monsters' (Sig. C2–2^{v}). They aim '[t]o mould their bodies to euery deformed fashion: their tongues to vile and horrible prophanations, and their hands to ruffianly and vnciuill actions' (Sig. B^{v}). The writer extends the contemporary criticism of deceptive female cosmetics to include masculine fashions which force the body into 'deformed' shapes and engender ill behaviour. Hic Mulier's deformity is attributed to weak female characteristics:

> either their weake thoughts ingenders, or the discourse of wicked tongues can charme into their yielding bosomes (much too apt to bee opened with any pick-locke of flattering and deceitfull insinuation) then they turne Maskers, Mummers, nay Monsters in their disguises, and so they may catch the bridle in their teeth, and runne away with their Rulers. (Sig. C2)

The masculine women resist and flee their husbands' mastery, biting at the bridle and taking his role as 'ruler'. Women are designated as inferior creatures with 'weake thoughts' and 'yielding bosomes', characteristics which reveal the writer's superior attitude towards his 'ideal' woman. The women usurp man's clothing and in turn his independence, thus taking her, theoretically, out of the control of fathers and husbands. These men are chided for sustaining rather than restraining women: 'hold close your liberall hands' (Sig. C2^{v}). By addressing men, he shows little hope for female self-correction and in fact holds man responsible for female unruliness: ensure 'your Wiues, Sisters and Daughters, will be the Co-heires of modestie' (Sig. C3). The full title, *Hic Mulier: or, The Man-Woman: Being a Medicine to cure the Coltish Disease of the Staggers in the Masculine-Feminines of our Times*, emphasises the need to school women and cure an animalistic disease.

The female inclination for modern consumerist temptations creates the masculine woman: 'poore Women haue nothing (how great soeuer they bee) to diuide themselues from the intising shewes or moouing Images which do furnish most shops in the City' (Sig. B4^{v}). She is associated with urban pleasure and entertainment: '[y]ou that are the gilt durt, which imbroders Play-houses; the painted Statues which adorne Caroches, and the perfumed Carrion that bad men feede on in Brothels' (Sig. A4). The masculine woman is closely associated with modern 'dirt', the superficial luxury that conceals lust. Her spectacular male fashion acts like the 'gilt' or perfume concealing the dead flesh which feeds the sexual appetite of 'bad men'. Hic Mulier is a patchwork body of contradictions with erotic connotations: '[y]ou that haue made your bodies like anticke Boscadge, or Crotesco worke, not halfe man, halfe woman; halfe fish, halfe flesh; halfe beast, halfe Monster: but all Odyous, all Diuell' (Sig. A4). Her visual monstrosity repulses the writer, while her unconventional expression of ambiguity, 'halfe fish, halfe flesh', emphasises the compound of free masculine sexuality with female form. The signification of the mermaid and prostitute by the 'fish' reference emphasises her dangerous salacious desire, which the writer transforms into a bestial and diabolical perversion by means of masculine liberty.

Masculine clothes in *Hic Mulier*, White claims, are 'indicative of unconventional and promiscuous sexual behaviour'.[83] Woodbridge confirms the text's association of the 'transvestites' aggressiveness with moral laxity',[84] while Garber notes the alliance of the style with 'a general sexual availability'.[85] Hic Mulier by her actions converts women's fashion from exuding modest constraint to erotic freedom:

> a concealing straight gowne, to the loose, lasciuious Ciuill embracement of a French doublet, being all vnbutton'd to entice, all of one shape to hide deformitie, and extreme short wasted to giue a most easie way to euery luxurious action: the glory of a faire large hayre, to the shame of most ruffianly short lockes; the side, thicke gather'd, and close guarding Sauegards, to the short, weake, thinne, loose, and euery hand-entertating short basses; for Needles, Swords; for Prayer bookes, bawdy Iigs; for modest gestures, gyant-like behauiours, and for womens modestie, all Mimicke and apish inciuilitie. (Sig. A4^{v})

The writer connects masculine dressing with 'euery luxurious action'. He depicts the masculine style as a cut designed to facilitate sexual indiscretion. When worn by women male garments symbolised superior status and provided physical freedom. Alternatively traditional female clothes acted as a constraint and reinforced society's definition of a

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[83] M. White, *Middleton and Tourneur* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1992), p. 55.
[84] Woodbridge, p. 145.
[85] Garber, p. 31.

modest and productive woman. Woodbridge questions whether 'doublet and broad-brimmed hat would be enough to make a woman look masculine, if her breasts were exposed'.[86] Her point is significant, as the writer emphasises the diabolical partnership of female sexuality in conjunction with the masculine assertive persona. Hic Mulier assumed elements of decorative masculine attire and combined these with female skirts or bared breasts. These women were not casting aside their female gender, but rather adopting the freedom and power associated with masculine imagery. Levin observes, 'what is construed as "masculine" here is precisely the aggressive sexual display, the flaunting of desire.'[87] Orgel's definition clarifies the point further: 'sexual desire, and the authority to satisfy it, are male prerogatives.'[88] The female transvestite's usurpation of masculine sexual freedom was imagined to release the voracious female appetite. Faderman exposes one particular threat of the transvestite or unconventional woman: 'someone who both engaged in lesbian sex and rejected the other aspects of a female role *always* aroused societal anxiety.'[89] The potent anger of *Hic Mulier* was a reaction to the masculine woman's combination of the male prerogative, with a perverse female sexual appetite. The greatest threat of the assumed masculinity of Hic Mulier was its facilitation of the threatening expression of female sexuality and desire. Masculine dress liberated and empowered the female wearer sexually, which implies that to be masculine is to be sexually promiscuous.

The masculine woman's innate sensuous lust is emphasised through caricature: 'eyes wandring, lips bylling, tongue inticing, bared brests seducing, and naked armes imbracing: O hide them, for shame hide them' (Sig. B4). The writer is constantly drawn to the sexual potency of her physicality and, as Howard comments, both women and actors 'provoke a troubling desire, debauching those who gaze on them too greedily'.[90] Through condemnation the writer attempts to resist and sever the corruptive attraction of ambiguous sexuality. He calls for the Statute of Apparel to 'crush the offenders in pieces, so as euery one may bee knowne by the true badge of their bloud, or Fortune: and then these *Chymera's* of deformitie will bee sent backe to hell, and there burne to Cynders in the flames of their owne malice' (Sig. C^{v}). Ultimately he wishes to restore 'true' hierarchical

[86] Woodbridge, p. 145.
[87] Orgel, p. 119.
[88] Orgel, p. 120.
[89] Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: The Women's Press, 1997) p. 47.
[90] Howard, 'Renaissance Antitheatricality', p. 169.

order by restricting the freedom of urban women and punishing those who debauch by transcending their gender.

Haec-Vir: Or, The Womanish-Man: Being an Answere to a late Booke intituled Hic-Mulier vocalises the motivations of the masculine woman by introducing the controversy through a dialogue. The opening's humorous misidentification between the effeminate man and the masculine woman, Rose claims, establishes a 'tolerant and urbane tone [...] in which Hic Mulier (now a sympathetic figure) can defend her behavior'.[91] The tone changes once her Latin name is revealed, and Haec Vir launches a vicious and intolerant attack borrowed from the pages of *Hic Mulier*, whilst also laying down a challenge. He predictably condemns her appearance, aggression, sexual depravity and diabolical nature directing her to its most expansive source, 'I can but referre you to your God-child [...] I meane the Booke of *Hic-Mulier*' (Sig. A4). Her hybridised male costume is evidence of her sin, and until it is discarded 'you shall neuer lose the title of Basenesse, Vnnaturalnes, Shamelesnesse, and Foolishnesse' (Sig. B4^{v}). The whole world is cast against Hic Mulier: '[s]he that like a Larum-Bell at midnight hath raised the whole Kingdome in Armes against her?' After he has 'dawbed' Hic Mulier 'with the worst colours thy malice can grinde', she is left to counter the slanderous portrait created by men (Sig. A3^{v}).

Hic Mulier's appearance is charged as base slavery to novelty. She responds, '[n]ow for mee to follow change, according to the limitation of mine owne will and pleasure, there cannot bee a greater freedome.' By illustrating her own free choice to initiate change in gender and fashion she eloquently portrays her originality, in stark contrast to Haec Vir who parrots a familiar line. The focus is reversed and Haec Vir becomes the enslaver of women: 'will you haue poore woman such a fixed Starre, that shee shall not so much as moue or twinkle in her owne Spheare? That were true Slauery indeed, and a Basenesse beyond the chaines of the worst seruitude' (Sig. B). Hic Mulier employs a later feminist argument against the confinement of women to gender-specific spheres, which constitutes unjust imprisonment. Her positive concept of change contrasts with the conventional negative suspicion of metamorphosis especially when concerning gender. Dollimore maintains that she is most challenging when 'she dissolves both law and ideological fixity

[91] Rose, p. 372.

into a celebration of her potential rather than her fixed nature'.[92] The masculine woman is accused of rejecting God's creation by assuming female unnaturalness. Hic Mulier confidently asserts that she has been created free to follow her path: 'I was created free, born free, and liue free' (Sig. B^{v}–B2). Her mantra for the right to freedom is controversial.

Hic Mulier reduces her critics to timid conservatives offended by the unfamiliarity of her attire: 'it is a Stranger to the curiositie of the present times, and an enemie to Custome. Are we then bound to be the Flatterers of Time, or the dependants on Custome?' Past female fashion is one of many outdated customs discarded by 'Reason': the implication is that her detractors are irrational (Sig. B2–3). Her claim that gendered fashion is a custom also casts gender distinctions as cultural rather than divine, opening them to debate and alteration. 'Ideological demystification' is the term Dollimore applies to Hic Mulier's dismissal of gender as a custom, which undermines the basis of law and society.[93] Furthermore, she controversially casts gender change as a positive prospect informed by reason, while in contrast the traditional feminine ideal is constituted as social slavery engineered by men not God. Man is the architect of concepts of gender and Hic Mulier casts him as the barrier to change, containing female potential. She asks:

> because I [...] am not dumbe when wantons court mee, as if Asse-like I were ready for all burthens, or because I weep not when iniury gripes me, like a woorried Deere in the fangs of many Curres: am I therefore barbarous or shamelesse? He is much iniurious that so baptiz'd vs: we are as free-borne as Men, haue as free election, and as free spirits, we are compounded of like parts, and may with like liberty make benefit of our Creations. (Sig. B3)

Hic Mulier exposes the strength of her character to defend justice and morality in contrast to the ideal woman whose weakness leaves her vulnerable to corruption and persecution. Sandra Clark states that she identifies shame as 'a concept framed by men to subordinate women to the dictates of arbitrary custom'.[94] Hic Mulier advocates women's equality with men by discrediting gender distinctions as custom and containment strategies. She is positioned on the side of reason and employs the support of Virgil, Martial, Chaucer and Du Bartas to rebut criticism. She is educated, while men use custom to suppress women in opposition to reason.

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[92] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 295.
[93] Jonathan Dollimore, 'Subjectivity, Sexuality, and Transgression: The Jacobean Connection', in *Renaissance Drama and Cultural Change, Renaissance Drama*, 17, ed. by Mary Beth Rose, pp. 53–81 (p. 67).
[94] Clark, '*Hic Mulier, Haec Vic*', p. 175.

Hic Mulier admits the error of masculine style which by its very material nature is a 'custome'. She continues, 'we must call vp our Champions against you, which are *Beauty* and *Frailty*, and what the one cannot compel you to forgiue, the other shall inforce you to pitty or excuse' (Sig. B3[v]). Contradictory to her claim of the benefits of masculine strength as opposed to female weakness, Hic Mulier pleads with the feminine ideals of Beauty and Frailty for forgiveness. Her resort to traditional feminine characteristics is incongruous with the feminist manifesto for female freedom and equality. The deviation is continued by the conciliatory conclusion between Haec Vir and Hic Mulier. Traditional gender ideals are proclaimed as restorative of past social harmony between women and men. Hic Mulier swears to become the ideal woman if Haec Vir rejects his effeminacy: '[t]hen shall you finde delight in our words; pleasure in our faces; faith in our hearts; chastity in our thoughts, and sweetnesse both in our inward & outward inclinations' (Sig. C3[v]). Haec Vir is convinced and declares, 'we will heere change our attires, as wee haue chang'd our mindes, and with our attires, our names. I will no more be Haec-Vir, but Hic-Vir, nor you Hic-Mulier, but Haec Mulier' and swears to live as 'true men, and true women' (Sig. C3[v]–4). Both Hic Mulier and Haec Vir in their readiness present their former roles as their real 'selves', unlike their assumed facades of masculinity and effeminacy, which are explained as reactions to an unnatural blurring of the distinctions between men and women.

Hic Mulier claims that the banishment of effeminacy will remove the need for women to assume masculinity for protection:

> what could we poore weake women doe lesse (being farre too weake by force to fetch backe those spoiles you haue vniustly taken from vs) then to gather vp those garments you haue proudly cast away, and therewith to cloath both our bodies and our mindes; since no other meanes was left vs to continue our names, and to support a difference? (Sig. C2[v])

The conclusion is founded on the argument that man's abandonment of masculinity has forced women to assert the gender difference through whatever means were available. The masculine woman is neutralised as merely a product of male effeminacy, devoid of all feminist connotations. She actually becomes the protector of traditional gender distinction and the ideals of masculinity: 'we haue preserued (though to our owne shames) those manly things which you haue forsaken, which would you againe accept, and restore to vs the Blushes we layd by, [...] doubt not but chaste thoughts and bashfulnesse will againe dwell in vs' (Sig. C2[v]–3). She would abandon masculinity if men acted as men. The

conclusion when isolated reassures with the sense that traditional gender roles are attainable.

Many critics cite *Haec-Vir* as outright feminist and stress its significance as an antecedent to the nineteenth-century women's movement calling for equal rights. Wright hails the text's 'dignity and spirit' and claims, '*Haec-Vir* is the *Areopagitica* of the London woman, a woman who had gained greater freedom than any of her predecessors or than any of her European contemporaries.'[95] He categorises the work as a 'treatise reflecting the opinion of the more advanced social thinkers among the bourgeoisie'.[96] White describes the essay as 'a passionate defence of women's rights to personal freedom, and a scathing criticism of those who slavishly follow popular opinion without thinking for themselves'.[97] It is appealing from a modern perspective to condemn *Hic Mulier* and place *Haec-Vir* on an ideological pedestal; yet Garber draws attention to the hypocrisy of a feminist who presents herself in a man's form: she 'offers a strong assertion of women's rights — an assertion which is complicated rather than clarified by the fact that she offers this opinion when cross-dressed as a man'.[98] The masculine appearance imbues Hic Mulier with the authority to speak upon female issues, even if she attracts condemnation for usurping a man's right. Clark, influenced by the inconsistencies of argument, advises the reader 'not to take too seriously Hic Mulier's defence,' as Elizabethan pamphleteers debated to demonstrate skill rather than for a cause.[99] Pamphlet debates were notorious opportunities for writers to expose their skill, although *Haec-Vir* was anonymous and does advocate a defence of women, if fragmented. Clark's assumption of a lack of 'cause' unfairly discounts the moments of potent feminism, yet these are confused by the incongruity of the pamphlet's female defences.

All of Hic Mulier's positions or arguments within *Haec-Vir* defend the masculine woman. They range from the conservative, relying on past gender ideas, to the extreme feminist defences, which claim equality. Rose describes Hic Mulier's final argument as a retrenchment: '[t]he entire phenomenon of women in men's clothing is rationalized [...] to

[95] Wright, p. 497.
[96] Wright, p. 495.
[97] White, p. 56.
[98] Garber, p. 31.
[99] Sandra Clark, '*Hic Mulier, Haec Vic*', p. 177.

return society to the idealized sexual norm of gender polarization and male dominance.'[100] Yet she also emphasises that the conclusion 'fails to cancel or even qualify the dominant logic of *Hic Mulier's* stirring defense of her freedom'.[101] Woodbridge similarly comments, '[d]espite the eventual collapse of *Haec-Vir* into orthodoxy, the first half of the dialogue falls very little short of being a flaming manifesto of liberty for women.'[102] Dollimore perceives *Haec-Vir* as 'a vehicle for a variety of defences of the transvestite, radical *and* conservative,' and insists that 'there is no good reason, given the genre, to privilege the one over the others as more truthful, more sincere, more representative, or to be dismayed that some of these arguments are incompatible with each other'.[103] He still asserts the significance of the pamphlet through its controversial belief that 'gender difference *can be and is being* maintained through cross-dressing and inversion'.[104] The false sense of harmony at the end of the pamphlet is unsettling and due to this contradiction emphasises gender divergence as possible and inevitable in the early modern world.

Haec-Vir produces a defence of the masculine woman by collating numerous arguments, both feminist and conservative. The feminist within the pamphlet claims equality with men and justifies her masculinity with reason. The restriction of women by social custom, not divine law, is also exposed, which significantly undermines all prohibitions based upon gender. Hic Mulier vocalises a female revolution, heralding change as positive progress. The conservative challenge to effeminate men to transform first reveals masculinity as a frighteningly malleable essence that anyone can 'assume' and this belief will be examined further in the following chapter. The pamphlet does not reassure those anxious over gender deviation. More intrinsically disturbing is the insistence on gender as a product of habit rather than God or nature. Hic Mulier in all her defences emphasises how women are aware of the fragility of gender distinctions and are willing to manipulate these ideals to call for equality or respect.

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[100] Rose, p. 372.
[101] Rose, p. 372.
[102] Woodbridge, p. 148.
[103] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 298.
[104] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 298.

Mary Frith: A Masculine Woman

Mary Frith manipulated the images of gender to construct her own independent space. Frith was notorious in seventeenth-century England, appearing in numerous plays including Nathan Field's *Amends for Ladies*, Middleton's and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl*, Dekker's *If this Be Not A Good Play, The Devil Is In It* and perhaps in his *Match Me in London*. She also featured in the lost 'booke called the Madde Prancks of Merry Mall of the Bankside, with her Walks in Mans Apparel and to what Purpose. Written by John Day', recorded in the Stationers' Register in August 1610. Her epitaph in seventeenth-century script was reprinted in *The Uncollected Writings of John Milton* and in Charles Johnson's *General History of the Lives and Action of the Most Famous Highwaymen.*[105] Frith also performed on the Fortune theatre stage in 1611 as recorded by the consistory of London Correction Book for 1611 to 1612:

> at the Fortune in man's apparel, and in her boots, and with a sword by her side, she told the company then present that she was a man, but if any of them would come to her lodging they should find she is a woman and some other immodest and lascivious speeches she also used at that time. And also sat upon the stage in the public view of all the people there present in man's apparel and played upon her lute and sang a song.[106]

The epilogue of *The Roaring Girl* announces the performance as forthcoming: 'The Roaring Girl herself, some few days hence, | Shall on this stage give larger recompense.'[107] Howard interprets Frith's stage appearance as 'what only court ladies and gallants were allowed to do: she made a spectacle of herself'.[108] On this occasion Frith transcended her social position too far and in 1612 she was called to the ecclesiastical courts for immorality and immodest behaviour, notably the wearing of male clothing. Frith was aware of the visual power of gender transgression as on one occasion wearing full male clothing she provoked a riot.[109] Portraits of Frith including the title page of *The Roaring Girl* and the frontispiece for *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse* (1662) capture her masculine appearance. White observes the realism of the play's portrait of Frith and imagines that the 'interpretation of art and reality for that particular audience must have been startling'.[110]

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[105] Todd and Spearing, p. xxv.
[106] *Consistory of London Correction Book*, fols 19–20, in Martin White, *Middleton and Tourneur* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1992), p. 52.
[107] Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*, ed. by Andor Gomme (London: Ernest Benn, 1976), Epilogus 35–6.
[108] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre', p. 440.
[109] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, pp. 46–8.
[110] White, p. 52.

Frith constructed her identity through her physical appearance, which could easily be translated and disseminated through popular printed images.

Frith's identity as a masculine woman enabled her independence yet also threatened her position through its sexual connotations. Her autobiography *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse* offers a personal perspective on 'real' events, yet cannot be treated as historically accurate due to the various agendas of the writer, editors, contributors and printers. Despite questions of factual integrity and authorship the work is valuable as it exposes how Frith publicly shaped her own unique character in order to benefit from the notoriety of being a 'hic mulier', either for financial gain or legal immunity. The autobiography may be fictional, yet it reveals the allure of Frith to her contemporaries, as the *Life* was printed to meet an imagined public demand. The work immediately casts her struggling against the expectations of her gender, as a middle-class daughter of a shoemaker born in 1584 in the Barbican area of London:

> A very *Tomrig* or *Rumpscuttle* she was, and delighted and sported only in Boys play and pastime, not minding or companying with the Girls: many a bang and blow this Hoyting procured her, but she was not so to be tamed or taken off from her rude inclinations [...] her Needle, Bodkin and Thimble, she could not think on quietly, wishing them changed into Sword and Dagger for a bout at Cudgels.[111]

Even as a child Frith is untamed, rude, and like Hic Mulier exchanges feminine domestic tools for male weapons. Her masculinity is shaped as a natural phenomenon, which prevents her from conforming, yet significantly her nature is not a disorderly choice. Frith rebels against the constrictive patriarchal society at the age of twenty, emphasising, 'I had but very little choice.' A surplus of single women in London due to necessity were forced to work as low-paid brewers, bakers and cooks, in domestic service, victuals and vending trades, while others resorted to prostitution and stealing. Todd and Spearing attribute limited work opportunities to the formation of Frith's character: 'this narrow margin of external possibility available to the ordinary woman [...] led her to reshape herself as something extraordinary.'[112] By adopting masculine dress she refuses the restrictive role assigned to women and constructed on the grounds of traditional gender definitions. 'Friends' force her to emigrate to Virginia to employ her masculinity and to secure her marriage in a place where women were scarce. Their reaction and their attempt to enforce Frith's conformity or at least conceal the shame are indicative of the horror felt by writers

[111] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, p. 9.
[112] Todd and Spearing, p. xx.

and authorities confronted with gender transgression. Frith pleads to the captain and is set ashore, which Todd and Spearing interpret as expressing 'a transgressive right in herself; she will not be married, sent to America, or put to a female trade by male "friends"'.[113] Frith resists society's insistence on feminine roles, yet despite her inspiring example she is presented as unique, unwilling to conform or be exiled. Orgel notes, 'her sense of herself in the *Life* is strongly conditioned by assertions of her self-generated and unparalleled nature, which is manifest in her clothing.'[114] Frith controls her life through a process of refashioning to enable her unique existence in English society on her own terms.

Frith shaped her life within a criminal world of masculine pastimes and activities; she was involved in petty crime, travelled, arranged business at inns and taverns, smoked tobacco and drank alcohol. Her criminal connection reflects her sense of individuality and disregard for society's rules. She also delivered adversaries to the law and exerted influence with court officers, the clerk of Newgate, and powerful Lords including 'a Nobleman my Neighbour'.[115] John L. McMullan adds a further dimension of respect when he states, '[c]ommercial interests, government, and the public at large recognized her authority.'[116] Frith disarms her potential social threat: 'if I had any thing of the Divel within me, I had of the *Merry* one, not having through all my Life done any harm to the Life or Limb of any Person.'[117] She is careful not to dramatically exceed the boundaries of femininity, presenting herself as 'merry' and not violent. The negative image of the masculine woman was easily believed and would destroy her public support. Strategically Frith shaped her popular rebellious persona through notorious episodes. On one occasion in 1621 she claimed a royal warrant whilst also threatening a witness in a suit charging her with false arrest and imprisonment.[118] Frith fashioned herself as a comic rogue securing immunity for criminal behaviour and her transgression of gender.

In the autobiography Frith is not depicted as a proto-feminist; as the introduction suggests she was intolerant of the 'Mag-pye Chat of the Wenches'. However, as an individual Frith expanded the restrictive female sphere to incorporate the lifestyle and freedoms she

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[113] Todd and Spearing, p. xxi.
[114] Orgel, p. 148.
[115] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, p. 51.
[116] John L. McMullan, *The Canting Crew: London's Criminal Underworld 1550–1700* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984), p. 113.
[117] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, pp. 49–50.
[118] Margaret Dowling, 'A note on Moll Cutpurse — "*The Roaring Girl*"', *RES*, 10 (1934), 67–71.

desired. Orgel claims that she manipulated 'the patriarchal imperatives' when she supplied one wife with a number of well-born lovers, from whom she had numerous illegitimate children.[119] She pacifies the husband by 'procuring him round summs of Money from his respective Rivals to the maintenance of their Illegitimate Issue,' and reassures that 'he and I as good Friends and Companions as ever'.[120] Orgel asserts that Frith's autobiography 'establishes an area of independence for women' as the work's humour derives from 'episodes in which she deflates male pomposity or takes revenge on male figures of authority who have mistreated her'.[121] In fact Frith's actions against men are dictated by her own personal rivalry and money, not any sense of feminist retribution. Furthermore, as with all masculine women, Frith can only imagine independence through the masculine gender. Todd and Spearing stress, 'she appears to be transgressing the homosocial system rather than rejecting it — moving over and redefining herself as (asexually) male.'[122] Frith creates a space of independence for woman, although she acts in her own interest and not on behalf of a feminist cause. Todd and Spearing suggest that the autobiography may have acted to silence her female rebellion, interpreting 'its two presumably male-authored introductions as an attempt to subordinate female rebellion to male authority'.[123] To openly proclaim feminist agendas would certainly risk her privileged position in society, although through her transgression she influenced the development of proto-feminism.

Frith's rebellious masculine characterisation suggested unconventionality in all aspects including sexuality. She rejected accusations of lewdness yet remained an erotic figure. The combination of a masculine persona concealing a female body invokes suspicions of sexual immorality in Thomas Freeman's epigram on Frith, which was published in *Rubbe and a Great Cast* in 1614, although may have been written earlier:

> They say Moll's honest, and it may be so,
> But yet it is a shrewd suspicion no:
> To touch but pitch, 'tis known it will defile;
> Moll wears the breech, what may she be the while?
> Sure she that doth the shadow so much grace,
> What will she when the substance comes in place?[124]

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[119] Orgel, p. 142.
[120] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, p. 56.
[121] Orgel, p. 141–2.
[122] Todd and Spearing, p. xxv.
[123] Todd and Spearing, pp. xxiv–xxv.
[124] Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*, ed. by A. Gomme (London: Ernest Benn, 1976), p. xiv.

Freeman casts Frith as an unknown, shifting in the shadows and enticing men with the alluring question as to what lies beneath the 'breeches'. Orgel interprets Frith's masculine appearance as 'in general inflammatory, in particular sexually', signifying 'licentious behavior that is specifically female, implying that she is a whore and a bawd'.[125] Her masculine persona also suggests a freedom, signalling the release of her female sexual appetite. Frith's negative sexuality is projected onto her by the liberating connotations of her masculine appearance and behaviour.

In her autobiography, the *Life*, Frith feels her identity threatened by the appearance of another who transcends the normal gender definitions, Aniseed-Water Robin. A London peddler of aniseed water, he was widely believed to be a real hermaphrodite and his epitaph by Charles Cotton claims he twice impregnated himself and produced a boy and a girl. Rumours of their sexual 'match' are scandalous to Frith, who consistently throughout the *Life* suppresses and rejects any suggestion of her sexual libido. Frith ensures the removal of her rival to preserve her own sense of uniqueness and prevent rumours of her sexual depravity. She draws a distinction between women who merely assumed masculine aspects, and those who were physically hermaphroditical. Frith marks his monstrosity as something very different from herself, while expressing the same prejudices against ambiguity which others directed at the masculine woman.

The autobiography's introduction stresses that cross-dressing 'cannot but be disgustful to mankind,' and Frith pacifies the threat by claiming that 'apathany and insensiblenesse of my carnal pleasure even to stupidity possest me'.[126] She denies experiencing sexual desire, despite acting to procure lovers for clients. The *Life* stresses Frith's masculinity; a 'lusty and sturdy Wench' who hated domestic service and refused to marry with 'a natural abhorrence to the tending of Children'.[127] Yet Orgel notes that she did marry a Lewkner Markham in 1614 from whom she separated. The introduction to the autobiography is absolute in the assertion that Frith never married or had sexual relations with any man. The writer stresses that 'no man can say or affirm that ever she had a Sweet-heart', and concludes '[s]he was not wooed nor sollicited by any man'.[128] There is mention of a shoemaker, yet his misuse of her money is cited as one experience which 'took her off

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[125] Orgel, pp. 146–7.
[126] Todd and Spearing, p. xxiv.
[127] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, pp. 11–12.
[128] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, p. 14.

from the consideration or thought of Wedlock'.[129] Within the diary, Frith omits any reference to a past husband or lover. The autobiography's censorship of Frith's apparent marriage is intriguing, either as an attempt to heighten the appeal of her sexual ambiguity, or more convincingly, to conform to her constructed sexless and independent persona. As a single woman she was free from the patriarchal constraints of a man, and from accusations of being an unruly wife. While reading *The Life* it soon becomes apparent that Frith's popular masculine persona was tolerated as an oddity. Public displays of sexual promiscuity or a revolt against a husband and the sanctity of marriage would have attracted greater criticism and correction of her transgression. Mary Frith's masculine persona secured her popularity and an amount of immunity from the authorities, yet the careful projection of her 'sexless nature' also reveals the precariousness of her position.

The Roaring Girl

Frith's notoriety as a masculine woman was utilised in an earlier play which fed a public appetite for the debate to be presented on stage. *The Roaring Girl* by Middleton and Dekker was performed by the Prince's Men at the Fortune theatre and was published by Thomas Archer in 1611. The play converts Mary Frith's notorious persona into the dramatic figure of Moll Cutpurse. The dramatist's portrayal of Moll, although drawing upon the real Frith's embodiment of transgression, does not incorporate her criminality. In his address, 'To the comic play-readers,' Middleton explains, '[w]orse things I must needs confess the world has taxed her for, than has been written of her; but 'tis the excellency of a writer to leave things better than he finds 'em.'[130] The dramatic portrayal of the masculine woman is complicated by the convention of male actors performing female characters, creating an environment, Phyllis Rackin maintains, where 'feminine gender was inevitably a matter of costume'.[131] The dramatic construction of sexuality and gender emphasises and confirms the masculine woman's embodiment of gender fashioning. Furthermore, the performance of the masculine woman, a contentious subject due to suspicions surrounding her sexuality, would have been challenging to perform particularly, as Orgel suggests, with the anti-theatrical 'fear of women's sexuality, and more

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[129] *The Life and Death of Mal Cutpurse*, ed. by Todd and Spearing, p. 15.
[130] *The Roaring Girl*, 'To the comic play-readers, venery and laughter', p. 4, 19–21.
[131] Phyllis Rackin, 'Androgyny, Mimesis, and the Marriage of the Boy Heroine on the English Renaissance Stage,' *PMLA*, 102 (1987), 29–41 (p. 29).

specifically, of its power to evoke men's sexuality'.[132] The playhouse audience was socially diverse and would have included women of various ages and circumstances, which causes Howard to imagine the theatre as an empowering place for women: '[i]t is possible that in the theater women were licensed to look — and in a larger sense to judge what they saw and to exercise autonomy — in ways that problematized women's status as object within patriarchy?'[133] The limited portrayal of Moll's sexuality reflects the male playwright's sense of what was acceptable and appropriate for a socially complex audience containing women. Habermann distinguishes 'the more active and assertive female characters' in drama as less feminine and closer in portrayal to the 'virago'.[134] She perceives their role as integral yet threatened by 'the spectres of the shrew or the monstrous hermaphrodite which can be mobilized against them if they overstep some invisible threshold — a likely event since their agency is not based on right but on occasion'.[135] Moll is an impressive 'virago' figure, although significantly she is not 'occasional' but a powerful entity that seems immune to the machinations of men like Sir Alexander. *The Roaring Girl* presents Moll whose gender and sexuality expresses the inspiring and reflects the threatening aspects of the masculine woman.

The public reputation of Moll Cutpurse precedes the character and first introduces her to the spectator:

> There's a wench
> Called Moll, mad Moll, or merry Moll, a creature
> So strange in quality, a whole city takes
> Note of her name and person. (I. 1. 94–7)

Sir Alexander, who fears Moll's marriage to Sebastian, expounds the negative world of opinion surrounding the masculine woman. He fears the contagion of her public shame:

> Why, as good marry a beacon on a hill,
> Which all the country fix their eyes upon,
> As her thy folly doats on. (II. 2. 134–6)

Sir Alexander cannot bear the taint of association with Moll as a daughter-in-law, and exclaims 'Oh my reviving shame, is't I must live | To be struck blind?' (V. 2. 142–3).

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[132] Orgel, p. 49.
[133] Howard, 'Women as Spectators', p. 72.
[134] Ina Habermann, *Staging Slander and Gender in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, Hants,: Ashgate Pub., 2003), p. 138.
[135] Habermann, p. 139.

Moll assumes a mythological status as a sexually alluring yet dangerous siren. Sir Alexander blatantly represents Moll as a sinister fantasy figure: ''Tis a mermaid | Has tolled my son to shipwreck' (I. 2. 212). Guy Fitz-allard welcomes the opportunity to taunt Sir Alexander over his future daughter-in-law:

> Your house has been dishonoured: give you joy, sir,
> Of your son's gaskin-bride, you'll be a grandfather shortly
> To a fine crew of roaring sons and daughters,
> 'Twill help to stock the suburbs passing well, sir. (V. 2. 22–5)

The horror of Moll's excessive reproduction of deviant offspring illustrates her transformation into a fictional monster:

> 'tis woman more than man,
> Man more than woman, and (which to none can hap)
> The sun gives her two shadows to one shape:
> Nay more, let this strange thing walk, stand or sit,
> No blazing star draws more eyes after it. (I. 2. 130–4)

She inhabits an ambiguous state of gender and her resistance to containment creates a dual identity, 'two shadows', which contradict the social order. Moll focuses fears of gender disorder and attracts social comment as an awe inspiring and ominous celestial star. Sir Adam treats Moll as a poison of womanhood and a contaminator of men, when he asks Sebastian, 'Will you love such a poison?' (I. 2. 148). Sir Alexander imagines Moll's shifting gender identity 'brought forth | To mock the sex of woman' and undermine female integrity (I. 2. 127–8).

Sir Alexander expresses his concerns for the implications of Moll's masculine usurpation upon the balance of power between man and woman: 'if the wife go in breeches, the man must wear long coats like a fool' (II. 2. 75–6). Moll's monstrous gender is constructed through clothing: 'I have brought up my son to marry a Dutch slop and a French doublet, a codpiece-daughter' (II. 2. 88–90). Her protruding yet empty codpiece is the epitome of a prosthetic and self-fashioned gender. Trapdoor revels in Moll's homoerotic appeal with images of sodomy: 'your son and her moon will be in conjunction', while, 'her black saveguard is turned into a deep slop, the holes of her upper body to button-holes, her waistcoat to a doublet, her placket to the ancient seat of a codpiece, and you shall take 'em both with standing collars' (III. 3. 22–7). Moll's clothing embodies her intermixed gender and evokes homoerotic desire. Susan Krantz claims that Moll's combined male/female self-sufficiency prevents her interpretation in the context of social or sexual male-female

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relationships.[136] The physical union between Moll and Sebastian is received as a horrific image, which conflicts with the ideal of the obedient wife and masterful husband, and with Sir Alexander's paternal authority.

Moll is condemned by her public persona and her name. Sir Alexander proclaims that there are 'More whores of that name than of any ten other' — while Sebastian defends her case — 'Can any guilt in others condemn her?' (II. 2. 151, 153). Rose believes that Sebastian's defence of Moll is the 'clearest articulation of her honesty in the play'.[137] His father's grief at their courtship reflects the common consensus of suspicion concerning Moll. Sebastian aggravates his father's anxieties by emphasising his sensual enslavement: 'I'm so bewitched, so bound to my desires' (I. 2. 175). He argues sensibly, pointing to her faults as superficial:

> Sh'has a bold spirit that mingles with mankind,
> But nothing else comes near it: and oftentimes
> Through her apparel somewhat shames her birth,
> But she is loose in nothing but in mirth:
> Would all Molls were no worse. (II. 2. 172–6)

Yet Sebastian's outspoken position is undermined by his pretence of loving Moll in order to secure his father's permission of a less offensive union with Mary Fitz-allard. Sebastian cheers Mary with the promise: 'A story of Moll shall make our mirth more sweet' (I. 1. 115). Despite protestation of Moll's integrity, Sebastian utilises and encourages her unfair public image to manipulate his father: 'To think I love so blindly' (II. 2. 186).

Moll's awareness of her notoriety allows her to employ her reputation to disturb Sir Alexander. She targets his fear for male potency and dominance by claiming to be 'As good a man as your son,' and promising protection, 'Now all the town will take regard on you, | And all your enemies fear you for my sake' (V. 2. 153, 155–6). In the epilogue Moll describes a woman's portrait which is altered to please all tastes and is 'So monstrous and so ugly all men did smile | At the poor painter's folly' (Epilogus, 14–15). The play stresses that a woman constructed to appeal to all men is more repulsive than Moll whose bare honesty is condemned by public opinion. Moll's youthful ignorance excuses her tainted association with the criminal world and she laments the unfairness of 'A black ill name,

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[136] Susan E. Krantz, 'The Sexual Identities of Moll Cutpurse in Dekker and Middleton's *The Roaring Girl* and in London', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 19:1 (1995), 5–20 (p. 12).
[137] Rose, p. 376.

because ill things you know?' (V. 1. 316). Gomme asserts, 'paradoxically she, about whom everyone in the play is so unsure, is the one who never pretends to be what she is not.'[138] The playwrights expose Moll's popular reputation: 'In the world's eye none weighs so light', and yet in the play construct a figure whose monstrosity is only skin deep (Epilogus, 21).

The Roaring Girl discredits the image of Moll's 'light' and lascivious sexuality, and yet her erotic appeal is constantly emphasised. Moll constructs her own image and sexuality, and men such as Laxton are attracted to the ambiguous nature of these constructions. Moll is a phallic woman and Orgel insists that Laxton is sexually attracted to her 'masculinity' and 'metamorphic quality'.[139] He is immediately aroused by Moll's ambiguous appearance in '*a frieze jerkin and a black saveguard*' and she becomes his sexual fantasy (II. 1. 158):

> Heart, I would give but too much money to be nibbling with that wench: life, sh'as the spirit of four great parishes, and a voice that will drown all the city: methinks a brave captain might get all his soldiers upon her, and ne'er be beholding to a company of Mile End milksops, if he could come on, and come off quick enough: such a Moll were a marrow-bone before an Italian, he would cry bona roba till his ribs were nothing but bone. I'll lay hard siege to her, money is that aqua fortis that eats into many a maidenhead: where the walls are flesh and blood, I'll ever pierce through with a golden auger. (II. 1. 169–179)

Laxton is drawn by the homoerotic thrill of masculine resistance, and a masculinity which dwarfs his own. Her strength is a challenge for him to break by force and money, 'that aqua fortis that eats into many a maidenhead.' He is aroused by the prospect of his masculinity penetrating Moll, and acting as a man strong enough to 'pierce through with a golden auger'. Force and bestiality permeates his fantasy when he imagines 'nibbling with that wench' and evokes a group rape in which the 'brave captain might get all his soldiers upon her'. Man must 'come on, and come off quick' as Moll is the beast who will bite back. Realities of illicit sex are conjured in his treatment of Moll as a prostitute, a 'bona roba' who acts as an aphrodisiac to arouse. Gomme identifies 'a suggestion of buggery' within Laxton's desire.[140] Laxton's attraction to Moll's masculinity is homoerotic: '[s]he slips from one company to another like a fat eel between a Dutchman's fingers. — [*Aside*] I'll watch my time for her' (II. 1. 188–9). He evokes a sense of Moll's movement between class and gender, and her sexual flexibility by the phallic image of the eel, which he

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[138] *The Roaring Girl*, p. xxvi.
[139] Orgel, p. 151.
[140] *The Roaring Girl*, p. 34n.

imagines tactilely slipping between fingers. Moll's illicit transexuality disrupts convention: 'she might first cuckold the husband and then make him do as much for the wife' (II. 1. 192–3). As the phallic woman she provides a world of sexual alternatives and Orgel suggests that Laxton 'admires most of all the double model it provides for his fantasy life'.[141] Moll also embodies masculine virility and freedom, which Laxton aspires to possess and to enjoy.

The hero Sebastian admits the erotic attraction of a woman in man's clothing: 'I'd kiss such men to choose, Moll, | Methinks a woman's lip tastes well in a doublet' (IV. 1. 47–8). He is drawn by the sexual suggestiveness of an ambiguous gender and an unconventional woman. Howard emphasises 'the gap between the semiotic signals of her dress and her well-known biological identity making her hidden body the more alluring'.[142] In contrast Clark points to Shakespeare's hero who is attracted to the disguised woman's feminine attributes which reassures 'the audience of his heterosexual normality, rather than hinting, as Middleton makes Wengrave do, at the allure peculiar to the androgyne'.[143] Sebastian primarily enjoys the illicit nature of his secret kiss with a cross-dressed woman:

> So methinks every kiss she gives me now
> In this strange form, is worth a pair of two.
> Here we are safe, and furthest from the eye
> Of all suspicion, this is my father's chamber,
> Upon which floor he never steps till night. (IV. 1. 56–60)

Mary's dual identity as page and woman doubles the value of her kiss. Sebastian is also excited by his role as the rebel against patriarchal order who kisses a subversive woman in his father's chamber. He is aroused by the knowledge of a woman beneath the costume; although in the reality of the playhouse the audience would witness a homoerotic kiss between two men.

The kiss between Sebastian and Mary disguised as a page is alien to Moll: 'How strange this shows, one man to kiss another' (IV. 1. 46). Moll is voluntarily oblivious of personal desire despite her constant sexual banter with men. Laxton's invitation to do '[n]othing but be merry and lie together, I'll hire a coach with four horses,' provokes sexual innuendo from Moll: 'I thought 'twould be a beastly journey: you may leave out one well, three

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[141] Orgel, p. 151.
[142] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre', p. 437.
[143] Clark, '*Hic Mulier, Haec Vir*,' p. 164.

horses will serve if I play the jade myself' (II. 1. 255–8). His proposition is met with Moll's sexual flirtation and emphasis of her prowess. Trapdoor also offers Moll his erect body to supply her sexual needs when he describes his service: 'movable and immovable: movable to run of errands, and immovable to stand when you have occasion to use me' (II. 1. 326–8). Her 'merry' conversation is entertaining and proof that sexual knowledge does not automatically designate a woman as a whore.

Moll employs her usual sexual innuendo when Sebastian hands her the viol: 'it shall ne'er be said I came into a gentleman's chamber and let his instrument hang by the walls' (IV. 1. 86–8). She protests against the common assumption of her voracious sexuality, asserting, 'I ne'er came into that chamber yet where I took down the instrument myself' (IV. 1. 93–4). Sebastian dismisses the hypocrites who discredit Moll's morality by evidence of her masculine behaviour, including the playing of the viol between the legs: 'there be a thousand close dames that will call the viol an unmannerly instrument for a woman, and therefore talk broadly of thee, when you shall have them sit wider to a worse quality' (IV. 1. 96–9). The defence of Moll's playing the instrument is also a defence of her unconventional masculinity encompassing dress and athleticism. The sequence emphasises that Moll's sexual innuendo is an act of merriment amongst men conforming to what is expected of her as a roaring girl. Significantly Moll says, '[h]ang up the viol now, sir: all this while I was in a dream, one shall lie rudely then; but being awake, I keep my legs together' (IV. 1. 127–9). While playing music or dreaming in sleep Moll will take a 'rude' position; however, in reality she is chaste.

Moll contradicts the impression of masculine sexual prowess constructed by her appearance. Helen Hull claims that through Moll's usurped masculinity 'she herself appropriates the role of subject of desire, traditionally a male role'.[144] Garber perceives an anxiety over the 'ownership of desire' in the issue of cross-dressing.[145] The threat of Moll expressing sexual desire is removed by her chastity, while her erotic power is neglected as she counters Laxton's advances and any prospect of marriage. Chastity also contains the threat posed by her transgression of gender, conforming to the ideal definition of female

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[144] Helen Hull, 'Crossdressing in *The Roaring Girl*', *University of Georgia: Virtual Park* <http://virtual.park.uga.edu/~cdesmet/judson/helen.htm> [accessed 5 December 2008] (p. 2).

[145] M. Garber, 'The Logic of the Transvestite, *The Roaring Girl* (1608)', in *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, ed. by David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 221–34 (p. 231).

morality. Howard maintains that Middleton and Dekker aimed to decriminalise Moll, 'to make her an exception to society's rules concerning women's behavior but not a fundamental threat to the sex-gender system.'[146]

From Moll's perspective sexuality is depicted as a trap for the independent woman and she perceives male suitors as threatening her integrity. Woodbridge claims that the female transvestite assumes a masculine exterior 'for fear of men — overtly, for fear of rape; covertly, I suggest, for fear of sexuality itself'.[147] She attributes to Moll an underlying adolescent anxiety of sex, emerging in dress as an attempt to postpone adulthood. Such a theory can be applied to Shakespeare's heroines who employed masculine dress as a temporary disguise. Moll's appearance affords her security as it professes her strength and yet it also advertises a sexual prowess which attracts Laxton and derision. She does not employ a masculine persona as a disguise, but as a projection of her essence; she reveals no fear of sexual flirtation or evidence of denied sexual desire. Moll is guided by a moral cause and perceives sexual relations with men as a suppression of female freedom and potency. She is content with a single life unrestricted by the degradations of a sexual relationship with a man.

The most powerful example of Moll's exclusion from sexual relations is her aversion to marriage. Howard notes that in *The Roaring Girl* 'the resistance to patriarchy and its marriage customs is clear and sweeping'.[148] Moll refuses marriage with Sebastian, even if in jest, due to her inadequacy for the role of wife:

> Sir, I am so poor to requite you, you must look for nothing but thanks of me: I have no humour to marry, I love to lie o' both sides o'th'bed myself, and again o'th'other side; a wife you know ought to be obedient, but I fear me I am too headstrong to obey, therefore I'll ne'er go about it. I love you so well, sir, for your good will I'd be loath you should repent your bargain after, and therefore we'll ne'er come together at first. I have the head now of myself, and am man enough for a woman; marriage is but a chopping and changing, where a maiden loses one head and has a worse i'th'place. (II. 2. 35–44)

On the surface Moll is not the outspoken feminist, instead blaming her inadequacy — 'so poor to requite you' — and withdrawing herself from the marriage market to save a man from suffering and repenting his 'bargain'. However, beneath the facade she does assert her own individuality — 'I have no humour to marry,' 'I am too headstrong to obey.' She

[146] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre', p. 438.
[147] Woodbridge, p. 292.
[148] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre', p. 439.

reveals her dual role as husband and wife, revelling in her independence and self-sufficiency: 'I love to lie o' both sides o' th' bed myself, and again o'th' other side.' She treasures her own mind and the masculine freedom she has constructed: 'I have the head now of myself, and am man enough for a woman.' A woman can only be of value to a man in marriage if submissive, and if she transcends this role her value depreciates rapidly as she is essentially a woman judged by a male consumer. Moll perceives marriage as a transforming event for the woman: 'marriage is but a chopping and changing, where a maiden loses one head and has a worse i' th' place.' Within the joke on a wife's loss of maidenhead, Moll reveals her concept of marriage as a means to convert the maid into an obedient wife; Moll has only just found her own 'head' and is unwilling to exchange independence for a wife's role. Howard states that by '[r]efusing a male head, Moll asserts a freedom extraordinary for a woman'.[149] Moll later openly repels marriage and laughs at Sir Alexander's belief that she would marry Sebastian. She reveals a feminist agenda behind her pleas of wifely incompetence:

> When you shall hear
> Gallants void from sergeants' fear,
> Honesty and truth unslandered,
> Woman manned but never pandered,
> Cheators booted but not coached,
> Vessels older ere they're broached.
> If my mind be then not varied,
> Next day following I'll be married. (V. 2. 217–24)

Moll lists a vast number of social injustices, which must be rectified before she considers marriage. These ills explain why a woman would refuse marriage, an institution symbolising a woman's submission and integration into the social order. Her scepticism concerning the correction of these imbalances emphasises that Moll has no real intention of becoming a wife. Jardine views Moll with her marriage speech as the 'misrule' figure who can move beyond her role and 'point a finger at the social hierarchy'.[150] Moll's rejection of marriage is a reminder, White claims, that in the '"real" world of Mary Frith and the audience, such apparent changes of heart by men have to be put into action, and that many fundamental changes still remain to be made if women are to achieve greater sexual and social freedom'.[151] Moll radically argues against marriage in a society where these vices are accepted and flourish, and where she as a wife would lead a life of subjection to a

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[149] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre', p. 437.
[150] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 161.
[151] White, p. 60.

husband. Moll's decision to remain single with relative freedom suggests a measure of social tolerance, which also implies that such an unconventional woman if married would be a greater threat to authority. A rebellious wife would corrupt the system from within, a far greater risk to gender boundaries, which suggests that *The Roaring Girl* is not as challenging as it might first appear.

Moll aids Mary and Sebastian in their plan to marry against Sir Alexander's wishes. Orgel interprets her actions as evidence of Moll's main function, to 'defeat patriarchal menace in favor of the patriarchal virtues'.[152] Men assume their authority in marital arrangements. Sir Alexander views Moll and Mary as commodities within a marriage bargaining, yet through their masculine assertion both secure the preferred marriage. Moll takes pleasure in admitting her part in the scheme: 'Now are you gulled as you would be: thank me for't, | I'd a forefinger in't' (V. 2. 169–70). Sir Alexander rejoices in the discovery of Mary instead of Moll as his daughter-in-law and it is only now that he feels remorse and hollowly praises Moll:

> In troth thou'rt a good wench, I'm sorry now
> The opinion was so hard I conceived of thee.
> Some wrongs I've done thee. (V. 2. 227–9)

Sir Alexander emphasises the danger of looking through the world's eyes and claims:

> I'll never more
> Condemn by common voice, for that's the whore
> That deceives man's opinion, mocks his trust,
> Cozens his love, and makes his heart unjust. (V. 2. 247–50)

The play happily concludes with true love triumphant and all reconciled for a celebration. Yet the nagging question remains, if Sebastian had chosen Moll as his wife, would his father still have seen the true character of Moll and apologised? Orgel claims that the facade of Sebastian marrying Moll 'is not presented as inconceivable or even unlikely, and everyone takes it seriously: Moll is acknowledged to be an attractive and powerful figure, both on stage and off it'.[153] Orgel's argument is flawed as the success of Moll and Sebastian's scheme relied upon the social disapproval of their supposed union, while Moll by her own admission chooses not to marry. Sebastian never desires to marry Moll, as despite her erotic appeal she is never imagined as a future wife, and he selects her in the

[152] Orgel, p. 152.
[153] Orgel, p. 153.

belief that Mary Fitz-allard would never see Moll as a rival (I. 1. 94–107). White notes that Sir Alexander's apology 'is done in the rush of relief he feels at realising Moll is not his son's bride after all'.[154] The extent of Sir Alexander's moral transformation is dubious as ultimately he achieved his aim to exclude Moll from his family.

Moll's resolve to remain unmarried excludes her from the patriarchal control of the family. Fiona McNeill characterises Moll as an unmastered woman who 'refuses to be governed by a husband; masters any man who tries to rule her; claims the state of permanent "maidenhood"; and performs no mastered labor yet has easy access to money'.[155] She notes how Moll's presence creates an awareness of other masterless women, who are threateningly reproduced 'at the imaginary peripheries of the stage by the relentless repetition of names'.[156] Even Mary's original guise as a sempster refers to the woman perceived to sell sewing and sex door to door. McNeill emphasises that Moll and other independent women in early modern drama are situated 'in the threatening space outside the patriarchal household'.[157] She asserts that unlike other women, prostitutes, female vagrants or thieves, itinerant or pregnant maidservants, could not be contained through marriage and formed a 'vast female underclass comprising persistently single criminally masterless women'.[158] Sexual and economic independence beyond the marital home was feared and labelled whorish as it embodied female freedom from men. McNeill classes *The Roaring Girl* as representative of the 'potential failure of heteroerotic mastery as an organizing civic principle'.[159] Moll's existence exposes the apparent failure of heterosexuality to master women as she is defiant and rebuts any masculine attempts to make her subservient. The sexual threat of the 'unmastered' woman is partially subdued in Moll's moral role although she does expose the effeminacy of men in the play.

Men are unable to match Moll's self-fashioned phallic authority. Even the most conventional woman, Mary Fitz-allard, through her disguise as page assumes a masculinity to achieve her marriage. She is described as a 'needle-woman', which Garber interprets as

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[154] White, p. 60.
[155] Fiona McNeill, 'Gynocentric London Spaces: (Re)Locating Masterless Women in Early Stuart Drama', *Renaissance Drama*, 28 (1999), 195–244, (p. 195).
[156] McNeill, p. 196.
[157] McNeill, p. 197.
[158] McNeill, Conclusion, p. 214.
[159] McNeill, Conclusion, p. 215.

'a glance at the phallic woman who is the boy actor playing Mary Fitzallard'.[160] Despite Garber's definition of Mary as phallic, she adopts the page outfit only as a temporary disguise and her sole objective is to secure a legal and conventional marriage. Mary is in no way a roaring girl, although the existence of two cross-dressing women emphasises the different agendas that exist within the category. Orgel observes that these 'women are fully as active as men, and rather more successful at getting what they want'.[161] Unlike Moll, Mary still subscribes to the patriarchy's example of the ideal woman who desires marriage, and so she reflects the male perspective that creates her assertive nature within the boundaries of appropriate female desires.

Moll Cutpurse's transgression usurps man's powerful image, yet it also, as Garber observes, 'refers back to the male as norm and hence is itself a hegemonic move.'[162] As a product of a patriarchal society it is impossible to imagine a form devoid of male associations, and even Garber's labelling of Moll as phallic relies upon that same masculine premise. The tailor follows Moll's directions and constructs an unconventional gender epitomised by an artificial phallus. Garber interprets the construction of gender as a 'fetishization of commodities' and 'body parts'.[163] Moll's female body is compensated with masculine trousers that supply the room for a penis: '[y]our breeches then will take up a yard more,' and '[i]t shall stand round and full, I warrant you' (II. 2. 82, 84). Moll's phallic authority is artificially manifested in her clothed figure. Female clothing does not accommodate masculine virility and must be altered: 'I know my fault now, t'other was somewhat stiff between the legs, I'll make these open enough, I warrant you' (II. 2. 86–7). The tailor's 'opening' of Moll's trousers is suggestive of the belief that man's clothing accommodated sexual promiscuity by easy access. Moll's sexual virility is further implied by the tailor's quip on the porter's delivery of her thigh measurement: 'it is a lusty one, both of them would make any porter's back ache in England' (II. 2. 96–7). Moll is conveyed as sexually dominant riding the porter as if she were a man, although significantly her constructed gender is an amalgamation of the masculine and feminine.

Moll does not utilise masculine clothing for disguise or protection, but is recognised as a woman by most when on stage. Gomme comments, '[h]er male clothes are thus not a

[160] Garber, 'The Logic', p. 223.
[161] Orgel, p. 144.
[162] Garber, 'The Logic', p. 232.
[163] Garber, 'The Logic', p. 224.

disguise but an expression of her masculine vigour and toughness.'[164] Bullen describes Moll as the incorruptible 'Amazon of Bankside', while Jardine suggests that in 'breeches she is fantasy warrior-woman'.[165] Moll impresses Laxton when she strikes a 'fellow' that abused her in a tavern, a counterattack which he describes as '[g]allantly performed i'faith Moll, and manfully' (II. 1. 238). Moll also asserts ownership of Trapdoor through clothing which marks him as servant and property: 'I'll put a livery cloak upon your back | The first thing I do' (III. 1. 198–9). As a masculine *woman* Moll dominates and overshadows real men.

The Roaring Girl presents men as impotent, castrated and misogynistic, thus creating through their failure the figure of Moll. Gomme describes roaring boys as 'swaggering bucks given to riotous and quarrelsome behaviour to show off their virility' and their aristocratic privilege.[166] Moll inverts the contemporary image of antisocial men and converts their privileged role to enforce justice. She fills the masculine void in the play and becomes the fearsome and admired phallic woman by means of her courage, honesty and symbolic codpiece. Moll literally usurps the role of men and *The Roaring Girl* exposes an anxiety over male sexual inferiority. Garber interprets Laxton's impotence from the homophony of his name: 'lack-stone.'[167] The gallant Jack Dapper purchases the sexual services of boys: 'when his purse jingles, | Roaring boys follow at's tail, fencers and ningles' (III. 3. 61–2). In contrast Moll represents the masculine virility which these men lack. She alters the sexual balance of power with her final dominance over Laxton whom she can now prostitute, not vice versa. Laxton, Trapdoor and Sir Alexander all attempt to dominate and castrate Moll. Moll's masculinity is performed and created, which casts doubt upon the essence of real men. Late Elizabethan and early Jacobean society is shown to be an anxious place where masculinity is always questioned and threatened, either by the masculine woman or inadequate man.

Moll's transgression invokes a gender war and Rose emphasises that while she is admired, she still represents a potential danger to social order.[168] Laxton, Trapdoor and Sir Wengrave embody anti-feminist attitudes and attempt to strip Moll of her illegitimate

[164] *The Roaring Girl*, p. xxvi.
[165] *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by A. H. Bullen, 8 vols (New York: AMS Press, 1964.) I, p. xxxv; Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 160.
[166] *The Roaring Girl*, p. xvii.
[167] Garber, 'The Logic', p. 225.
[168] Rose, pp. 388–91.

masculine sexuality. Trapdoor says, 'I'll cut her comb for you,' offering to metaphorically castrate Moll's masculinity (I. 2. 214). Again Trapdoor's fantasy of subduing Moll includes the symbolic removal of her trousers: 'And when her breeches are off, she shall follow me' (I. 2. 223). Trapdoor envisages himself as the man to enforce her female obedience: 'A roaring boy the roaring girl puts down' (I. 2. 244). White asserts that the play challenges Sir Alexander's perception of Moll 'as not only a whore and a thief, but as a threat to the very stability of society'.[169] Sir Alexander desires to silence Moll by cutting her throat:

> Trace all her steps: at this she-fox's den
> Watch what lambs enter: let me play the shepherd
> To save their throats from bleeding, and cut hers. (I. 2. 231–3)

Despite his intentions Moll is depicted as the hunter who slaughters innocent men bewitched by her strangeness.

Laxton represents the worst example of man and he is an enemy to women whom Moll must correct. At Gray's Inn Fields Laxton attempts to lure Moll into his coach and asks if she will 'untruss a point' in preparation for sex (III. 1. 58). Instead she draws her sword and adds: '[y]es, here's the point that I untruss, 't has but one tag, 'twill serve, though, to tie up a rogue's tongue' (III. 1. 59–60). Moll has full use of her phallic weapon, which threatens Laxton with castration unless he proves his manhood: 'Draw, or I'll serve an execution on thee' (III. 1. 68). Moll's artificial penis mocks the sexually frustrated Laxton, who is castrated with fear of a duel: '[d]raw upon a woman? why, what dost mean, Moll?' (III. 1. 69). Laxton's assumption that Moll is a 'fish' leads her to justify her masculine image:

> I'm given to sport, I'm often merry, jest:
> Had mirth no kindred in the world but lust?
> Oh shame take all her friends then: but howe'er
> Thou and the baser world censure my life,
> I'll send 'em word by thee, and write so much
> Upon thy breast, 'cause thou shalt bear't in mind:
> Tell them 'twere base to yield, where I have conquered.
> I scorn to prostitute myself to a man,
> I that can prostitute a man to me,
> And so I greet thee. (III. 1. 102–11)

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[169] White, p. 57.

Her speech acts as a personal defence against the sexual defamation of the masculine woman. We see a complete gender reversal in which Moll is the masculine aggressor and has the strength and the means to prostitute Laxton whom she sexually and physically dominates. Men interpret Moll's athletic and 'merry' characteristics as 'kindred' to lust. She will make an example of Laxton as base opinion's representative: 'I'll send 'em word by thee, and write so much | Upon thy breast.' Moll asserts her masculine dominance, dismissing Laxton's offer of 'purse and body' as 'Both are mine, | And now at my disposing' (III. 1. 120–1). The encounter began with Laxton's presumption of power to seduce Moll; however, by this point Moll openly declares her authority to sexually use Laxton.

Moll's most 'feminist' cause is her fight against man's unfair treatment of women. Clark asserts, 'Middleton uses the device of the girl in boy's clothing to expose and deglamorize the romantic conventions usually associated with it.'[170] Moll has adopted her costume to step outside of society and, as White suggests, assumed a role which society forces upon her if she is to remain free: 'it is the attitudes and behaviour of men that force her to opt out and adopt male attire.'[171] Misogyny compensates for masculine impotency in *The Roaring Girl.* Laxton proclaims, 'Their good parts are so rare, their bad so common, | I will have nought to do with any woman' (I. 2. 155–6). Laxton's degrading assumptions concerning women evoke the feminist hero in Moll who seeks his correction:

> To teach thy base thoughts manners: th'art one of those
> That thinks each woman thy fond flexible whore:
> If she but cast a liberal eye upon thee,
> Turn back her head, she's thine: or, amongst company,
> By chance drink first to thee, then she's quite gone. (III. 1. 70–4)

Moll excuses the glances and gestures, which in a man would be unremarkable, although in a woman are sexual signs. She blames such men for their defamation of innocent female reputation for no more than sharing a loving cup or a kiss: 'In path of whoredom beyond cup and lip?' (III. 1. 81–2). Moll's vindication of the female right to kiss is a liberal standpoint. As an outsider Moll's moral voice is able to expose social injustices and through her 'unnatural' masculinity she is empowered as the defender of women who fall victim to villainous men. Moll's attack on Laxton expands into a proto-feminist manifesto:

[170] Clark, '*Hic Mulier, Haec Vir*', p. 164.
[171] White, pp. 56–57.

> In thee I defy all men, their worst hates,
> And their best flatteries, all their golden witchcrafts,
> With which they entangle the poor spirits of fools.
> Distressed needlewomen and trade-fallen wives,
> Fish that must needs bite or themselves be bitten,
> Such hungry things as these may soon be took
> With a worm fastened on a golden hook:
> Those are the lecher's food, his prey, he watches
> For quarrelling wedlocks, and poor shifting sisters. (III. 1. 90–8)

Moll is the product of man's persecution of women; she refuses subjection through marriage and employs her unconventionality to publicise female suffering. Moll offers an alternative interpretation to Laxton's gallant seductions with the 'golden augur'. Dollimore suggests that within Moll's speeches the 'politics of inversion become persuasive, perhaps irresistible'.[172] Men are inverted into witches yet they utilise the power of wealth: 'golden witchcrafts' and a 'golden hook'. Their female 'prey' are not condemned but excused as distraught 'needlewomen and trade-fallen wives,' driven by endemic gendered poverty. Moll radically attributes 'female immorality' to economic hardship and the threat of destitution. Dollimore emphasises Moll's 'exceptional awareness of the prostitute as someone sexually exploited because of economic and other kinds of social subjection'.[173] Jardine observes, '[i]t is men here who practice witchcraft and seduction; women are "fish that must needs bite" (the fisherman, presumably, not the baited hook) to avoid being bitten.'[174] Men are the 'lechers' looking for opportunities to target vulnerable marriages and poverty stricken women. The audience cannot help but analyse or at least become aware of their own preconceptions about Moll and the women she represents. Dollimore sees the play revealing how 'economic and political anxieties can be displaced into the domain of the sexual and, conversely, the sexual comes to possess enormous signifying power'.[175] Moll's focus upon the sexual subjection of women is easily translated into a feminist critique of their overall subjection in society.

As a social nonconformist, Moll advances the argument for an alternative life for other women instead of sexual subjection:

> And make 'em know, she that has wit and spirit
> May scorn
> To live beholding to her body for meat,
> Or for apparel, like your common dame

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[172] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 294.
[173] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 294.
[174] Orgel, p. 151.
[175] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 295.

> That makes shame get her clothes to cover shame.
> Base is that mind that kneels unto her body,
> As if a husband stood in awe on's wife;
> My spirit shall be mistress of this house,
> As long as I have time in't. (III. 1. 132–40)

Moll aggressively seeks to enlighten the woman who has 'wit and spirit' to the truth that she does not have to prostitute her 'body for meat | Or for apparel'. She advocates a proto-feminist argument that is directed towards assertive women. The 'common dame' and the husband who worships her are equally despicable and stand in opposition to Moll. Moll rules out the prospect of a husband, as she will never submit her body to a man to survive, and any man who worships the female body is unworthy. Moll supplies her own example as an alternative to prostitution. Her spirit is mistress not 'master' of her body, so in this instance she upholds the integrity of her feminine identity. Her final assertive statement, 'My spirit shall be mistress of this house, | As long as I have time in't', is reminiscent of Elizabeth I's reported attitude towards marriage and her role as prince. Sir Robert Naunton's *Fragmenta Regalia* was a popular history of Elizabeth I's reign accumulated from recollections and observations which first appeared in print in 1641. He relates a story concerning the Earl of Leicester and his presumption of influence over the Queen concerning a dispute with Bowyer. Bowyer's bold suggestion that Leicester imagines himself as King evokes her response to the Earl: 'if you think to rule here, I will take a course to see you forthcoming. I will have here but one mistress and no master.'[176] The character Moll and the Queen employ the image of a household to express their determined protection of their independent rule from the encroachment of a man. Queen Elizabeth I also responded to petitions for her marriage in recorded speeches before Parliament. On one occasion she reveals an insistence on the impossibility of ruling as a prince and marrying a husband, as if the demands of a man would be too great for her to care for her realm: 'when the public charge of governing the kingdom came upon me, it seemed unto me an inconsiderate folly to draw upon myself the cares which might proceed of marriage.'[177] Speeches may not be accurate records of the Queen's actual words; however, the fact of their existence during the period in which *The Roaring Girl* was written and performed makes their influence convincing.

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[176] Sir Robert Naunton, *Fragmenta Regalia; or, Observations on Queen Elizabeth, Her Times and Favorites*, ed. by John S. Cerovski (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1985), p. 41.

[177] 'Queen Elizabeth's first speech before parliament, February 10, 1559, Speech 3, Version 2' in *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, ed. by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp. 58–60 (p. 59).

Moll holds the dominant male seducer responsible for the sexual vulnerability of women, yet she also emphasises the ability of women to resist. Rose comments, '[a]s Moll's defeat of Laxton makes clear, free-floating, amoral eros is stripped of its socially destructive power when women decide to take responsibility for themselves [...], the playwrights clearly associate lechery and misogyny with obtuse, unobservant social conformity.'[178] Moll by her own example argues the case for women's sexual responsibility and independence. Howard stresses, '*The Roaring Girl* uses the image of the crossdressed woman to defy expectations about woman's nature and to protest the injustices caused by the sex-gender system.'[179] White maintains the significance of the play as 'a direct intervention in a contemporary debate on the rights of women'.[180] The audience, he claims, 'are encouraged to review their own attitude to slanderous and hypocritical attitudes to women.'[181] Rose in contrast perceives Moll as the 'defiant champion of female freedom from male sexual dominion' undercut by her exclusion from the 'new comic society' restored in the marriage of Sebastian and Mary.[182] It is true that Moll remains an outsider at the conclusion of the play; however, this is a realistic position for a figure that embodies destabilising change. Her exclusion does not undermine her views, but only reflects the continued social prejudices against the masculine woman.

In the conclusion of *The Roaring Girl* Moll ignites change and re-stabilises order through a conventional marriage ultimately condoned by the parents. Rose suggests that Moll is 'excluded from the renewed comic society of married couples'.[183] The new society is defined by the patriarch Sir Alexander in terms of marriage:

> And you kind gentlewomen, whose sparkling presence
> Are glories set in marriage, beams of society,
> For all your loves give lustre to my joys. (V. 2. 259–61)

Unlike Mary Fitz-allard, Moll does not offer the social reassurance of transforming into a wife. Garber describes Mary and Moll as projections of each other, insisting that Moll is not a 'role model' or 'metaphor for the aspirations of early modern feminists but a sign of

[178] Rose, p. 376.
[179] Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre', p. 438.
[180] White, p. 61.
[181] White, p. 58.
[182] Rose, p. 381.
[183] Rose, p. 379.

the double division of the concept of the "roaring girl" (female/male; Mary/Moll)'.[184] She highlights the dual reality of contemporary female transvestism; however, she fails to note Moll's defiant declarations of power and female rights. Moll's rejection of marriage and masculine authority contrasts to the motivation of the socially approved woman, Mary, who seeks married family life. Moll is a 'roaring girl'; a provocative figure who embodies a powerful female independence that at its essence threatens the social order. As a result Moll must remain on the outskirts of conventional society, whilst still retaining her appeal through her shared sense of social justice and sexual morality.

The notoriety of the real Mary Frith attracted the spectator and yet the dramatic Moll is a complex rebel whose alternative gender and beliefs are confined within a code of morality and definite sexual boundaries. Dollimore emphasises 'containment' in his analysis of *The Roaring Girl*, where Frith's 'deviance is harnessed as the moral conscience of the self same society whose gender categories she transgresses'.[185] Criminality and sexual promiscuity are erased from the mould of the masculine woman, reducing the potency of her threat; however, this does not obscure the criminal and sexualised setting of the play which will be explored in the final chapter. Rose insists that 'with their idealized comic portrait of the *Hic Mulier* figure Moll Frith, Dekker and Middleton were joining those who, like the author of the *Haec-Vir* pamphlet, were beginning to call for greater freedom for women and equality between the sexes'.[186] The complex characterisation of Moll undermines Rose's description of the playwrights as clear advocates of women's rights. She acts as an outsider, unique amongst women, emphasising her role as the mouthpiece for a socially extreme view. Rose describes Moll's social identity as 'ambiguous, marginal, and problematic, [...] a metaphor for the changing condition of women in early modern England'.[187] Moll is the figure of change, both in terms of the woman who revolts against social oppression and as a literal force of justice ensuring order. Both elements of her role seem contradictory, although they merely reflect the influence of the male playwrights who established her morality in order to provide a less threatening platform for proto-feminist arguments.

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[184] Garber, 'The Logic', p. 229.
[185] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 298.
[186] Rose, p. 377.
[187] Rose, p. 379.

The Masculine Woman Reconsidered

The satires of Marston and Guilpin express an anxiety over the inversion of gender and relate the masculine woman to the effeminate man, as signs of corruption through a misappropriation of identities and authority. The masculine woman utilised the figure of authority of patriarchal society and assumed that to be free one must be male. Women in early modern society were forced to adopt male roles in order to lead active lives, which were not incorporated into the concept of the feminine. Mary Frith, the fictional Hic Mulier and the stage Moll Cutpurse imagined and assumed independence through the image of man. The masculine woman assimilates power within the system and imitates man to gain his freedoms and rights, the only template she has for equality. In 1852 the controversial 'bloomer' outfit was introduced to the United States and consisted of long full trousers worn under a short dress. It was adopted by a minority of feminists; however, was generally ridiculed by press and public.[188] Despite the obvious differences of culture and period, both the outfit of the early modern female transvestite and the 'bloomer' represent an attempt by women to gain equality with their contemporary men, which caused alarm.

The Roaring Girl insists upon the irrationality of mindless prejudice while Moll is never wholly welcomed as an equal member of society. The pamphlets *Hic Mulier* and *Haec-Vir* are the product and record of the anxiety which masculine women evoked, while the real Frith's public persona of humour, rebellion and criminality ensured her treatment as a rogue and spectacle. The condemnation of masculine women and the attempts of the authorities to suppress the trend, reflect a perception of society and order as under attack. Orgel attributes the reaction to a belief that women 'must be controlled if the patriarchy is to survive'.[189] Masculine apparel imbued a woman with a usurped authority, which Hic Mulier employs to speak on female issues, and in *The Roaring Girl* establishes Moll as the dominant force in society. The anxiety aroused by the masculine woman, in terms of sexual and social deviance, was reflected in literature including *Hic Mulier*, in sumptuary laws and by the Crown. *Haec-Vir* responds to attempts at suppression by establishing the arguments for female rights and equality. Mary Frith's autobiography and *The Roaring*

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[188] Christine Bolt, *The Women's Movements in the United States and Britain from the 1790s to the 1920s* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), pp. 105–6.
[189] Orgel, p. 109.

Girl counter the perception of the masculine woman's immorality by censoring her sexual history and emphasising her unique status. Additionally, the dramatic Moll's defiance against marriage is cast as an outsider's protest, whereas if married her threat would have been greater as an enemy within society. Jordan observes, '[f]or Elizabethans, the fact that men could acknowledge or deny their sexual activity constituted a highly significant dimension of their political power.'[190] Masculine clothes symbolised the combination of man's sexual liberty with female licentiousness, which would enable women to assert a sexual appetite and freedom.

The masculine woman represented a feminist cause, even if in its very infancy. She may not have known or even openly advocated the cause of the woman; however, the very usurpation of the man's appearance and his behaviour was a move to rectify woman's social inferiority. Catherine Dunn asserts, 'during the sixteenth century, women took the first tottering steps toward modern feminism.'[191] Faderman also proclaims, '[t]ransvestites were [...] among the first feminists', as '[t]ransvestism must have been a temptation, or [...] a favorite fantasy for many an adventurous young woman who understood that as a female she could expect little latitude or freedom in her life'.[192] Even if the masculine woman was a criminal or sexually promiscuous, the costume she wore allowed her the freedom to follow her chosen path or to improve her life, which previously had been a privilege of men.

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[190] Jordan, 'Political Androgyny,' p. 161.

[191] Catherine M. Dunn, 'The Changing Image of Woman in Renaissance Society and Literature', in *What Manner of Woman: Essays on English and American Life and Literature*, ed. by Marlene Springer (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), pp. 15–38 (p. 34).

[192] Faderman, p. 61.

Chapter Three
The Effeminate Man

The Feminine Influence

The effeminate man of the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean reigns acts as counterpart to the Hic Mulier figure, and therefore, has a prominent role in the development of the investigation of female sexuality and the idea of its ability to transform gender. The effeminate man was and is still defined by his inversion of masculinity and additionally he is perceived as a creation derived from the feminine. An analysis of the identity of the effeminate man, an identity seen to imitate or be shaped by women, is integral to exploring the image of female sexuality as a corruptive and transforming force.

The effeminate man dominates Marston's *Certaine Satyres*, *The Scourge of Villanie* and Guilpin's *Skialetheia*. Woodbridge comments, 'effeminacy is a recurrent theme in the formal satires of the 1590s: the satires of Marston, Hall and Guilpin are full of commentary on foppishness; and such other specialized perversions of true manliness as female impersonation, male prostitution, and buggery in academe receive mention as well.'[1] Hall nostalgically remembers a golden age in *Virgidemiarum*: 'Then men were men, but now the greater part | Bestes are in life, and women are in heart.'[2] Marston's and Guilpin's satires establish the effeminate man as an idle creature, who lives a pampered and depraved life which not only damages the health of English masculinity but also the strength of the whole nation. Their intentions are serious, as shown when Marston encapsulates the satirist's despair at the dearth of real men, consciously resuscitating the 'currish mad Athenian' Diogenes at the opening of 'A Cynicke Satire' — 'A *Man, a man, a kingdome for a man.*'[3]

Marston and Guilpin exercised their wit through satire, and so their attitude was constitutive of a vocal few; however, they also offer a greater value than purely as a marker of public opinion. These writers commit to paper a response to a particular

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[1] L. Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540–1620* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1984), p. 169.
[2] *The Collected Poems of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter and Norwich*, ed. by A. Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1949), *Virgidemiarum*, Bk. III. Satire 1. 70–1.
[3] *Poems of John Marston*, ed. by A. Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1961), *The Scourge of Villanie* VII. 1.

alteration of gender ideals and by so doing betray the fear at the root of their hyperbolic attack on effeminacy, a fear concerning the blurring of gender identity which social order relied upon.

Effeminacy in Sidney's *Old Arcadia*

Almost two decades prior to the satires of Marston and Guilpin, the debate concerning effeminacy was established between Pyrocles and Musidorus in Sidney's *Old Arcadia*. The theme of male effeminacy caused by love and feminine dress was exposed through an Arcadian pastoral setting, and by the time the theme was harnessed in the satires it had adopted a vicious and contemporary tone. John J. O'Connor emphasises the influence of *Amadis de Gaule* upon Sidney's Arcadia and emphasises that for 'the disguise of Pyrocles as Zelmane, *Amadis* is the only source'.[4] The feminine disguise of a knight appears in full only in *Amadis*. In Book VIII Amadis de Grèce and in Book XI Agesilan fall in love and disguise themselves as amazon women. *Arcadia's* Musidorus expresses a familiar anxiety concerning the deviation of gender. He vociferously attacks man's love of women and laments the effects of female beauty upon masculinity: 'love of a woman doth so womanize a man.'[5] A man in love repeats Adam's submission to Eve and violates divine order; by surrendering to his desire for women he re-enacts the Fall. Musidorus claims that passionate love 'utterly subverts the course of nature in making reason give place to sense, and man to woman'.[6]

An all-consuming love drives Pyrocles' plan to become an Amazon and when physically dressed as a woman Pyrocles embodies the belief that desire converts the lover into the beloved. He insists that there is no other course than, 'to take upon me the estate of an Amazon lady going about the world.' The irony of the situation is blatant; to cure his illness of effeminacy, Pyrocles will dress as a woman, which for Musidorus appears as an effeminate extreme. Furthermore, the cause of Pyrocles' disease is his beloved Philoclea, yet his cure involves her imitation to gain intimacy. Philoclea does fall in love with

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[4] John J. O'Connor, *Amadis de Gaule and its influence on Elizabethan Literature* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1970), p. 185.
[5] Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. by Jean Robertson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), I. p. 20, 19–20.
[6] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 20, 11–12.

Pyrocles when disguised as the Amazon, and Orgel observes, 'the nature of love is to strive to be like the beloved; women are therefore best wooed by imitation.'[7] Pyrocles embraces his physical transformation as an imitation of the beloved: 'as for my name, it shall be Cleophila, turning Philoclea to myself, as my mind is wholly turned and transformed into her.'[8]

In the *New Arcadia* Pyrocles suddenly appears as an Amazon while Musidorus rests in a wood, taking advantage of the shock factor upon Musidorus and the reader. Dipple identifies metamorphosis in the *New Arcadia* as the 'natural instrument of love [...] making transference of sex not a degrading but an ennobling thing'.[9] The *Old Arcadia* provides ample opportunity for Musidorus to voice his theory of effeminacy caused by love of a woman. Prior to Pyrocles' Amazonian conversion, Musidorus notes a change in his cousin and confronts him accordingly:

> I have marked in you, I will not say an alteration, but a relenting, truly, and slacking of the main career you had so notably begun and almost performed; and that, in such sort as I cannot find sufficient reasons in my great love towards you how to allow it.[10]

Musidorus emphasises those changes which he finds most disturbing as they are all suggestive of a physical and mental effeminacy. Musidorus is motivated by the love between men, a bond which protects and nurtures masculinity. Before his effeminacy Pyrocles encompassed the definition of rational man:

> whereas you were wont, in all the places you came, to give yourself vehemently to knowledge of those things which might better your mind; to seek the familiarity of excellent men in learning and soldiery; and lastly, to put all these things in practice both by continual wise proceeding and worthy enterprises, as occasions fell for them; you now leave all these things undone.[11]

Musidorus assumes the role of a masculine superior, a father, elder brother or commander and aims to retrieve Pyrocles from his error. Pyrocles achieved a noble path by associating with men, improving his mind and martial ability, two studies Musidorus holds in high esteem. Masculine learning is also socially beneficial when applied to life outside the classroom; however, Pyrocles has now left his work 'undone'. Danby interprets two

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[7] Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p. 80.

[8] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 18, 21–3.

[9] Elizabeth Dipple, 'Metamorphosis in Sidney's *Arcadias*', *PhQ*, 50 (1971), 47–62 (p. 62).

[10] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 13, 23–6.

[11] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 13, 29–34.

separate yet connected spheres in Sidney's world, 'one [...] the especially masculine world, the other the world in which the womanly nature finds its supreme expression.'[12] Musidorus, influenced by the memory of Pyrocles' former rational heights, launches an impassioned attack on his cousin's present diminished masculinity:

> you let your mind fall asleep, besides your countenance troubled (which surely comes not out of virtue; for virtue, like the clear heaven, is without clouds); and lastly, which seemeth strangest unto me, you haunt greatly this place, wherein, besides the disgrace that might fall of it (which, that it hath not already fallen upon you, is rather luck than providence, this duke having sharply forbidden it), you subject yourself to solitariness, the sly enemy that doth most separate a man from well doing.[13]

Musidorus is aggravated by Pyrocles' lack of action, his mind is 'asleep,' he haunts the place, and reverts into passive 'solitariness' in which he cannot achieve 'well doing'. Musidorus advances noble action instead of contemplation: 'in action a man did not only better himself but benefit others; that the gods would not have delivered a soul into the body which hath arms and legs (only instruments of doing) but that it were intended the mind that should employ them.'[14] He is suspicious of the morality of Pyrocles' present habits; his 'troubled' countenance and his inevitable 'disgrace' for trespassing can only oppose 'virtue'. Pyrocles still feels the bond of male love and is touched by his friend's concerns yet this vulnerability is also symptomatic of effeminacy; the judgements 'pierce' him to his heart, already made tender by love, and he responds with 'blushing cheeks' and 'two or three broken sighs'.[15] Pyrocles directly combats the typical effeminate criticisms. In response to the neglect of his education through solitary ponderings, he asks, '[w]ho knows whether I feed not my mind with higher thoughts?' He points to the restrictions of male scholarly knowledge and exalts the value of contemplation as an alternative.[16]

Despite his skill in debate, Pyrocles' stance is undermined by his physical characterisation as 'a man unsatisfied' and one 'looking with a countenance as though he desired he should know his mind without hearing him speak, and yet desirous to speak to breathe out some part of his inward evil, sending again new blood to his face'.[17] He appears melancholic, too lethargic to argue yet also driven by a lust, which needs to be expired through the

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[12] J. F. Danby, *Poets on Fortune's Hill: Studies in Sidney, Shakespeare, Beaumont & Fletcher* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), p. 51.
[13] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 13, 34–6, p. 14, 1–6.
[14] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 16, 15–19.
[15] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 14, 9–12.
[16] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 14, 30–5, p. 15, 1–2.
[17] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 15, 6–11.

mouth. Pyrocles betrays his abandonment of masculine 'reason', and reveals his fantasy of desire:

> Certainly, certainly, cousin, it must needs be that some goddess this desert belongs unto, who is the soul of this soil; for neither is any less than a goddess worthy to be shrined in such a heap of pleasures, nor any less than a goddess could have made it so perfect a model of the heavenly dwellings.[18]

Pyrocles represents the forbidden 'desert' as an Edenic idyll that holds his Eve, betraying a blind desire for sexual consummation.

Musidorus is horrified with the reality of Pyrocles' love sickness, 'casting a ghastful countenance upon him, as if he would conjure some strange spirit he saw possess him.'[19] Standing before him is a friend consumed by an evil 'other', an extreme opposite of his former masculine self:

> And is it possible that this is Pyrocles, the only young prince in the world, formed by nature and framed by education to the true exercise of virtue? Or is it, indeed, some Amazon Cleophila that hath counterfeited the face of my friend in this sort to vex me? For likelier, sure, I would have thought it that any outward face might have been disguised than that the face of so excellent a mind could have been thus blemished. O sweet Pyrocles, separate yourself a little, if it be possible, from yourself, and let your own mind look upon your own proceedings; so shall my words be needless, and you best instructed.[20]

The image of Pyrocles at present is one of ambiguous gender and deception, a woman poorly imitating the heroic prince. Musidorus finds the two visions of the young prince and the Amazon incongruous and appeals to Pyrocles' reason to 'separate' himself from his effeminate half. Musidorus is confident that masculine reason if summoned will rectify the balance. He heralds reason as the defining element of a man, as opposed to the corruptive sensuality within man's sexual desire for women:

> Remember (for I know you it) that, if we will be men, the reasonable part of our soul is to have absolute commandment, against which if any sensual weakness arise, we are to yield all our sound forces to the overthrowing of so unnatural a rebellion.[21]

Musidorus insists that the mark of a true man is his ability, when sexually aroused by a woman, to control this passion through his masculine reason. Musidorus considers heterosexual desire as 'so unnatural a rebellion' against reason, that it reduces man to a

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[18] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 15, 28–32.
[19] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 18, 28–30.
[20] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 18, 32–6, p.19, 1–5.
[21] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 19, 13–16.

child or even worse a defiant woman. He treats Pyrocles' resistance to his argument as evidence of his decline: 'to say I cannot is childish, and I will not womanish.'[22] Musidorus strives to enlighten his cousin to the danger:

> And see how extremely every way you endanger your mind; for to take this woman's habit, without you frame your behaviour accordingly, is wholly vain; your behaviour can never come kindly from you but as the mind is proportioned unto it. So that you must resolve, if you will play your part to any purpose, whatsoever peevish imperfections are in that sex, to soften your heart to receive them — the very first down step to all wickedness. For do not deceive yourself, my dear cousin; there is no man suddenly either excellently good or extremely evil, but grows either as he holds himself up in virtue or lets himself slide to viciousness.[23]

The most precious attribute of man, his mind, is endangered by love. Musidorus believes that the outward 'habit' dictates 'behaviour', and accordingly female clothing will produce 'wholly vain' actions. He authoritatively warns that the moral state of a man is not predestined, but one which demands constant attention and maintenance, and vehemently conceives Pyrocles' transvestite plan as a sure path to 'viciousness'. Pyrocles' Amazonian disguise fuels and is fuelled by his love for Philoclea, which Musidorus judges harshly:

> love, a passion, and the basest and fruitlessest of all passions [...] this bastard love (for, indeed, the name of love is unworthily applied to so hateful a humour as it is, engendered betwixt lust and idleness), as the matter it works upon is nothing but a certain base weakness, which some gentle fools call a gentle heart; as his adjoined companions be unquietness, longings, fond comforts, faint discomforts, hopes, jealousies, ungrounded rages, causeless yieldings; so is the highest end it aspires unto a little pleasure, with much pain before, and great repentance after.[24]

Musidorus describes love as base and fruitless, 'bastard', emphasising its difference from procreative divine love. Pyrocles' experience of love is reduced to a list of undesirable emotional extremes ranging from the unsatisfied 'longings' to the more dangerous 'rages'. Musidorus anticipates Shakespeare's Sonnet 129 which establishes the contradictions of lust:

> Past reason hunted, and no sooner had,
> Past reason hated as a swallowed bait,
> On purpose laid to make the taker mad.[25]

The main aim of love in his view is sexual consummation, an experience of temporary pleasure, which is preceded by painful yearning and followed by regret at the lover's moral fall. Musidorus can only perceive the ill effects of love, and his fears of its efficacy leads

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[22] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 19, 20–1.
[23] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 19, 21–30.
[24] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 19, 32–7, p. 20, 1–7.
[25] *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. by Katherine Duncan-Jones (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 1998), Sonnet 129. 6–8.

him to censor its 'infinite evils', as they are 'not for your ears, in whom, indeed, there is so much true disposition to virtue'.[26] Love acts as a pervasive yet unseen force, which Musidorus despises yet respects, unwilling to utter its truths in case they consume his friend even further. He sees love as an insurgent, reversing the natural order, and observes its effect upon Pyrocles: 'it utterly subverts the course of nature in making reason give place to sense, and man to woman.'[27] Reason embodies man, the superior sanctioned by nature and God, yet this position is threatened by love that inspires tender and lustful thoughts, thus converting man into an image of the sensuous woman, and placing him under her thrall:

> true love hath that excellent nature in it, that it doth transform the very essence of the lover into the thing loved, uniting and, as it were, incorporating it with a secret and inward working. And herein do these kinds of love imitate the excellent; for, as the love of heaven makes one heavenly, the love of virtue, virtuous, so doth the love of the world make one become worldly. And this effeminate love of a woman doth so womanize a man that, if you yield to it, it will not only make you a famous Amazon, but a launder, a distaff-spinner, or whatsoever other vile occupation their idle heads can imagine and their weak hands perform.[28]

Musidorus praises 'heavenly' love, which similar to his 'bastard love' converts the admirer to the nature of the beloved. Man's essence is treated as an unknown yet malleable 'essence', which when touched begins 'a secret and inward working' unbeknown to its owner. In fact what makes the love divine or base is the character or quality of the beloved; those who love 'heaven' become 'heavenly' whereas those who love woman become effeminate. The bastard love equates to 'effeminate love' and will reduce him to the actions of a woman concocted by women's 'idle heads'. Musidorus explicitly emphasises the incompatibility of his true cousin with the love of a woman and is confident that once Pyrocles contemplates the 'kind of creature' he is attracted to, 'you shall find the cause so small, the effects so dangerous [...], that I doubt not I shall quickly have occasion rather to praise you for having conquered it than to give you any further counsel how to do it.'[29] Pyrocles' attempts to assure Musidorus of his masculinity have the opposite effect.

Pyrocles makes the poignant assurance, '[n]either doubt you, because I wear a woman's apparel, there is nothing I desire more than fully to prove myself a man.'[30] Pyrocles

[26] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 20, 8–10.
[27] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 20, 11–12.
[28] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 20, 13–23.
[29] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 20, 26–30.
[30] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 22, 33–5.

emphasises his ultimate sexual aim to stress his masculinity; however, if he does sexually consummate his desire, according to contemporary theory, the semen (life) draining and bewitching woman will weaken him. He is unaware that such desire is a root of effeminacy rather than manliness, and to prove his desire he would also prove his effeminacy. Pyrocles is clearly driven by a passion — 'the noble desire that possesseth me' — both sensual and spiritual, for an image of a woman, while Musidorus is extremely suspicious of women and all associated with them, including desire.[31]

Musidorus is unrelenting and he castigates Pyrocles' love as a derivative of physical passions, motivated by a sensual desire for carnal satisfaction. He portrays the love as superficial and scorns his cousin's hypocritical enslavement to beauty: 'what you wisely count a trifle in yourself, you fondly become a slave unto in another.' The rivalry between the love of men and the love of women is made explicit. Musidorus pleads:

> I do now beseech you, even for the love betwixt us (if this other love have left any in you towards me), and for the remembrance of your old careful father (if you can remember him, that forgets yourself), lastly, for Pyrocles' own sake (who is now upon the point of falling or rising), to purge your head of this vile infection.[32]

Musidorus offers the love between men as a viable alternative to the love of women. He depicts this devotion as noble, familial and heroic, a sure path to maintaining masculine integrity. Musidorus acts the part of the physician treating Pyrocles' love of Philoclea as an illness with physical symptoms:

> for, besides his eyes sometimes even great with tears, the oft changing of his colour, with a kind of shaking unstaidness over all his body, he might see in his countenance some great determination mixed with fear, and might perceive in him store of thoughts rather stirred than digested, his words interrupted continually with sighs which served as a burden to each sentence, and the tenor of his speech (though of his wonted phrase) not knit together to one constant end but rather dissolved in itself, as the vehemency of the inward passion prevailed.[33]

Musidorus emphasises the influence of poets upon Pyrocles' perversion that 'set up everything to the highest note — especially when they put such words in the mouth of one of these fantastical mind-infected people that children and musicians call lovers'.[34] Love is the effeminate man's sickness and Musidorus fulfils the role of the surgeon striking at the source: Pyrocles' body suffers 'a sudden motion, the heart drawing unto itself the life of

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[31] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 23, 5.
[32] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 24, 5–10.
[33] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 16, 2–10.
[34] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 17, 6–9.

every part to help it, distressed with the sound of that word'. Pyrocles is described as 'lifting up his eyes a little from the ground, and yet not daring to place them in the face of Musidorus, armed with the very countenance of the poor prisoner at the bar whose answer is nothing but "guilty"'.[35] Pyrocles is struck by Musidorus's diagnosis of 'love', which inspires guilt and shame at his susceptibility:

> For since it was the fatal overthrow of all my liberty to see in that gallery of Mantinea the only Philoclea's picture, that beauty did pierce so through mine eyes to my heart that the impression of it doth not lie but live there, in such sort as the question is not now whether I shall love or no, but whether loving, I shall live or die.[36]

Pyrocles represents the lover not purely as a figure of effeminate ridicule, but one who is powerlessly imprisoned. He depicts love sickness as a life-threatening disease, which will endlessly torment and alter his masculine persona.

Pyrocles attacks Musidorus for acting as, 'a physician that, seeing his patient in a pestilent fever, should chide him instead of ministering help,' and pleads that it is a sickness not a choice, which has weakened his resilience: 'I am sick, and sick to the death. I am prisoner; neither is there any redress but by her to whom I am slave.'[37] The sight of Pyrocles' emotional misery brings Musidorus to his knees and in a symbolic gesture he kisses 'the weeping eyes of his friend,' which brings forth more 'manlike tears'.[38] Pyrocles' tears are now described as 'manlike', reflecting a self-awareness of his disease of heterosexual desire, and as a reaction to the masculine love exhibited by his friend and cousin. Musidorus assumes the superior position first by reinforcing the bond of men and by treating Pyrocles as a woman in need of the wise counsel of a man:

> it is reason you be governed by us wise and perfect men. And that authority will I begin to take upon me with three absolute commandments: the first, that you increase not your evil with further griefs; the second, that you love Philoclea with all the powers of your mind; and the last commandment shall be that you command me to do you what service I can towards the attaining of your desires.[39]

Pyrocles is further effeminised by Musidorus's assumption of the role of a dominant and rationally superior guardian. Musidorus makes a clear request for his cousin to employ his reason instead of his senses when judging his beloved in the flesh. Musidorus will now

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[35] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 17, 14–17.
[36] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 17, 27–32.
[37] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 24, 24–5, 28–30.
[38] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 25, 1–2, 9.
[39] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 25, 23–9.

partake in the apparent 'evil' of Pyrocles' Amazon plan, as it is the 'readiest remedy' to his friend's effeminacy, which he cannot bear to witness. The rapid onset of Pyrocles' effeminisation is completed through the assumption of his, 'womanish apparel which, with the help of his friend, he had quickly put on in such sort as it might seem love had not only sharpened his wits but nimbled his hands in anything which might serve to his service.'[40] Love increasingly attains a sinister personification and wills Pyrocles' actions, as if an alien force rather than his own desires controls his body: '[t]ill at length love, the refiner of invention, put in his head a way how to come to the sight of his Philoclea.'[41] Throughout the *Arcadia*, the power of female beauty is overwhelming, although the bond between men is a strong rival. Pyrocles is torn, unwilling to disappoint and sever his love of men, but equally unable to rationalise and dismiss his desire to act as a 'man' with Philoclea. Sidney incorporates the misogynistic theories of sexual attraction to women with the reality of heterosexual desire and its pleasurable benefits. He reveals the conflict between the moralists' warnings against the effeminate dangers of loving women and the sexual passions and desires of the early modern individual. The gulf between theory and reality is fully exposed by Pyrocles' relentless pathway to Amazonian metamorphosis and even the once-adamant Musidorus's rejection of title to gain intimacy with an unfamiliar yet beautiful woman.

The transformation of Musidorus from the rational man to the man in love, and physically from the noble to the shepherd is triggered again through the influence of beauty: 'the beams of the princess Pamela's beauty had no sooner stricken into his eyes but that he was wounded with more sudden violence of love than ever Pyrocles was.'[42] Both Pyrocles and Musidorus are transformed and are aware of the travesty of their metamorphoses. The cousins lament the effect of their many hardships: '[s]hip-wracks, daily dangers, absence from our country, have at length brought forth this captiving of us within ourselves which hath transformed the one in sex, and the other in state, as much as the uttermost work of changeable fortune can be extended unto.'[43] Sex and status, the two great bastions of order, are inverted within these two noble men for the love of women, and yet their love against adversity is presented as true and destined.

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[40] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 26, 17–20.
[41] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 12, 26–8.
[42] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 41, 2–4.
[43] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 43, 11–15.

The song of Cleophila, the Amazon, exposes the involuntary transformation of effeminacy. The process appears as a decline from masculine reason and strength to a state of passionate obsession with the feminine:

> Transformed in show, but more transformed in mind,
> I cease to strive, with double conquest foiled;
> For (woe is me) my powers all I find
> With outward force and inward treason spoiled.
>
> For from without came to mine eyes the blow,
> Whereto mine inward thoughts did faintly yield;
> Both these conspired poor reason's overthrow;
> False in myself, thus have I lost the field.
>
> And thus mine eyes are placed still in one sight,
> And thus my thoughts can think but one thing still;
> Thus reason to his servants gives his right;
> Thus is my power transformed to your will.
> What marvel, then, I take a woman's hue,
> Since what I see, think, know, is all but you?[44]

An external ambush by Philoclea's beauty combined with male sexual frailty 'conspired poor reason's overthrow'. Pyrocles' effeminacy is couched in terms of military defeat epitomised by Cleophila's claim of bewitchment — 'I see, think, know, [...] all but you' — an obsession that leads her to assume the form of the beloved, 'a woman's hue.' The masculine right to command has been inverted into enslavement to female beauty and sexual possibility. Cleophila's 'very rich jewel' worn on the shoulder features a device:

> an eagle covered with the feathers of a dove, and yet lying under another dove, in such sort as it seemed the dove preyed upon the eagle, the eagle casting up such a look as though the state he was in liked him, though the pain grieved him.[45]

Mark Rose interprets the device as a portrayal of inverted natural order through the submission of man to the power of woman.[46] Dipple understands the Amazon's device as an image of necessary male evolution to achieve the 'personal neo-platonic desire for heavenly beauty, written for fictional young Renaissance noblemen in the faces of human princesses'.[47] The jewel in fact portrays the masculine eagle covered in the feminine dove's feathers as a symbol of the effeminate man dressed in female attire. The emphasis is placed upon the contradictions of love and depicts Pyrocles' effeminate self in pain and pleasure from the experience of being enslaved as a woman's subject. Sidney's

[44] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 28, 30–5, p. 29, 1–8.
[45] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 27, 10–14.
[46] Mark Rose, 'Sidney's Womanish Man', *RES*, 15 (1964), 353–363 (p. 354).
[47] Dipple, p. 51.

presentation of Pyrocles as the Amazonian has provoked discord amongst critics. Rose selects Pyrocles' lamentation for 'poor reason's overthrow'[48] to support her argument that 'Sidney [...] intended his readers to find Pyrocles's disguise offensive'.[49] In contrast Dipple upholds Arcadia as a positive place of change and points to the tale's 'mythic' implications to suggest that 'Pyrocles' choice is of a certain virtue and that Musidorus' arguments are prohibitive of that virtue'.[50] John F. Danby claims that in Pyrocles Sidney 'would seem to be insisting that man is capable of a synthesis of qualities that includes the womanly yet avoids the hermaphroditic'.[51] A harmonious perfection is inevitably achieved through the union of the virtuous man and woman. He claims that there is 'implicit moralization of Pyrocles' costume,' and its meaning neutralises any offence caused by transvestism.[52] Sidney portrays the effects of love upon a respected man as a debilitating yet necessary gender transformation:

> Upon his body he ware a kind of doublet of sky-colour satin, so plated over with plates of massy gold that he seemed armed in it; his sleeves of the same, instead of plates, was covered with purled lace. And such was the nether part of his garment; but that made so full of stuff, and cut after such a fashion that, though the length fell under his ankles, yet in his going one might well perceive the small of the leg which, with the foot, was covered with a little short pair of crimson velvet buskins, in some places open (as the ancient manner was) to show the fairness of the skin. Over all this he ware a certain mantle of like stuff, made in such manner that, coming under his right arm, and covering most part of that side, it touched not the left side but upon the top of the shoulder where the tow ends met, and were fastened together with a very rich jewel.
>
> [...]
>
> Upon the same side, upon his thigh he ware a sword (such as we now call scimitars), the pommel whereof was so richly set with precious stones as they were sufficient testimony it could be no mean personage that bare it. Such was this Amazon's attire: and thus did Pyrocles become Cleophila.[53]

The description of Pyrocles as the Amazon introduces the new character, Cleophila. There is great emphasis upon her rich jewels, and adornment, with her military garb including a plated doublet, helmet-styled coronet and bejewelled sword. The military aspect of the Amazon is integral to the characterisation of Pyrocles, the once honourable prince who has now assumed a female guise. His visual representation as the Amazon also emphasises the parallels of beauty between men and women, as the feminine garments eroticise 'the small of the leg' and the buskins reveal 'the fairness of the skin'. The actual body underneath appears inconsequential; it is the image which informs its role and sexuality. Apparel

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[48] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 29, 1.
[49] Rose, p. 354.
[50] Dipple, p. 51.
[51] Danby, p. 56.
[52] Danby, p. 57.
[53] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 26, 31–4, p. 27, 1–18.

fashions Pyrocles as Cleophila with an erotic androgyny, as the shepherd Dametas expresses: 'thou woman or boy, or both, or whatsoever thou be.'[54] Female fashion imbues Pyrocles with a bewitching power that provokes Musidorus to warn, 'since you are framed of such a loving mettle, I pray you, take heed of looking yourself in a glass.' He also admits his own attraction to Pyrocles and insists that if it were not for his resolve, 'I were like enough while I dressed you to become a young Pygmalion.'[55] The effect of Pyrocles' physical effeminacy is to make him a sexually appealing subject, and his transformation naturalises the concept of uncontained and malleable gender identities.

The Demise of Late Elizabethan and Early Jacobean Man

The *Arcadia* establishes the early influence of a theory of effeminacy, uniting the love of women and feminine fashion with the corruption of masculinity. Marston and Guilpin adopt the same associations, yet staying true to the satiric genre they condemn the effeminate as an irredeemable monster. The satirists reflected a contemporary preoccupation with the effeminate man that characterised the literature, drama and official records of the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods. A sermon preached during the reign of Elizabeth I satirically depicts a naked Englishman, who has no national dress to wear. The intention of the sermon is to emphasise the destructive implications of effeminacy upon wealth and national reputation:

> Yea, many men are become so effeminate, that they care not what they spend in disguising themselves, ever desiring new toys, and inventing new fashions [...]. Thus with our fantastical devices we make ourselves laughing-stocks to other nations; while one spendeth his patrimony upon pounces and cuts, another bestoweth more on a dancing shirt, than might suffice to buy him honest and comely apparel for his whole body. Some hang their revenues about their necks, ruffling in their ruffs, and many a one jeopardizes his best joint, to maintain himself in sumptuous raiment. And every man, nothing considering his estate and condition, seeketh to excel others in costly attire.[56]

The insatiable desire and trend for expensive fashions has confused the clarity of the social hierarchy and consumed male patrimony, while national masculine pride has been damaged by the widespread effeminacy amongst the ruling elite. The sermon's portrayal of endemic effeminacy is partly for effect yet must also refer to the visual reality of

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[54] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 32, 10–11.
[55] *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, I. p. 27, 31–2.
[56] *Sermons or Homilies Appointed to Be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1814), p. 262.

modern male fashion to ensure an instructive impact upon the congregation. It parades as an attempt to awaken these vain, treacherous men to their impotence and to dissuade others from following the same ungodly path. This supposes that the sermon was addressed to the effeminate, but it seems more likely that it was addressed to those who could share a comfortable outrage at the alleged iniquities of the age knowing that they themselves did not indulge in them.

Beatrice of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* expresses a critical image of modern manhood epitomised by Benedick's refusal to kill Claudio:

> O that I were a man for his sake, or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into curtsies, valour into compliment, and men are only turn'd into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.[57]

In a world of overbearing masculine oppression, Beatrice seeks a man of honourable action not effeminate posturing. She resembles Hic Mulier through her desire for a 'man' and willingness to assume the role to fill the masculine void. Nevertheless, as a woman she is confined to playing the part of the bereaved. The play, believed to have been written in 1598 or 1599 with the first Quarto edition appearing in 1600, is placed as a close contemporary with the satires of Marston and Guilpin. Beatrice's speech extends into the debate on contemporary manhood lamenting man's degradation through the replacement of the phallic sword with the feminised weapon of the 'tongue'. Unlike Pyrocles of the *Arcadia*, Benedick is roused to his masculine role by her chastising speech, illustrating the same permeation of anxiety concerning effeminacy yet with a more optimistic outlook appropriate for this comic play.

The effeminate man and the masculine woman are frequently depicted as two sides of the same deviance in the early modern period. They both represent a perversion of convention and order while also appearing antithetical to each other; as Patroclus tells Achilles in *Troilus and Cressida*:

> A woman impudent and mannish grown
> Is not more loathed than an effeminate man

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[57] *Much Ado About Nothing*, in *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, ed. by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson and David Scott Kastan (London: Arden Shakespeare, Thomson Learning, 2006), pp. 913–40 (IV. 1. 315–21).

In time of action.[58]

The confrontation between the effeminate man and the virago was a common literary device that emphasised a concern with the implications of gender deviancy for order and society. The anonymous play *Every Woman in Her Humour* presents the familiar scenario of the dominant wife who bullies her weak husband, while Follywit, a comic female impersonator in Middleton's *A Mad World, My Masters*, sees his attire as representative of a modern sexual crisis: ''[t]is an Amazonian time; you shall have women shortly tread their husbands.'[59] Even Mary Frith in her autobiography was apparently repulsed by the effeminate Aniseed-water Robin. Woodbridge claims that the Elizabethan and Jacobean interest in the alteration of the ideals of femininity and masculinity indicates that 'traditional sex roles were undergoing pronounced mutation in the modern world'.[60]

In the aforementioned pamphlet *Haec-Vir* the prospect of the reformed effeminate man who intends to marry Hic Mulier emphasises the contrast between reproductive divine love and the love of physical passion: '[w]e will bee henceforth like well-coupled Doues, full of industry, full of loue: I meane, not of sensuall and carnall loue, but heauenly and diuine loue, which proceedes from God.'[61] The harmonious physical union repeats an emblem incorporated within Ovid's Salmacis and Hermaphroditus and Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. Woodbridge imagines the union between the two gender deviants as a stage in sexual development, 'where the girl guards the chrysalis of her sexual self by dressing like a boy and the boy by cracking jokes against girls,' emerging into 'domestic hermaphrodism' or marriage.[62] Woodbridge's analysis can be applied to the character of Hic Mulier who finally shows a willingness to play the feminine role if Haec Vir will assume the masculine opposite. Woodbridge's theory of destined heterosexual union for the two seems too idealistic especially considering the use of the pamphlets *Hic Mulier* and *Haec-Vir* to express all arguments within the gender debate, irrelevant of continuity. In contrast Rose interprets the debate between the Man-Woman and the Womanish-Man, as a reflection of the attitudes to homosexuality at James's court.[63] *Haec-Vir* expresses a

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[58] *Troilus and Cressida*, in *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, pp. 1153–90 (III. 3. 220–2).

[59] Thomas Middleton, *A Mad World, My Masters*, in *The Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: OUP, 2007), pp. 414–451 (III. 3. 118–20).

[60] Woodbridge, p. 153.

[61] *Hic Mulier: or, The Man-Woman and Haec-Vir: or, The Womanish-Man* (Ilkley, Yorkshire: The Scolar Press, 1973), *Haec-Vir*, Sig. C4.

[62] Woodbridge, p. 293.

[63] Rose, p. 377.

revulsion against the effeminate man who is portrayed in its title page woodcut carrying a racquet and battledores for shuttlecock, an activity perceived to be a woman's sport. Haec Vir is an inversion of masculinity assuming feminine attributes; alternatively Hic Mulier assimilates a masculine image and its connotations of power. Characteristically Hic Mulier plays a significant role in the formation of the reader's attitude towards Haec-Vir. She succeeds in marking his character as ridiculous and unnatural which is illustrated in the comic scene of the effeminate man at a play or assembly:

> hee takes a full suruay of himselfe, from the highest sprig in his feather, to the lowest spangle that shines in his shoo-string: how he prunes and picks himselfe like a Hawke set a weathering, cals euery seuerall garment to Auricular confession, making them vtter both their mortall great staines, and their veniall and lesse blemishes, though the moat bee much lesse then an Attome: Then to see him plucke and tugge euery thing into the forme of the newest receiued fashion.[64]

Reminiscent of Hic Mulier, he has a desire to wear the new styles; however, the effeminate man seems far vainer, perfecting even the smallest detail of the spangle on his 'shoo-string'. His emphasis upon luxurious garments and the aesthetic unites him with the ridiculed Catholic priest, a connection not allowed to pass unnoticed, as each item of his clothing is called to 'auricular confession'. Any sin that requires forgiveness and correction takes the form of a superficial fashion *faux pas*. Once he has perfected his '[s]ymetry' he casts 'himselfe amongst the eyes of the people (as an obiect of wonder) with more nicenesse, then a Virgin goes to the sheetes of her first Louer, would make patience her selfe mad with anger' (Sig. C2–2^{v}). In contrast to the masculine woman who seeks notoriety and attention as a statement of defiance, at least in the accounts of her critics, the effeminate man launches his perfectly contrived image into society to be adored.

Haec Vir is by no means defenceless and embarks on an attack of Hic Mulier and other masculine women based upon the conventional arguments expressed in *Hic Mulier*. She responds to Haec Vir by drawing critical attention to his own equally deviant conduct: 'I see you refuse the potion, and are as grieuiously infected' (Sig. C). She provides a comprehensive impression of the effeminate man, first noting the excessive preening of his hair: 'why doe you curle, frizell and powder your hayres' (Sig. C). Hic Mulier connects the effeminate man's fashion directly to the conventional feminine styles, accusing him of stealing 'our Ruffes, [...] our Farerings, Carkanets, and Mamillions, [...] our Fannes and Feathers, our Busks and French bodies, nay, [...] our Maskes, Hoods, Shadowes and

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[64] *Hic Mulier*, Sig. C2.

Shapynas?' (Sig. C). The 'Art of Painting' is another stolen feminine fashion which Haec Vir has 'greedily ingrost', leaving only his dagger and 'crosse hilt' to mark the precarious difference between 'the fayre Mistris & the foolish Seruant' (Sig. C–C^{v}). The robbery extends beyond the superficial; men have 'euen rauisht from vs our speech, our actions, sports and recreations' (Sig. C^{v}). Hic Mulier compares the men of the past, whose 'motions shewed more strength then Art, and more courage then courtship,' with the actions of the new effeminate men: 'you tooke from vs poore Women our trauerses and tourneys, our modest statelinesse and curious slidings, and left vs nothing but the new French garbe of puppet hopping and ietting' (Sig. C^{v}). Haec Vir represents an inversion of Hic Mulier's ideal man; he is anti-chivalric, stealing the essence of women and leaving them with the inferior French fashion.

Hic Mulier is not purely a defender of hermaphrodite fashion. Blatantly, she cites it as a woman's last resort due to the English men's effeminate passion for female style. Her argument is a defensive justification rather than a fight for women's liberty. With roles reversed she assumes the part of the accuser and castigates Haec Vir for the deplorable change in the idealised masculinity of man:

> For this you haue demolish'd the noble schooles of Hors-manship (of which many were in this Cities) hung vp your Armes to rust, glued vp those swords in their scabbards that would shake all Christendome with the brandish, and entertained into your mindes such softnes, dulnesse and effeminate nicenesse. (Sig. C2)

She employs the classic imagery of the discarded military arts, horsemanship and regalia to symbolise the man who has lost his masculinity and reason.

Hic Mulier establishes effeminacy as a more threatening form of gender deviancy than her own. It is characterised as the result of a crumbling national masculinity and as the cause of the social phenomenon of the masculine woman. Hic Mulier declares that effeminacy has 'taken such strong root in your bosomes, that it can hardly bee pull'd vp'. She presents Haec Vir, the representative of modern men, with an ultimatum to re-establish the traditional gender roles:

> Be men in shape, men in shew, men in words, men in actions, men in counsell, men in example: then will we loue and serue you; then will wee heare and obey you; then will wee like rich Iewels hang at your eares to take our Instructions. (Sig. C3^{v})

Hic Mulier offers assurance that, when men regain women's respect, they will in turn resume their traditional gender role and obey men as their true masters. Hic Mulier's characterisation as a woman who mourns the effeminate corruption of man reflects the contemporary anxieties concerning English masculine virility and authority both at home and abroad.

Alternatively, if the text is read as more than a debate on gender deviance, and instead as a pamphlet to be applied to real individuals who rebel against social convention, Hic Mulier's traditional stance is questionable. Before her promise to revert to true womanhood she cites a number of provisos to her counterpart. She does not only request a simple sartorial change of 'shape' and 'shew,' but also requires a complete alteration in all other aspects of personal identity including his 'words,' 'actions,' and 'counsell'. From today's perspective such a transformation of the essence of identity may seem impossible. An early modern reader, less sceptical over the malleable nature of personal identity, would, through familiarity with the real effeminate rebel boldly displaying their deviancy in the community, be adamant that such a conversion would never willingly arise from the effeminate man. As a result Hic Mulier's offer to change in response to the effeminate man's complete metamorphosis is revealed as a hollow and sarcastic promise. In fact it further exposes the reality of the extreme opposition between the masculine woman and the effeminate man, as well as painting the effeminate as the cause and possible rectifier of gender transgression. Hic Mulier or masculine women could present a conventional and respectable stance as the victims of male effeminacy.

The theory of effeminacy works on the premise that masculinity was not an automatic essence of all men; it had to be checked and carefully maintained, against the many modern effeminate fashions and activities. A man who indulged in sexual relations with women or embraced the material and superficial would become effeminate and fall from the divine perfection of manhood. Effeminacy was placed as antithetical to masculinity, thus defining effeminacy as a branch of the feminine, distinguished by its application to only men. Woman represents the other, a porous and imperfect creature, which a man through weakness can become. Those who feared the demise of traditional masculine qualities were adamant on the need to maintain man's superior attributes and beware the sensual path of the woman.

The emphasis upon the material identification of woman and the effeminate man in the late Elizabethan satires enforced a sense of the feminine as a purchasable facade. The later city comedies feature recipes for femininity, which include ingredients that could be purchased along the Strand: as Newman maintains, '[f]emininity became an available imaginary, a simulated womanhood represented strikingly in descriptions of the female toilette.'[65] On first assessment the effeminate man is similarly characterised by his 'feminine', 'decorative' and expensive appearance as the most flagrant transgressor in the sartorial codebook. The breeching tradition expressed the same belief informing effeminacy, that a boy can evolve through appearance towards masculinity or femininity. The breeching of a boy was an important date marking the transition from child to a second phase starting in the seventh year, believed to be 'a milestone in physical and mental development', claims Ralph A. Houlbrooke.[66] The young infant would wear 'coats' or gowns and at the age of seven would be dressed in breeches as a symbol of his new gendered identity and authority. Susan Snyder explains: 'when a boy took on male attire it was the outward and visible sign that he was leaving behind the special cherishing accorded to early childhood and setting out on a gendered course that was more strenuous but held appropriate rewards.'[67] Both the masculine and feminine genders were externalised through clothing to symbolise an individual's role and place in society. *Lingua; Or, The Combat of the Tongue, And the fiue Senses for Superiority*, a comic play first published in 1607 yet most likely written prior to Queen Elizabeth's death and generally attributed to Thomas Tomkis, illustrates the expense of constructing the artificial feminine through the character Tactus:

> five hours ago I set a dozen maids to attire a boy like a nice gentlewoman; but there is such doing with their looking-glasses, pinning, unpinning, setting, unsetting, formings and conformings; painting blue veins and cheeks; such stir with sticks and combs, cascanets, dressings, purls, falls, squares, busks, bodies, scarfs, necklaces, carcanets, rebatoes, borders, tires, fans, palisadoes, puffs, ruffs, cuffs, muffs, pusles, fusles, partlets, frislets, bandlets, fillets, crosslets, pendulets, amulets, annulets, bracelets, and so many lets, that yet she's scarce dressed to the girdle; and now there is such calling for fardingales, kirtles, busk-points, shoe-ties, &c., that seven pedlars' shops — nay, all Stourbridge fair, will scarce furnish her. A ship is sooner rigged by far, than a gentlewoman made ready.[68]

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[65] Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 123.

[66] Ralph A. Houlbrooke, *The English Family 1450–1700* (London and New York: Longman Group, 1984), p. 150.

[67] Susan Snyder, 'Mamillius and Gender Polarization in *The Winter's Tale*', *Shakespeare: A Wayward Journey* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 2002), pp. 210–220. Repr. in *Shakespearean Criticism*, 110 (2008) <http://go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%7CH1420080551&v=2.1&u=uokent&it=r&p=LitRG&sw=w> [accessed 10 January 2010]

[68] Tomkis, Thomas, *Lingua; Or, The Combat of the Tongue, And the fiue Senses for Superiority* (1607), in *A Select Collection of Old English Plays*, ed. by Robert Dodsley (1744), 4th edn, ed. by W. Carew Hazlitt (London: Reeves and Turner, 1876), IX, 331–463 (p. 426).

Significantly, the boy does not become a woman but is made 'like a gentlewoman,' effeminised through luxuries and fashions primarily associated with the feminine. The first movement of the transformation describes the process of dressing and creates his ambiguity with the feminine pronoun 'she' of the ninth line. Written in a humorous vein satirising the time taken for 'a gentlewoman made ready,' the list of 'female' fashions is deliberately provocative, emphasising the contemporary fetish for an artificial eroticism of, for example, painted 'blue veins and cheeks'. The master, the dozen maids, and the pedlars are the artificial creators of femininity. Phantastes jests, ''Tis strange that women, being so mutable, | Will never change in changing their apparel.'[69] The writer ridicules the 'gentlewoman' as a masquerade, and emphasises the power of the feminine to convert the form and gender of the boy into the effeminate.

An effeminate man is criticised for his decline into the realms of femininity. Garber labels 'effeminacy' as 'misogynistic as well as homophobic', as 'what is being protected here is a notion of manhood or manliness as social norm,' while 'it is always *women* who are scapegoated'.[70] The attack on the effeminate man is an attack on the 'feminine' that is feared for its power to create a soft stomach that cannot tolerate war and its inclination towards the arts and imagery. Newman asserts that '"femininity" represented an important, perhaps even newly essentialized, category of difference,' which formed our idea of gender.[71] The effeminate man's gender perversion classified him within the same inferior category as women. Dekker and van de Pol observe that 'transvestism of men was considered much more objectionable than that of women. The man was demeaned, while the woman strove for something higher'.[72] Garber interprets the official curtailing of excessive fashion by the sumptuary laws and the church homily as targeting 'another kind of vestimentary transgression, one that violated expected boundaries of gender identification or gender decorum'.[73] The case of a real 'effeminate man', John Taylor, reveals the perception of his subversive threat to society. He was indicted at Chester in 1608 'for wearinge weomen's apparel' and his punishment was instructed as follows: 'his clothes to be cut and breeches to be made of them & to be whipped thorowe the citie

[69] *Lingua*, p. 426.
[70] M. Garber, *Vested Interests, Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 139.
[71] Newman, p. 120.
[72] Rudolf M. Dekker and Lotte C. van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1989), p. 55.
[73] Garber, p. 28.

tomorrow.'[74] Not only did the law enforce a conventional image of manhood through clothing, it also treated cross-dressing as a deviant crime with social repercussions. The legal definition of cross-dressing as a socially disruptive crime classes it as alien and perverse in comparison to the 'norm'. The implications of the effeminate form for the masculine gender and its place in the world are what certain writers really believed to be monstrous.

Donne's elegy, 'The Perfume', emphasises the shame of effeminacy through the dramatic portrayal of the lover's presence betrayed by his perfume to his beloved's father. Influenced by the stage, and characteristic of Donne's love poetry, the elegy is devoid of the Petrarchan tradition of representing love as a humble service, or the neo-platonic idea of love as a mystical union, remarks Helen Gardner.[75] She dates the Elegies between 1593 and 1596 which is also accepted by John Carey, who describes them as 'designed to appeal to the Inns of Court students as a group'.[76] They emerge from the same decade which produced Marston's and Guilpin's satires and the three writers all experienced life at the Inns of Court. These factors suggest a shared sense of the Elizabethan world from the broad perspective of young ambitious men seeking a voice. The lover of 'The Perfume' is effeminate in his passion for his beloved and his preoccupation with luxurious clothing: 'I taught my silkes, their whistling to forbeare, | Even my opprest shoes, dumbe and speechlesse were.'[77] The 'bitter sweet' perfume is another effeminate indicator through its deception and association with man's lust (53):

> Base excrement of earth, which dost confound,
> Sense, from distinguishing the sicke from sound;
> By thee the seely Amorous sucks his death
> By drawing in a leprous harlots breath. (57–60)

The attack on the perfume constitutes an espousal of the shame of emasculation: 'the greatest staine to mans estate | Falls on us, to be call'd effeminate' (61–2). Woodbridge emphasises that 'men had a greater horror of effeminacy than women of mannishness'.[78]

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[74] J. A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England 1550–1750* (London: Longman, 1984), p. 178.
[75] John Donne, *The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets*, ed. by Helen Gardner (Oxford: OUP, 1965), p. xxiv.
[76] John Donne, *The Major Works, including Songs and Sonnets and sermons*, ed. by John Carey (Oxford: OUP, 2000), pp. xx–xxi.
[77] Donne, 'The Perfume', pp. 7–9, 51–52.
[78] Woodbridge, p. 157.

Donne exposes the ability of clothing not only to create but also to symbolise an inferior masculinity. The effeminate man is ridiculed as a comic figure in *Euerie Woman in Her Humor* (1609) when Accutus attacks a group of preening fops in an Inn, causing one effeminate to express concern for his appearance, as the incident has 'put my hat quite out of fashion' (Sig. B3^v). New fashions for men are in essence feminine as they are motivated by the aesthetic, and also symbolise the infection of foreign weakness, particularly threatening English integrity: Orgel comments, 'in England, French and Italian fashionable male style was considered effeminate.'[79]

The late Elizabethan satire of the effeminate soldier exposes a fear for national security, which is reflected in other contemporary works. The mythical past heroes of masculinity are a constant presence in the literature attacking the current emasculated image of man. Richard Niccols's poem *Londons artillery* (1616), voiced a nostalgia for England's past strong yeomen and long bows compared to 'this our peacefull cittie,' populated by 'eldest sonnes of idle ease, | Whom nothing but the Taylors cut can please'.[80]

Peace ironically was characterised by some as a destroyer of the nation, through the emasculation of its men, which ultimately would leave the country defenceless. Barnabe Rich was one such social commentator, voicing hostility to his English nation's virtual peacetime in *Riche his farewell to Militarie Profession* (1581). He attributes English emasculation to the effects of peace and grieves for his own decline into writing prose for women. The effect upon others is blatant and sartorial: 'it is as fonde a sight to see a manne with suche a bable in his hande, as to see a woman ride through the streate with a launce in hers.'[81] The negative representation of English manhood was founded in a fear for the border, which tapped into a sense of the masculine self as a realm. During the 1590s the continuing threat from Spain and Elizabeth's age and infertility, increased anxiety over the virility of the English male ruling class, whose fears of effeminacy were also part of a European trend. In a time of social change with men left idle, the masculine borders were imagined as penetrable and malleable, while womanly luxury came to embody a foreign enemy who penetrates and weakens.

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[79] Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p. 109.
[80] R. Niccols, *Londons artillery*, pp. 100–1, in Woodbridge, p. 169.
[81] *Rich's Farewell to Military Profession 1581*, ed. by Thomas Mabry Cranfill (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959), pp. 10–11.

The association of England with masculinity conveyed a powerful and martial national image, although the onset of literary concern over individual masculine integrity naturally cast doubt upon national strength. Moulton comments, 'in the patriarchal ideology of the period, the English nation was in many ways identical with English manhood.'[82] Criticism of the contemporary man, motivated by a fear for national security, inevitably led many writers to reminisce over past masculine prowess. Gosson in *The Schoole of Abuse* yearns for the imaginary past ideal of military valour, when 'english men could suffer watching and labor, hunger & thirst [...], they vsed slender weapons, went naked, and were good soldiours'.[83] Later in the chapter Gosson's explanation for the alteration in men will be considered. In addition, dramatists expressed anxiety over the realm's military skill hampered by effeminacy. Marlowe's *Edward II* presents the effeminate king versus the dominant Queen Isabella while Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* features the military leader choosing a woman over battle. The dramatist Thomas Heywood's *The Brazen Age* (1613) employs the effeminised figure of Hercules to illustrate the danger of a man's decline. Jason cries out:

> Alas! This *Hercules*?
> This is some base effeminate groome, not hee
> That with his puissance frighted all the earth:
> This is some woman, some *Hermophrodite*.[84]

The recital of former heroic deeds revives Hercules' masculinity and so his experience serves a precautionary tale of the effects of effeminacy upon martial skill. Barnabe Rich in *Faultes Faults* (1606) commented on '[c]onquerors whom Loue haue made effeminate, but I neuer heard of any whom Love hath made truly valiant'.[85] He pointedly associates lustful women with 'valiant men effeminate, as *Hercules*'.[86] The theory surrounding effeminacy contradicts the physical phallic representation of man. In erotic writing the penis serves as a physical marker of a man, and through penetration during intercourse it is frequently

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[82] I. F. Moulton, *Before Pornography: Erotic Writing in Early Modern England* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), p. 72.
[83] Stephen Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse*, in *The Schoole of Abuse by Stephen Gosson and A Reply to Gosson's Schoole of Abuse by Thomas Lodge*, ed. by A. Freeman (New York and London: Garland Pub., 1973), sig. B8–B8^{v}.
[84] Thomas Heywood, *The Brazen Age* (1613), in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood*, 6 vols (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), III, 165–256 (p. 243).
[85] Barnabe Rich, *Faultes, Faults, and nothing else but faultes* (London: [Valentine Simmes] for Ieffrey Chorleton, 1606), STC (2nd edn) / 20983, Huntington Libary <http://eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 7 January 2010] (sig. F4^{v}).
[86] Rich, *Faultes, Faults*, sig. G3^{v}.

compared to a piercing weapon asserting its authority in battle. Despite the plentiful imagery of a man's militaristic sexual virility, the real act of sexual intercourse is conceived as debilitating to the man.

George Wither embarks upon the theme of neglected martial skills in his *Abuses stript and whipt*, 1613. He criticises the men who 'vaunt and bragge of their lasciuious facts, | No less then of some braue *Heroick* acts'.[87] Similarly the alteration of Mick from a martial Englishman to a castrated 'maiden' in Satire 62 of Goddard's *Mastiff Whelp* (1598) highlights the common perception of effeminate men abandoning their essential role as protector and conqueror:

> Metamorphiz'd Mick: where's thy Target man?
> What chaunged into a lisping Ladies fann?
> Is dubb a dubb Bellonas warlike noates,
> Chaung'd to fa la la, streind through shrill Eunukes throates?
> Art turn'd from grimm-fac't Mars his valiaunce,
> To smiling Venus hir tempting daliaunce?
> Me thinkes those leggs oft harnest with bright steele,
> To twind with Nimphes weake limmes no sweet should feele,
> Hast learn'd to skipp, smyle, kisse, & looke demure?
> I'th steede of charge or raise a counter mure.
> *For shame reechaunge, thou maiden-chaunged Mick*
> *Come use thy pyke; tha'st use'd too long thy —.*[88]

The theory of difference between woman and man and the gender associations of love and war are utilised to their full potential within the poem. Mick has been metamorphosed from a man into a woman and he now serves Venus, god of love, rather than Mars, the god of war. Mick's shield is transformed into a lady's fan, and his once 'war-like noates' are altered to the sound of a castrato, a man literally castrated. His martial charge is now replaced with the female seductions of smiling, kissing and skipping. The last lines of the poem explain Mick's preference for the feel of a nymph as opposed to steel armour. Mick is begged to 'rechaunge' and to use his 'pyke' to return to the occupation of masculine warfare. The poet indicates the cause of Mick's effeminacy, namely his promiscuity. Despite the blank space within the final line, it is apparent that the bawdy term 'prick' is intended due to the rhyming scheme and the association with the theory of effeminacy

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[87] George Wither, *Abuses stript and whipt; or Satirical essaies* (G. Eld for Francis Burton, 1613), STC (2nd edn) / 25894, Bodleian Library <http://eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 7 January 2010] (p. 28).

[88] William Goddard, *A mastif whelp and other ruff-island-lik curs fetcht from amongst the Antipedes* (Dordrecht: George Waters), STC (2nd edn) / 11928, Huntington Library <http://eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 7 January 2010] (Sig. E4r).

caused by loving women.[89] Moulton discerns that 'Mick's prick is the agent of his effeminacy'.[90] To be masculine in the early modern period did not purely rely upon genitalia; a true man must also know how to fight. Effeminacy is presented not as a private but a public problem, just as Goddard's volume also condemns through satire the social issue of the masculine woman. Gender deviants and the literary attempts to uphold the masculine ideal were of great importance to early modern society.

Welford in Beaumont's and Fletcher's *The Scornful Ladie* (1616) fulfils the role of the effeminate man whose martial essence is reduced to competing for love. Elder Loveless, his rival, describes Welford disdainfully as a fashionable gentleman, whereas he is 'more then thou dar'st be, a Souldier,' whose rude manner is inconsequential 'amongst a nation of such men as you are'.[91] Elder Loveless explains Welford's effeminacy through his feminine environment of fashion and the woman's body: 'some new silken thing wean'd from the countrey, that shall (when you come to keepe good company) be beaten into better manners' (III. 1. 62–4). His physical weakness is encompassed by a luxurious silken image of man:

> And for you, tender Sir, whose gentle bloud
> Runnes in your nose, and makes you snuffe at all
> But three pil'd people, I doe let you know,
> He that begot your worships sattin sute,
> Can make no men Sir. (III. 1. 91–5)

In the play the Lady misleads Welford to prove that she can love, and ridicules the character when she discards him. A later scene depicts Welford assuming the disguise of a woman, clearly as a comical device, yet ultimately he tricks the Lady's sister Martha and enjoys his sexual reward. Welford is an amusing effeminate man in all the main senses — his appearance, lack of martial spirit, and preoccupation with the sexual pleasures of women — although he does achieve his sexual aim with the help of Elder Loveless. Of all the men Welford is the most ridiculed; however, ultimately he succeeds against the women. The effeminate man is most dangerous not through traditional masculine martial skill, but through a feminine sexual appetite.

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[89] Eric Partridge states: 'pricking. Copulation regarded as penetration as if by a prick or thorn', in Eric Partridge, *Shakespeare's Bawdy* (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), p. 217.
[90] Moulton, p. 71.
[91] Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Scornful Lady*, ed. Cyrus Hoy, in *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. by Fredson Bowers, 10 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1970), II, 449–565 (III. 1. 40, 71).

One of the most famous early examples of the belief in the dangers of heterosexual love is Botticelli's painting *Mars and Venus* (*c.* 1485), which illustrates the physical emasculation of a man drowned in sexual pleasure with a woman.[92] Mars is depicted asleep, physically exhausted and sexually impotent. He rests upon his armour while the fauns play with his abandoned tools of war symbolising a time of peace. Three fauns charge towards Mars with his lance, and attempt to awaken him with a conch shell, while Venus in a transparent underskirt watches from the left of the painting. Significantly the lance is suggestively aimed towards a symbolic hole in the tree behind Mars. The painting conveys the aftermath of sex; Mars is emasculated, unarmed, with his left hand in a symbolic limp pose, while Venus is alert and commands her Fauns to awaken Mars for more love making. The contrast in representation of a man's virility and the harmful effects of satisfying desire for the man, indicate that the theory of effeminacy served as much to prevent men from promiscuity as to explain impotency as a consequence of the woman's appetite. Furthermore, the bewitching allure of the voracious female made sense of a man's desire for a creature so apparently inferior.

Harington's translation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1591) retells the story of effeminacy through bewitchment by female beauty yet with the imagery of the early modern effeminate man's luxurious appearance. Rogero becomes 'an effeminate courtier' by loving Alcina and his depiction within Harington's translation smoothly connects with the Elizabethan debate on masculinity. Harington undoubtedly saw the parallels of Rogero's emasculation with his contemporaries' representation of early modern men. Rogero's sensuality and taste for excess is suggested by the exuberance of his appearance, as epitomised in his description: 'About his necke a carknet rich he ware | Of precious stones all set in gold well tride.' We are reminded that Rogero's form now richly adorned was once engaged in warfare. Instead of commanding an army, Rogero now acts as the preening effeminate: 'His locks bedewd with waters of sweet savour | Stood curled round in order on his hed.' The mockery is complete and Harington focuses upon assessing the morality of Rogero's metamorphosis. His appearance is shown to be incongruous with masculinity and his actions are dismissed as sexually motivated. Rogero's immoral lust and effeminacy in 'speech,' 'manners,' and 'favour,' are foreign to masculinity. The antithetical relationship of female sensuality and masculine reason is emphasised by the

[92] Sandro Botticelli, *Mars and Venus*, *c.* 1485 (69.2 x 173.4 cm, NG 915) National Gallery, London. See illustration in appendix.

image of Rogero led 'beyond all reason' by the 'inchantments of this am'rous dame'.[93] Effeminacy effaces his masculine identity and the main source of this debilitating condition, Alcina, will be analysed in the fifth chapter.

The excessive love of women was presumed to be a cause of effeminacy. Musidorus of the *Arcadia* attributes the love of a woman as the primary cause of effeminacy, while Marston and Guilpin throughout their satires emphasise the general sexual depravity and enslavement of the effeminate lover. Shakespeare's Romeo after his friend's death points to his love of Juliet — 'Thy beauty hath made me effeminate, | And in my temper soften'd valour's steel.'[94] The emasculating effects of love are also stressed by Thomas Wright in *The Passions of the Mind in General*: 'a personable body is often linked with a pestilent soul; a valiant Captain in the field for the most part is infected with an effeminate affection at home.'[95] Spending time and seed with women was believed to deplete, corrupt, subdue and mould the man in the image of the beloved. The potent fear of the effect of heterosexual love and desire, related to the myth of the unknown subversive power of the internal woman. Through protestation against heterosexual pleasure, writers betrayed doubts concerning the existence of a male essence, particularly as the insistence on maintaining masculinity implied the potential similarities between man and woman. The fear of effeminacy was at the centre of the debate over the definition of man, and the adamant belief in the extreme difficulty of being male suggests a greater questioning of the traditional fixed gender ideals. Despite the perceived malleability of masculinity, the theory of effeminacy only featured the natural decline of the man towards the position of the female. Women are the base mean from which men must be elevated to justify the patriarchal structures of order and to ensure a divine connection with the influence of God.

Sexual indulgence was a real threat to man; he would lose his masculine identity and be reduced by lust into effeminacy. The insistence on the instability of masculinity reflects a fear of the effeminising modern pleasures and the individual freedom to explore them. Female sexuality was classed as the primary effeminising force; it was the woman who tempts and seduces man away from reason, and it is her sexuality which he is seen to imitate. Orgel describes sexuality in the early modern period as 'misogynist,' while

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[93] *Ludovico Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, translated into English Heroical Verse by Sir John Harington* (1591), ed. by Robert McNulty (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), VII. 47. 6–7.
[94] *Romeo and Juliet*, in *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, pp. 1007–1040 (III. 1. 115–16).
[95] Thomas Wright, *The Passion of the Mind in General*, ed. by W. W. Newbold (New York, 1986), p. 237.

masculine identity is defined by reason and although it must be maintained is the achievable male ideal.[96] Women in contrast are embodied by their sexual worth; their beauty is the weapon of a sexuality which corrupts men through sight and touch. Significantly the lust and enjoyment of carnal pleasure with a woman motivates the effeminate man. Female sexuality expands into the fantastical with ideas of bewitchment and metamorphosis of a man into a lover, with the capacity to deplete a man by draining his semen or essence. Orgel identifies effeminacy as 'male sexuality out of control: the great danger in women's sexuality is its power to evoke men's sexuality'.[97] A woman is defined by her sexual appetite and the evidence of a similar desire in men, is attributed to 'effeminacy', not as Orgel suggests a masculine sexuality, but a conversion or infection of the normally rational man by the 'other'.

Fletcher's and Massinger's *The Custom of the Country* (1619) illustrates the female rapacious sexual appetite and its destructive effects upon men.[98] It acts as a defence of marriage and includes a short episode in which Rutillio the rake is installed as a prostitute in a male brothel for female clients. Eventually he is rescued, and proclaims, 'I'le no more whoring.' Rutillio ends happily married with the realisation, 'That I might be civilly merry when I pleased, | Rather than labouring in these fulling mills.'[99] Rutillio as the rake embodies the most virile representation of man and it is deliberate that he is juxtaposed against women in search of sexual satisfaction. The appetite of the female client proves too great for the rake who is physically drained of life. Jacques warns Sulpitia the brothel keeper that after satisfying nineteen women Rutillio will 'melt' with exhaustion and pleads, 'Body ô me give breath, the man's a lost man else' (IV. 4. 11–12). The play emphasises that a woman's sexual appetite is always stronger than a man's desire, even if he is a rake. The insatiable sexual appetite of city women is conveyed through their eager arrival in coaches — 'they drive as the Divell were in the wheeles' followed by an 'old dead-palsied Lady in a litter' (IV. 4. 26, 28). The old lady, past the age of child bearing, represents the female pursuit of physical sexual pleasure unhindered by procreation. Jacques imagines Rutillio's destruction through sexually diseased bones: 'You may gather

[96] Orgel, p. 26.
[97] Orgel, p. 63.
[98] *The Custom of the Country* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 22 February 1619 and was first performed by the King's men during 1619–20.
[99] John Fletcher and Philip Massinger, *The Custom of the Country* (1619), ed. by Cyrus Hoy in *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. by Fredson Bowers, 10 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1992) VIII, 633–752 , V. 1. 15, IV. 5. 54–5.

up his dry bones to make nine-pins, | But for his flesh' (IV. 4. 30–1). Rutillio is forced to service insatiable desire and becomes fully aware of his depletion, declaring himself 'crow-trodden', 'broken-winded', with bones that 'ake'. He laments his physical transformation from 'a handsome body' to one whose 'hams shrinke' and appears emaciated, 'like a rascall | That had been hung a yeare or two in gibbets' (IV. 5. 1–19). Rutillio reaches an epiphany through the emasculation and near destruction of his body and pleads to be freed from the bond of sexual servitude.

It is questionable as to whether male promiscuity is the direct subject of attack. The promiscuous lifestyle of the rakish male is not blatantly condemned, although it is proven to be a destructive path. The play, consistent with the contemporary debate, illustrates the danger of promiscuity through the representation of female desire as carnivorous and unquenchable. Rutillio would rather endure battle or torture than to serve in a brothel. He exclaims 'But women? Women? ô the Divell! women? | *Curtius* gulfe was never halfe so dangerous' (IV. 5. 11–12). He refers to the Roman myth of Marcus Curtius, who in 362 BC leapt into the gaping gulf in the centre of the Roman Forum, and he as their noblest soldier formed solid foundations for the state. Rutillio compares the gulf to the abyss of female sexual desire as both feed on manhood. He fears, 'no earthly thing | But these unsatisfied Men-leeches, women' (IV. 5. 17–18). The depiction of female sexuality, notes Moulton, suggests 'the need to limit and constrain women's desires in order to safeguard men's health and well-being'.[100] The play depicts the danger of the insatiable and destructive female passion and includes numerous derogatory remarks concerning women, although it does not preach a containment specifically of women. The section concerning the male brothel is only one episode, while elsewhere in the play Zenocia represents female chastity and constancy, and Guidomar resists sexual temptation in loyalty to her son. Marriage is presented as a solution to the perceived social reality of female sexual desire and male promiscuity as embodied by the gallant rake. Rutillio discovers that women are like scorpions as in a similar vein they can harm through their insatiate sexual desire and yet cure by marriage: 'both have stings, and both can hurt, and cure too' (V. 5. 204).

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[100] Moulton, p. 75.

The Custom of the Country develops the dangers of promiscuity with women through two other characters. Sulpitia and her servant Jacques discuss the sexual stamina of men of various nationalities. Jacques paints a depressing scene of English manhood:

> You'le scant finde any now, to make that name good.
> There was those English that were men indeed,
> And would performe like men, but now they are vanisht:
> They are so taken up in their own Countrey,
> And so beaten off their speed, by their own women,
> When they come here, they draw their legs like hackneys:
> Drinke, and their owne devices has undone 'em. (III. 3. 16–22)

Rutillio's experience also adds to Jacques's comment upon English effeminacy and expands the debate to incorporate a fear of national vulnerability against more masculine foreign enemies. Lust, drink, behaviour and women corrupt English men. Jacques describes the English man as a lost legend, a figure of the past who has 'vanish'd' with modern times, while English women appear to have assumed unnatural dominance over men. Englishmen are now transformed into servile beasts, 'hackneys' who 'draw their legs' rather than perform, an image which also echoes the representation of female prostitutes. Men, such as Rutillio and the exhausted three who claim that the brothel was 'too warm for our complexions,' throughout the play are depicted as inadequate prostitutes, unable to equal female sexual stamina and desire (IV. 4. 39). The play primarily exposes the dangers to the individual of loving women and the concept of female sexuality as dangerous and powerful.

Woman symbolises through her sexuality an entity which must be controlled and focused towards procreation. Callaghan emphasises the masculine role in securing conformity: 'the phallus "stands", albeit precariously, for the line of gender demarcation traversed in all instances of female transgression.'[101] The effeminate man, by metaphorically weakening man's phallic authority, allows the sexual transgression of women into positions of superiority. The courtier's obedience to a monarch is in essence feminine; mirroring the loyalty a wife is bound to pay her husband in the patriarchal order. Castiglione's *The Courtier* includes Pietro Bembo who maintains that those 'wrapped in this sensuall love, which is a very rebel against reason [...] make themselves unworthie to enjoy the favors

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[101] Dympna Callaghan, *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy: A study of King Lear, Othello, the Duchess of Malfi, and The White Devil* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 155.

and benefits which love bestoweth upon his true subjects'.[102] Bembo's argument is founded in neo-Platonism, a discourse which most directly counters the misogynist tradition as it emphasises the mystical union of two lovers, rather than the concept of man's servility to an all powerful beloved. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick extends the argument: '[l]ust itself (meaning, in this context, desire for women) is a machine for depriving males of self-identity.'[103] Her study of Shakespeare's sonnets reveals, '[o]nly women have the power to make men less than men within this world. At the same time, to be fully a man requires having obtained the instrumental use of a woman, having *risked* transformation by her.'[104] To be a passive sexual partner was womanly, and as Moulton suggests, 'to take erotic possession of a woman was to weaken oneself as a man, spiritually through a moral surrender to effeminate pleasure and physically through the spending of valuable seed.'[105] Effeminacy threatened to undermine the microcosm of man's domestic mastery over the family, and to the wider extent, destabilize national structures of mastery by questioning the authority of the English male, including the aristocratic ruling class. Relations with women were a necessary part of many men's lives, and it was their ability to navigate the temptations of lust that proved their masculine superiority.

Man's disempowerment is not tolerated within *The Faerie Queene* when Spenser writes of 'that lothly vncouth sight, | Of men disguiz'd in womanishe attire'.[106] The Amazon Radigund imprisons Artegall the knight of justice in 'womans weedes, that is to manhood shame'.[107] Britomart's shock exposes the extent of Artegall's masculine degradation; she asks, 'Could ought on earth so wondrous change haue wrought, | As to haue robde you of that manly hew?' (V. 7. 40). Rose is adamant that 'Spenser has chosen the Amazon image to indicate the nature of the injustice, the subjection of a man to a woman'.[108] In fact Artegall's effeminate metamorphosis is treated not as an 'injustice' but a consequence of his own submission. He is responsible for his fall, as he has succumbed to passionate love:

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[102] Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. by T. Hoby (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1966), p. 306.
[103] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men, English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 36.
[104] Sedgwick, p. 40.
[105] Ian Frederick Moulton, '"Printed Abroad and Uncastrated": Marlowe's *Elegies* with Davies' *Epigrams*', in *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by Paul Whitfield White (New York: AMS Press, 1998), pp. 77–90 (p. 79).
[106] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by A. C. Hamilton (London and New York: Longman Group, 1977), V. 7. 37.
[107] *The Faerie Queene*, V. 5. 20.
[108] Rose, p. 359.

> So was he ouercome, not ouercome,
> But to her yeelded of his owne accord;
> Yet was he iustly damned by the doome
> Of his owne mouth, that spake so warelesse word,
> To be her thrall, and seruice her afford. (V. 5. 17)

Artegall's battle with the Amazon Radigund is eroticised through the combination of their opposing images: 'The Knight, as best was seeming for a Knight, | And th'Amazon, as best it likt her selfe to dight' (V. 5. 1). Radigund is depicted as perverse and monstrous due to the incongruity of her feminine body and masculine action. Artegall's strategy of waiting for a moment of Radigund's weakness and his symbolic castration by the wound on his thigh symbolises the effeminate process. Artegall surrenders with the sight of Radigund's face and her female beauty which can 'mollifie' (V. 5. 13). Significantly Artegall 'to her yeelded of his owne accord' and his effeminacy is compounded by the removal of 'all the ornaments of knightly name' and his new attire of 'womans weedes, that is to manhood shame' (V. 5. 17, V. 5. 20).

Harvey interprets Artegall's effeminacy as an implicit reference to Spenser's own sense of subjection.[109] In the proem to Book Five addressed to his Queen, Spenser adopts the voice of Artegall:

> Pardon the boldnesse of thy basest thrall,
> That dare discourse of so diuine a read,
> As thy great iustice praysed ouer all:
> The instrument whereof loe here thy *Artegall*. (11)

Harvey comments, 'Spenser implicitly condemns transvestism in the Radigund episode as the inevitable consequence of his own role in Elizabethan society, a position that violates nature and demeans men.'[110] Effeminacy and in particular cross-dressing are condemned by Spenser as unnatural and yet he places the responsibility ultimately upon man and his resolve to resist the pressures of feminine beauty and authority. Spenser's attitude extends to his defence of the arts, which will be analysed later in the chapter.

Robert Burton's treatise *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) expresses an attitude towards effeminacy at the close of the period under investigation. His work reveals that as late as 1621 effeminacy is still topical as a pervasive fear, partly in reaction to an effeminate king

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[109] Elizabeth D. Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 41.
[110] Harvey, p. 43.

who sues for peace and a court of male favourites. Such a theory is undermined by Burton's avoidance of references to homoerotic appeal and his attribution of effeminacy to heterosexual desire. Burton associates his world with the times of Seneca: '"men go beyond women, they wear harlots' colours, and do not walk, but jet and dance," *hic mulier, haec vir* [the mannish woman, the womanish man], more like players, butterflies, baboons, apes, antics, than men.' Burton lists the excessive male fashions: '[w]hat with shoe-ties, hangers, points, caps and feathers, scarfs, bands, cuffs, etc., in a short space their whole patrimonies are consumed.' He is concerned by the waste of family money and the disregard of hierarchy, with the 'wearing [of] jewels [...], a common thing in our times, not for emperors and princes, but almost for serving-men and tailors; all the flowers, stars, constellations, gold and precious stones do condescend to set out their shoes'.[111] In Burton's world the disease of effeminacy is not restricted by social position.

Burton also continues the emphasis on the risk of love to the soldier or warrior: '[t]hat monster-conquering Hercules was tamed by him,' — and an abstract of Ovid proves his point: 'Whom neither beasts nor enemies could tame, | Nor Juno's might subdue, Love quell'd the same.' Burton converts the mythical allusion to contemporary reality and expresses the fear of many contemporaries that men have surrendered to feminine blandishments and embraces: '[y]our bravest soldiers and most generous spirits are enervated with it, *ubi muliebribus blanditiis permittunt se, et inquinantur amplexibus*.'[112] Lust is blamed for the downfall of kingdoms: '[i]t subverts kingdoms, overthrows cities, towns, families, mars, corrupts, and makes a massacre of men.'[113] Burton focuses upon one particular symptom of love: ''[t]is full of fear, anxiety, doubt, care, peevishness, suspicion; it turns a man into a woman, which made Hesiod belike put Fear and Paleness [as] Venus' daughters [...] because fear and love are still linked together.'[114] Love effeminates man, transforming him into a coward who is imbued with feminine traits of insecurity.

Burton despises man's enslavement to the beloved and refers to Diogenes for support: '[t]hey will adore, cringe, compliment, and bow to a common wench (if she be fair) as if

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[111] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. by Holbrook Jackson (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1936), Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 2, Subs. 3, p. 98.
[112] Burton, Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 1, Subs. 1, pp. 42–3.
[113] Burton, Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 1, Subs. 2, p. 49.
[114] Burton, Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 3, p. 142.

she were a noble woman, a countess, a queen, or a goddess.'[115] Love for a woman precipitates the transformation of man through his own self-fashioning: '"[h]e composeth himself wholly to her affections to please her [...]. All his cares, actions, all his thoughts, are subordinate to her will and commandment"; her most devote, obsequious, affectionate servant and vassal.'[116] Burton portrays the actions of the effeminate man as the results of female designs rather than behaviour caused by his personal vanity:

> to the barber, baths, theatres, etc., he must attend upon her wherever she goes, run along the streets by her doors and windows to see her, take all opportunities, sleeveless errands, disguise, counterfeit shapes, and as many forms as Jupiter himself ever took; and come every day to her house (as he will surely do if he be truly enamoured) and offer her service, and follow her up and down from room to room, [...] he cannot contain himself, but he will do it, he must and will be where she is, sit next her, still talking with her.[117]

Burton's effeminate man has lost all independent thought and he is slave to the whims and desires of a woman. Even his form is made uncertain by effeminate finery, 'disguise' and 'counterfeit shapes', through the influence of the female protean ability to change and deceive. Burton does not attribute vanity directly to the effeminate man; it is his enslavement and desperation to please, brought on by the disease of love, which emasculates. Notably a man due to his primary allegiance to reason can never fully become a woman, and yet can be degraded and abused by the female machinations. The removal of the man from the company of women is heralded by Burton as the primary remedy to love, which he proves by classical example:

> Isæus, a philosopher of Assyria, was a most dissolute liver in his youth, *palam lasciviens*, in love with all he met; but after he betook himself by his friends' advice to his study, and left women's company, he was so changed that he cared no more for plays, nor feasts, nor masks, nor songs, nor verses, fine clothes, nor no such love-toys: he became a new man upon a sudden [...] (saith mine author) as if he had lost his former eyes.[118]

Burton seeks classical authority to support his claim that through masculine study and reason, man can regain his identity and shed all signs of effeminacy, revealing Burton's indisputable association of this masculine disease with women. It takes the advice of another man, a contrasting force of Reason to combat the emasculating female beloved in order to create a 'new man'. His new-found masculinity is characterised by the phrase that he 'lost his former eyes,' written in Latin and derived from the *de vita sophistarum* of Philostratus. The eyes enslave man to female beauty; however, Burton's philosopher has

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[115] Burton, Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 2, Subs. 2, p. 68.
[116] Burton, Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 3, p. 161.
[117] Burton, Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 3, p. 161.
[118] Burton, Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 5, Subs. 2, p. 199.

rejected these vacuous eyes and through solitary study has secured his masculine integrity, impenetrable to the creeping attacks of women whose characterisation will be further explored in Chapter Five. Burton, despite the pessimism of the effeminacy of heterosexual love, notably offers a cure in which man through avoidance of women can restore true and even greater masculinity.

Moulton identifies John Evans's mid-1650s manuscript, *Hesperides; or, the Muses Garden*, which compiles English texts from the preceding seventy-five years and includes one section entitled 'Effeminacy'. Moulton observes the collection's overall message: 'effeminacy entails a surrender [...] to almost any kind of sensual pleasure — from eating fine food to playing games of dice or tennis.'[119] The use of effeminacy as a category within the work reveals that it was a topical preoccupation for over half a century.

Masculinity and the Arts

All men are subject to effeminacy through living an urban life of prostitutes, plays and idle luxury. Callaghan reminds us that 'masculinity is formulated differently according to the class of those defining it'.[120] The elite men classed themselves apart from their poorer base brothers, whereas men of a lower status also contrasted their harsh masculinity by attacking effeminate courtly behaviour. The literary condemnation of education, fine living and leisure activities as signifiers of effeminacy partly forms a reaction to a process of change affecting the aristocracy. Hutson describes the early modern 'gentleman's "service" in a noble household as more likely to consist of some activity connected with the organization of knowledge into texts: intelligence-gathering, secretaryship, scholarly reading, tuition, diplomacy, stewardship, surveying'.[121] She claims that the English prose fiction of the 1560s and 1570s reveals 'the formal and thematic expression of concern about the pervasive textualization of the signs of masculine honour, and of the signs of credit and trust between men'.[122] 'Courtization' was a process of alteration in the concept

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[119] Moulton, p. 72.
[120] Callaghan, p. 159.
[121] Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter: Male Friendship and Fictions of Women in Sixteenth-Century England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 88.
[122] Hutson, p. 88.

of noble masculinity coined by Norbert Elias in *The Civilizing Process*.[123] The men of the aristocracy defined by and privileged due to physical strength and military prowess were seen to embrace a culture that placed greater value upon education and eloquence. While writers encouraged and created the new court culture, others were dismayed by the apparent emasculation and dubious principles of the powerful male youth. Within such works the effeminate appears ridiculous and wasteful, although as wealthy men with family connections many must have been destined for influential careers or positions. The fear of courtization represented an anxiety over the future prospects for the nation when the influence of the effeminate man was fully exerted.

In contrast, Sidney and Spenser defended poetry as an English moral force, which could strengthen by inculcating virtuous behaviour. They viewed poetry as an ordered discipline; *The Faerie Queene*, as suggested earlier, aimed 'to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline'.[124] Writers including Marlowe and Nashe exploited eroticism to establish their name and careers, although their rivals could easily argue that their erotic work was a sign of effeminacy. Both Spenser and Sidney wrote erotic verse without betraying guilt or a sense of compromise. Sidney defended martial poetry while writing *Astrophil and Stella*, the first great Petrarchan English sonnet sequence. Spenser's national epic was based in Arthur's dream of sexual union with Gloriana and addresses the subject of sexual temptation which will be discussed in the fifth chapter. Both works hark back to the medieval notion of courtly love, which entailed aristocratic erotic service and devotion outside of marriage. Spenser and Sidney view erotic writing as an attribute of the warrior aristocrat, and therefore, like their critics, they also uphold the patriarchal order. Sidney believed writing should be the preserve of the educated and wellborn. At the beginning of his *Defense* Sidney compares poetry to horsemanship and insists that martial nations always valued poetry, drawing attention to the popularity of sixteenth-century romances such as *Orlando Furioso* amongst soldiers. Sidney's final martyrdom at Zutphen implicitly supported the argument that a man could be a poet and warrior.

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[123] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: State Formation and Civilization*, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: OUP, 1982), p. 275.
[124] *Letter to Raleigh*, in Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, p. 737.

Other writers were more critical of 'effeminate' texts. Jonson in *Discoveries* comments upon the effeminate fashions of contemporary writing with the marginal gloss, 'de mollibus & effaeminatis':

> *There* is nothing valiant, or solid to bee hop'd for from such, as are always kempt'd, and perfum'd; and every day smell of the Taylor. The exceedingly curious, that are wholly in mending such an imperfection in the face, in taking away the Morphew in the neck; or bleaching their hands at Mid-night, gumming, and bridling their beards, or making the waste small, binding it with hoopes, while the mind runs at waste: Too much pickednesse is not manly. Not from those that will jeast at their owne outward imperfections, but hide their ulcers within, their Pride, Lust, Envie, ill nature, with all the art and authority they can. These Persons are in danger.[125]

Jonson utilises fashion to refer to effeminate, elaborate language, the dress of thought. He characterises the external image of such writing as shallow and feminine reflecting the inner which should be masculine and true. Jonson seeks to illustrate how effeminate writing is equally criminal as the effeminate man. Both writing and the man are in 'danger', as the effeminate writing threatens to morally corrupt and degrade the art of the word, while the effeminate man embodies the corruption of the ideal and true masculine.

Erotic writing was deemed to adversely effeminise the male English population with the effect of harming the nation's military strength and moral health. Gabriel Harvey commented '[t]he date of idle vanityes is expired,' and insisted that England needs 'Spartan inuincibility,' not the 'bawdy [...] songes of Priapus'.[126] Marlowe's translation of Ovid's *Elegies* may have fulfilled Harvey's concept of a bawdy song as it explores and even glamorises the love of women with the effects of effeminacy. The selected sequence of the *Elegies* printed in the 1590s exposes man's degradation through promiscuity and even connects effeminacy with the monogamous sexual activity that modern culture was moving to validate. Moulton notes, 'Marlowe's translations celebrate effeminacy and argue for the pleasures of subjection.'[127] The speaker of the *Elegies* welcomes the effeminate role by surrendering to his desire for women. As a result he loses control, and the image of the honourable soldier's death emphasises not only his pitiful demise as a man but also his experience of orgasm, as alluded to by the double entendre of 'die': 'Euen

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[125] Ben Jonson, *Timber; or, Discoveries; Made vpon men and matter: as they have flow'd out of his daily Readings; or had their refluxe to his peculiar Notion of the Times*, ed. by G. B. Harrison (London: The Bodley Head Quartos, 1923), pp. 57–8.
[126] Gabriel Harvey, *Pierces Supererogation; or, A new prayse of the old asse* (London: Iohn Wolfe, 1593), STC (2nd edn) / 12903 <http://eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 7 January 2010] (sig. G1v).
[127] Moulton, '"Printed Abroad and Uncastrated": Marlowe's *Elegies* with Davies' *Epigrams*', p. 78.

as he led his life, so did he die.'[128] Despite the emphasis upon pleasure, the *Elegies* freely admit the significant price of enjoying a lust for women, that being the loss of masculine martial strength and the sexual enslavement of man.

Marlowe's *Elegies*, printed with a selection of Sir John Davies's epigrams, were included in the Bishops' Ban of 1599, in which political satire was a criterion for the censorship of many of the prohibited works. Moulton claims, '[t]hey celebrate desire as much as they warn of its dangers, and coupled as they are with the subversive wit of Davies' epigrams, their own subversiveness appears in heightened relief.'[129] The Ban represented a move by the authorities to censor political discourse which was perceived as unfavourable or deviant. Erotic writing was also seen to have political consequences, and therefore writing of this genre was included within the prohibition. The *Elegies* combined with the Epigrams were censored due to their feared corruptive implications upon the male reader. Manuscript works also focus upon male sexual dysfunction and the uncertainty of masculine identity; however, they escape censorship due to the nature of their circulation. The slim and discreet edition of Marlowe's translated *Elegies* emphasised the perceived threat of its dissemination amongst common men, women or servants. The suppression of Marlowe's *Elegies* was indicative of the fear of national effeminacy. Marlowe's *Elegies* reveal a contemporary argument in favour of heterosexual desire and consummation, although the censorship of the *Elegies* emphasises the influence of the belief that heterosexuality corrupted masculinity and its devastating effects will be considered in the following chapter.

Homoeroticism and Effeminacy

Marlowe's persona of the *Elegies* advocates personal surrender to erotic desire, a source of pleasure which other contemporaries also extended to include homoeroticism. Sedgwick observes, 'in any male-dominated society, there is a special relationship between male homosocial (*including* homosexual) desire and the structures for maintaining and

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[128] *Ouid's elegies: Three Bookes*, trans. by Christopher Marlowe (1603), in Christopher Marlowe and Sir John Davies, *Epigrammes and elegies. By I. D. and C. M.* (Mid[...]gh: 1603), STC (2nd edn) / 18931, Bodleian Library <http://eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 7 January 2010], II. 10.
[129] Moulton, '"Printed Abroad and Uncastrated": Marlowe's *Elegies* with Davies' *Epigrams*', p. 85.

transmitting patriarchal power.'[130] Through her study of Shakespeare's sonnets she identifies the presumed compatibility of homo- and heterosexual relations through 'a male-male love that, like the love of the Greeks, is set firmly within a structure of institutionalised social relations that are carried out via women'.[131] In contrast to the dangers of heterosexual lust, Sedgwick emphasises that 'for a man to undergo even a humiliating change in the course of a relationship with a man still feels like preserving or participating in a sum of male power'.[132] The ecclesiastical and secular authorities targeted heterosexual promiscuity, yet the prosecuted cases of sodomy in Renaissance England often involved pederastic rape while private consenting homosexual activity was not a pursued offence. Orgel also notes that the romantic and erotic homosexual relationships in the literature of the age are often represented with 'surprisingly little anxiety'.[133] The experience of young Colin in *The Shepheardes Calender* who is pursued by Hobbinol is portrayed as normal for the poet-shepherd. Colin treats Hobbinol's courtship as foolish yet harmless: 'Ah foolish *Hobbinol*, thy gyfts bene vayne.' In stark contrast his relationship with Rosalind is painful and unrequited: 'Shee deignes not my good will, but doth reproue, | And of my rurall musick holdeth scorne.'[134] Heterosexual relationships are frequently associated with suffering or lust, which by implication suggests homosexual desire as an alternative.

The erotic narrative poem expressed potent homoerotic desire through the safe distance of mythological fantasy. Jardine claims, 'with good classical precedent, the sixteenth century's primary understanding of Hermaphrodite is [...] the erotically irresistible effeminate boy.'[135] The sexual appeal of the ambiguous gender of a male youth is emphasised in Marlowe's erotic narrative poem, *Hero and Leander* (1598). Appreciation of Leander's physical beauty is professed with admiration for his erotic effect upon men. His hair 'Would have allur'd the vent'rous youth of *Greece*, | To hazard more, than for the golden Fleece'.[136] Leander is compared to Ganymede, Jove's cupbearer, and he attracts

[130] Sedgwick, p. 25.
[131] Sedgwick, p. 35.
[132] Sedgwick, p. 45.
[133] Orgel, p. 42.
[134] Edmund Spenser, *The Shepheardes Calender*, in Edmund Spenser, *The Shorter Poems*, ed. by R. A. McCabe (London: Penguin Books, 1999), pp. 23–148 (p. 37), 'Januarye', 59, 63–4.
[135] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 17.
[136] *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by Fredson Bowers, 2nd edn, 3 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1981), II, *Hero and Leander*, pp. 423–515, First Sestyad, 57–8.

Neptune's amorous attentions. An explicit passage describes Neptune's sexual advances upon Leander while he swims naked to Sestos:

> He watcht his armes, and as they opend wide,
> At every stroke, betwixt them would he slide,
> And steale a kisse, and then run out and daunce,
> And as he turnd, cast many a lustfull glaunce,
> And throw him gawdie toies to please his eie,
> And dive into the water, and there prie
> Upon his brest, his thighs, and everie lim,
> And up againe, and close beside him swim,
> And talke of love: *Leander* made replie,
> 'You are deceav'd, I am no woman I.'[137]

The reader is led along a voyeuristic path with Neptune who 'watcht', would 'prie' and cast 'many a lustfull glaunce' upon Leander. Neptune and the reader claim possession of the youth's physical body as the poem itemises and eroticises his 'brest,' 'thighs,' and 'lim'. The homoerotic relationship is a tense and tactile battle of power placing Neptune as the protagonist who would 'slide | And steale a kisse' from between Leander's open arms. Leander's naïve resistance heightens the eroticism when he exclaims, 'I am no woman', while the experienced and sexually predatory Neptune physically and psychologically encroaches upon his body. The erotic beauty of the effeminate and naïve male is also exploited in Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which was first published in 1565 and again throughout every decade since until 1612. The tale of Salmacis and Hermaphroditus again places the male youth in an erotic scene swimming in the water:

> Through which his body fair and white doth glisteringly appear,
> As if a man an ivory image or a lily white
> Should overlay or close with glass that were most pure and bright.[138]

Water eroticises his physical beauty and reveals a voyeuristic desire to contain and possess his youthful form, a desire which motivates Salmacis:

> '"The prize is won," cried Salmacis aloud; "he is mine own."
> And therewithal in all post haste she, having lightly thrown
> Her garments off, flew to the pool and cast her thereinto
> And caught him fast between her arms for aught that he could do.
> Yea, maugre all his wrestling and his struggling to and fro,
> She held him still and kissèd him a hundred times and mo
> And, willed he, nilled he, with her hands she touched his naked breast. (IV. 440–6)

[137] *Hero and Leander*, Second Sestyad, 183–92.

[138] *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, trans. by Arthur Golding, ed. by Madeleine Forey (London: Penguin Books, 2002), p. 133, IV. 437–39.

Salmacis is the sexual protagonist, fired by her desire to physically possess Hermaphroditus, while he characteristically refuses and attempts to repel her advances.

> 'But Atlas' nephew still persists and utterly denies
> The nymph to have her hopèd sport; she urges him likewise
> And, pressing him with all her weight, fast cleaving to him still,
> "Strive, struggle, wrest and writhe," she said, "thou froward boy, thy fill;
> Do what thou canst, thou shalt not scape. Ye gods of heaven, agree
> That this same wilful boy and I may never parted be." (IV. 456–61)

Salmacis attempts to rape Hermaphroditus, pressing her weight upon the 'froward' and 'wilful' boy whose resistance heightens the sexual tension. Jardine emphasises that the erotic focus is 'the potentially rapeable boy (be the assault by a nymph, or by a male or female god)'.[139] Salmacis's forceful desire for Hermaphroditus entices the male reader to appreciate the erotic appeal of the beautiful youth through mythological rape. Passivity and disdain, traditional traits of the Petrarchan mistress, emphasise his androgyny yet with a physical sensuality suggesting homoerotic appeal. Marlowe and Golding explored the effeminate male youths as erotic figures pursued by an aggressor in deference to classical precedent and also as part of a contemporary fantasy of homoeroticism. The topicality of the Ovidian erotic narrative is evident in Hermaphroditus's lesson that sexual relations transform man:

> Now when Hermaphroditus saw how in the water sheen,
> To which he entered in a man, his limbs were weakened so
> That out fro thence but half a man he was compelled to go,
> He lifteth up his hands and said (but not with manly rere),
> "O noble father Mercury and Venus mother dear,
> This one petition grant your son which both your names doth bear,
> That whoso comes within this well may so be weakened there
> That of a man but half a man he may fro thence retire."[140]

Golding associates Hermaphroditus's effeminate figure with the Elizabethan concern for national masculinity harmed by over-indulgence in sexual sport with women. The 'spring' represents this sexual indulgence with women which, although against his will, Hermaphroditus has experienced. The effect of carnal lust creates 'half a man', an effeminate prospect familiar to the early modern reader.

[139] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 18.
[140] *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, trans. by Arthur Golding, ed. by M. Forey (London: Penguin Books, 2002), IV. 471–8.

Love between men was heralded through the classical tradition as a noble alternative to the base lust for women. Orgel considers that the love between men was less threatening than the love for women: 'it had fewer consequences, it was easier to de-sexualize, it figured and reinforced the patronage system.'[141] However, the erotic portrayal of Leander and Hermaphroditus as immature and vulnerable re-enacts the fantasy of sexual dominance by the masculine over women. Yet the solidarity of gender can reassure the male lover, as the persona of Shakespeare's sonnets is attracted to the feminine beauty of the handsome youth with the promise of masculine constancy and vitality: 'A woman's face, by Nature's own hand painted | Hast thou, the master mistress of my passion,' although unlike a woman he has a heart unacquainted with 'shifting change,' and 'An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling'.[142] The sonnet exposes the homoerotic appeal of a beautiful male directly in comparison with a woman.

In the satires of Marston and Guilpin and anti-theatricalist texts the reality of homosexual relations arouses fears for the integrity of masculinity, and is condemned as part of the effeminising effect of all sexual passions. Homosexuality was associated with effeminacy and 'sodomy becomes the visible sign of its subversiveness', claims Orgel.[143] These writers were not alone in their less than favourable portrayal of homoeroticism. As late as 1612 the image of the ingle or ganimede was still a pervasive symbol of sexual deviance and the corruption of man. The *Ganymede* emblem in Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britanna* (1612) depicts a perception of homoeroticism as deviant and socially dangerous:

> Vpon a Cock, here *Ganimede* doth sit,
> Who erst rode mounted on *IOVES* Eagles back,
> One hand holdes *Circes* wand, and ioined with it,
> A cup top-fil'd with poison, deadly black:
> The other Meddals, of base metals wrought,
> With sundry moneyes, counterfeit and nought.
>
> These be those crimes, abhorr'd of God and man,
> Which Iustice should correct, with lawes severe,
> In *Ganimed*, the foule Sodomitan:
> Within the Cock, vile incest doth appeare:
> Witchcraft, and murder, by that cup and wand,
> And by the rest, false coine you vnderstand.[144]

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[141] Orgel, p. 49.
[142] *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, p. 151, Sonnet 20. 1–2, 4–5.
[143] Orgel, p. 41.
[144] Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britanna* (1612) (Leeds: The Scolar Press, 1966), Emblem no. 48. See illustration 2 in appendix.

His naked effeminate form straddling 'a Cock,' a visual emblem of his practice of sodomy and 'vile incest', emphasises Ganimede's sexual lust and deviance. God and man condemn 'the foule Sodomitan' for his sexual activities, which the writer believes should be officially corrected. '*Circes* wand' and a shape-transforming 'poison, deadly black' symbolise Ganimede's connection with female sexuality through the power to effeminise and degrade man. His cup of transforming poison echoes the writer Rainoldes's vision of the pervasiveness of homoeroticism. Ganimede is a fraudulent male identifiable by the use of his perverse desire to gain 'base' and 'counterfeit' wealth. There is no human face to Ganimede: he is an emblem within Peacham's *Minerva Britanna* exposing the resentment and voyeuristic interest which his sexuality commanded.

Other writers, in the vein of the late Elizabethan satirists, also presented homosexuality as a symbol of the effeminate man's sexual depravity. Unlike Peacham these earlier writers presented a male client as the protagonist while the homoerotic subject was a reflection of his perverse lust. Thomas Middleton's *Micro-Cynicon* (1599) was one of the late Elizabethan satires on the list of books to be burned in the Bishops' Ban. He utilises male prostitution and transvestism as a shocking and humorous conclusion to the satire. The masculine persona is drawn to the figure of a beautiful woman on the streets of London, with whom he attempts to procure sex. Middleton is greatly influenced by *Skialetheia* especially through the persona's own involvement in the sins of the modern man. The prostitute is, however, revealed as an issue of 'Satan,' a hermaphrodite who 'jets it like a gentleman, | Otherwhiles much like a wanton courtesan'. Middleton creates the image of Pyander who sexually performs either gender, 'a man or woman whether, | I cannot say, she's excellent in either.'[145] Pyander's female guise is achieved through cosmetics and allows her to attract carnivorous clients: 'Whose cherry lip, black brow and smiles procure | Lust-burning buzzards to the tempting lure.'[146] The persona ultimately discovers that her appearance is a facade concealing a man who prostitutes and alters his body for financial reward. Middleton's *Micro-Cynicon* dramatically exposes the realisation that the recognisable code of clothing which marks gender cannot ensure the same correlation with the physical body beneath the clothes. Furthermore, Middleton's inclusion of a male prostitute disguised as a woman in his contemporary London implies that sexual ambiguity had its erotic and monetary value in the early modern sex trade.

[145] *Micro-Cynicon* in *The Collected Works*, pp. 1981–2, 'Ingling Pyander', V. 21, 25–8.
[146] *Micro-Cynicon*, V. 37–8.

The homosexual boy or ingle of Marston's and Guilpin's satires is similarly employed to shock and supply bawdy humour as a symbol of effeminate depravity particularly associated with the stage. The topicality of homosexuality as a concerning trend is revealed by contemporary drama including Jonson's *Poetaster* which features Ovid's father fearing that his son will become an actor: 'shall I have my son a stage now, an ingle for players.'[147] Middleton in *Father Hubburd's Tales* illustrates the currency of boys in the sex trade when a man is advised to visit 'Blackfriars, where he should see a nest of boys able to ravish a man'.[148] The humour of sodomy between men is employed in John Webster's 1604 Induction to John Marston's *The Malcontent*:

> SLY Oh, cousin, come, you shall sit between my legs here.
> SINKLO No indeed, cousin, the audience will then take me for a viol da gamba and think that you play upon me.
> SLY Nay, rather that I work upon you, coz.[149]

The bawdy humour of sodomy reveals the same attitude towards homosexuality as a flirtation with sinister undertones of a desire to assert masculine sexual dominance. Truewit of *Epicoene*, who we encountered in the previous chapter, attacks Clerimont's leisurely lifestyle: 'between his mistress abroad and his ingle at home, high fare, soft lodging, fine clothes, and his fiddle, he thinks the hours have no wings, or the day no post horse.'[150] *Epicoene* will be at the forefront of the discussion of masculine identity in the following chapter. The keeping of a boy or ingle appears within these plays as a mark of a man's modern luxurious lifestyle, diverse sexual appetite, and assertion of his 'perverse' authority. Steve Brown emphasises 'the syntactic yoking in parallel and equivalence of the female mistress and the male ingle'.[151] Marlowe's historical play *Edward II* (1593) adopts homoeroticism as a mark of effeminate inversion. Gaveston's courtship is a performance, a pandering to the King's perverse sexual desire particularly through the imagery of the Italian masque:

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[147] Ben Jonson, *Poetaster*, in *Ben Jonson's Plays*, ed. by Felix E. Schelling, 2 vols (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1964), I, 233–307 (I. 2. 15–16).
[148] *The Nightingale and the Ant, and Father Hubbard's Tales*, in *The Collected Works*, pp. 149–82 (pp. 173, 560–1).
[149] John Marston, *The Malcontent*, with additions by John Webster, ed. by W. David Kay, New Mermaid, 2nd edn (London: A & C Black, 1998), Induction, 18–21.
[150] Ben Jonson *Epicoene; or, The Silent Woman*, ed. by L. A. Beaurline (London: Edward Arnold, 1967), I. 1. 23–6.
[151] Steve Brown, 'The Boyhood of Shakespeare's Heroines: Notes on Gender Ambiguity in the Sixteenth Century', *SEL*, 30:2 (Spring 1990), 243–63 (p. 254).

> Sometime a lovelie boye in *Dians* shape,
> With haire that gilds the water as it glides,
> Crownets of pearle about his naked armes,
> And in his sportfull hands an Olive tree,
> To hide those parts which men delight to see,
> Shall bathe him in a spring.[152] (I. 1. 61–6)

Gaveston displays his construction of the homoerotic boy for the pleasure of a King who throughout the play neglects and inverts authority. The boy's naked form is eroticised in the guise of Diana, with a homoerotic focus upon the suggestion of his genitalia 'which men delight to see'. The inclusion of a sexualised effeminate boy within these plays shows an awareness of the dramatic performance of gender. Some scholars believe that the stage created the right conditions for the acceptance of the feminine illusion presented by the boy actor. Orgel maintains that modern spectators are not convinced by the representation of gender on Shakespeare's stage, which 'we would regard as utterly superficial, a matter of costumes and mannerisms; nevertheless, the superficies produce a difference that is absolute — gender disguises in this theatre are represented as all but impenetrable'.[153] Orgel suggests that the early modern audience would read costume as a definitive distinction of sex. However, Marlowe exploits the performed and real sexuality of the actor in the play *Edward II*, as Jardine illustrates with 'the stage irony that Edward's "natural" love — *his Queen Isabella* — is also [...] a boy'.[154] The sexual innuendo and tension created by the presence of a male transvestite is exposed in Field's play *Amends for Ladies* (1618). Bold, disguised as a woman, gains intimate access to the widow Lady Bright, enabling many comic moments of sexual innuendo. Bold's attempts to undress Lady Bright are ridiculed: '[h]ast not done yet? Thou art an old fumbler, I perceive. Methinks thou dost not do things like a woman.'[155] His response is full of sexual quips based upon his disguise:

> BOLD But rather than be a burthen to your ladyship, I protests sincerely, I would beg my bread; therefore I beseech you, madam, to hold me excused, and let my goodwill stand for the action.
> L. BRIGHT Let thy goodwill stand for the action? If goodwill would do it, there's many a lady in this land would be content with her own lord; and thou can'st not be a burthen to me, without thou lie upon me, and that were preposterous in thy sex. (*Amends for Ladies*, III. 3).

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[152] Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, in *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by Fredson Bowers, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1981), pp. 1–119 (I. 1. 61–6).
[153] Orgel, p. 18.
[154] Jardine, *Still Harping*, p. 23.
[155] N. Field, *Amends for Ladies*, in *Nero & Other Plays*, ed. by Herbert P. Horne, Havelock Ellis, Arthur Symons & A. Wilson Verity (London: Bradbury, Agnew, 1888), pp. 413–88 (p. 453, III. 3).

The humour of Bold's disguise derives from the dramatic irony, in which the audience are fully aware of the true male identity of Bold and the actor, while Lady Bright in confidence to whom she believes to be a woman proceeds to comment upon men and sex. Her own sexual interpretation of Bold's excuse flirts with the reality of the masculine body sexually liberated within feminine clothes. The female spectator may equally have been attracted to the boy actor whose effeminacy nullified his masculine superiority. Orgel observes that feminine clothes would 'disarm and socialize him in ways that were specifically female [...] not as a possessor or master, but as companionable and pliable and one of them'.[156] The boy actor realises the masculinity of women in the safe confines of the playhouse where the female spectator could visualise the androgynous figure on stage as a role model of feminine activity, even though in the realms of fantasy.

The ingle and the boy actor's associations with homosexuality were placed within the context of the general sexual depravity which effeminised contemporary men. The anti-theatricalists share the same condemnatory attitude towards homoeroticism and homosexuality which the satires of Marston and Guilpin exude. Both advocate a strong belief in the vulnerability of the human self to external factors, which suggests a fear that there is no masculine self, only the performance of masculinity. If so, the order of society based upon gender and birth would have no justification and also be merely a performance. The concept of personal identity as a performance for onlookers explains the relative ease with which the issue of the fashioning of subjects was directly linked to the actor who altered his persona as an occupation. Early modern drama expressed the increasing awareness of the malleable possibilities of identity, especially through image. Garber introduces Freud's theory of fetishism in the discussion of the boy actor and comments, 'this mechanism of substitution, which is the trigger of transvestic fetishism, is also the very essence of theater: role playing, improvisation, costume, and disguise.'[157] From this standpoint the stage and its related contents and actors become part of a fetishist's fixation, where the superficial re-enactment substitutes the real pleasure gained from a sexual relationship. Katherine Eisaman Maus similarly emphasises the perspective of drama as intrinsically subversive. She comments, 'the antitheatricalists argue that the exciting theatrical identification of (male) spectator and (female) spectacle represents a profoundly

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[156] Orgel, p. 81.
[157] Garber, p. 29.

dangerous form of sexual compromise.'[158] The interaction of the two genders within the playhouse is visualised as an unconstrained and unregulated sexual relationship, with the ever-present fear of the people becoming free to experience and realise the sexual choices available to them. Anti-theatricalists cast the male spectator as the jealous voyeur; he watches the play and in fact owns the performance, although the actual content of the play and the environment emasculate the viewer.

Gender identity is not seen as integral to the individual, and the boy actor through his performance as a woman exposes the malleable potential of the projected 'self'. The 'effeminate' boy actor provided a focus for the debate over masculine identity, in particular through his sexuality and sexual allure to the spectator. Anti-theatricalists and other moralists target the boy actor as a public figure who held a position with potential subversive power and influence. Dollimore comments, 'the players were seen to undermine the idea that one's identity and place were a function of what one essentially was — what God had made one.'[159] Actors were perceived as masterless and free from the restrictions of social position, which left them dislocated from society. The socially indefinable actor who wore women's clothes or even a noble's apparel altered the fixed order and blurred the divisions between status and gender, suggesting that these definitions were malleable and constructed in the real world. The feared transforming effect of clothing and behaviour upon gender directed the debate towards the boy actor's ability to effeminise his own and others' masculinity by assuming a female persona.

Renaissance anti-theatricality was marked by a belief that the boy actor was effeminised by dressing as a woman. Levine identifies 'at the root of pamphlet attacks [...] the fear that costume could actually alter the gender of the male body beneath the costume'.[160] The image of a boy behaving as a woman carried connotations of homoeroticism, and the anti-theatricalist perspective extends this interpretation by assuming that the 'essential form of erotic excitement in men is homosexual — that indeed, women are only a cover for men', maintains Orgel.[161] In fact the anti-theatricalist focuses upon the boy actor especially because of his unique role to fashion gender and sexual ambiguity as an occupation. The

[158] Katherine Eisaman Maus, 'Horns of Dilemma: Jealousy, Gender, and spectatorship in English Renaissance Drama', *ELH*, 54:3 (Fall 1987), 561–583 (p. 569).
[159] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 290.
[160] L. Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-Theatricality and Effeminization 1579–1642* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), p. 3.
[161] Orgel, p. 30.

feared desire is evoked by the image of the effeminised male youth and it is this youthful androgyny which is feared to attract the ardent admirer. The boy's appeal is homosexual yet not in the modern sense of the category, but as part of a sexual excess. Writers such as Stubbes create images of 'deviant' or 'secret' sexualities as symbols of the dangers of transexuality and the playhouse.

As discussed earlier in the thesis, Philip Stubbes in *The Anatomie of Abuses* attributes the national 'pusillanimity and effeminat condition' to an indulgence in lust and other pleasurable luxuries.[162] The present age is classed as a time of masculine degradation and fashion is integral to this metamorphosis: 'this pampering of their bodies makes them weaker, tenderer, and nesher [delicate], then otherwise they would be if they were vsed to hardnesse' (1601–3). Similarly the boy actor's female clothes are imagined to adulterate his masculine gender. The arts, music and dance play a significant role in the process:

> Wherfore, if you would haue your sonne softe, womannish, vncleane, smooth mouthed, affected to baudry, scurrility, filthy rimes and vnseemly talking: briefly, if you wold haue him, as it were transnatured into a woman, or worse, & inclined to all kind of whordome and abhomination, set him to dancing schoole, & to learne Musicke, and then you shall not faile of your purpose. (6743–51)

Stubbes warns and chastises the neglectful parent who permits artistic lessons which 'transnature' a man into a woman or 'worse', a form embodied by the boy actor who is devoid of martial skills. Stubbes associates artistic effeminacy with female licentiousness, and a propensity to enjoy 'whordome and abhomination'. In the playhouse Stubbes blames sodomy upon the collapse of conventional gender, states Levine: 'euery one brings another homeward of their way very friendly, and in their secret conclaues (couertly) they play the Sodomits, or worse' (5544–47).[163] However, the term 'sodomite' is emblematic of a general sexual depravity including heterosexual fornication, which creates and is symptomatic of effeminacy. Alan Bray claims that due to the fantastical nature of the mythology of sodomy, it was rarely associated with the actual practice of homosexuality.[164] In the context of anti-theatricalist and moralist work the term is used to convey unimaginable sexual activities to inspire shock and awe. Stubbes presupposes the transforming power of apparel and actions to alter the inner identity of an individual.

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[162] Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies*, ed. by M. Kidnie, vol. 245 (Tempe, Arizona: Renaissance English Text Society, 2002), 1615.
[163] Levine, p. 22.
[164] Alan Bray, 'Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England', in *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. by Jonathan Goldberg (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 40–61.

Levine explains the anti-theatricalist's fear that 'representations in general can alter the things they are only supposed to represent,' and Stubbes accordingly is horrified by the resultant transformation, the effeminate man.[165] In fact Stubbes's insistence on the monstrosity of effeminacy is motivated by a fear of the implications of gender transformation in terms of social change. It is the self-fashioning of gender which is monstrous, and which arouses his reaction.

Gosson in *The Schoole of Abuse* (1579) describes poetry and drama as the 'Cuppes of Circes,' conveying the belief in the power of words and plays to debase men by altering gender, which fuels his concern for national masculinity as previously discussed.[166] Poets are attacked in the same terms used to criticise contemporary women; they employ 'good sentences [...] as ornamentes to beautifye their woorkes, and sette theyre trumperie too sale without suspect' (Sig. A2^{r}–2^{v}). He traces the effeminacy of poets predictably to their female predecessor, Sappho, the Greek lyric poet: 'Sappho was skilful in Poetrie and sung wel, but she was whorish' (Sig. A5). Gosson identifies the origin of poetry in the work of a 'whorish' woman, which validates his belief that poetry and drama are effeminate, as essentially they are womanly. Gosson emphasises the impotency of study when a man is called to fight and by implication suggests warfare as a wiser pursuit for men than the arts (Sig. D8^{r}–8^{v}). Similarly the playhouse creates 'effeminate gesture, to ravish the sence; and wanton speache, to whet desire too inordinate lust' (Sig. B6^{v}). In his *'Dedication to the Gentlewomen*', he stresses that men at the playhouse who gaze upon the female spectators will transform into animals, braying 'Wilde Coltes' (Sig. F2). Gosson's *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* (1582) similarly identifies the risk of gender transformation to the spectator who will be induced to imitate the actor. Levine observes his train of thought: 'watching leads inevitably to "being" — to assuming the identity of the actor.'[167] It is easy for a modern reader to assume a superior stance, automatically looking upon these beliefs as anachronistic; however, it is not too dissimilar from the argument that modern media adversely affect our youth. Gosson perceives the sinister nature of the theatre: '*Poetes* that write playes, and they that present them upon the stage, make our affections overflow

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[165] Levine, p. 5.
[166] Stephen Gosson and Thomas Lodge, *The Schoole of Abuse by Stephen Gosson and A Reply to Gosson's Schoole of Abuse by Thomas Lodge*, ed. by A. Freeman (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1973), sig. A2^{v}.
[167] Levine, p. 13.

whereby they draw the bridle from that parte of the minde, that should ever be curbed.'[168] The playwright and the player are rebellious figures, creating and representing action which will free man from reason and social control.

A second and third blast of retreat from plays and theatres (1580) is written by a self-proclaimed 'Anglo-phile Eutheo' who insists that erotic representation will lead to effeminacy, and cause the destruction of the English nation, as befell Rome.[169] He taps into fears for national security and holds plays responsible for debauchery causing effeminacy. The third section of the work, attributed to Anthony Munday, emphasises the erotic powers of transformation of the play, '[d]o wee not use [plays] to counterfeit witchcraft, charmed drinks and amorous potions thereby to drawe the affections of men and stir them up unto lust?'[170] Masculinity is stolen and men become pliable to lustful instructions and examples. Munday fears for boy actors who are instructed in effeminacy which will define their whole lives, 'what do they teach them, I praie you, but to softer mischiefe in their youth, that it maie always abide in them, and in their age bring them sooner vnto hel?'[171] Munday forcefully asserts the association of sexual deviancy with the performance of drama.

A later anti-theatricalist text, William Prynne's *Histriomastix* (1633), shows a continuance of the concern over the playhouse as a place for subversive sexuality. Dramatic performances 'effeminate their Actors and Spectators [...] enervating and resolving the virility and vigor of their minds,' leaving them 'womanish both in their mindes, their bodies, speeches, habites, and their whole deportment'.[172] Prynne connects cross-dressing with sexual deviance, and proclaims the theatre as a pretext for homosexuality. He describes actors as those who 'by unchaste infections of their members, effeminate their manly nature, being both effeminate men and women, yea, being neither men nor women' (p. 169). Typically an action becomes constitutive: 'he who puts on a womans raiment [...] though it be but once, is doubtlesse *a putter on of womens apparell*' (p. 180).

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[168] Stephen Gosson, *Plaies Confuted in Five Actions* (London, 1582), with a preface for the Garland Edition by Arthur Freeman (New York & London: Garland Pub., 1972), Sig. F1^{v}.
[169] Anthony Munday, *A Second and Third Blast of Retrait from Plaies and Theaters*, ed. by A. Freeman, (New York & London: Garland Pub., 1973), 'A Preface to the reader', Sig. A2.
[170] Munday, pp. 100–1
[171] Munday, p. 111.
[172] William Prynne, *Histriomastix*, ed. by Arthur Freeman (New York & London: Garland Pub., 1974), pp. 546–47.

Heywood in *An Apologie for Actors* (1608) responded to the claims of Munday and Gosson in defence of plays. He writes, 'so bewitching a thing is lively and well spirited action that it hath power to new mold the hearts of the spectators and fashion them to the shape of any noble and notable attempt.'[173] Heywood advocates the belief that the play could transform through its persuasive powers of language and spectacle. Yet he stresses that spectators enjoy a 'performance' and are aware of the man playing a woman:

> To see our youths attired in the habit of women, who knowes not what their intents be? who cannot distinguish then by their names, assuredly, knowing they are but to represent such a Lady, at such a time appointed. (C3^{v})

Heywood counters anti-theatricalist attacks on the eroticisation of the boy through female disguise, although by implication he suggests the spectator's arousal by the idea of a boy effeminised.

A leading Oxford divine, Dr John Rainoldes, focused upon the dangerous homoeroticism of the boy actor in *Th'Overthrow of Stage-Playes* (Middleburgh, 1599), an anti-theatricalist work printed abroad and therefore unlikely to represent a consensus of opinion. Dr Rainoldes warned, '[b]eware of beautifull boyes transformed into women by putting on their raiment, their feature, lookes, and facions.'[174] He declares that cross-dressing 'is a great provocation of men to lust and leacherie: because a womans garment being put on a man doeth vehemently touch and move him with the remembrance and imagination of a woman; and the imagination of a thing desirable doth stir up the desire'.[175] Feminine appearance and gestures performed by a boy transfer a female sexual efficacy and are here believed to invoke desire. Jardine maintains that playing a female part is for the pleasure of a male audience and advertises 'availability as an object of *male* erotic attention'.[176] The boy actor appears as a sexual figure available in 'fantasy' to any spectator who has paid to watch his performance. Orgel instead asserts, 'there is no desire for men imagined,' while 'heterosexuality here only provides the fetish that enables the true homosexual response to emerge'.[177] He further suggests that Rainoldes attacks an 'undifferentiated' sexuality distinct from the object of desire, be it woman or boy: 'the

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[173] Thomas Heywood, *An Apologie for Actors* (1612), (London: Shakespeare Society, 1841; repr. London: Elibron Classics, 2005), B4^{r}.
[174] John Rainoldes, *Overthrow of Stage Playes* (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1972), pp. 34–35, pp. 10–11.
[175] Rainoldes, p. 97.
[176] Jardine, *Still Harping,* p. 31.
[177] Orgel, pp. 35, 29.

effeminate stage player here is the agent of a universal effeminacy.'[178] Despite Orgel's insistence upon the universal sexual appeal, Rainoldes is concerned by the subject's combination of an eroticised feminine image with a male physical reality and authority to publicly perform. John Rainoldes describes such a desire as dangerous and perverse: 'what sparkles of lust to that vice the putting of women's attire on men may kindle in unclean affections.'[179] Femininity is the agent that sparks the 'unnatural' lust in the male spectator and female sexuality is the corruptive force that threatens the cross-dressed actor. Both woman and child through society were constructed as less rational creatures in need of guidance and distinct from man. They embody the corruptive threat of 'feminine' sensuality, in this case hetero- and homosexual desires, which Rainoldes fears will cause effeminacy leading to homosexuality, male marriage, sodomy and sadism with dire consequences for society.

The distinctions between man, woman and boy, point to a belief in the concept of three definitions of gender. Garber identifies the term 'boy' as a third sex for those who act female parts, 'made up of males, homoerotically attractive to male spectators.'[180] There is an assumption that masculine homoerotic desire is weakly restrained, and the trigger of female clothing on a boy could release homoerotic desire. Rainoldes assumes that the performance of an illicit sexuality would invoke the male spectator's imitation. Dollimore comments, 'Rainoldes seems to have imagined adult male sexuality [...] as anarchic, but as satanically polymorphous, capable of engaging in the forbidden with alarming ease.'[181] The sexual undertones of the male bond, as emphasised by Alan Bray, justified Rainoldes's assumption of man's vulnerability to the homoerotic.[182] The notion of the transvestite stage enabling homoerotic activity was central to Rainoldes's and William Gager's discussion of the performance of plays by Oxford graduates. Drawing from the authority of Socrates, Rainoldes compares the homoerotic lust inspired by transvestite boys to the sting of the spider: 'if they do but touch men only with their mouth, they put them to wonderful pain and make them mad: so beautiful boys by kissing do sting and pour secretly in a kind of poison.'[183] Rainoldes accuses the Oxford actors of physically

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[178] Orgel, p. 28.
[179] Rainoldes, p. 11.
[180] Garber, p. 10.
[181] Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, pp. 292–3.
[182] Alan Bray, 'Homosexuality and Male friendship in Elizabethan England', in *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. by Jonathan Goldberg (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 40–61.
[183] Rainoldes, p. 18.

tempting men as women and he eroticises the performance of a kiss as an oral penetration of poisonous homoerotic desire. In a letter to Rainoldes, appended to the 1600 edition of *Th'overthrow of the Stage-Playes*, Gager strictly denies any 'kiss' and by implication homoeroticism: 'as for the danger of kissinge bewtifull boyes, I knowe not howe this suspition should reache to us, for it is untrwe [...] that owre Eurymachus did kisse owre Malantho.'[184] The vehemence of Rainoldes's attacks and Gager's avid denial reveals the real fear of the sexual corruptibility of man.

The Effeminate Man: A product of his time

A new modern and urban lifestyle creates the effeminate man who is so prominent in the late Elizabethan satires of Marston and Guilpin. His effeminacy is a product of external influences, from idle luxury, the arts, feminine fashions and the more dangerous sexual lust. The concern over the corruptive power of love for a woman is a traceable fear potently espoused by Musidorus in Sidney's *Arcadia.* Significantly the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean presentation of effeminacy frequently incorporates homoeroticism as a sexual deviance which accompanies the effeminate man's desire for his whore. The satirists, moralists and anti-theatricalists contradicted the classical idealisation of the homoeroticism of male youth, and categorised the pleasure of the ingle with other carnal desires that directly harmed masculinity. The ingle embodies the anti-threatricalist concern over the pervasive influence of the transvestite boy actor. The satires provocatively rebel against a classical attitude of surrender to sensuality, which they perceive as a sure move towards effeminacy. Man's desire and subjection to feed a sexual appetite is deemed as weak and feminine, and by undermining their superior masculine nature is naturally interpreted as a sign of effeminacy. The corruptive threat of loving women is a constant anxiety throughout the period and recognises an innate fear of becoming an imitation of the feminine. A woman's sexual allure is demonised. Sonnet 68 of Barnabe Barnes's *Parthenophil and Parenthophe* depicted the power of a woman's beauty through the image of Medusa's petrifying look, and Marston employs the same concept as a sinister action of effeminisation, 'Since last *Medusa* turn'd him to a stone.'[185] The most potent and alarming

[184] 'Letter to Dr. John Rainoldes' (1592), in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. by Tanya Pollard (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2004), pp. 179–87 (p. 185).
[185] *SV,* VII. 45.

discovery revealed by the investigation of the effeminate man is the perception of the malleable nature of masculinity and its close proximity to the 'other', a female excessive and base sensuality. By attacking the effeminate man, the writers reveal an attempt to mark men who did not conform to masculine ideals, as perverse anomalies and distinct from true men. The social threat of effeminacy both to the concept of man's superior position in the patriarchal order, and in terms of national vulnerability in times of foreign military threat, also illustrate an external projection of the internal fears for the security of the masculine borders which are constantly threatened by the corruptive pleasures of modern urban life and sexuality.