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Bewitching The Stage: Elizabethan And Jacobean Witch-Lore And Witch-Hunt

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BEWITCHING THE STAGE: ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN WITCH-LORE AND WITCH-HUNT

by

KYOUNG LEE

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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MAJOR: ENGLISH

Advisor

Date

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2010

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DEDICATION

Hither!, Gare greets me at journey's end;

Wingbeats of Madeline evanescence send.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this dissertation, I got to feel the feel of “The Colossus” that once loomed over Sylvia Plath: “I shall never get you put together entirely, / Pierced, glued, and properly jointed.” One guide in my journey kept telling me it is doable if I can eat an elephant a bite at a time. I am truly indebted to Arthur Marotti who showed me how to engage the elephant. “Perseverance” was his word of encouragement, and he was and is a living example of the virtue. I am grateful to Simone Chess for her spirit and energy, which helped me keep churning my rough lump for clarity and texture. Ken Jackson, with his sharp eye, and Michael Giordano, weaving English literary matters into continental thoughts and affairs, each showed me different argument maps. Last May, my sage friends, Barrett Watten and Carla Harryman, opened their home on Cathedral Drive, which greeted me in verdure’s fragrance: thank you for the opportunity to be “together and away” from my daughter and husband. Gerald MacLean, who is now teaching at the University of Exeter, taught me a touching lesson of how the unappreciated labor of a teacher may come into blossom in due time. Here at the University of Texas, Pan-American, I was and am in good company: Thank you, Pamela Anderson-Mejías, Virginia Broz, William Broz, Colin Charlton, Jonikka Charlton, Debbie Cole, Jamee Cole, Theron Francis, Kathy Sparrow, and Scott Sparrow, for who you are and for what you showed me. I am looking forward to setting a table full of dishes laced with potions of love and gratitude: Health for the UTPA community, we might intone.

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Introduction

The early modern witch on the pre-Restoration stage poses a utilitarian question: What purpose did the detestable and dreadful witch serve for the stage and its audience? While historians tell us most of the executed witches were too old, poor, and lame to claim either attention or agency, the early modern stage interjected the liminal presence of the witch onto the stage alongside the nobles and citizens as if she were capable of trespassing the boundaries of geography, class, and economic standing. Clearly, the early modern stage witch claimed more seditious and frightening authority than her real-life counterpart—the old village woman whose nagging presence evoked her want and the community's guilt.

This project hypothesizes that the stage witch's grotesque femininity and her masculine presumption of agency were the effective signifiers of the feminine interior, what men fantasized about the reproductive secrets of womanhood and their control over the feminine activities. My investigation of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean drama indicates that the fictional witch is postulated as the negative example of female fertility and feminine nurture and, furthermore, she assumes an antagonistic agency to household prosperity by interfering in the natural process of fertility in humans as well as in crops and livestock. I suggest that the early modern stage appropriated the historical witch, the anti-mother, and cast her as the anti-housewife whose negative example was to discipline femininity and domesticate housewives.

The socio-cultural expediencies of the early moderns dictated that the elusive properties as the feminine and the maternal needed to be exposed, and I believe the stage witch was scribed as a bogey lurking in the hidden interior of the feminine and the maternal. In understanding the cultural fantasies about women and the feminine, the three decades of the

late Elizabethan and Jacobean periods provide a wealth of dramatic narratives about witches and witchcraft fantasies. With little discomfort the stage appropriated the cultural tropes of misogyny and anti-Catholicism, associating them with the witch.

The late Elizabethan stage witnessed *and* engineered the shared suspicion and awe toward women of power since the exceptional political embodiment of the virgin mother in Elizabeth was the maternal matrix that nurtured *and* at the same time confined. On the other hand, James established royal patronage in a paternalistic manner, renaming the Chamberlain's Men as the King's Men and the Jacobean stage responded and reflected the King's paternalistic political philosophy in its portrayal of domestic gender expectations. As the Stuart dynasty established itself, the stage portrayed insubordinate women as the mistresses of misrule and the object of mockery. This process also coincided with James's slow movement toward skepticism of the witches' agency. As the former demonologist's enthusiasm gradually dissipated, the Jacobean stage witches were removed from the stage of absurd prominence. By the time the theater was closed in 1642, witch-hunting narratives in stage plays were virtually expunged from the English stage, and after the theater reopened upon the return of James's grandson, they had disappeared altogether.

The historical parabola from the last decade of the sixteenth century to the first two decades of the seventeenth century reveals how the seditious witches in Elizabethan histories and tragedies were relegated to Jacobean tragicomedies and city comedies as referents and analogues to feminine misrule. The growing skepticism of witches' agency and the trivialization of the female and the feminine coincided with the middle-class containment of women and

their agency. With the establishment of the bourgeoisie, neither stage didacticism nor male fantasies had to rely on the abominable witch in domesticating the housewives.

Previous scholarship on the historical phenomenon of the early modern European witch-hunt has provided parameters for my discussion of English witches in Renaissance drama. The European witch-hunt started during the second half of the fifteenth century and wound up generally by the end of the seventeenth century. By the Enlightenment, during which each region saw its last witch execution, conservatively speaking, there were more than 40,000 executions.¹ Robin Briggs in *Witches and Neighbors* (1998) sums up the cause of witch-hunting: he claims that it was “a cover for some other hidden purpose, whether it be state-building, the imposition of patriarchy or religious bigotry.”² In other words, he implies that it is inadequate and unsatisfactory to ascribe a single explanation to the multifarious manifestations of the period’s witch-panic. One etiological model does not fit all; therefore, one needs to approach the witch-hunt discourse keeping a comprehensive outlook of history, politics, religion, and culture in mind.

Since Keith Thomas’s *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971) legitimated the scholarly discussion on the witch-hunt, historians actively engaged the European witch-hunt, treating it as a historical phenomenon that awaits an analytical exposition of what triggered the different authorities to embark on the witch-hunt and also what brought such a wide-spread pursuit to termination. Thomas has inspected magic and witchcraft as the transitional pseudo-religion that offered the cause and solution to inexplicable tragedies for illiterate and simple-minded lay people while the old religion molted its erstwhile magical claims and rituals in favor of spiritual guidance. After Thomas, and probably because of Thomas, the association of anti-Catholic

tropes with the demonic rituals of deceptive witches has been implicit in the scholarship about the witch-hunt. Many studies on the far-reaching influence of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1484), in the century and one half after its composition, as well as accounts of the hostility to the cult of the Virgin Mary, that precipitated the postulation of the universal malevolence of women and witches, identify religious factionalism as the root cause of witch-hunting. Yet, according to Lyndal Roper, the Catholic bishoprics in Germany and Calvinist Scotland saw fierce witch-hunting while Catholic Italy was not severely inflicted with the witch fever: there was no single religious faction that monopolized witch-hunting.³

On the other hand, Brian Levack and Christina Lerner have done useful work, respectively, on English and Scottish witch-hunt, examining the utility of the witch-hunt in nation building.⁴ James Charles Stuart, who officiated over the North Berwick witch trials in 1590-91 and reinstated an Act against witchcraft in 1604, is the prime political example of one who benefited from the royal policing of the witches. However, as Lerner herself has demonstrated, the Interregnum did not rely on witch-hunting in strengthening Protestant control, which challenges the universal application of such a functionalist theory on the witch-hunt. Diverse other hypotheses—such as the anti-geriatric misogynist fear and loathing, the havoc wrought by syphilis on the male population and on female fertility, diet-related delusion, psychosomatic illnesses, and the competition between old-style healers (including midwives) and professional medical doctors—have been presented to explicate what Hugh Trevor-Roper has dubbed the witch-craze.⁵

What such abovementioned models of the European witch-hunt point out seems to be the spiritual anomie early modern people experienced in the post-Reformation era and the

volatile energy of social changes which demanded aspirant capitalists to redraft their expectation of women's roles in their middle-class venture. While these heuristic approaches—such as religious rebellion, religious persecution, state-building, disease, mass hysteria, economical and generational friction—strive to present a comprehensive model for the early modern witch-hunt, they seem to relegate the executed women as the helpless casualty of a sweeping maelstrom, by and large depriving subjectivity of the condemned witches.⁶ In fact, there are vast archival records left from legal proceedings of torture, confessions, and executions that captured who the accused women were.

Hence, I consider the historical findings of religious, political, and domestic upheavals and other social events as the cultural condition of the so-called “burning times” rather than considering one factor as the cause of such diverse, wide-spread cases of witch-hunting. In addition, I believe the new generation of feminist critics, who engaged the archive of witch trials to reexamine the complex relationship among the accuser, the accused, and the interrogator, started to disclose how gender affected the interactions among the involved parties.⁷ Close to ninety percent of the executed were women, and widows and midwives constituted forty percent of the executed women, from which one can deduce that the early modern witch-hunt may not have been sex-specific but gender-related.⁸

Gender was clearly a factor in the violent fantasies about the malevolent and contaminating witch and the recent development in discussions on male witches seems to divert the gender question once again. While postmenopausal beldams were often targeted in witch accusations, some women found livelihood and perhaps agency in cunning, palmistry, and other surreptitious services, seemingly utilizing the knowledge and access their sex allowed.

Even though the witch-hunt was a sweeping phenomenon, the psychological and social dynamics explicit in witchcraft accusations demand special attention to the textuality of legal proceedings and witches' confessions.

The new generation of feminist literary historians, including Lyndal Roper, Deborah Willis, and Diane Purkiss, among others, engaged the archive to reexamine the complex relationship among the accuser, the accused, and the interrogator and started to disclose how gender affected the interactions among the involved parties. Basing her research on early modern German witch-trials and the confessions made by the condemned, Roper argues that male judges ventriloquized their witch fantasies through the self-accusing "witches" while the implicated women interweaved what they thought would satisfy their torturers with the accounts of their unresolved ambivalence of maternity, repeatedly rambling about postpartum anxieties such as dried milk, postnatal sickness, and death.⁹ Roper raised the question: whose fantasy are we talking about?

Similarly, Deborah Willis focuses on the pre-oedipal ambivalence of the children that was later manifested as persecutory resentment toward the bad mother, applying the psychoanalytical approach propounded by Melanie Klein to James Stuart's witch fantasies: the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, had to resolve his ambivalence toward the malevolent biological mother and his older cousin Elizabeth who claimed to be the benevolent surrogate mother. Willis expounds the Scottish witch-hunt as the monarchical projection of resentment toward the archetypal evil mother.¹⁰ On the other hand, Diane Purkiss reminds the readers of *The Witch in History* that the recalcitrant witches of 1566 Chelmsford witch trials and the Pendle witches of 1612 and 1633 (the second wave of trials in 1633 did not produce any conviction

while some perished in jail waiting to be tried) preferred hanging to renouncing their old ways of life and beliefs: Purkiss seeks to rehabilitate the agency that some self-fashioned witches asserted—albeit temporarily.¹¹ Both Willis’s reading of James’s ambivalence to maternity and Purkiss’s reclamation of the agency and interiority of the resistant witches demonstrate the centrality of gender in the formation of witch accusations and witch fantasies.

In investigating the ways in which the stage exploited *and* shaped the early modern witch fantasies, I benefit from the abovementioned research on the European witch-hunt and the feminist criticism on gender relationship in witchcraft accusations, yet I limit my historical scope to the English witch-hunt during the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. In addition to several dramatic narratives that span the three decades, I also exploit the works of Reginald Scot, King James, George Gifford, among other demonologists. In so doing, my project benefits from the New Historicist openness to historical episodes and works of fantasy and propaganda; I pay attention to the historical witch trials, pamphlets and tracts that engaged witchcraft and witchlore, and other diverse forms of cultural texts such as recipe books, magical manuals, and conduct books.

In the four chapters of this project, I try to illustrate how the stage incorporated early modern folklore, witch fantasies, and witch trials in fashioning a positive femininity by using the negative example of the witch. Starting with *Titus Andronicus* (1592), the jarringly ambitious tragedy of the apprentice playwright William Shakespeare, in Chapter One, I discuss the Elizabethan ambivalence to female and feminine exercise of power, suggesting a new interpretive frame for this Shakespearean play within the discourse of witch fantasies. Chapter One, titled as “*Titus Andronicus* and Catering for Bloody Banquets: the Witch in the Kitchen,”

posits the eroticized female as the anti-mother and the seditious feminine as the anti-wife, both of whom the dramatic space is to exorcize. The anti-mother in Tamora keeps alive the fright the archetypal classical witch provokes while Shakespeare domesticates Titus as the frightful familiar who desecrates and pollutes the mother and nature.

If Shakespeare saturates the fictional Ephesus in *The Comedy of Errors* (1594) with allusions to witchcraft while never materializing any act of witchcraft, *Titus Andronicus* avoids any linguistic identification of witchery while punishing Titus and Tamora as witches. Not only does Tamora choose to “suckle” her demonic lover while refusing to nurse her bastard child, but she also contaminates nature and nurture: the queen of Goths poisons the psychological topography of Rome by shedding blood of the innocent, prodding her sons to defile the chaste body of Lavinia, and turning Rome to the figurative burial site of the young. As her body (womb) reverts to the tomb of her sons when she ingests the cannibalistic banquet Titus serves her, she resembles not only the archetypal classical witch but she also becomes the epitome of what Willis and Roper identify as the anti-mother in the early modern witch fantasies.

On the other hand, Titus, the punitive agent of the stage, goes through a demonic transformation: in choosing to be a cook and server to the queen of masculine authority, Titus blurs the boundaries between life and death, nourishment and poison, and the masculine and the feminine. Titus degrades into the frightening witch in the kitchen. The normalcy in slaughtering, dressing, curing, and cooking in the early modern kitchen is the primal site, I suggest, of the grotesque and gore in the early modern witch fantasies. Titus, despite his suffering, is unredeemable once he crossed into the domain of feminine secrecy and terror.

Carrying over the feminine fright in the kitchen and domestic secrecy from *Titus Andronicus*, I analyze cuckoldry anxiety in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597) in Chapter Two titled as “Is There a Witch in this Text?: the Troubling Provenance of the Witch of Brainford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.” This text uses the unreality of the witch in exposing and shaming both the householder’s fantasy of the castrating witch and the sexual marauder’s cuckold-making fantasy. In order to cure Ford of his witch-scare, the mistresses construct a witch on Falstaff’s corporeal body, resulting in a grotesque spectacle that pillories the carnival king. While pillorying the lord of lust under the garb of a local witch provides comedy and farce to the play, the aspirant cuckold-maker as the castrating witch also allows Ford to confront and overcome his witch-scare: the stage performs an act of counterwitchcraft.

The trivializing process of the phallic authority, in that the noble man goes through effeminizing ordeals by donning a witch’s garb and cuckold’s horns, is inextricably interwoven with the mistresses’ invention of a false witch: the witch, despite and because of its unreality, effectively incites the fear of castrating witch in Ford and also becomes the cure for his paranoia of cuckoldry. In addition to the cunning wives, even the bumbling Mistress Quickly keeps her household and, furthermore, presides over a fairy masquerade in the nocturnal Windsor forest. The female ingenuity and healthy skepticism of the male fantasies of unruly female sexuality mock Falstaff—the false-staff of the phallic authority. At the same time, the *numen* of the “fairy queen,” connoting Queen Elizabeth, harmonizes the civic and the crown, the mercantile and the aristocratic by uniting Fenton (the young and redeemable version of the knight) and Anne. At the height of Scottish witch-hunt fervor, the English stage and its “fairy

queen” blithely prescribed a fairy dance as the cure and salve for communal discomfort in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

While Shakespeare’s English wives resist the male fantasies about lusty wives and castrating witches, the Jacobean creation of Middleton’s housewives concede to male fantasies and anxieties about the wasteful and mismanaging housewives. In Chapter Three, “Imagining the Witch at the Table: the Abominable Belly of Middleton’s Women,” I compare Thomas Middleton’s *The Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, *Women Beware Women*, and *The Witch*, focusing on the insatiable gustatory and sexual desires of Middletonian women that resist the cultural imprint of the virtuous, ascetic housewife. The middle-class householders’ aspirations of the “fair banqueting house” in these texts are frustrated and destroyed by their unruly mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters, who variously take the role of gossips, prostitutes, cuckold-makers, and bawds. The middle-class fantasy of a sumptuous banquet as the visual confirmation of their social prestige and financial prosperity is intrinsically wrought with the fantasy of the abominable belly of ungoverned women, who are commensurate with witches.

As witches’ banquets were believed to rouse appetite but leave the unfortunate diner with unsatiated hunger, the stage aroused the envy of the fair banqueting house and the need for the self-effacing housewife who would showcase the prosperity and magnanimity of the householder. Middleton’s urban female characters are easily corrupted due to their geographical and psychological proximity to the witches; furthermore, Middletonian witches were to make their theatrical migration onto the stage of *Macbeth*, permanently affecting English witch fantasies. In this sense, Middletonian rapacious and facetious beldams are crucial ciphers in understanding the Jacobean perception of the feminine venality and witches.

Having traced the stage's adaptation of the witch as the anti-housewife, I examine in my last chapter the epistemological stance of the early modern stage in summoning the dead witch only to confirm her malevolence and criminality with a comparative reading of *Doctor Faustus* (both the 1604 and 1616 quartos) and *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) by Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley. In Chapter Four, "The Covenant Staged: Jugglers, Conjurers, and Skeptics on the Early Modern English Stage," I deliver the defense for the theater regarding its exploitation of the exploited. *Doctor Faustus* and *The Witch of Edmonton*, each bookending the historic period of examination in this dissertation, are developed from, respectively, the cultural and historical accounts of a necromancer and a witch who formed a pact with the devil to gain control of the dark art. In retelling these well-known narratives of the wretched, the theater not only indulges in stage magic but also subverts the source material and its authority.

The Faustian stage is populated with jugglers and conjurers, who repeatedly rehearse, what Reginald Scot calls the most daring juggling act, the decollation magic—the punitive dismemberment of Faustus on stage. On the other hand, Cuddy Banks, the Fool of Edmonton, cavorts and communes with the demonic Dog. The player within the play, Cuddy is the embodiment of the spirit of the theater who pointedly undermines the somber tone of oppositional absolutism in the divine and the demonic that Henry Goodcole, the chaplain at Newgate, endeavored to patent as the definite truth of Sawyer's final week, which is a sales pitch for his pamphlet. Both of these distinct plays, the first performed during the height of the Scottish witch-hunt fervor, and the second during the time skepticism of witches' agency was prevailing, imply the stage's skepticism toward the socio-religious morals the source materials presupposed: the theater exercised its interpretive agency when it seemed to capitalize on

witch fantasies and magical narratives. The poets did not reenact what the persecutors had done but with a cheeky riposte reported it.

I hope my suggestion that the early modern stage incorporated the witch as the linguistic cipher in reifying the feminine interior sheds some light on early modern gender relations. Culture and politics affect the social perception of women, and thus the diachronic parabola of the changing image of the witch is closely correlated with changing gender expectations of the time. Just as the deceptively alluring Spenserian and Shakespearean witches morphed into the crinkled, garbling, and facetious witches during James's reign, the cultural images of the modern witch that Hollywood and the media promote subsume the witch within the exotic fantasy as a fetish. As the early modern stage appropriated the violent fantasies about the anti-mother, casting her as the anti-housewife ensconced in the middle-class household, the signifier of the witch has been divorced from the signified: the great number of women who were burned or hanged. This project, I hope, has reconnected the two.

Chapter 1 Titus Andronicus and Catering for the Bloody Banquet: the Witch in the Kitchen

In this chapter, I examine the ways in which *Titus Andronicus* (1592) characterizes Tamora as the malevolent mother intent on corrupting and destroying. To avenge the ritual killing of her first-born son, Tamora engineers the young Andronici's destruction, for which Titus punishes her by feeding her her slain sons. This revenge tragedy casts Tamora as the maternal origin of life that is reduced to its burial site. While the anti-mother in Tamora needs punishing, her mortal enemy Titus Andronicus also needs purging from the Roman bounds. Despite his grievous suffering at the hands of the tyrannous empress, the father of the Andronici adopts the feminine roles of caretaking and cooking, perverting them by cooking and serving a cannibalistic banquet. Such a frightening image of domestic violence and rebellion that Titus commits against Tamora, I argue, adumbrates the late Elizabethan and Jacobean witch as anti-housewife.

The Troubling Mothers in Shakespeare and the Troubles of the Mother

An early Shakespearean comedy, *The Comedy of Errors* (1594) illustrates errors in nature that stem from the mother, who returns to correct the errors. In its very first scene, Egeon relays the strange and wondrous event—an act of division of one into two identical yet complementary halves, the birth of two sets of twin boys. Even though the audience is privy to the mix-ups and melees in store involving the two sets of identical twins, the wonder that was first wrought in the feminine interior, her womb, is multiplied and amplified throughout the play until the mother reveals herself as the maternal matrix of all the “errors.” Until each is reunited with the other half, the brothers feel entrapped in Circe's magic; ancient Ephesus was known for its worship of Diana as the temples of Diana and Hecate still extant in Ephesus bear

witness. The mother ensconced in a priory, a Christian version of a votaress mourning for her supposedly lost twins, holds the key that would unlock the “errors” of confusion and bewilderment, which render the air in Ephesus fraught with fear of possession and bewitchment. Two late Elizabethan plays Shakespeare wrote—*The Comedy of Errors* and *Titus Andronicus*—ascribe the source of the frightening and mysterious power in the mother; the comedy delights in madness originated in the maternal mystique while the mother in the tragedy causes bloodbath in pagan Rome.

Egeon of Syracuse attributes all his plights to the erratic nature of Mother Nature: “my end / Was wrought by nature” (1.1.33-34). He imparts to Solinus, Duke of Ephesus, how his return voyage from Epidammum, with his wife and newborn twins, ended in a shipwreck and separation between the couple, their twins, and the twin Dromios:

We were encountered by a might rock,
Which being violently borne upon,
Our helpful ship was splitted in the midst,
So that in this unjust divorce of us
Fortune had left to both of us alike
What to delight in, what to sorrow for. (1.1.101-5)

Egeon’s verbal reenactment of the shipwreck reflects and amplifies the original act of “strange” wonder (51) in twin births: the unpredictable elements in nature manifest themselves as a “might rock” that violently split the ship that was whole and complete into two pieces that are alike. The survivors’ emotional reaction is equally divided into relief and grief: they are left amazed. The impenetrable rocky protrusion that caused the violent split is as wondrous and unnerving as the maternal matrix that divided a wholesome son into two halved duplicates.

Thirty-three years later, Antipholus of Syracuse, with his Dromio twin, lands on Ephesus in his search of the lost mother and brother(s). Confounded by strangers' familiarity toward them, the alien Antipholus opines:

They say this town is full of cozenage,
As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye
Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
And many suchlike libertines of sin. (1.2.97-102)

Like the proverbial devil, as they say "Speak of the devil and he will appear," the dark-working sorcerer and prating mountebank in the alien Antipholus's imagination is soon reified in one Doctor Pinch, who assays exorcism on the resident Antipholus. One twin triggers an action that befalls on the other twin, creating "errors." Hence, Kent Cartwright writes that in this play words and thoughts "unexpectedly acquire a certain magical agency and that the magical and the fantastical acquire a certain potential for truth."¹² Similarly, Stephen Greenblatt considers this Shakespearean word magic in *The Comedy of Errors* as an example of Aristotelian *enargeia*, metaphors fusing themselves to conjure magical visibility in the mind's eye.¹³ I might add that the two sets of twins in this play further enhance this process of *enargeia*: one's emotion and language are reflected in the other's reality and, in the process, "this sympathized one day's error" (5.1.397) becomes magical reality. As Greenblatt, in "Shakespeare Bewitched," aptly correlates *enargeia* and witchcraft in their theatrical efficacy, Gareth Roberts has argued that the magical transformability in Ephesus, "the home of the goddess Diana, possession, exorcisms and magic books in Acts XIX," relies not on magic or witchcraft but on the language and poetry of this play, continuously circling around the female and feminine sensuality ascribed to the Circean witches.¹⁴

There is no Circean siren in Ephesus; rather, it is the alien Antipholus who confounds himself with his own fantasies of bewitching women of mysterious power. Unbeknownst to the characters, the whirlwind of confusion spreads out to implicate two sisters, Adriana (who seeks reconciliation with the Ephesian Antipholus) and Luciana (whom the Syracusan Antipholus woos in “mad” passion). Through the sacramental union of marriage, Adriana argues, the husband and his wife are united as one. Her language mirrors the biological and psychological affinity between her husband and his twin: “For if we two be one, and thou play false, / I do digest the poison of thy flesh” (2.2.142-43). Furthermore, Adriana with her unrestrained tongue of a shrew and Luciana with her lulling tongue of a siren are alter egos, like the two tongues of Janus sharing one and the same body. Right after Adriana locks out her husband and censures him for his philandering, the single Antipholus, mistakenly received into his married twin’s household, is lulled and charmed by Luciana’s pleas of marital affection on behalf of her spurned sister. Luciana’s unwitting wooing speech bewitches the alien Antipholus, who is lost in enchantment:

O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note
 To drown me in thy sister’s flood of tears.
 Sing, siren, for thyself, and I will dote.
 Spread o’er the silver waves thy golden hairs,
 And as a bed I’ll take them, and there lie,
 And in that glorious supposition think
 He gains by death that hath such means to die.
 Let love, being light, be drownèd if she sink. (3.2.45-51)

His “supposition” that Luciana’s golden hair is the bed he can lie on implicitly declares that the singing siren that holds him in infatuation is not malevolent since love, being light and ethereal, would not sink. Luciana, notwithstanding her bewitching tongue, is not to be mistaken for a witch since, if she were, satanic intervention would not let a witch drown when she is subjected

to dunking. The spirit of comedy and Luciana's bewitching tongue that promotes patriarchal containment and control of female sexuality acquit such dalliance with the fantasy of magical transgression.

With the resident Antipholus in jail and his alien twin seeking refuge in the priory, the imagined site where maternal authority resides, the wife and the mother confront each other. The Abbess safeguards her refugee from "his" demanding nagging wife, who the Abbess charges for obstructing her husband's humor and health. The Abbess diagnoses the marital discord between Adriana and the Ephesian Antipholus:

Sweet recreation barred, what doth ensue
But moody and dull melancholy,
Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
And at her heels a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures and foes to life?
In food, in sport, and life-preserving rest
To be disturbed would mad or man or beast.
The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits
Hath scared thy husband from the use of wits. (5.1. 79-87)

Oblivious to their kinship through marriage, the Abbess instructs her daughter-in-law that madness and melancholy that devastate the married Antipholus's mood and marriage originated from such feminine threats as "grim and comfortless despair" that trigger in the husband insomnia, dyspepsia, and fever, all exacerbating his madness and melancholy.

The war of will and wits between the mother and the wife revert the young man—it does not matter that it is Antipholus of Syracuse who fled to the cloister since the twins are to be restored to wholeness through the reunion with the other and maternal nurture—to a tender infant who needs maternal care and her restorative posset:

ABBESS And it [priory] shall privilege him from your hands
Till I have brought him to his wits again,

Or lose my labour in essaying it.
 ADRIANA I will attend my husband, be his nurse,
 Diet his sickness, for it is my office,
 And will have no attorney but myself.
 And therefore let me have him home with me.
 ABBESS Be patient, for I will not let him stir
 Till I have used the approvèd means I have,
 With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers
 To make of him a formal man again. (96-106)

Reunion between the two sets of twins restores wholeness for the once “lost boys” and the supposition of her sons’ wholeness allows a moment of true “delivery” for Emilia, the long-grieved mother, to whom the past thirty-three years were like being “in travail / Of you, my sons, and till this present hour / My heavy burden ne’er delivered” (402-4). A “gossips’ feast” (407) celebrates the christening of the children; “Ephesian magic,” the maternal knowledge the mother-turned-votress has ensconced with herself in a priory, compounds the four men who have grappled with their incomplete sense of independence, eventually delivering them to manhood.

Mother, in its early modern English social context, was a suspect title. On the familial level, mothers were secondary and familiar as opposed to the principal and symbolic authority of the father. On the other hand, in its socio-cultural signification, “mother” was an epithet that daubed a linguistic taint on its bearer. Both fictional and historical cunning women and witches—such as Mother Bombie, Mother Redcap, and Mother Sawyer—were trivialized by the epithet that carries the implicit mockery of her disdainful authority, “mother.” In the post-Reformation mindset, “mother” associates the imposture and self-delusion of cunning women, female healers, and witches with the (now nullified) authority once given to religious women in the Catholic order. The fact that the accused witches during the 1692 Salem witch trials in the

American colony of Massachusetts were referred to as Goody Proctor and Goody Nurse, to name a few, underscores the etymological origin of the English social title of “mother” in the context of the (now jettisoned and abjured) veneration of old Catholic women. The Puritans in New England replaced “mother (superior)” with “goodwife” or “goody.”

In fact, many accused witches in early modern England were old, lame, and poor women: Reginald Scot in *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* describes the witches as “women which be commonly old, lame, bleare-eied, pale, fowle, and full of wrinkles.”¹⁵ Historians have corroborated Scot’s profile of the English witches; up to ninety percent of the executed were women and forty percent of them were widows who survived their husbands and, probably, children, young and old.¹⁶ Old women—say, octogenarians—were not of a significant demographical group; however, old women who had to bury many loved ones, hardened and disfigured by bad harvests and plagues, were of psychological significance and economical liability, whose weight is quite palpable in Scot’s language:

These miserable wretches are so odious unto all their neighbors, and so feared, as few dare offend them, or denie them anie thing they aske: whereby they take upon them These go from house to house, and from doore to doore for a pot full of milke, yest, drinke, pottage, or some such releefe; without the which they could hardlie live: neither obtaining for their service and paines, nor by their art, nor yet at the divels hands (with whome they are said to make a perfect and visible bargaine)¹⁷

Scot’s language is often subjective, tilting toward misogyny with a strong bent of anti-Catholicism. Diane Purkiss reads Scot as a misogynist who equated old religion to imposture while old beliefs and tradition were to him superstition.¹⁸ Many other readers, however, seem to consider Scot’s skeptical stance as a deliberate apologetic seeking to deter the frenzied hunting of witches. Witches, Scot writes, were “poore, sullen, superstitious, and papists; or

such as knowe no religion They are leane and deformed, shewing melancholie in their faces, to the horror of all that see them.”¹⁹ Whether Scot was motivated by Protestant misogyny or humanitarian sympathy, his account voices the collective prejudice and suspicion of his society toward old women without patriarchal protection or economic security.²⁰

Investigating witch fantasies in Baroque Germany, Lyndal Roper observes that there is almost no rhetoric of motherhood in the early years of the Reformation.²¹ However, she discerns a wealth of cultural fantasies of terror circulating around nourishment and oral satisfaction: “Milk, blood, causing harm through food and drink, midwives and cauls make regular appearances in witchcraft accusations,” testifying to powerful pre-oedipal anxieties.²² While new mothers during the period of lying-in projected their post-natal anxieties onto the “other” mother (the midwife), the community, populated by (now grownup) children, posits the witch as a kind of evil mother, one who frustrated their pleasures and comforts. Endeavoring to reconcile the archival scholarship on historical witch trials with the heuristic model of childhood psychoanalysis propounded by Melanie Klein, Roper claims that the witch is posited as the anti-mother.²³

The old, dependent, and alienated woman who has failed in nurturing her family and community is marked as the anti-mother, whose precarious social standing as “mother” as in “Mother Sawyer” or “Mother Bombie” may easily deteriorate when witchcraft accusation arises. The pre-Restoration English theater, with its all-male cast, did away with mothers and maternal characters, if expendable, without inconveniencing the narrative flow with an explanation. When allowed on the stage, vulgar low-class women were comical commodities, as is the Nurse of Juliet Capulet; on the other hand, female characters who exhibit or assert their maternity

create friction and crises, in that maternal affection was perceived to be irrational, yet (to make its damages worse) superfluous. Mary Beth Rose has asked “Where Are the Mothers in Shakespeare?” in her 1991 article, in which she has observed the gender disparity in parental representation in Shakespeare and illustrated how the text of *The Winter’s Tale* compels the absence of the mother in order to sustain its spirit of romance.²⁴ Sharing Rose’s psychoanalytical feminist stance that the mother threatens the dramatic reality by her implicit sexuality, Janet Adelman has examined the ways in which the dramatic mothers in Shakespeare are polluted and polluting with their sexual or linguistic voracity in *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare’s Plays, from Hamlet to Tempest* (1991).

Indeed, the powerful mothers in Shakespeare, serving as a screen for male fantasies, demand the radical split between the mother and the strumpet; furthermore, I might add, the mother with her own agency threatens and destroys her offspring. For example, in *Coriolanus* (1608), the maternal counsel Volumnia provides handicaps her son Coriolanus, who helplessly surrenders himself to the Volscian army and dies a traitor’s death in the eyes of both Romans and Volscians. Prevailed by his mother’s pleas to abandon his military campaign against Rome, Coriolanus apprehensively confesses: “O mother, mother! What have you done?”; “Most dangerously you have with him prevailed, / If not most mortal to him” (5.3.183-4, 189-90). In the Renaissance humanist education, Rose informs, mother’s influence is conceded acceptable only during the tender years of a boy. Juan Luis Vives, for instance, in *Instruction of a Christen Woman* (translated into English in 1529) relays what one of his friends confided: “if she [my mother] had lyued, I had neuer come to Paris to lerne: But had syt styll at home all my lyfe, amonge dicing, drabbes, delicates, and pleasures, as I begounne.”²⁵ In *Coriolanus*’s case,

succumbing to the maternal counsel weakens and emasculates him, whom Aufidius despises for placing his “mercy” over his soldierly “honour” (5.3. 201), a failure in sound, soldierly, judgment. Later, Aufidius and Volscian soldiers mercilessly slaughter the “boy of tears” (5.6.103). Volumnia’s maternal power of persuasion is the breath of death to her son.

In addition to her smothering tongue, the mother, when her sexuality becomes explicit or intimated, proves suspect and destructive as in *Hamlet* (1600). Prince Hamlet has contemplated suicide even before Old Hamlet’s Ghost reveals how Claudius committed parricidal regicide. Having met his father’s ghost, Hamlet declares his plan to feign insanity as strategic comportment, making those who are privy to the visitation of the Ghost swear secrecy. The solemnity of the prince’s pledge “to put an antic disposition on” (1.5.172) adds a grain of salt to the most famous line he utters, “To be, or not to be, that is the question” (3.1.55). Seemingly fully aware of the spying eyes of Claudius and Polonius, Hamlet puts on an air of suicidal contemplation.²⁶ If not father’s murder, since it is revealed to the prince only in Act 1 Scene 5, what initially triggered suicidal malaise in the man who was the “unmatch’d form and stature of blown youth” (159)? As Adelman has convincingly argued, it is neither the unrequited love of Ophelia nor the frustrated prospect of royal succession that drives Hamlet into suicidal despair: it is his mother’s inability to mourn for her late husband, in other words, her accommodating sexuality.²⁷

In blind rage, having stabbed the “rat” hiding in his mother’s bed chamber, Hamlet blasts his mother for her sexual desire:

You cannot call it love, for at your age
The heyday in the blood is tame, it’s humble
And waits upon the judgement;

.....

Nay, but to live
 In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
 Stewed in corruption, honey and making love
 Over the nasty sty— (3.4.67-84)

Seemingly less distraught at her incestuous second marriage, the “mad” prince seems more engulfed by disgust of his “nasty” and “rank” imagination of his eroticized mother. His primal fear and loathing of the maternal sexuality damages Hamlet’s outlook on womanhood and motherhood; he blasts at Ophelia to “get thee to a nunnery” (3.1.122) and repeats the same expletive again and again. His anger at all “breeders” (women of reproductive age) veils all too thinly his disgust at the sexualized maternal body. His mother is the source of his life *and* malaise: “it were better my mother had not borne me” (124-25).

Once the mother is marked with sexuality, she is reduced to a “woman,” fickle and slutty: “frailty, thy name is woman!” (1.2.146), deplores Hamlet about his mother’s sexuality. Spurned by her betrothed for her unalienable female sexuality (a sign that she is a potential breeder that would corrupt both the husband and the son in Hamlet’s misanthropic misogyny) Ophelia drowns herself—a feminine form of self-slaughter resulting from the excess of female (and maternal) liquidity. Hamlet’s hesitance and deliberation that sabotage and complicate his revenge (causing the collateral damage of Ophelia), ironically, earn time and opportunity for Gertrude to make an ultimate gesture of maternal sacrifice during the fateful fencing match. By drinking the poisoned wine, Gertrude takes the poison that was intended for her son; furthermore, her potentially unconscious act of picking up the chalice underscores the futility of Claudius’s order that his wife should not drink from the cup. Even though a Pyrrhic victory, the dying prince saves the sacred symbol of the mother in Gertrude while providentially punishing the incestuous strumpet in her.

Sexualized maternity has affinity to witchcraft in early modern fantasies. Cleopatra's defiant embrace of death is eroticized through her suckling of an asp "baby" in *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606). Facing an inevitable defeat, the Egyptian "witch" escapes the shame of public pillory by baring her breast to a poisonous asp, a perverse form of breastfeeding. Rightfully apprehensive, Clown warns her: "Give it nothing, I pray you, for it is not worth the feeding" (5.2.161-62). The imagery of the asp as a phallic symbol converges on the image of her demonic maternity: she "nurses" the "worm," which sucks and dispatches at the same time. Cleopatra, evocative of classical witches such as Medusa or Tasso's Armida, shares the common trait of suckling a demon child with the English witchcraft fantasies.²⁸ As jealous Antony accuses Cleopatra of being a witch (4.13.47), her suicide as a suckling nurse to her asp-baby denotes the witch who suckles her familiar in the English imagination. The uncanny agency of the African "witch" is closely related to her willingness to feed, and be consumed by, her asp child.

Mothers and the maternal on the Shakespearean stage are suspect and need purging; for example. Mary Beth Rose reads the breakpoint in *The Winter's Tale*—on which the spirit of drama changes from a tragedy to a comedy with Antigonus chased out of the stage "pursued by a bear" (3.3.58)—as the dramatic declaration of Leontes's removal of Hermione from representational import. Antigonus, as Leontes's proxy, relays his dream in which Hermione appeared "in pure white robes, / Like very sanctity" only to prophesy that he will never see his wife again before "with shrieks, / She melted into air" (3.2.22-23, 36-37).²⁹ Her "resurrection" from a tableau vivant, in Rose's reading, does not threaten the spirit of comedy since the sexualized maternal body of Hermione—who as a pregnant woman and a mother who nurtures her son and nurses her infant daughter discomfited Leontes into paranoid jealousy—is now

purified through wrinkles that age and pain of bereavement etched on her. Perdita's nubile sexuality contrasts Hermione's vestigial sexuality—her sexuality would not threaten Leontes any longer. As Rose and Adelman have pointed, the presence of the mother in later plays of Shakespeare intimates the sexualized threat of the feminine. However, I would like to go back to early Shakespeare in order to investigate how sexualized maternity threatens the dramatic world with corruption and destruction even though she may not have been identified as a witch: Tamora in *Titus Andronicus*.

Troubling Titus: Troubling Remains of the Maternal

The earliest tragedy of Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, denies its audience a cathartic experience in witnessing the tragic fall of the Roman military hero. Even the banquet scene at the denouement—despite its highly stylized slaughtering of malefactors—suggests an unsettling picture of the future: Lucius, the erstwhile exile, returns to Rome to assume the imperial throne, leading the rebellious Goths who rose against their former queen. The alliance between the Roman rebel and the Goths may restore order and stability, but Lucius's successful—and thus politically justified—coup is quite discomfiting due to its moral compromise: both parties in this military uprising commit high treason against their sovereign figureheads, and, in so doing, desecrate the mother and the motherland with bloody swords. Furthermore, the foreign army of the Goths on Roman territory would not have failed to remind the audience how the same Germanic tribe was to topple the Roman Empire soon after the fictional reign of Emperor Lucius.

Most of all, it is none other than the aggrieved father of the Andronici himself who is the primary obstacle against the didactic catharsis the play ought to have offered. *Titus Andronicus*,

to begin with, wronged Tamora by immolating her son as a sacrifice to his fallen soldier sons, starting the inevitable cycle of the mutual revenge of aggrieved parents.³⁰ Despite the poignant portrayal of Titus's suffering as he was avenged by Tamora—as if he prefigured the “mad” avenger in Prince Hamlet and the wronged father in King Lear—the legitimacy of Titus's revenge remains contingent; the redemption of the victim relies more on the surviving Andronici's eulogizing rhetoric over the dead patriarch than on Titus's character and action.³¹

The Bard's apprenticeship seems to explain the protagonist's compromised moral command in this play: how did the fledgling writer navigate through ambition and frustration to arrive in the Senecan Rome of revenge and rape? Is the resultant play a daring experiment or a jumble of hyperboles and human carcasses? One critic, documenting the prevailing influence of Arthur Golding's 1567 translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* on Shakespeare, reasons that Shakespeare deliberately cast “the Christian Ovid in a Calvinist mould” in structuring the moral ambiance of *Titus Andronicus*.³² With its baleful exaction of justice in Actaeon's metamorphosis and in Procne's cannibalistic banquet, Golding's *Metamorphoses*, as A.B. Taylor claims, defies the conventional sensibilities of moral propriety; it also informs the pagan Ovid with a puritanical misogyny.³³ Yet, in appropriating Ovid through Golding, Taylor argues, Shakespeare deliberately undermines the moral assertiveness of the Andronici (including Lavinia, the victim of brutal rape) with a “sardonic use of Golding's puritanical moralization.”³⁴ Similarly, Katharine Eisaman Maus observes the fledgling playwright's penchant for packaging the matters of pathos in the manner of bathos in this “daring experiment,” which is astride the Senecan tradition of sanguine tragedy and, at the same time, the spirit of the postmodern, absurd, surreal sensibilities. Such a deliberate rule breaking in the mode and sensibilities of tragedy

explains, to Maus, the raw, inappropriate, and jarring elements of this play—whose “un-Shakespearean” crudity has baffled many Bard audiences and readers—and the recent rehabilitation of this play during the late twentieth century.³⁵

This strain of subversive reading—that the playwright keeps a shrewd distance from the prevalent religiosity and stylistic sensibilities of the time—may procure the potential of redemption for the raw, gory, defiant form of Titus’s revenge. Even so, the disconcerting message of anti-femininity, suggested as an antidote to Tamora’s barbarian depravity, remains troubling. The misogynist rhetoric of the present play is so intrinsically interwoven with the plot and character development that the dissolution of mutual feuding at the banquet table results in a complete abrogation of both women’s presence and feminine attributes in Lucius’s Rome. All female characters meet their deaths at male hands: Aaron needs to destroy the potential witnesses of Tamora’s birthing of the biracial baby (the nurse and the midwife) and indignant Titus kills defiled Lavinia and proceeds to execute malicious Tamora. Even more, Saturninus’s killing of Titus relieves Rome of any attributes of femininity, the feminine traits and roles Titus has been compelled to adopt for his revenge and in care-giving. With his death, Rome is rid of not only the frightening potential of feminine command in the kitchen sorcerising abominable ingredients into victuals, but also the androgynous nurturer (a counterpart to the infanticidal mother in Tamora) to his mutilated daughter and orphaned grandson.

The rejection of women and femininity in this play is so unequivocally upheld that the new Rome of Lucius requires Young Lucius and Tamora’s bastard son (and his changeling at court) be raised by soldiers with neither female influence nor feminine interference. The mutual destruction of Tamora and Titus restores the health of the empire; in this light, Titus’s

demise, not his revenge, may constitute a cathartic resolution to the spiraling atrocities between the feuding Romans and Goths. In purging the frightening aspect of femininity, this play punishes Tamora for her sensory indulgences with the literally and figuratively bloodcurdling culinary violence Titus commits.³⁶ Macbeth's "dark" Scotland, blighted by "unsexed" weird wayward women, may be restored with Malcolm and his "medicine" (his androgynous kingship); however, Rome in its purgation of its protector-turned-butcher in the kitchen along with the barbarian queen exorcises all forms of femininity even to a degree of denying two infants (Tamora's bastard and the changeling) any nurturing figure.

The covert logic in the mutual destruction of Tamora and Titus presages the correlation between banquets and witchcraft in subsequent English Renaissance plays, a trend Chris Meads observes in *Banquets Set Forth*.³⁷ Indeed, early modern plays increasingly incriminated seditious and salacious women at the banqueting scene, as either purveyors of poisonous food or perverted consumers of unnatural edibles, branding them as witches. Even in this Roman tragedy about nobles and royals at mortal feuding, Tamora embodies a voracious consumer who takes without partaking in food preparation, for which the witches in later witchcraft plays such as Thomas Middleton's *The Witch* and Thomas Heywood's and Richard Brome's *The Witches of Lancashire* were indicted. Although without accusatory claims of witchcraft of either Tamora's or Titus's horrendous deeds, this revenge play, achieving *enargeia* that conjures up anti-femininity, adumbrates the tropes of witchcraft that are to be more pronounced in subsequent pre-Restoration plays.

Titus Andronicus, with human immolation, rape and mutilation, filicide, and a cannibalistic banquet, stages a series of grotesque and gory spectacles. The spectacles in this

play, far from being gratuitous, are entwined with the didactic process of identifying, isolating, and purging the malicious potential of the maternal and the feminine. Among many critics who consider *Titus Andronicus* as vulgar spectacle that was part of the 1590s' itch for blood-spattering revenge plays,³⁸ Dover Wilson, in the course of censuring the play, unwittingly outlines the significance of the spectacle in this play: employing the imageries of pageantry, Wilson sums up the failed enterprise of this play as "broken-down cart, laden with bleeding corpses from an Elizabethan scaffold."³⁹ The ostentatious ceremonial pomp, facilitated through the funeral procession, inauguration procession, street pageantry, masque, and banquets of this play, shapes Titus's suffering at the hands of Tamora and her minions, but also anticipates the specific mode of Titus's retribution: pursuing pompous spectacles is feminine and feminine asceticism needs to redress such a vice.

In manipulating Titus, Tamora employs such revelries as masques and banquets; her disguised (masked) visit to Titus not only reveals her manipulative nature but also underlines her libertine pursuit of sensory pleasure, her desire for pompous wardrobe and scrumptious food, which is intrinsically correlated to her sexual indulgences. The queen's appropriation of ritualistic revelry to "read" her enemy's inner thought and to anticipate his next move unwittingly allows the forced participant Titus to take advantage of the ritualized intimacy with the royal malefactor: to the royal masquer's misfortune, it is Titus who "reads" the identity behind the visor. My reading of *Titus Andronicus* is two-fold: first, I map out how Tamora's gustatory and sexual indulgences vilify her as a malevolent mother; second, I address how Titus's adaptation of the feminine domain of cookery and his gradual transformation from a militant hero to an androgynous nurturer ironically create a compelling portrayal of the witch in

the kitchen. The feminine agency in cookery remedies the disturbing presence of reveling mother in *Titus Andronicus*. As the misogynist fear of women's sexual and satanic alliance with the devil fueled the European witch-hunt, the feminine sedition in the eroticized maternal body and inculpatory cookery in this play resulted in the bloodiest of all Shakespearean plays.

With a protagonist who resorts to the abominable feminine activities in the kitchen, there arises a question that looks for an answer: why is the text silent about the witch's felonious association with the human remains? Neither Titus in the kitchen nor Tamora the adulterous infanticide is indicted as a witch. One critic detects similarities in Tamora and Sycorax, both being feminine adversaries to fallen male heroes, Titus and Prospero.⁴⁰ However, it is not Tamora but Titus who molds his revenge after the Greco-Roman female characters who slaughter and cook children for their parents' sins. With an echoing presence of Medea who rent her children in contempt of her cheating husband, Titus draws an analogy of his fate to Procne and Lavinia's to Philomela. Clearly, past literary precedents cast Titus in the role of feminine passivity, which casts Tamora in the role of the abusive masculine aggressor, since Tamora, by proxy, commits the crime of rape and mutilation of Lavinia. Tellingly, Titus adopts the feminine means of cookery in punishing the masculine female authority: Titus, now an androgynous nurturer, becomes the domestic who works in the kitchen in service of the authority figure.

Peculiarly, the treasonous conduct of Titus and Lavinia, who butcher, bleed, dress, grind, and bake the queen's sons, escapes the condemnation of handling human body parts, which in early modern England was a crime frequently associated with Jews, infidels, and witches. According to Henry VIII's 1541 Act on witchcraft, "to waste consume or destroy any persone in

his bodie membres or goodes” was liable for death penalty.⁴¹ Elizabeth’s 1563 Act tried to use imprisonment as a deterrent if “any person shall happen to bee wasted consumed or lamed in his or her Bodye or Member.”⁴² Considering the image of witches digging up graves for magical ingredients for *maleficia* was a reality in the early modern English witch fantasies, it is strange that Titus’s desecration of human flesh for an inculpatory banquet dodges any implication of witchcraft in this text. English Acts against witchcraft in 1541, 1563, and 1604 suggest that any suspicious acts involving human flesh could have been easily incriminated as witchery with grave consequences. Even though neither Tamora’s resemblance to Medea nor Titus’s cannibalistic banquet is implicated as witchery, their demonic means of revenge warrant the destruction of both.

The correlation between perverted eating and witchcraft was quite pervasive in many pre-Restoration English plays: for example, Thomas Middleton’s *The Witch* (1613) and Richard Brome’s and Thomas Heywood’s *The Witches of Lancashire* (1634) depict witches’ hunger for the free banqueting stuff.⁴³ In *Titus Andronicus*, neither the Goths’ hunting of the Andronici nor Titus’s catering of a cannibalistic banquet correlate witches and travestied eating; even though in curing Rome of its corruptors Titus plays a male witch, his cannibalistic exploitation of human remains is clearly void of hunger for banqueting stuff.⁴⁴ It needs consideration that early modern witch-hunts targeted a considerable number of men along with women since the accusation of witchcraft was not sex-specific but rather gender-specific in that the witch’s willing submission to the devil renders him or her dependent and thus feminine. For example, Francesco Maria Guazzo’s woodcut images in *Compendium Maleficarum* (1608) depict male witches who, for example, engage in roasting and boiling dead infants for magical potions.⁴⁵ It is

Titus's conspicuous attempt at asceticism that salvages this titular character from the accusations of witchery.

In England during the turn of the seventeenth century, massive witch-hunts by the church (of the Catholic bishoprics and of Calvinist reformers as in Germany) or by the head of the state (as in Scotland) did not occur: the local outbreaks of witch accusations and executions were instead materialized from neighborly strife and after long-endured rumors of witchcraft.⁴⁶ In addition to the geographical separation, the presence of the female head of the state must have damped witch accusations to a degree while the Queen's consultation of the astrologer John Dee positively endorsed the symbolic figure of the national magician such as Friar Bacon and Fabell.⁴⁷ Moreover, the female sovereign's shrewd pragmatism and her preference for allegory over ideology may explain the temporal nature of English witch accusations.⁴⁸ This specific period under Elizabeth's reign also saw literary witch figures who hail from noble, foreign, or mythical provenance: the foreign figures such as "La Pucelle" and Cleopatra, the archetypes of classical witches such as Medea and Circe, and the historical precedents of ambitious noble ladies like Eleanor Cobham, for example.

Soon after James VI of Scotland claimed the English throne, Shakespeare's company, The Lord Chamberlain's Men, was subsumed under the royal patronage as King's Men, and the 1606 *Macbeth* reflects the company's keen desire to facilitate the new King's predilection toward witchcraft and demonology. The Scottish noble women in Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles*, who according to the historian counseled the military hero to usurp the throne from the weak king, are diminished in stature and agency in *Macbeth* as the weird sisters, who toy with the ambitious man of sword with their equivocating tongue. Thomas Middleton's

interpolation of witchcraft paraphernalia, in order to enhance the technical aspect of stagecraft, clearly furthered the degeneration of Holinshed's Scottish noble ladies; nonetheless, the 1606 conceptualization of the underworld network of witches clearly marks a new mode of witches on the stage: the figure of the Jacobean witch is the farcical self-parody of the earlier stage incarnation.

Macbeth signals the downslope on which the fearsome, sinister, archetypal witches on the Elizabethan stage were to be sent to their hanging noose for trifling with charms and potion. In this sense, the open fire and the fumous cauldron encircled by the vengeful griping old women in *Macbeth* is the kitchen *Titus Andronicus* refused to descend even though what Titus does eerily resembles the witches' inculpatory meddling with human remains. Unlike her male counterpart with an ambivalent claim for redemption, Tamora is unequivocally excised and exorcised from the safe boundary of Rome (and also from the psychological reality of London playgoers). Aaron holding her bastard infant near the monastery is a strong indictment against the filicidal adulteress in post-Reformation psyche; in addition, the mortuary punishment inflicted on her carcass betrays the English audience's need to "read" the ultimate curse on the desecrated body of Tamora. For the metabolized remains of Tamora in carrion-eating beasts preempt the potential of her resurrection at the second coming, just as her two sons that she ingested do not deserve the prospect of salvation, assuring the audience of her eternal damnation. Without using such a temporal currency as the label of the witch, this late Elizabethan play creates two fearsome emblems of feminine sedition, the reveler and the cook.

Maternal Gore and the Grotesque in Tamora's Revelry and Banquet

The original audience of *Titus Andronicus* likely saw the mixture of gore and the grotesque, marshaled in the numerous funeral processions, civic pageantries, mimes, and court masques in this play as something like a *Pulp Fiction* of the 1590s: disturbing entertainment.⁴⁹ Michael Neill claims that tragic dirges and comedic festivities meet in the frequently employed funerary pageantry in *Titus Andronicus*, constructing “poetry-as-monument.”⁵⁰ Neill’s reading of the funerary spectacles in *Titus Andronicus* helps one see a grotesque burlesque of ritualistic revelries in the series of violent mutual revenge; I extend Neill’s perspective to illustrate how “the emblematic language of representation,” used in disguisings, mimes, and the banquet as well as in the funerary pageantry, embodies the feminine in gore and the grotesque. Tamora’s transformation from a helpless victim to a ruthless aggressor is contextualized with her embodiment of barbarity that was embedded in Roman funerary rituals and depravity that was masked in Roman festivities: Roman patriarchs transfer their barbarity and depravity onto the sexual and racial other, Tamora, only to throw her body out of Roman bounds.

The very first scene features the spectacle of serial processions: princes campaigning with “drum and colours,” Titus on his triumphant chariot, and Saturninus’s coronation pageantry. The triumphant procession of Titus, conducted in silence, comprises two spectacles: the funerary procession for Titus’s dead sons and the exhibition of the prisoners of war and spoils. The stage direction reads: “Sound drums and trumpets, and then enters...Titus Andronicus [in his chariot], and then Tamora the Queen of Goths and her sons...with Aaron the Moor and others as many as can be” (1.1). Neill ponders the importance of the unspecified number of the train in this parade, which he argues was to maximize its spectacular significance with as many as the company could put on stage.⁵¹ The Goths and the Moor in this parade—the

noble savages and the exotic black—are displayed as a part of the spectacular Roman pageantry. Yet, to Romans, the exoticism in the pairing of the captive Queen and her Moor—just as Ben Jonson’s *The Masque of Blackness* (1605) enhanced its exoticism featuring Queen Anne dancing in blackened skin—must have further enhanced the ceremonial grandeur for the living and dead sons of Titus.⁵²

Despite the honorary title of *Pius* and the full endorsement of the Roman citizenry, the moral authority of the victorious Titus starts to wane as soon as it is asserted. Lucius propositions to immolate the noblest prisoner in order to “appease” the “groaning shadows that are gone” (1.1.126); obsessed with proper burial, Titus shares the idolatrous fear and veneration of spirits with Lucius. Marked is the fear of the spirits as the animistic remnants of human life. Titus’s proud investment in the family mausoleum, his “sacred receptacle of my joys, / Sweet cell of virtue and nobility” (92-93), resembles totemic worship. Later when he forgoes his hand in a doomed effort to save his framed sons, the only concern Titus voices is the appropriate disposal—burial—of his lifeless hand (3.1.195).

With similar totemic veneration of the dead, Lucius envisages the “earthy prison” (1.1.129) of the family mausoleum eagerly consuming the limbs of Alarbus while his “entrails feed the sacrificing fire” (144). Lucius’s insistence on feeding the grave human flesh sinisterly presages the fall of Quintus and Martius into the pit dug by the Goths (2.3), which Titus further localizes as Tamora’s maternal matrix that metabolizes her two sons.⁵³ Titus also gravely desecrates the “sweet cell of virtue and nobility” of the Andronici by hastily slaying his son Mutius in the mouth of the mausoleum. As Titus’s moral command deteriorates, such a fetishized topography of the sacred mausoleum is carnalized as the rapacious maternal mouth,

which Titus stuffs with her offspring's flesh. The obsession with ritualistic burial is sustained throughout the play up to the very last scene, quantifying the worth and merit of the slain in terms of proper burial methods.

The Andronici's apprehensive need to appease malicious spirits undermines the notion of Roman civility upheld by them: Andronicus "religiously" (1.1.124) complies with Lucius's suggestion of sacrificing Tamora's eldest son while Tamora, although a barbarian according to the Manichean worldview of civilized Rome, denounces this form of human sacrifice as "cruel irreligious piety" (130). The text juxtaposes the Andronici's veneration of the dead in their spiritual remnants with Roman Catholic veneration of relics, a telltale sign of elements of contemporary culture seeping into the literary imagination. In a similar vein, later Aaron and his bastard son are captured under the ruins of a monastery (5.1), implicating the crying baby with the reportedly strangled bastards of Catholic nuns as the contemporary anti-Catholic propaganda imagined. Countering Lucius's threat to hang the baby—again the Andronici's moral authority is undermined since Lucius legitimizes punishing children for their parent's sin—Aaron strives to warrant the baby's safety by pleading Lucius's religiosity:

Yet for I know thou art religious
And hast a thing within thee callèd conscience,
With twenty popish tricks and ceremonies
Which I have seen thee careful to observe,
Therefore I urge thy oath; for that I know
An idiot holds his bauble for a god,
And keeps the oath which by that god he swears, (5.1.74-80, italics added)

Aaron illustrates Lucius's religious assiduousness, such anti-Catholic locution as idolatry, pater noster, and "popish tricks and ceremonies." Since Lucius "restores" Rome in league with the Goths (the Germanic tribes who were to topple the Roman Empire in the fourth century),

Titus's Rome evokes another precarious empire, Rome as the headquarters of Catholicism. Titus's Rome is as foreign and depraved as the Romish Church (sitting on the ruins of the pagan empire) in the audience's mind. Whether the Andronici are governed by the animistic fear of the dead or the idolatrous Catholic veneration of the dead, such "religious" deeds render the moral authority of the Andronici quite dubious. The series of spectacles in the very first scene asserts the prestige and power of Titus only to undermine its moral base while their helpless victim Tamora begs the audience for sympathy.

Before the first scene is over, however, the fates of the proud Titus and the abased Tamora reverse drastically, granting the latter the rein of formidable revenge machinery, a series of spectacles that levies bloody recompense on Titus for his "religious" brutality against her son. Tamora ascends as the royal consort to Saturninus, who Titus endorsed as the next emperor, procuring power and means of revenge: her proxy rape and mutilation of Lavinia, false accusation of his two sons for the murder of Bassianus, and banishment of Lucius. In 3.1, Titus's accused sons are displayed like caged animals while Judges, Tribunes, and Senators ceremoniously conduct a silent procession, all unresponsive to the old man's supplication for the prisoners. Without a means to save his children, the father compares his agony to a mime with no means of expression: "shall we bite our tongues, and in dumb shows / Pass the remainder of our hateful days?" (3.1.131-32). Yet, Lavinia's mutilated body, without her tongue and hands, prompts her father to learn the language of the mime in order to decipher her unspeakable secret: the father avows, "In thy dumb action will I be as perfect / As begging hermits in their holy prayers" (3.2.40-41). His reading of Lavinia's "language" discloses Tamora's role in her mutilation; more importantly, such a language of representation prepares Titus for

the future masked confrontation with Tamora. The foreign woman's abuse of Roman ceremonies and revels renders Romans mute and "dumb" and Titus has to countervail the malicious feminine revelries Tamora has introduced.

Titus's allusion of his suffering to the mute actor of the dumb show—a conventional foreshadowing device many early Elizabethan plays used to delineate the plot—illustrates the rhetorical dimension of Lavinia's telltale presence (her voiceless performance) on stage. Without a tongue or hands, being forfeited with other modes of expression, Lavinia performs a mime to disclose the secret of her mutilation confined in her mute body. Although frozen in her mutilated body like a "mop of woe" (3.2.12), Lavinia delivers a grotesque approximation of mummings, in which the male Andronici have to figure out the cause of her obsession with the copy of *Metamorphoses*.⁵⁴ Lavinia's bodily speech—holding a staff in her mouth and guiding it with two stumps of arms—is translated through Titus's voice as the patriarch is the one who must carry out revenge on behalf of Lavinia.⁵⁵ Since rape was an encroachment against the proprietorship of the father or the husband, Lavinia's revenge becomes Titus's liability; therefore, Titus, following the example of Virginius, in the denouement slays his defiled daughter (5.3.36-38). Although "rape" and "mutilation" are spelled out through the concerted effort of the mute woman and her male kin, Titus's inferior social status and Saturninus's alliance with the offenders create an impasse, whose dilemma Titus can escape only through rebelling against the sovereign who fails in justice.

While Lavinia's proxy revenge via the aggrieved father and her destruction by the avenger reveal the limitations of female agency of justice and vengeance, Titus in facing his inability to bring justice to the Goth brothers is associated with feminine passivity. Titus shoots

his petitions to the emperor at the arrows' end lest "The angry northern wind / Will blow these sands like Sibyl's leaves abroad" (4.1.103-4). Titus's passive and reactionary means of retribution, in the face of the Queen's aggressive villainy and the Emperor's disengagement, is compared to the dire warnings of the wandering prophetess that nobody heeds. Like Sibyl's prophecy that lacks lasting authority, the reportedly deranged old man's plea for justice is feeble; his (masculine) employment of (penetrating) arrows seeks to shake off this feminine helplessness, only to underscore the aimless futility of his arrows, just like the fleeting leaves of prophecies the frantic Sibyl writes. Even though this scene seems to be the last moment his masculine agent of resistance is asserted, the helplessness of this loyal subject is akin to the empty authority of the old woman whose petition no one heeds.

In need of a messenger, Titus cajoles Clown with the promise of royal rewards but Saturninus instead orders the rustic's death by hanging. As in the fly-killing episode during the banquet of the Andronici in 3.2, Titus, even in moments of suffering and humility, reveals egotistic insensitivity toward the defenseless. But it seems relevant to the current discussion that Titus prepares Clown to act decorously in front of the emperor. Titus, even though reportedly "in his ecstasy" (4.1.124), instructs the naive rustic to kneel down and kiss the emperor's foot before delivering his pigeons and supplication to the emperor (4.3.100-4). As the first recorded English mumming tells, gift presentation was a ritualistic component of court entertainment and reception.⁵⁶ Saturninus's petulance with Titus's supplication and his injudicious execution of the messenger underline his tyrannical atrocity, which his disregard of the decorum of gift presentation further underscores. The execution of Clown follows shortly after Marcus declares Saturninus a traitor, as he prods rebels to wreak "vengeance on the

traitor Saturnine" (4.3.35). Saturninus's obdurate disdain of royal conventions, while he is under his motherly wife Tamora's domineering influence, helps manipulate the audience's perception of the emperor and the empress as unfit to rule, justifying Lucius's uprising and Titus's future regicide.

By travesty the convention of the masque, Tamora confirms that she is the prime cause of the deteriorating decorum of royal entertainment. Once empowered with her cuckold husband's blind trust, Tamora stages an allegorical masque in "strange and sad habiliment" (5.2.1) in order to lure Titus into a trap: in this confrontation, the masquerading Goths as Rape, Murder, and Revenge are the incarnations of evil spirits and at the same time agents of self-purification. However, Tamora's disguising fails in keeping her identity concealed: the masks are deciphered. "You are deceived" (13), says Titus to the Goths under their barely veiling disguises. Once her hidden motive is read, it is Tamora who is to be played. Titus now becomes the agent of punitive purification. The Goths and their mother pervert mimes and disguisings and Titus punishes them for it.

The stage direction does not inform the reader whether Tamora enters in a pageant car; however, the players and the audience were clearly aware of the cultural reference to the masque and familiar with the tropes of pageantry and masques Titus alludes to. Faking gullibility, Titus volunteers to be a part of the pageantry: "Stab them [Rape and Murder], or tear them on thy chariot wheels, / And then I'll come and be thy wagoner" (48-49); "I will dismount, and by thy wagon wheel / Trot like a servile footman all day long" (54-55). Titus even volunteers to embellish the queen's pageantry by commenting on a missing element for an eye-catching procession, the exotic presence of her black companion: "Well are you fitted, had you but a

Moor. / Could not all hell afford you such a devil?" (85-86). In spite of Titus's admission that "I know thee well enough" (21) and his insinuation of a violent fantasy of stabbing death of Rape and Murder, Tamora delights in her successful execution of the "determined jest" (139) and in Titus's custody blindly entrusts her sons as hostages.

The primitive functions of a masked procession—embodiment and banishment—are carried out in Titus's revenge on Tamora, who embodies the feminine malice looming like a tigress about to rend anyone in her way and who also becomes the unwitting agent of self-condemnation. Masquerading as Revenge, Tamora impersonates the spirit of revenge and inadvertently assists its undertaking at the hands of Titus: her body as the allegorical Revenge becomes the grave of her children. Titus slaughters his hostages by cutting their throats, collects their blood, and grinds their bones for culinary purposes, preparing the proper punishment of the dam of those villainous brutes. In the very last scene, the player queen visits her harried subject under the pretence of a reconciliatory banquet, while hiding her intention to capture Lucius.

Even the strictest dietary inhibition such as veganism cannot avoid the violence of consumption.⁵⁷ The axiom "you are what you eat" holds good since what one consumes becomes a part of one's own being; so, Wendy Wall explains that in early modern belief, "animal spirits lingered in the material ingested by humans."⁵⁸ As Wall suggests, early modern culture hardly sought to veil the raw truth about the violence of consumption. Before analyzing Tamora's inculpatory banquet, I will illustrate the urgency of revenge in terms of the imperativeness of eating. To eat, or not to eat, that is the question of agency.

The apprentice Shakespeare emulated the provocative volatility of Marlowe's Tamburlaine in styling Titus, as it is quite clear who Chiron has in mind in impugning Titus's merciless evisceration of Alarbus: "Was never Scythia half so barbarous" (1.1.131). Tamburlaine kills his indolent coward son; Titus similarly kills his disobedient son in a moment of disbelief and stupefaction caused by Saturninus's sudden change. Furthermore, the discourteous portrayals of the royal masque and banquet in both plays lead one to ponder on the early modern cultural imagination concerning acceptable consumption and decorous entertainment.⁵⁹ In *Tamburlaine Part 1* (1587), Tamburlaine in vain forces Bajazeth to eat the scraps of dirt and insult at dagger's point. Bajazeth's retaliatory defiance, refusing to eat at Tamburlaine's terms, takes a form of cannibalistic hunger: "Ay, such a stomach, cruel Tamburlaine, as I could willingly feed upon thy blood-raw heart" (4.4.11-12). At the enslaved king of Turkey's refusal to eat, Tamburlaine would rather have Bajazeth's flesh filleted (43-45). This morbid royal banquet, of an eagerly consuming host and the captive guests resisting to eat, is further perverted with their cannibalistic animosity. The allusion to the Thracian banquet that Zabina, the enslaved queen of Turkey, voices also illustrates the perversion of Tamburlaine's banquet: "And may this banquet prove as ominous / As Procne's to th'adulterous Thracian king / That fed upon the substance of his child!" (23-25). To succumb to forced eating is to acquiesce to one's defeat; Bajazeth's resistance comes from his denial of eating and ironically from his willingness to eat Tamburlaine's flesh.

The embarrassment and humiliation associated with being force-fed evidence that human agency lies in controlling one's eating. The examples of the proverbial embarrassment to "eat one's word" are common in Shakespeare. Forced eating is associated with shame of

defeat since the antagonist is able to pervert the oral drive of the defeated: Falstaff brags, “I would make him eat a piece of my sword” (*1 Henry IV* 5.4.145-46); Ajax vows “A should eat swords first” (*Troilus and Cressida* 2.3.205). So, force-feeding incites vengeance: forced to eat leeks, Pistol grumbles, “I will most horribly revenge—I eat and eat—I swear” (*Henry V* 5.1.42-43). Otherwise, when “the meat [be] beloved more than the man that gives it” (*The Life of Timon of Athens* 3.7.69), the decorum of civilization is stripped off and consumption becomes cannibalism: Apemantus laments, “It grieves me to see so many dip their meat in one man’s blood” (1.2.40-41).

The violence of consumption hits home quite closely in the classical sources of *Titus Andronicus*: the cannibalistic banquets of Procne and Thyestes. The Thracian banquet, retold in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, penalizes Tereus’s abuse of domestic intimates. Procne, the doubly-wronged wife and sister, serves the rapist of her sister a dish of their own son Itys. “As a tigress carries off / A poor teat-sucking fawn down the deep forests” (181-82), Procne corners and slaughters her own son, with the silent assistance of tongueless Philomela. When Tereus eagerly consumed the self-incriminating dish, Procne, with emphatic succinctness, reveals “You have the boy inside.”⁶⁰ Feeding her husband the dire dish is Procne’s revenge, making Tereus a living grave of his son, which makes his daily existence a harrowing testimony of his villainy. Likewise, Seneca’s *Thyestes*—from which Shakespeare borrows the theme of parental sin taking its toll on the children—portrays a cannibalistic banquet that punishes Thyestes’s incestuous adultery.⁶¹ Having lured a reluctant guest to the banquet, Atreus reviles his brother for trustingly consuming wine and meat: “Whatever of thy sons is left, thou hast; whatever is not

left, thou hast.”⁶² Those texts exploit the self-disgust of unwittingly consuming inhuman food as the most horrifying form of revenge.

Eating can also be purgative. Culinary aesthetics that constitutes a medieval dish called “Turk’s head” makes this paradoxical process of consumption and purgation quite clear. “Turk’s head” is a multi-colored tart that looks like a man with “a layer of nut paste in red, yellow and green, showing the features of a man’s face, which the container is a black bowl to represent his hair.”⁶³ An object of fear and wonder, the dreadful Turk is carefully reconstructed only to be destroyed through consumption. As the English carefully creates the dreadful Turk only to “destroy” it, Titus destroys the Goths by carefully making a pie with the human ingredients from the rapists. Similar to the primordial working of the Table of Fortune, food consumption can relieve the fear and conflicts that the food symbolizes, a point proven by bulimic cases, in which the patient pathologically equates food intake to purgation.⁶⁴ Titus, the ascetic, has Tamora, the indulgent, “destroy” the carefully constructed “coffins” (baked pies) of her sons.

This fantasy of cannibalistic consumption literalizes the early modern socio-religious delineation of the socially unacceptable, such as Jews, witches, heretics, and infidels, equating their aberrant desire for unnatural food with their debased humanity.⁶⁵ Shylock, in *The Merchant of Venice*, renounces the Christian feast he is invited to and rather fantasizes the flesh of the prodigal Christian: “I’ll go in hate, to feed upon / The prodigal Christian” (2.5.14-15).⁶⁶ If revenge plays are a theatrical corrective system of social vice and injustice, Shylock’s inhuman desire denies him any agency of amendment; hence, *The Merchant of Venice* denies Shylock even a fractional retribution for being as debased as the Devil at Cock-lorell’s table. Indulging in the idea of a vengeful feast on Christian flesh, Shylock becomes the very object of

purgation: the Christian/ Venetian legality, presided over by Portia, performs the ritual of purgation of the unnatural consumer from the homogenous “Christian” city.

As Shylock’s perverted appetite for Christian flesh forewarns, proper eating is a sign of social legitimation. In front of Hermione’s “statue,” Leontes wistfully confesses his Pygmalion-like fantasy: “If this be magic, let it be an art / Lawful as eating” (*The Winter’s Tale* 5.3.110-11). Leontes’s desire betrays the fundamental uncertainty of the legitimacy of magic against the surety of food consumption; the legitimacy of eating delivers the “magic” conjured up by Paulina and Hermione from the accusation of witchcraft. Ruth Morse observes that “Jews, witches, and heretics were almost invariably accused of cannibalism”; however, the more striking instance of self-inculpatory cannibalistic drive is manifest in dramatizing witchcraft.⁶⁷ The unknown process of the human body’s assimilation of food intake might have construed witches as potential culprit for negative or lethal reaction to what is consumed.

Shakespeare’s Jacobean play *Macbeth* (1606) exploits the association of handling human flesh with felonious witchcraft. The weird sisters, as Banquo brands as “the instrument of darkness” (1.3.122), brew “poisoned entrails” (4.1.5): a toad that accrued its venom for a full cycle of the moon starts the catalog that also contains a slice of a snake, an eye of a newt, and a toe of a frog, along with other unusual body parts of uncanny creatures.⁶⁸ At the climax of their chanting, the third Witch adds such human body parts in the cauldron as “Witches’ mummy,” “Liver of blaspheming Jew,” “Nose of Turk, and Tartar’s lips,” and “Finger of birth-strangled babe / Ditch-delivered by a drab” (22-34). Here, the body parts of the socially condemned in early modern Christendom are treated no differently from animal carcass. As *Macbeth* seemingly endorses the contemporary socio-religious norms with a taxonomic equation of

Jews, Turks, witches, and bastards to animals, the fact that the witches dabble with human flesh creates an interesting twist: the witches reaffirm the contemporary societal disapprobation of those social irritants at their own expense with self-incriminating cannibalism.

As Jews, Turks, and bastards are to be eliminated, so are witches; hence, the healthy state of Scotland, recovering from Macbeth and his weird women, is imagined in terms of normal eating and sleeping. A Scottish lord voices his wish for normalcy and legitimacy that Macduff's counter-rebellion would bring about:

We may again

Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,

Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives. (3.6.33-35)

Malcolm's androgynous governance, with Macduff's military assistance, restores wholesome consumption when the ominous cooking of the witches ceases and the effeminate "banquet-abuser"—in more than one sense—Macbeth is removed from the throne. The legitimate white magic (medicine) virginal Malcolm applies negates the feminine perversion of proper eating, that is, the witches' inculpatory cookery and the Macbeth's murderous banquets.

Titus Andronicus ties Titus and Tamora in an abominable bond as the purveyor and the consumer of the cannibalistic banquet. The animalistic appetite of the "tiger"—whose feminine form "tigress" did not enter the English language until 1611—associates Tamora with masculine ferocity.⁶⁹ Interestingly, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* also depicts the archetypal witch Medea in terms of her animal appetite: Medea calls herself a "mad tigress' daughter."⁷⁰ Similar images of a predatory scavenger characterize the lascivious dam Tamora and her brood, who turn Rome

into “the wilderness of tiger.” Titus compares Tamora’s maternal instinct to a dam fearlessly protecting her cubs: “But if you hunt these bear-whelps, then beware, / The dam will wake” (4.1.95-96). Furthermore, Tamora’s treasonous adultery and Saturninus’s compliance are described in animal behavior:

She’s with the lion deeply still in league,
 And lulls him whilst she playeth on her back,
 And when he sleeps will she do what she list. (4.1.97-99)

As Tamora’s sexuality transgresses social, marital, and racial norms, her hunger drive is also travestied; as she is lecherous, she is also lickerish (lecherously hungry). In the forest—the dark, treacherous domain of perverted womanhood—the Goths use terms of food preparation in alluding to their plan to rape Lavinia: Demetrius instructs Chiron to “thresh the corn, then after burn the straw” (2.3.123). Likewise, Tamora sees murderous raping as wholesome as eating: “when ye have the honey ye desire / Let not this wasp outlive, us both to sting” (131-32). The queen and her sons despoil (rape) wholesome comestibles (chaste Lavinia). The insatiable Moor—phonetically evoking “more”—shares this brand of unnatural hunger drive with the Goths: both the Moor and his enamored partner share the epithet of “the ravenous tiger.”

The ceremonial hunting in 2.3 becomes a pretense for the ravenous tigers to hunt down the defenseless doe not to consume but to spoil: Chiron and Demetrius, at their mother’s instigation, slaughter Bassianus like a lamb (223) and ravish Lavinia as they would “pluck a dainty doe to ground” (2.2.26). When Aaron and the Gothic brothers play the macabre jest on the two heads and three hands, their spoils, Titus acknowledges that the game of this hunt is his own family: “Tigers must prey, and Rome affords no prey / But me and mine” (3.1.54-55).

“These devourers” (56) do not kill for corporeal sustenance but for the sake of violence. For example, recounting his villainy in masterminding the Goth rapists, as if he were dressing the hunted doe, Aaron relishes his consumption of Lavinia in sexualized culinary terms: “Why, she was washed and cut and trimmed, and ’twas / Trim sport for them which had the doing of it” (5.1.95-96).

While the hunt for the “doe” exposes the Goths’ pursuit for inhuman inedible food, the animal instinct of the dam of the cohorts is further marked with her demonic affiliations. Lavinia imploring for mercy—that is murder without rape—tries to no avail to negate the harmful influence of Tamora’s maternal nurturing of the sons. In despair, Lavinia attributes their cruelty to Tamora’s poisonous breastmilk: “The milk thou sucked’st from her did turn to marble, / Even at thy teat thou hadst thy tyranny” (2.3.144-45), alluding to the transfiguration of bodily fluids in the maternal body. Lady Macbeth applies a similar understanding of humoral constitution in reading her husband’s temperament: apprehensive of Macbeth’s irresolution resulting from too much milk in him (*Macbeth* 1.5.15), Lady Macbeth implores the spirits to “Make thick [her] blood” and “take [her] milk for gall” (41, 46). Both the witches, the reification of feminine malice and geriatric deformity, and Lady Macbeth, the malevolent nurturer of her husband, are dramatic embodiments of the frightening maternal body.⁷¹ Such uncanny womanhood of the bearded witches (1.3.37-44) and of the infanticidal Lady Macbeth (1.7.54-58) renders Scotland as mother and grave (4.3.167). Likewise, Lavinia contends that Tamora’s maternal body, in rearing her ruthless sons, went through the demonic transformation, what the “fiend-like queen” (*Macbeth* 5.11.35) went through, that resulted in her breast milk turning into marble at an infant’s mouth.

Still worse, sanctioning her bastard son's immediate death, Tamora's motherhood takes the most unnatural form: denial of maternity and an infanticidal malice. When wooing Saturninus, however, the filicidal mother spoke the language of highly-sexualized maternalism. The lusty widow, marrying Saturninus, pledges to be "a handmaid," and "a loving nurse, a mother to his youth" (1.1.328-29). Yet, she manipulatively (s)mothers Saturninus's regal authority, cuckolds him, and births an illegitimate child. This biracial child materializes the cultural anxiety of female sexuality, eliciting fear that it can intercept the line of patriarchal inheritance. The white-skinned changeling—another child of miscegenation Aaron arranges in place of his child of black complexion—some day may lay his claim on the Roman throne, even though the Roman polity of Titus's days seems to dither between elective empery and primogeniture.⁷² Tamora's marital transgression yields a potentially sinister consequence of a biracial emperor of base origin.

More ominously, Tamora's villainous partnership with Aaron evokes the supposed witches' pact with the devil. Aaron, in his unidentified malice and gleeful pursuit of villainy (2.3.38-39), plays a paradoxical role as the devil that sexually subjugates Tamora and at the same time as the familiar (in both hierarchies of the household governance and witchcraft discourse) who caters to her malicious intents.⁷³ In this light, it is interesting that Aaron compares the curly texture of his hair to a toiling female snake, as if to evoke the dreadful Medusa, transforming himself into a demonic incarnation of ill will in a feminine form: "My fleece of woolly hair that now uncurls / Even as an adder when *she* doth unroll" (2.3.34-35; italics added). Harboring the misanthrope, Tamora enables Aaron to take vengeance on humanity like a snake uncurling herself.

Aaron relishes his sexual prowess by telling Tamora his monstrous villainy in acquiring a hand (of Titus) and two heads (of Quintus and Martius) and later reminisces how Tamora “swoonéd almost at my pleasing tale” (5.1.119). Here Aaron’s tale/tail conflates his narration of villainy and his sexual liaison with the empress. Their demonic partnership is implied through their abnormal/demonic sexual union: she takes delights in his “tail.” Again, Aaron’s social dependency on Tamora facilitates his abnormal appetite for villainy, feeding his ravenous malice as he gleefully proclaims, “O, how this villainy / Doth fat me with the very thoughts of it!” (3.1.201-2). The Moor’s craving for more villainy, in part a projection of his internalized racial inferiority, can be satisfied only through his sexual alliance with Tamora, who in turn warrants Aaron’s iniquitous presence in Rome. As Tamora vowed her conjugal duties to Saturninus in maternal terms, the sense of her perverted maternity pervades her adulterous relationship with Aaron. She fantasizes, as if she were Dido to Aeneas, of relishing “a golden slumber” (2.3.26) while the hullabaloo of hunting comforts them like “a nurse’s song / Of lullaby to bring her babe asleep” (28-29): Tamora nurses her husband and her lover with her sexualized motherhood, yet she rejects nursing her newborn bastard.⁷⁴

In 4.2, Tamora’s demonic affiliation becomes quite obvious when she willingly forsakes her bastard son in an attempt to cover up her affair with the Moor. Here, Aaron’s denial to “christen” the infant with “dagger’s point” (70), calling Tamora “the devil’s dam” (64), underscores Tamora’s malicious motherhood. The imagery of an infant “baptized” in its own deathbed blood obviously evokes the surreptitious practice of infanticide, one fantasized, for instance, by Lady Macbeth. The pagan fantasy of such destructive seductresses as Medea, Sirens, and Circe and the Christian fantasy of a witch as a human agent of the devil overlap

when Tamora perverts the Christian rite of baptism by ordering a bloody “baptism” of her newborn.

Unlike the filicidal mother Tamora, Aaron invites sympathy when he professes his deep affection for the child, even exiling himself for the baby: “This maugre all the world will I keep safe” (4.2.109). But the fact that the Goth rebels capture the fugitive Moor in a derelict monastery further evokes the frightening image of murderous mothers that early modern anti-Catholic propaganda conjured up: the dilapidated monastery (a frequent eyesore since Henry VIII’s dissolution of convents and monasteries) and the haunting cry of a baby (evocative of the anti-Catholic fantasy of bastard-strangling nuns) depict Aaron as a demonic agent hiding under the umbrella of a false religion, Catholicism. His patriarchal pride and care for the infant are contrasted with his misogyny in murdering the nurse, perverting his need to silence the witness as a frivolous act of spoiling comestibles. To stop this “long-tongued, babbling gossip” (4.2.149) from divulging the secret delivery of the biracial child, Aaron stabs the nameless nurse, while mocking her death pang: “‘Wheak, wheak’—so cries a pig prepared to the spit” (145). Trying to protect his paternalistic legacy, the Moor devalues the surrogate mother to his child as a stuck pig: even the misanthrope’s villainy is mitigated in Titus’s morally-bankrupt Rome.

So eroticized, Tamora’s perverted maternal body inflates expansively and becomes analogous to Mother Nature. The overall topographical feminization of the tomb, the pit, and the earth as blood-thirsty consumers is germane to Tamora’s voracious and insatiable sexuality that seduces and destroys just as Semiramis and Sirens do (2.1.22, 23). Titus’s “sweet receptacle of joy” eagerly consumes Alarbus and Mutius along with the fallen at war. With its grand orifice, Titus’s family mausoleum resembles the blood-stained pit, Lavinia’s bridal bed,

Bassianus's grave, and eventually Tamora's ravenous body that becomes her children's grave. The gradual change of the focal points of action—from a grand family mausoleum, to an open pit in the forest, finally to a maternal body—localizes the feminine voracity from a physical monument, a topographical location, to a single maternal body that undoes her procreation. The “abhorred,” “loathsome” pit (2.3.98, 176) drenched with Bassianus's blood, also suggestive of the inflated version of Lavinia's hidden wounds,⁷⁵ conjures up the images of the secrecy of female anatomy and sexual violence against women.⁷⁶ The “detested, dark, blood-drinking pit” (224) the brothers descend may covertly hint at their sister's loss of virginity (even though she was married the day before), unwittingly exposing the desecrated conjugal bed of their sister:

QUINTUS: What subtle hole is this,
 Whose mouth is covered with rude-growing briars
 Upon whose leaves are drops of new-shed blood.
 As fresh as morning dew distilled on flowers? (2.3.118-21)

This bloody pit, scandalously suggestive of a sexualized female anatomy, reveals “a precious ring,” filtered daylight lingering on Bassianus's bloody corpse, just as Pyramus “by night lay bathed in maiden blood” (232). Furthermore, when Martius describes it as “fell devouring receptacle, / As hateful as Cocytus' misty mouth” (235-36), the juxtaposition of the receptacle and mouth combines images of consumption with the dreadful prospect of death and damnation that Cocytus signifies. Helplessly falling into the hole, Quintus calls it “the swallowing womb” (239), spelling out the earlier insinuation of the semblance of the pit and the unnatural maternal body. Like the blood-gulping pit, Tamora as the mother is over-sexualized and at the royal banquet Titus prepares, “this detested, dark, blood-drinking pit,” “this fell devouring receptacle,” “the swallowing womb,” and “this gaping hollow of the earth” (249) all

converge on Tamora's maternal body, a site in which the criminal Goths were procreated and are to be buried. This bloody pit the Goths dug becomes the metaphor for the Gothic mother.

The sexualized topography of the tomb/womb/mouth is the embodiment of the destructive female body as Quintus voices it, equating womb to tomb: "the swallowing womb / Of this deep pit, poor Bassianus' grave" (239-40). Women's unambiguous pursuit of their desire is as unseemly and self-condemnatory as their entombing womb; for example, in John Marston's *The Tragedy of Sophonisba* (1604-6) he uses the witch Erictho as an antithesis to Sophonisba, a chaste maid who is firmly resolved against "low appetite / Of my sex' weakness" (1.2.175-76).⁷⁷ The illicit league Aaron and Tamora form resembles the one by Syphax and Erictho; while "blood's appetite / Is Syphax's god" (4.1.186-87), Erictho, driven by her "thirsty womb" (5.1.8), seeks to fulfill "woman's greediness to fill" (14).⁷⁸ The witch's body testifies to her excessive sexual desire and voracious consumption, linking her mouth to her womb. Similar to the witch Erictho's eerie femininity, the grotesquely inflated image of the grave, the pit, and Mother Nature contributes to dehumanizing and further demonizing Tamora as the mother.

Female sexual desire without moderation is comparable to gluttony since feeding is what those voracious women desire; therefore, raping is what they deserve. Such was the rationale of male vigilantes who gang-raped Alyce Arden before her due execution.⁷⁹ Lena Orlin sums up how male violence justified itself against female sexual license: "women's presumed sexual voracity can be appropriately 'served' only with the revenge of surfeit."⁸⁰ This scandalous aspect of mob justice over women's domestic crimes, according to Orlin, contributed to "collective as well as personal purgation" and reestablished proper social order. The feeding of Tamora with her malevolent progenies is thus a justifiable form of punishment

for her sexualized maternity and also her unjustified “masculine” violence against a chaste married woman. Her disposal into the wilderness of scavenging beasts purges the walled Rome of perverse womanhood and motherhood. Her maternal body (her womb) as the originator of the malefactors becomes their receptacle (their tomb), which like a disposable container of waste is to be thrown away.

The Abominable Appropriation: Male Witchery in Titus’s Housewifery

In punishing Tamora’s gluttony (her sexual desire for “more”), Titus appropriates the feminine role of cookery. The queen’s proxy rape and mutilation of Lavinia cannot be justified; it is not Lavinia but the very ringleader of this sexual violence that transgressed the marital norms of sexual, domestic governance. Her unwarranted assumption of a masculine form of justice, in addition to her regal status, manipulates the audience’s perception of the gender role Tamora plays; on the other hand, as the sole nurturer to the mutilated daughter and orphaned grandson, Titus becomes androgynous and even feminine. The cannibalistic banquet Titus prepares, hence, shares the frightening aspects of intimate, secretive violence of women’s revenge that are assimilated into the process of food consumption.

Opposed to the Goths’ perverted appetite and eager destruction of comestibles, the Andronici abstain from overindulging in food. Since the wholesome process of eating is travestied (for example, the Goths hunted the doe but leave her behind mutilated and silenced), Titus regrets once feeding (protecting) Rome: “they [his hands] have nursed this woe in feeding life” (3.1.74). Therefore, at a private banquet for the remaining Andronici, Titus instructs, “look you eat no more / Than will preserve just so much strength in us” (3.2.1-2). While Tamora requests that Titus prepare a sumptuous royal banquet as a gesture of

reconciliation, surreptitiously seeking to ambush the exiled Lucius during the banquet, Titus believes a light repast suffices for his aggrieved clan.

Titus's beliefs in abstinence stems from the fear of over-metabolizing, which would dilute their constitution and resolve of revenge. With the fly-catching scene (which appears only in 1623 folio edition)—as if it were to foreshadow the macabre nature of the lavish banquet in the denouement—this meal time becomes a poignant reminder that the diners lack hands to eat with and the meal is left for the flies to spoil: the Andronici have their proper eating confiscated by their mortal enemy. This frugal repast is to be eaten with hands without silverware, stressing the missing hands of the father and the daughter. The absurd humor of hands adds bitter irony when Marcus implores Titus to “Teach [Lavinia] not thus to lay / Such violent hands upon her tender life” (21-22). That is to “tell the tale twice” (27), says Titus; that is, reminding themselves of the bitter reality of his and her missing hands is unnecessary and indecorous. And yet, Titus demands that this harrowing reality is not to be forgotten (32). The paradoxical coexistence of remembering and forgetting of absent hands permeates throughout the frugal banquet, set for those who cannot consume.

In one sense, the predatory rampage of the ravenous tigers deprives Titus of a proper banquet; however, a purposeful abjuration of over-consumption is also present at Titus's table. Remarking on Lavinia's overflowing bodily fluids—her unstoppable bleeding and tears—Titus alludes to the early modern beliefs in the interchangeability of bodily fluids: “She says she drink no other drink but tears, / Brewed with her sorrow, mashed upon her cheeks” (37-38), imagery that evokes a circulatory flow of bodily fluids through many transformational phases and shapes. Whatever she consumes metabolizes into tears. In addition, the early modern notion of

the interchangeable bodily liquids is ironically evinced through Aaron, who alludes to the humoral physiology in imploring Tamora's sons for the life of his bastard son since it was, like his legitimate half-brothers, "sensibly fed / Of that self blood that first gave life to you, / And from that womb where you imprisoned were" (4.2.121-23). Tamora's blood conceived and nourished the fetus, and her milk, made of blood, would feed the child if possible.

To confirm Tamora's maternity of the bastard, Aaron advances an argument of the transformative process of blood, the quasi-medical view that all bodily fluids are reducible to blood, as Gail Paster has observed about the medieval and early modern humoral theory.⁸¹ Titus, thus, dreads that the surplus of tears, transformed from blood overproduced from indulgence of food, might "Drown the lamenting fool [Lavinia] in sea-salt tears" (20). Titus also likens his young grandson to a "tender sapling" (50), a metaphor of a small tree whose life force comes through imbibing liquids: the Young Lucius is "made of tears, / And tears will quickly melt thy life away" (50-51). Thus, to Titus food consumption in itself is analogous to poison: food kills. In this light, Titus revels in killing the fly buzzing around his table "as if" it were Aaron who came to poison their food (73), creating an imaginary poisonous agent operating in food.

Since food consumption forces him to assimilate the oppositional elements of his existence, Titus cannot ingest even what he consumes as he bewails "For why my bowels cannot hide her woes, / But like a drunkard must I vomit them" (229-30). He suffers the sensation of being engulfed by indomitable nature, the tyrannical Mother Nature: "a wilderness of sea" that swallows him "in his brinish bowels" (4.3.94, 97). The excess of fluids, within and without the body system of the Andronici, threatens Titus's sense of reality; he believes the unstoppable, inundating bodily fluids derive from the food consumed. Hearty consumption

produces too much blood, the foundational fluid for all other forms, so consumption threatens Titus. In addition, too much blood in Titus, who is already sanguine, will only further damage his precarious existence. Hence, afraid and unable to eat, his fantasy of feeding his mortal enemy sustains Titus's austere self-preservation and will to revenge: he is fed with will to avenge which can be diluted if he consumes the literal forms of nourishment. Tending to Titus, Publius expresses his concerns are to "feed his [Titus's] humour kindly" (29); to sustain Titus in his humor (insanity as escapism in Publius's partial understanding) is in fact to supply him with the continuous reminder of vengeance, food for spirit. Food for body only furthers his sanguinity; hence, to Titus, feeding has to take an immaterial form.

While withdrawing from food consumption, Titus's gender identity becomes ambiguous: the ruthless militant hero is now an aggrieved, grieving caretaker of the family. The passivity that characterizes Titus's transformation also takes a form of femininity: the grieving father is likened to a leaky vessel and becomes an emblem of the prototypical grieving mother like Niobe. Like a bottomless vessel, Titus is unable to contain emotions and resultant bodily fluids as he bewails, "Is not my sorrows deep, having no bottom? / Then be my passions bottomless with them" (3.1.215-16). The image of excessive bodily emission, gushing out of Titus's and Lavinia's wounds enough to change geographical reality, renders the abused father and the violated daughter a pair of leaky vessels, an early modern metaphor for female excess of emotions as result of their cyclical physical changes.⁸² The hysterical emotional condition Titus is in—as Paster calls it, "women's normative condition to leak"—enervates and emasculates Titus.⁸³ The emphasis given to Titus's passivity, with a visual illustration of the proverbial female leakiness, seems deliberate since Titus now identifies himself as a teary, grieving parent, which

is far from the imposing militant leader who “never wept before” (25). His prior authority, represented through his oratorical power, is replaced with tearful supplication as he owns up: “My tears are now prevailing orators!” (26). During his oration, Titus wishes he could “stanch the earth’s dry appetite” (14) as rain relieves summer drought and melts wintry ice (16-22). The old bewailing father, through a sequence of verbal metamorphoses, becomes the frozen image of a grieving individual, “Like Niobe, all tears” (*Hamlet* 1.2.149).

Gradually transformed into an androgynous nurturer, Titus is compared to another grieving mythological mother, the Queen of Troy. Hecuba is at first an emblem of the bewailing mother Tamora in 1.1., but later Young Lucius identifies Titus with the same emblematic archetype of the grief-stricken mother who went insane with grief:

YOUNG LUCIUS: For I have heard my grandsire say full oft
 Extremity of griefs would make men mad,
 And I have read that Hecuba of Troy
 Ran mad for sorrow. (4.1.18-21)

This boy’s comparison of his grandfather to a mother who lost nineteen children adds a maternal attributes to Titus. Titus and Lavinia foster-parent Young Lucius by reading him old stories and playing with him even though Titus viewed story-reading as women’s pastime.⁸⁴ Lucius’s motherless young son had a playmate in his aunt and a surrogate mother in his grandfather. In his eulogy for Titus, Lucius commemorates how his old father nurtured the boy he had to leave behind during his exile. Titus’s feminine attributes that Lucius enumerates tellingly engender Titus as an old maternal caretaker:

Thy grandsire loved thee well.
 Many a time he danced thee on his knee,
 Sung thee asleep, his loving breast thy pillow.
 Many a story hath he told to thee,
 And bid thee bear his pretty tales in mind,

And talk of them when he was dead and gone. (5.3.160-65)

Remembering how the former military hero desired a metaphysical continuity of his limited human conditions through cultivating Young Lucius's mind, Lucius notes Titus's nurturing traits: his breast (evocative of mamma), lap, lullaby, and his "pretty" tales. While Tamora's femininity is the sum of voracious desires for consumption and revelry, the dramatic efficacy she executes is quite masculine. For example, contrary to her biological gender, Tamora is imagined as another Sinon, who "bewitched" Trojans and "brought the fatal engine in" (5.3.84, 85), to this ill-fated city of Rome. On the other hand, consumed by "the earth's dry appetite" (3.1.14), the teary old Titus is rendered as a passive feminine sufferer. In the end, in the face of Tamora's insatiable thirst for the Andronici's blood, Titus is no more the brutal aggressor but the emblem of feminine suffering.

The cook's garb Titus dons calls attention to the disparity between the aged patriarch in the servile garb of a domestic cook and the tyrannical female authority who demands hospitality and banquet. This unusual costume is also a visual reminder, to the audience, of what happened in the kitchen—Titus's involvement in slaughtering, collecting the blood, lopping the limbs, and grinding the bones of the Goth brothers. Even though without the cook's costume the revelation of cannibalism might be more shocking, Titus as a cook corroborates the reversal of the paradigm of the aggressive male authority and his female victim. When Macbeth "with Tarquin's ravishing strides" (*Macbeth*. 2.1.55) approaches the bedchamber of the defenseless old king, the imagery of rape is not about sexual violence but about the physical aggression against defenseless, androgynous, and paternalistic Duncan. As Duncan bears an ambiguous gender identity in front of murderous Macbeth, in *Titus Andronicus*, Titus's garb of a

domestic familiar in service of the queen emphasizes the anomaly of a wrongful female tyranny of Tamora and the domestic servitude of the abused patriarch.

After making pie and pastry with the ground bone and collected blood of Chiron and Demetrius, Titus waits on their mother while she consumes the feast of her offspring—which seemingly occurs between Tamora’s gracious acceptance of Titus’s hospitality in line 34 and Titus’s analogy to Virginius in line 35. Titus, in preparing, cooking, and serving the banquet, adopts the role of a housewife or, in case of a wealthy household, of a domestic servant—a verisimilitude of the frightening alliance of the “dangerous familiars.” Titus’s empathy toward Tereus’s ill-treated wife Procne, comparing Lavinia’s lot to Philomela’s, associates their extreme form of vengeance, dabbling with human flesh, with women’s crime. Titus, opting for the “feminine” role of a cook, punishes Tamora’s unnatural womanhood by feeding her ravenous appetite.

The fear and disgust over human sacrifice loom throughout the play; yet, all the preceding violence committed by Titus and Tamora against each other’s children converges on the dish Tamora consumes. The sense of propriety this ritualized royal banquet carries is reflected in the way the hierarchical structure of slaughtering is executed: with a revelation of the criminal deeds of the Goth brothers and Tamora’s monstrous maternity, Titus first takes away the life of his defiled, deformed daughter and then executes Tamora. Titus’s killing of Tamora, which calls for Saturninus, the proprietor of his wife, to exact vengeance on Titus, compels Lucius to take the life of his father’s murderer. Lucius’s regicide is logically engineered at this ritualistic slaughtering at the banquet. Since violence committed against Lavinia is petty treason against the patriarch, “this treason” (4.1.66) committed by Tamora’s cohorts calls for a

justifiable high treason against their protector, the emperor. At this corrective banquet, the sense of legitimacy is revised: Chiron and Demetrius are branded as “these traitorous Goths” (4.1.92), Saturninus “the traitor” (4.3.35), while Lucius’s rebellion against his mother country and his murder of the emperor are justified.

The hierarchical structure of slaughtering clearly reflects the particular style of hierarchal decorum in which the royal banquet must have been conducted; similarly, the Andronici’s obsessive adhesion to the proper burial of the slaughtered evidences the reinstatement of order and justice: the corrective forms of feeding on the queen and the Moor. Upon arrival at his father’s for the royal banquet, Lucius instructs Marcus to deny the captive Aaron any food: “This ravenous tiger, this accursèd devil. / Let him receive no sust’nance” (5.3.5-6). Later, as the newly erected emperor of Rome, Lucius declares the royal verdict to the two adversaries of his family: Aaron and Tamora. The Moor is to be buried “breast-deep in earth and famish” (178) with no “more” sustenance. Lucius continues:

As for that ravenous tiger, Tamora,
No funeral rite nor man in mourning weed,
No mournful bell shall ring her burial;
But throw her forth to beasts and birds to prey.
Her life was beastly and devoid of pity,
And being dead, let birds on her take pity. (194-99)

As the scourge of maternal perversion (once the womb of life and now its tomb), Tamora is to be thrown away without passing bell or funerary rituals. The proper burial of those “ravenous tigers” takes a form of perverted feeding: Aaron famished without food and Tamora as food for carrion-eating beasts. With a firm conviction of Tamora’s and Aaron’s eternal condemnation, Lucius is no more afraid of the “groaning shadows that are gone.” The cannibalistic feasting on Tamora by ferocious wild beasts is the extreme perversion of wholesome consumption and

proper burial—a cultural indicator of her unworthiness of Christian resurrection that the audience might have inferred from the image of her cadaver being rent and devoured.

Just as Tamora treats Lavinia's body as the site on which her revenge on Titus is to be carved, the maternal in Tamora and the feminine sedition of Titus are the objects of embodiment and purgation. With the punitive agent of Titus, this text identifies, denounces, and purges Tamora's propensity towards feminine vices—along with her liaison with Vice/Aaron—of indulging the senses. Titus exploits Tamora's indulgent pursuit of masquerading and banqueting in securing hostages and publicly reproving her monstrous motherhood of evil deeds. Recognizing Tamora and her ruse despite the mask of "Revenge" she puts on, Titus outwits her in her own game of disguising. The player queen futilely attempts to manipulate Titus by characterizing banqueting as a gesture of political reconciliation; yet, it is evident that banqueting is another of the queen's favorite pastimes, as she gleefully celebrates: "How I have governed our determined jest?"(139). At the banquet she demanded, the mother devours what she gave life to. Her carcass jettisoned into the wilderness is the visual emblem of the condemnable surfeit of her fancy and appetite. The witch-like characters of Tamora and Titus convey the frightening agency of the maternal and the feminine; misogynist the play may be, but it allows character and agency to those much wronged and wronging parents, the dreadful prototypes to the Jacobean witches of farce and mannerism.

Chapter Two *Is There a Witch in This Text?: the Troubling Provenance of the Witch of Brainford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor**

Is There a Witch in This Text?

In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Shakespeare conjures up a witch, a forest spirit, and benevolent fairies to create an ideal marriage and a harmonious reconciliation to troubled marriages. Yet, unlike the fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the weird sisters in *Macbeth*, those preternatural creatures residing in Windsor cannot claim such willing suspension of disbelief because they are all extempore roles invented by the Windsor denizens. The characters knowingly put on a witch's garb, a headgear of horns, and colorful fairy costumes fitting for the specific role each is to play in the wives' merry jests. Even though the playwright employs props and linguistic allusions pertinent to the popular discourse of the supernatural such as witchcraft and folklore in designing the mistresses' punitive pranks, the wives' goals are as simple as to ditch the knight of burning desire into the cold Thames, to prompt the jealous husband to bash away the marauder's insolent persistence, and finally to expose the horned swellhead to public mockery.

Witches, sprites, and fairies may seem accidental rather than essential in these plays-within-the-play, and the wives of well-to-do burghers are familiar and comfortable with such specters of old belief without evoking the suspicious association between emasculating wives and castrating witches. The merry but honest wives' craft of storytelling, role-playing, and masquerading, on the contrary, dispels any lingering doubt of feminine secrecy or immodesty since the mistresses' self-rule not only punishes inordinate, unprovoked male desire but also remedies and restores the sexual insecurities and fear of women's uncontained sexuality a household secretly harbors. The subtext of Ford's sickness of mind is the logic that

interconnects the horn and the witch, and also the reason why the mistresses' jests are not only punitive but also ameliorative measures, as if they were metaphorically to provoke the boil, precipitate its violent rupture, and apply a comforting salve. Nonetheless, the normative dictates of properly hierarchical companionate marriage tolerate and overlook the extremities of the householder's unreason and failings. The corpus of the Lord of Misrule, Falstaff's body itself, is the site on which such paradoxical inner workings of matrimonial unions unravel themselves.

The mistresses administer "medicine" to Falstaff's and Ford's perverted male fantasy in the form of the buck basket, a witch, and the court of fairies. However, Roger Moss has claimed that just as Verdi's opera *Falstaff* works coherently without the episode of Gillian of Brainford, so the scene in which the fat knight dons the outfit of a supposed local witch rather "creates the demand for some awkward filling in of detail" with little added richness to the plot.⁸⁵ Regarding Herne the Hunter, Geoffrey Bullough has argued that Falstaff's disguise as the folkloric figure is only a dramatic device to set horns on the head of the self-proclaimed philanderer and to take the characters into the open air at night.⁸⁶ Even K. M. Biggs, with his keen eye on the early modern perception of the workings of the supernatural, admits that the reason why Falstaff is dressed as the oak-keeping spirit, Herne the Hunter, is not quite clear unless it is to supply the play with jokes about horns, which he says had "inexhaustible pungency to the Elizabethans."⁸⁷ Having informed his readers that Reginald Scot, the author of the most comprehensive work on early modern English witchcraft, commented on the superstitious belief in the haunting spirit residing in Windsor forest, Biggs seems to consider Falstaff's incarnation as a cornual sprite only as a device for ribald taunting. Herne the Hunter is,

as Biggs points out, a topical specific that colors the spiritual topography of the late Elizabethan Windsor and his presence at the denouement is the very remedy for the witch-scared self-persecuting cuckold.

Yet, even such insightful readings of this play as Leah Marcus's "Purity and Danger in the Modern Edition: *The Merry Wives of Windsor*" and Wendy Wall's "Why Does Puck Sweep?" have by and large overlooked one specific form of cultural force: the early modern cultural fascination with witches and witchcraft.⁸⁸ Focusing on the folio's strong allusion to the skimmington ritual—the concerted effort of moral policing in early modern England in which villagers shame and mock the transgressive members of the community usually in a cacophonous parade of shame, transvestism, and verbal taunts—Marcus observes that "horns for an adulterer or cuckold were also a common feature of the skimmington."⁸⁹ Marcus, as does Edward Berry, reads an application of skimmington in the first shaming prank, in which the merry wives orchestrate a ducking for the injurer of their sexual honesty, even though the usual gender roles of the agency of the skimmington may be reversed in this case.⁹⁰ Berry, inferring from his analysis of the unique combination of festivity and violence in skimmington rituals, concludes that the often-referred term "sport," and more specifically "public sport" (4.4.13),⁹¹ implies the wives' application of skimmington on Falstaff—that is, the wives' revenge that precipitates the miscreant courtier's dejected capitulation is to restore communal health and order.

Indeed, the buck basket (that enwraps the knight of folding flab with household linens only to dump him into the cold stream of the Thames) and the fairy court (that pinches and burns him into confessing his carnal sins) are the housewives' remedial means to regulate "this

unwholesome humidity, this gross watery pumpkin” (3.3.33-34). The wives “buck-wash” the lustful knight and this trial by water anticipates the final scene in which the would-be marauder is put through a trial by fire. Yet, both readings of the housewives’ application of skimmington gloss over Falstaff’s second punishment in which Falstaff literally becomes a witch. Such a lacuna, due to the distance in times and attitudes toward the mythos of the unknown and the supernatural, seems to have supported aforementioned readings that consider the witch or the forest sprite as accidental, expedient, or derivative references.

Even the finely-woven early modern cultural tapestry presented by Marcus and others seems to skip one warp that interlaced loss, pain, bewilderments, and the demonic agency as the cause of such negative unfoldings: witches’ maleficia. Wall has illustrated “how thoroughly fantasies of domesticity saturate this play and its lore”⁹²; I would like to make a similar claim: the narrative coherence of this play—beyond its expediency and verisimilitude—is supported with the male fantasies of the lustful wives and castrating witches. For adultery and cuckoldry had strong cultural associations with witchcraft; a cuckolded farmer in *The Witch of Edmonton*, for instance, reports a witch’s spell as the cause of his wife’s otherwise “unreasonable” deed. Such punitive shaming rituals as ducking, watching, scratching, pinching, and burning were often imposed not only on the boundary pushers of the community but also on village outcasts with long-standing repute as witches.

The last corrective ritual, in which Falstaff decks himself as a horned protector of the wild Windsor forest, needs to be read in its logical trajectory (how paranoid it may seem) that started with the buck in the laundry basket and intensified with the bearded witch. Stepping into the nocturnal fairy world, Falstaff wearing horns characterizes himself as a bestial deity

that awaits sexual partners in the dark forest; this setup for an illicit assignation closely resembles the early modern cultural fantasy of witches' Sabbath in which witches flown on the back of horned goats or broomsticks reportedly met for indiscriminate orgies and demonic couplings. Such a fantasy of the grotesquely unseemly witches' indiscriminate sexuality has revolted and frightened Ford, who thus embarks to expose his wife's secret sexuality even though it may undermine himself as a cuckold.

Falstaff's tribulations—ducking, cudgeling, and public shaming at the fairies' assizes—are not only analogous to the community policing of transgressive sexual and marital behaviors but also follow the logic of counter-witchcraft. For Master Ford, the wives arrange an encounter with the witch, who he believes is the cause of his inability to “stand.” The witch is the symptom, the cause, and the solution of the husband's diseased mind; since as the court doctor in *Macbeth* prescribes “[t]herein the patient / Must minister to himself” (5.3.48-49), such a delusion of mind can find its cure only in the believer's afflicted mind. The operation of the witch-hunt mechanism that is interwoven with the cathartic use of the cuckold's horn, as it is transposed from a self-persecuting cuckold to the swellheaded cuckold-maker, cures not only Falstaff but also Ford of the “dissolute disease.” The concupiscent courtier and the insecure husband suffer, each in his own way, from extremely distorted male sexual fantasies: the aggressively improper priapus of the former and the masochistic voyeurism of the latter. While the spirited chastisement (or the cure) of the fat knight contributes to reuniting the distrustful jealous husband and his abused wife, the reformed (cured) husband willingly participates in the fairies' punitive masquerade, in which parental counter-schemes over Anne's matrimonial hand untangle themselves to reward Fenton, the title-poor courtier who stole Anne's heart (in fact,

Fenton is the most skilled hunter in Windsor forest since he catches the best heart/hart). The cure for male dissolute diseases and the restoration of formerly discordant unions are located in the spirit of marriage-making.

The wives use their crafty command of domestic activities and women's network—including a local wise woman (or the witch)—in bringing about a remedy for Ford's paranoia of horns (his fear of cuckoldry) and a remedy for Falstaff's cuckold-making fantasy. If the witch who needs to be purged from this ideal world of married life is a fabrication of Ford's male fantasy, the horn that the most unlikely claimant of male sexual prowess brags is another fiction that betrays how patriarchy fears its own echo of self-assertion. This chapter, therefore, seeks to analyze *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in terms of its covert logic of male sexual anxiety and a cure that is located in the supposed connection between male fertility and witches' maleficence. The contemporary obsession with witches and witch-scare, I claim, supports the fantasy construct that the witch-scared Ford creates in his paranoia and, in turn, relies on to justify his unreason and fear. The Windsor wives write their scripts (the three jests that are in fact the plays-within-the-play) appropriating witches and fairies with such ease and familiarity and the "inexhaustible pungency" of the Elizabethan joke on the horns is as palpable as the witch-scare, the cause and solution of Ford's anxiety over sexual fertility and the issue of legitimate progeny. The mistresses gallantly employ the buck basket, the garment of an old village witch, and the disguise of a cornual spirit since the unreality of their cuckold-making sexuality is as certain as the unreality of the witch.

What's in a Name?: Staff versus Broom

Before entering the main thread of the argument, an act of calibration, when it comes to the proper nouns whose specific adoptions become essential in the following discussion, is in order: Falstaff/Oldcastle, Brooke/Broome, and the wise woman of Brentford/the witch of Brainford. Larger than life in his symbolic presence in early modern historiography as well as his undeniable girth as Shakespeare depicts him, Falstaff is widely construed as Shakespeare's dramatic resurrection of John Oldcastle; introducing the character for the first time in the Henry IV trilogy, the playwright has Prince Hal call him as "my old lad of the castle" (*1 Henry IV* 1.2.37). William Brook, the seventh Lord Cobham and then lord chamberlain, sensing slight in Shakespeare's portrayal of John Oldcastle, reportedly exercised his influence in censoring out the dramatic name of his ancestor. Brook's tenure as the lord chamberlain (from August 1596 to March 1597) coincides with the deduced time frame of Shakespeare's completion of *1 Henry IV*. The playing company had to comply with the noble licenser even though the Lord Chamberlain's Men retained such a telltale identification marker as "my old lad of the castle" as an act of cheeky defiance.⁹³

Such bad blood is quite implicit in the comically abject composition of the new dramatic name for this character: Falstaff, a name fit for a deserter of his military post as he is in *1 Henry IV* (false flagstaff) and also a source of bathos whenever his physical fitness and virility is invoked in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (false or fallen erection). In writing *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the playwright seemed to, almost, succeed in airing his grievances through a pseudonym Ford adopts for his alter ego, one Master Broome. With a bagful of money to give away, Ford as Brooke easily sells Falstaff his fiction that as the secret admirer of Mistress Ford he will line the cash-strapped courtier's pockets for his future sexual acquaintanceship with her

if Falstaff “successfully” derails her from her marital vow. William Brook was by now no longer the lord chamberlain but the powerful Cobhams asserted their power, excising the name of Brooke, which was in the 1602 quarto but replaced with Broome in the 1623 folio.

Pointing out the discrepancy between the quarto and the folio pseudonyms Master Ford adopts (Brooke in the quarto and Broome for the folio), Wendy Wall argues that Ford’s impersonation of one Master Broome may have underscored his obsession with housekeeping chores and household economy. Wall states, Ford’s “self-transformation into a household object shows less a general anxiety about emasculation at the hands of women . . . and more a desperate concern over the power of household materiality.”⁹⁴ Wall observes that the folio’s readers might have “hear[d] Falstaff declare his allegiance to a household utensil.”⁹⁵ Furthermore, the linguistic load in the pun of “Broome” seems to be much more charged if one conjures up the image of the witch fostered since the medieval ages: the witch flying on a broomstick.

A broom is used to sweep a floor as Puck does in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; the mercurial sprite cleanses the new matrimonial site as an apotropaic gesture, a point Wall herself has adroitly illustrated in her *Staging Domesticity*.⁹⁶ As Puck’s symbolic sweeping is a form of magical invocation of matrimonial prosperity and the broom he holds serves as a simulacrum of priapic materiality (in that the “erect” broomstick is in its compliance with the proper care of domestic space), it is quite an ironic burden that is carried by Ford as Broome: compelled to “discover” the site of wayward female sexuality, the jealous husband seeks to precipitate his “inevitable” cuckoldry and in willing to become the tool that undoes himself, Ford becomes the vehicle of witchery, which he believes took away his “erection” and left him

angry and anxious for its loss. Ford becomes the B/broom(e) that affords the witch with uncanny transport and ability to strike fear in him.

The buck basket escape of the unsuccessful marauder confirms to Ford the certainty of his failure in searching the site of his wife's illicit sexuality despite his ascertained knowledge of her fall. Ford as the victim of his agency is pinned down not only with the knowledge of his wife's sexual openness for Falstaff and the certainty of the time and place of their assignation, but also with his incompetence in producing the "ocular proof." His frantic search of all "impossible places," the nooks and crannies of his domestic space, does not produce the "truth that he knows is" but rather brings forth the "witch." Ford as Broome facilitates Falstaff's second assignation, which disintegrates into Falstaff's escape under the garment of a local witch, and as the witch-scared husband and zealous discoverer of female sexual transgression, Ford confirms the malefic witchery cast on him by discovering a witch in his own household.

In addition, a broom, or besom in witch-lore locution, signals the promiscuous sexuality of witches: from the medieval era, witches have been imagined to fly on brooms to their Sabbath in a dark forest. Witches were believed to carry disguised brooms for that purpose; yet, as Albrecht Dürer's "Witch Flying backwards on a Goat" (circa 1500) and countless other drawings from late medieval and early modern era suggest, the domestic tool for housecleaning features prominent in witch-lore not because of its inseparable association with domestic activities and versatile application for numerous purposes, but because of its phallic resemblance.⁹⁷

Finally, Gillian of Brentford is replaced with the witch of Brainford in the folio. The editors of *The Norton Shakespeare* prefer Brooke to Broome and the wise woman of Brentford

to the witch of Brainford for the topical immediacy and local topography the quarto edition carried for its original audience. In fact, Gillian, who lived in Windsor's vicinity, had enjoyed scurrilous fame mostly from her grotesque predilection for the farcical and the carnivalesque: she reportedly "bequeathed a score of farts amongst her friends."⁹⁸ On the other hand, the folio's adoption of the "witch" of Brainford evokes the economy of alarm that will jolt an unconditional aggression in Ford, whom I argue is embroiled with the fear of the witch's glamour, her malefic spell that took away his erection. In addition, the witch of "Brainford" adds psychological awareness to Master Page's diagnosis of Ford's wild humor as sickness of mind. The neighbor chides Ford for his frantic search of Falstaff: "No, nor nowhere else but in your brain" (4.2.139). Even though my argument is in accordance with the editorial decisions made in *The Norton Shakespeare*, for such abovementioned reasons, this chapter departs from such nomenclatures as Brooke and the wise woman of Brentford in favor of Broome and the witch of Brainford.

Hornucopia: the False Phallus

The "bad" quarto of 1602, *A Most Pleasaunt and Excellent Conceited Comedie, of Syr Falstaffe, and the Merrie Wives of Windsor*, advertises Falstaff as a titular character, foregrounding his antagonistic prominence against the pair of wily wives of Windsor burghers.⁹⁹ It is quite unexpected, hence, to hear what Nicolas Rowe, in 1709 on the occasion of publishing the first editorial edition of William Shakespeare, had to say about the main design of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: this play in Rowe's eyes is about curing Ford's unreasonable jealousy. Why does this well-established scholar consider remedying Ford's pathological jealousy more crucial than exposing a swollen-headed would-be cuckold-maker? Does this imply that

eighteenth-century England's poet laureate identified himself less with the prodigal courtier but more with the misgoverning patriarch who persecutes himself with sexual anxiety and jealousy? In his sympathy for the householder with security issues, does Rowe betray the nervousness and uncertainty of patriarchal idealism in governing marital discord, distrust, and dis-ease?

Even though the wives receive Falstaff's proposition as a backhanded compliment and avow to cure his "dissolute disease" (3.3.161) by administering "merry" but remedial tricks, the first editor of the Shakespearean opus viewed this play as a therapeutic drama for the pathologically jealousy-stricken husband. The self-persecuting cuckold as well as the self-conceited cuckold-maker suffers from a disease that drives his senses into self-exaggerating delusion: if the knight is "courageous-mad" (4.1.3), Ford is "horn-mad" (3.5.130). Both are ill at ease with their own socio-economic status: the prodigal courtier without self-sufficient means is reduced to resorting to a mercantile venture involving the seduction of the wives of the prosperous middling sort and the well-to-do burgher dithers on the issues of his heirless marital union. Besides, neither of them is properly equipped for his own fantasy role: the fat knight carries a last name that almost already dooms his sexual ventures, and the insecure husband fails even in precipitating his own cuckoldry. As the obverse of each other, one indulges in what he does not have and the other suffers from the loss of what is not lost.

Prompted by Pistol's rebellious tattle against his former master Falstaff, Ford proceeds not to ask his wife her opinion of Falstaff; rather, he in a flash acquiesces to his fate as a cuckold and, oddly enough, seeks to precipitate the dreaded fall of any married man with the help of a proxy cuckold-maker he commissions himself. In a way, the jealousy-stricken husband identifies

himself with a willing cuckold-maker as Edward Berry observes in commenting on the mimetic rivalry between the two men.¹⁰⁰ According to Berry, Falstaff, recruited by the jealous husband to hasten his wife's "inevitable" fall, is "not only a potential cuckold-maker but a salaried representative of the potential cuckold himself."¹⁰¹ As a surrogate of one Master Broome, Falstaff by proxy is to cuckold Ford, who, to begin with, knowingly commissioned the deed even after Pistol informed him of Falstaff's adulterous plan. Master Broome is Ford's alter ego; if the cuckold-making Broome and the marked man Ford are one and the same, Falstaff's surrogacy, as a scapegoat for Ford so that he can reclaim his wife's sexuality, connects him to his rival in their semblance and mimetic rivalry. Coincidentally, Ford's menservants dump Falstaff in a buck basket into a "ford," forcing the trapped knight to drink his "belly full of ford" before his escape (3.5.32) and later Ford beats up Falstaff unfortunately disguised in the garb of the witch of "Brainford." For unstated psychological reasons, Ford needs Falstaff to challenge him.

What turns Ford against himself? Why does he not challenge Falstaff to a duel like Caius, who challenges Evans after discovering a courier in his closet? The doctor is incensed enough for a sword fight partly because Evans wants to promote Slender's courtship to Anne Page, whose hand Caius himself is eagerly pursuing; yet Evans's encroachment into the doctor's domestic authority seems to be the graver affront. Evans has already intimated Mistress Quickly satisfies Caius for his sexual desires, observing that the housekeeper is "in the manner of [Caius's] 'oman" (1.2.3); whatever relationship the doctor and his mistress may keep, Evans's recruitment of Caius's "woman" in the interest of her employer's romantic rival is a challenge to the householder. Also, this incident catapults a courier into the doctor's domestic inner sanctum, the doctor's closet for his medical secrets. Caius's impassioned reaction toward the

outside interceptor of his households and housekeeper underscores the oddity of Ford's subdued self-persecution—needless to say, foreshadowing Ford's shameful and maddening inability to search and detect Falstaff hiding within his own domestic space.

It is not fortuitous that Mistress Quickly predicts Caius will be "horn-mad" if he finds Simple in his closet: hiding the secret messenger in the doctor's closet, his housekeeper frets about the detection, "If he had found the young man, he would have been horn-mad" (1.4.42-3). Another man in his household would have driven any man "horn-mad" since secretly entering another's estate implies the possibility of the misuse of the householder's woman. Evans violates Caius's property and proprietary authority through such proxies as the letter, the letter carrier, and consorting with his mistress. Evans's tactless pandering may be unwitting but slaps Caius with the threat of cuckoldry, since cuckoldry was as much about sex as it was about ownership. Hence, Caius is understandably "horn-mad" and acts on his indignation by challenging Evans to a duel.¹⁰²

On the contrary, as if he were split into two selves, the misogynist Ford mocks his helpless half as the cuckold. Afflicted by the looming cuckoldry, Ford depends on his accusatory self, Master Broome. With the invention of Broome, Ford turns his helpless half, the shamefaced cuckold, into the object of persecution, whom Broome is to expose. This self-objectification affords him with the right to partake in the male gaze that locates shame in the robbed husband.¹⁰³ Ford, thus, belabors to invite the townsmen to join the "sport" (3.2.67), that is, his exposing of Falstaff's tryst with his wife; such a discovery will declare him a cuckold but that will also allow Ford to align himself (or the split half of himself) with the male taunting

of a cuckold (the other half of himself). So, Ford talks himself up: “I shall be rather praised for this than mocked” (3.2.39-40).

Ford is pitting himself against himself. Broome as the discoverer of the cuckold points his finger at himself. If Broome actively deflects his fear of cuckoldry by spying on Falstaff and providing him with financial means to woo and bed his own wife, Ford is passively dependent on Falstaff, first to fulfill what he dreads, second to prove to himself the certainty of his own self-undoing knowledge, and third to allow Master Broome to claim Ford’s wife after cuckolding her husband. Such intense self-persecution—masochism, one might call—is met and matched by equally violent anger projection when Ford encounters the witch in his own household during his search for Falstaff. Falstaff as the witch is a logical necessity in the cure of Ford’s fear of cuckoldry, which is anticipated from the first encounter between the two men.

When Broome with a bag of money volunteers to pander Falstaff’s sexual escapades, Falstaff swears to humiliate and cuckold Ford in front of none other than Ford: “I will stare him out of his wits. I will awe him with my cudgel; it shall hang like a meteor o’er the cuckold’s horns” (2.2.246-8). Prophetically, the marauder’s swaggering oath anticipates the specific form of the three punitive tricks Falstaff is to suffer: Falstaff’s debased escape carried in the buck basket, his second escape under the garb of the witch of Brainford only after bearing Ford’s sound beating, and finally his public shame in having to admit his cuckold-making horns of Satyr-like sexuality are in fact the symbol of male abjection.

Initially, Falstaff’s pursuit of Mistress Ford threatens her husband with a prospect of cuckold’s horn, yet it is Falstaff who is marked as a game of prey and sheepishly led to wear the horns of shame and mockery. The way the horns are transferred between the two men

elucidates two kinds of antagonistic confrontations: the cuckold's wild-goose chase of his wife's secret sexuality that is materialized in the form of a man hiding inside his domestic space; and the hunter's surprise attack on a swollen-headed Actaeon and the latter's shameful dehorning. Falstaff's personification of Herne the Hunter belies the fat knight's insubstantial claim of sexual prowess and delivers the final appraisal of the poor quality of the self-proclaimed royal buck. While the wives recognize Falstaff as a "rascal"—a base specimen of ill-bred deer or a scoundrel—despite the courtier's title and claim, to Ford, the marauder with substantial girth is the illusive "buck" he cannot capture: frantically searching for the cuckold-maker in the buck basket, Ford unawares declares Falstaff hiding in the basket as a "buck." Ford's frustrating search for the resolute cuckold-maker unwittingly creates an invincible horn-maker in the farcically-inept lord of misrule. The remedy for the "horn-mad" husband lies in his recognition of the inept horn Falstaff flaunts; hence, exposing the man with oversized horns as a poor simulacrum of Herne the Hunter grants Ford a fantasy of cuckold-making, in which he gives the knight a horn of shame.

Ford's obsession with the witch and the horn stems from his inability to give the "horn" to his wife, triggering his fear of receiving one from his wife in that her autonomous sexuality may invite a proxy horn into the marital bed. Mistress Page pretends to deplore Ford's "old lines," his misogynist fear and anger (4.2.16), in order to conjure up a dreadful image of the brutishly vengeful husband who will bolt in to seize Falstaff for his furtive presence in a married woman's chamber. However, this alleged report of his brooding misogyny does not seem too foreign in Ford. He cannot help betraying his fear of women's sexual autonomy and male dispensability, and his self-defeating fear of insignificance unwittingly endows Mistresses Ford

and Page with Amazonian self-governance: “I think if your husbands were dead you two would marry” (3.2.11-2). His latent aggression toward women and fear of women’s league anticipates the wives’ invention of the dreaded witch, who would “cure” his sickness of mind.

The illustration of Robin Good-fellow on the title page of *Robin Good-fellow His Mad Prankes and Merry Jestes* (1628) pictorially testifies to the early modern cultural significance of horns: the cornucopia of horns in this woodcut—antlers, musical horns, and a horn-shaped penis—showcases Robin’s bestial male attributes in the spirit of encomiastic farce.¹⁰⁴ Yet the horn’s assertive masculinity has to preempt the presence of another such presence. In the *Roxburge Ballads*, a horned head of a cuckold ruefully looks out from a latticed window while the larger-than-life moral policer (or the cuckold-maker) blows a musical horn of alarm.¹⁰⁵ In the bottom left corner, the satanic beast with horns and cloven feet converses with the unfaithful wife. This attempt at Christian symbolism, quite jarring against the dynamics evident in the male psyche (one celebratory of his cuckold-making horn and the other shamefaced and envious of the other’s horn), seems futile to countervail the blatant working of the male competition. Even the misogynist inscription of the reprobate adulteress in her embrace of the satanic semblance does not seem to offset such celebratory male pride endowed through the horn.

The celebratory assertion of the cuckold-maker’s horn is quite evident in a number of Shakespeare’s works. Grumio, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, asserts his vantage in male sexual hierarchy—the pecking order amongst the fellow serving men—by invoking his horn: “why, thy horn is a foot, and so long am I, at the least” (4.1.23-4). His back-handed compliment of his fellow serving man’s manhood intimates the paradoxical nature of the horn as a signifier of

male anxiety concerning both prowess and ineptitude. Cuckoldry was as much about sex as it was about male hierarchy; for example, Shakespeare depicts Tarquin's rape of Lucrece as the prince's violent means to win the male competition over their governance of their wives' sexuality. Similarly, Menenius in *Coriolanus* compliments Martius for "standing" to shame Audifius for his presumptuous horn, which in humiliation had to hide itself into obscurity:

'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Martius' banishment.
Thrusts forth his horns against into the world,
Which were inshelled when Martius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out. (4.6.44-9)

Giving the horn to another man's wife may be morally reprobate; yet its assertion in itself is a positive quality—the phallic authority—whether it be motivated by nationalistic pride or personal ego.

The passivity of having to receive the horn, either in a male competition or via his wayward wife, robs the cuckold not only of marital trust but also of the unalienable prerogatives of the householder. As soon as Iago intimates "the green-ey'd monster" (3.3.166), Othello has a "pain upon [his] forehead" which is too large to hide even with Desdemona's handkerchief (283). Othello admits an ironic truth that jealousy or the anxiety of cuckoldry lies not in the fact or deed but in the cuckold's knowledge of it: "let him not know't, and he's not robb'd at all" (3.3.343). The more worldly Emilia seeks to console Desdemona with her etiological diagnoses of jealousy:

They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they're jealous. It is a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself. (3.4.160-3)

Emilia observes that a woman cannot refute her spouse's suspicion even when she is chaste since the paranoia is an innate condition of male existence. Similarly, Touchstone, in the lighter-hearted comedic world of *As You Like It*, quibbles on cuckoldry as the universal fate of all men: "the noblest deer hath them [horns] as huge as the rascal" (3.3.46-7). Likewise, Leonato and Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, use horns as a metonym of husbands:

LEONATO: So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

BEATRICE: Just, if he send me no husband, for the which blessing I am at him
upon my knees every morning and evening. (2.1.22-4)

The horn in aforementioned texts is a protean signifier that may imply male confidence, achievement, aggression, violence, insecurity, helplessness, and passivity: the horn functions as a signifier rather than as a sign.

The wives "buck-wash" the horny knight and this trial by water foreshadows the final scene in which the horned suitor literally "dis-horns" himself after suffering a trial by fire. The enshielding of Falstaff's "horn" in the buck basket minimizes the sexual threat the fat marauder can pose on the wives and their marriage. For a "buck-washing" (3.3.131)—the harsh form of washing in a boiling alkaline lye— the wives hoodwink the self-proclaimed Windsor buck to hide inside the buck basket, which is to be carried to Datchet Mead, where the camaraderie of low-class laundresses, in concert with the absentee mistresses, would abuse the filth—the man enwrapped in dirty household linens—with "rough music" of discipline. To buck-wash Falstaff's filthy desire is to wash off the forward imposition of his "two yards about" maleness (1.3.42) and to score out his libelous interpretation of female sexual wantonness, "the action of her familiar style" (45-46).¹⁰⁶ With the buck basket, the wives wilyly defeat both the jealous

husband's surveillance and the salacious courtier's proposition; as Mistress Ford is not sure "which pleases [her] better: that my husband is deceived or Sir John" (3.3.149-50), the wives use one man against the other, and vice versa, in revenging the two men's unwarranted misinterpretation of their honesty. Treated as the dirty laundry that needs harsh treatment, Falstaff experiences domesticity as a frightening threat just as Ford, as Wall has illustrated, experiences housewifery as a threat.¹⁰⁷

Not only do the women act as domestic agents of discipline, but they also divest the signifier of male pride and anxiety—the male investment in the cuckold's and cuckold-maker's horns—of its power to prescribe female sexuality in the logic of male competition: the mistresses manipulate the linguistic associations of the "buck" and "buck-washing." Falstaff as a buck with his prized cuckold-making horns is to be washed off as filth in bucking with lye while the "buck," as Mistress Ford articulates it repeatedly, teases Ford, who goes berserk in his paranoia of cuckoldry: "Buck! I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck, buck, buck! Ay, buck! I warrant you, buck and of the season too, it shall appear" (3.3.132-4). The gallant buck in Falstaff's fantasy becomes the sign of humility and passivity, the cuckold's horn, to Ford. Unable to expose the buck that was encased away in the buck basket, and unable to suppress the hallucinatory thrust of his cuckold's horn, Ford produces his keys—a simulacrum of householder's phallic authority—in order to search the inner chambers of his domestic space. The "double excellency" (3.3.148) of the buck basket trick exposes the two forms of the extreme perversion of male sexual fantasy: Falstaff's narcissistic pride and Ford's misogynistic insecurity.

Even though the actual action of ducking is not staged, in his verbose self-pity, Falstaff reenacts the ducking scene over and over again in front of Ford: “Think of that—a man of my kidney—think of that. . . Think of that” (3.5.98, 99, 104). This repeated reenactment of the dunking scene seems to confirm the association of his water immersion with the punishment used on witches, scolds, and adulterers: “ducking” also known as “cucking” or “swimming.” Trapped in the dilemma of the vindicated death and self-accusatory survival, those accused of witchcraft had no viable option when it came to the swimming test since her survival is construed as the devil’s protection of his minion.¹⁰⁸ The first prank not only insinuates the underlying cultural reference to the swimming of the witch but also this report of Falstaff’s trial by water makes way for the second punishment, in which he literally becomes a witch—the singular example of a Shakespeare’s male character who willingly puts on a female disguise.

The shameful cross-dressing that is imposed on the erstwhile buck basket rider mocks the braggart’s self-delusive priapic assertion, his false phallus; instead, it is Ford who wields the cudgel, a weapon of phallic authority and aggression. Falstaff dismissed all his criminal cohorts, who in concerted rebellion eagerly divulge their former employer’s cuckolding scheme to the burghers. Even the young page boy Robin double-crosses the lord of misrule. Falstaff is a false figure for paternalism: his phallic authority is rebelled against. Falstaff is the “bell-wether” (3.5.95), the castrated ram, whose loud jingle betrays his own castration, inviting mockery to his inept horns. The false staff is the false phallus that holds authority over none but his unwieldy body as in his escape in the buck basket, a cowlstaff (a pole to carry a basket) is more effective than the cargo, a crestfallen staff.

The order of the father, the phallic authority, is unsustainable or illusive in Windsor that is governed by mistresses. Patricia Parker reads the scene in which the Welsh parson Evans teaches William Latin conjugation as the emblematic moment that betrays the play's "subterranean wordplay organized around the transfer and conveyance of property, pages, boys, trade, and women."¹⁰⁹ The ownership of linguistic signification is quite unsettled as Evans's heavy Welsh accent lampoons not only his own authority as schoolmaster but also the authority of Latin as an elite language. The false authority of the (religious) father's tongue is exposed by none other than Mistress Quickly, the vulgar-mouthed housekeeper with vulgar linguistic imagination. Such vernacular translation of false linguistic, paternal, and metaphysical authority is attempted again when Ford reclaims his sexual ownership of his wife at the end of the play: "I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou [Evans] art able to woo her in good English" (5. 5. 133-4). The father's tongue cannot claim such a romance in the vernacular tongue, needless to say authority.¹¹⁰

Even from the very beginning, the authority figures whose claims derive from the state (Justice Shallow) and the church (Parson Evans) betray their pedantry and illiteracy in Latin. Their snobbish affectation linguistically deconstructs their false authority: Justice Shallow may claim the prestige of his family name for being "an old coat" (1.1.15) but Evans's Welsh tongue blunders the coat of arms as "coad" (16), which Slender takes with a bawdy pun for "cod" (19)—scrotum and a salted fish. The opening scene not only prepares how the witch's coat is to cover up the salacious scrotum, the site of Falstaff's sexual pride, to turn Falstaff to a spectacle of a bearded old woman, but also it reveals how inept such conventional authorities as the Justice, the Father, and the courtier are. Even when Evans and Caius arrange a dual, it is the Host of the

Garter Inn who plays the mediator's role to obviate violence between the two neighbors. Nonetheless, the text has Bardolph, an employee of the Host, rebel against the Host in a horse-swindling scheme as if it were not to allow any male to assume patriarchal or paternalistic authority.

The wives pierce and patch their schemes to safeguard their honor as well as to revenge the male affront on their honesty; in such sartorial locution, Mistress Page heartens Robin for his secret alliance with the wives against the knight: "this secrecy of thine shall be a tailor to thee, and shall make thee a new doublet and hose" (3.3.26-7). It is the courtier Falstaff who initially speaks of his lustful venture in terms of mercantilism and husbandry: "She is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheaters to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me. They shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. . . . We will thrive, lads, we will thrive" (1.3.59-64). Yet, the wives are the very nautical experts who navigate the perilous sea of schemes and counter-schemes floated by the battling two men. It is also the wives who treat Ford's fear of cuckold's shame as if they were the sartorial masters who could patch the hole in Ford's coat, the one he decried "there's a hole made in your best coat, Master Ford! This 'tis to be married! This 'tis to have linen and buckbaskets" (3. 4. 141-3). The hole in what Wall calls "the reproduction of property and lineage" has threatened Ford into self-persecution and witch-scare,¹¹¹ but the wives' craft in weaving their tales fills the hole in Ford's paranoia, facilitating him to reclaim his sexual "occupation" of his wife. Aware of the fiction of the phallic authority that has a self-conscious hole in its "coat," the wives are the "ministers" who regulate their tales and remedies (4.2.191).

Hair of the Dog or Glamour of the Hag

Known as “The Hammer of the Witches” or “Der Hexanhammer,” *The Malleus Maleficarum* (1487) predates *The Merry Wives of Windsor* by a good century. The church-sanctioned witch-hunting manual spread throughout Europe during the rise of print, triggering a wide-reaching witch-scare and witch-hunt for the next century and a half: between 1487 and 1520, twenty editions were published, and another sixteen editions were published between 1574 and 1669.¹¹² *The Malleus Maleficarum* does not seem to have suffered from the lack of a vernacular translation in England. Its influence on English witch-hunt lore also is not clearly documented unless one considers the learned men’s fervor to present the definite version of English witchcraft monographs.¹¹³ What dominion their exegesis might have claimed, the two zealous inquisitors, Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger, were not above the sensationalism of their own material; they indiscriminately cited village rumor and gossip of witch-lore and counter-witchery in writing this theological document.

Just as the provenance of the witch of Brainford and her outer garments demands no explanation of whether the merry wives of Windsor are surreptitiously in league with the dabbler of black art, the witch in *The Malleus Maleficarum* also is an empty cipher, a vacuous nothing that is nonetheless capable of instilling fear in the believer of her power. The witch in those texts is the empty screen on which her male “victim” drops his lily-livered shadow, which consequently confirms him with her frightening presence. Falstaff in his unfortunate disguise as a local witch gets severely flailed as if it were to reveal Ford’s earnest fright of the witch’s power over his marriage. In both texts, the witch is by nature a woman: the witch, as maleficarum signals, is, *a priori*, a woman since the prominence of a male witch might have demanded maleficorum as the unmarked male noun would have been normative; in the

Shakespearean text, when a slinking marauder needs to be put in a garment that is in itself a sign of shame and emasculation, it had to be woman's coat and skirt. Nonetheless, each text also contains a strange lacuna: what motive does the witch harbor against the afflicted? There is a hole in the father's coat that he needs to explain.

What the Shakespearean text hides in plain sight is the common presupposition of the male fear of witches. The *Malleus Maleficarum* provides one explanation for the early modern obsession with cuckoldry and male impotence: the witch. This influential tract, fully endorsed in the bull issued by Innocent VIII, sought to justify not only matrimonial union but also the metaphysical union of Christ with believers by hypothesizing the antagonistic presence of the witch in a troubled marriage.¹¹⁴ Marriage was a currency for political and religious expediency in early modern Europe as it is in twenty-first-century America. Not only did the state and the church seek to tailor the quotidian and symbolic operation of marriage, but also the rank and file found spectacles and pastime in wedding celebrations.¹¹⁵

Succeeding Elizabeth, the virginal ideal and nurturing mother to her English subjects, James advanced his own metaphor for the familial obligation between the monarch and his subjects by declaring "I am the husband, and all of the whole isle is my lawful wife."¹¹⁶ Both frustrated inquisitors who penned *The Malleus Maleficarum* and the beleaguered foreign-born king of England figured the private lives of married couples in the language of religio-political didacticism. Hence, the religious phraseology to which Fenton in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* resorts to vindicate his secret marriage to Anne does not seem to be exaggerated—with the exception of the hyperbole of the thousand hours—since, according to Fenton, their compassionate marriage providentially prevented "[a] thousand irreligious cursèd hours /

Which forced marriage would have brought upon her” (5.5.206-7). No doubt Shakespeare’s dramatic personae and the witch-hunting church fathers shared a clear awareness of the role of marriage in establishing the rule of the “fathers.”

Kramer and Sprenger justify the legitimacy of matrimonial union and cast the witch as the antagonistic agent in a troubled or infertile marriage; as a reified correlative to the metaphysical union of Christ and his bride, the church, marriage becomes the site the devil would assail in order to spoil the sanctity of both unions.¹¹⁷ Walter Stephens maintains that Kramer felt compelled to prove that sacramental magic is real (as is the presence of the devil) by demonstrating why and how “witchcraft is manifestly not real.”¹¹⁸ This patrician tract devises the witch as a religious necessity, the concrete human embodiment of the devil’s envy and malice of the sacramental matrimony. The clerical inquisitors then inject this effective antigen called the witch to vitalize religious ordinance over the fleshly union of “two in one flesh,” which is potentially replete with dispute and discord. The authors, then, proceed to relay numerous anecdotes in which witches, in league with the devil, tried to obstruct the matrimonial fulfillment of Godly injunction—prosper and multiply—first, by preventing erection (and thus conception), then by killing the fetus during the pregnancy or labor; or, when all else is to no avail, by offering up the unbaptized infant to the devil.¹¹⁹

The official stance the church held toward marital fertility, at least during the prolific publication of the witch-hunting manual, seems to shed light on the unspoken root of Ford’s paranoia of witches: his infertile union with Alice Ford. Ventriloquizing through his alter ego, Master Broome, Ford confides “like a fair house built on another man’s ground, so that I have lost my edifice by mistaking the place where I erected it” (2.2.193-4). The fair house that Ford is

unable to keep, or sexually “occupy,” also implies the insecurity of his family assets that is to be bequeathed to a bastard son or eventually escheated to the Queen’s coffer. As Andrew Gurr has explained, this simile might allude to the financial crisis and property dispute that hit Shakespeare’s company in 1596; yet the bawdy innuendo in “edifice” and “erection” seems to point a finger at the sanctimonious allegory the church constructed: the spirituality of corporeal marriage. Falstaff’s use of “building” also confirms this double entendre: surviving a drowning in a buck basket, Falstaff returns Mistress Quickly’s malapropism of “erection” for “direction” in a quibble: “So did I mine, to build upon a foolish woman’s promise” (3.5.36). If his lost edifice is of a sexual nature, does the confession betray that Ford suffers conditional impotence with his wife? How else can his erection be misplaced? Surely, this confession of a man on his mission to cuckold himself by proxy is quite pregnant with unspoken implications of sexual anxiety. Falstaff, eventually shamefaced and contrite, is to confirm his rival’s ability to “stand”: at the denouement, Falstaff professes, “I am glad, though you have ta’en a *special stand* to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanced” (5.5.211-1, italics are added). Falstaff’s dramatic role—sheathed inside a buck basket, wrapped in a witch’s coat, and finally exposed with Herne’s horns—is to facilitate Ford so that he can “stand.”

Such anxiety—may it be called castration anxiety or the time’s ribald sense of humor—is telltale even in the *de facto* decree of ecclesiastical witch-hunting. The devil’s “prestidigitatory art,” which is to be reified through his corporeal agent who casts the glamour on the senses of the “victim,” is no more than his ability to beguile the victim’s exterior senses, which makes the afflicted perceive as if his priapic organ were physically removed. The zealous authors embed many sensational examples of such sensory manipulations—witch’s glamour, her execution of

the “prestidigitatory art” on her helpless male victims—clearly unaware that their belabored persistence seems to border on misogynist perversity and sexual obsession. One of the numerous examples of witchcraft fantasy that serves as the cause and cure of male impotence hails from the town of Ravensburg, Germany:

In the town of Ravensburg a certain young man was attached to a young woman, and when he wished to set her aside, he lost his male member, clearly though the act of conjuring, with the result that he could not see or feel his body as anything but smooth. Being worried, he then went to a certain cellar to buy some wine, and while he was sitting there for a while, another woman showed up and he revealed to her the reason for his sadness, relating the details and showing that he was so in body. Being clever, she asked whether he considered any woman suspect. When he specified her identity, mentioning her name and relating what had happened, the woman said, “When benevolence does you no good, it would be best to prevail upon her with violence in order to regain your health.” At dusk, the young man watched the path where the sorceress would regularly pass by. After finding her, he pleaded with her to return to him the health of his body, but she claimed that she was innocent and knew nothing. He then attacked her and, tying a handkerchief tight around her throat, he pulled it taut, saying “Unless you restore my health to me, you will die at my hands.” Then, because she could not shout and her swollen face was now turning black, she said, “Release me and I will make you healthy.” When the young man loosened the knot (noose), the sorceress touched him with her hand between the thighs (hips), saying, “You now have what you want.” And, as he would later recount, before he assured himself with sight or touch, the young man noticeably felt that the member had been restored to him, just by the touch of the sorceress.¹²⁰

The gap between verifiable facts and the power of conviction, however, begs a closer reading; starting from the symptom of the lost priapus, the man arrives at the cause of his inexplicable condition: the witch. Very likely guilt-stricken over jilting one woman for a more marriageable one, this man solicits a cure for his ailment from the crowd in a tavern, a place fraught with mysterious cures and unfaltering convictions. A female fellow drinker volunteers to guide him to his cure and, as astutely as any drunkard can be, she points out that the suspicious one is to be suspected.

Having committed the twofold transgression in engaging in premarital fornication with an unmarriageable woman, the man dreads the consequence of squandering his sexuality without the approval of the custom and the church. The irony of the incident lies in the fact that this sex-specific condition of quasi-castration is diagnosed by a woman and treated through another woman. The witch is now delivered as a therapeutic device to this abuser of the female sex. The physical contact between the witch and the “afflicted” man—verbal confrontation, strangulation, and eventually restorative stimulation—verifiably produces a cure: he has his erection back. This questionable story does not delve into whether the witch used occult knowledge or physical dexterity to stimulate her assailant, yet it is clear that the witch’s power to undo her witchery is as concrete as the man’s belief in her power to bewitch him in the first place. Clearly incognizant of such pregnant ironies, Kramer and Sprenger provide their diagnosis of the mechanism of glamour: the devil’s “Prestige” has affected not the material reality but the victim’s perception of the physical changes on his body. Laboriously amassing similar cases, the scholastic idealists complete their indictment of the witch for her malefic invasion into sacramental procreation; therefore, to undo the perceptual damage on his maleness, the afflicted or his advocate, the church, is to confront, overwhelm, and subdue the devil’s instrument in lieu of the preternatural tempter. If the witch’s alleged obstruction in matrimonial sexuality and fertility verified the Manichean battle between the divine and the diabolic in sacramental unions, her confession of her allegiance and erstwhile service to the devil was to reconfirm divine supremacy and providence in church-sanctioned marriages.

The patriarchal, as well as patristic, obsession with male virility attests to the institutional will to govern marital sexuality and fertility; however, it unwittingly exposes the

vulnerable and contingent foundation of male authority that needs reinforcement from the periphery. In the case of the man from Ravensburg, such reversal of hegemony returns with a farcical irony: his penile autonomy that he squandered away is restored by the hands of a hag.¹²¹ Belying the patrician didacticism, this episode unravels what Žižek calls “the logic of the phallic inversion” in that “the demonstration of power starts to function as a confirmation of a fundamental impotence.”¹²² For the man of Ravensburg and Ford of Windsor, the witch is invented to cover up what the narrative will seek to hide: the fundamental impotence of the phallic assertion of autonomy and self-sufficiency. Both of them encounter the moment of the phallic inversion at the vulnerable stage of their sexual confidence, the former jilting the woman with whom he had an “intrigue” and the latter facing a bombastic cuckold-maker from the upper social echelon, coveting his wife’s nulliparous womb.

As the anonymous man could see or touch nothing in his penis due to the glamour cast on him, Ford as Master Broome confesses his inability to meet his wife in the eye: “She is too bright to be looked against” (2.2.216). Oblivious to the identity of the visitor, Falstaff reports the first assignation and his narrow escape from the jealous husband to Broome/Ford, which throws the frustrated discoverer into a nightmarish abyss of self-disgust: “Hum! Ha! Is this a vision? Is this a dream? Do I sleep? Master Ford, awake! Awake, Master Ford! There’s a hole made in your best coat, Master Ford” (3.5.120-2). Convinced that self-defense resides in his ability to vindicate his knowledge of his victimhood, Ford first invents an alter ego who can strike before he is hit by the inevitable cuckoldry and yet he is unable to separate the knowing “eye,” “I,” from the sleeping cuckold; the blurring of the first, second, and third person pronouns in this soliloquy emphasizes such hallucinatory sensation of one’s lost identity. The

delusion of their eyes—the most literal means of the sensory assurance of their selfhood—results in their internalization of the gaze, the image of the self through the other’s eye: they are exposed in the raw under the stare of what one may call the super ego or the order of the father. At such a crucial moment, their waning sense of maleness turns into violent deflection of their self-hatred: the fear of castration now calls for a witch as the cause and at the same time the solution of their plight.

In planning the second prank, Margaret Page convinces Alice Ford that holy matrimony is to be safeguarded with both Christian and demonic operations, a worldview that providence and maleficence respectively govern matrimonial prosperity and infertility: “Heaven guide him [Falstaff] to thy husband’s cudgel, and the devil guide his cudgel afterwards” (4.2.74-5)—a perspective the *Malleus Maleficarum* also proposes. For Falstaff’s sound beating, the wives procure a witch’s outer garment, knowing a witch in his household will incite Ford’s anger. A contemporary witch-hunting text, King James’s *Daemonologie*, offers an inferential frame for Ford’s obsession with household patrol and search for the devil lurking in “impossible places” in his household. If the witch survives the swimming test, King James prescribes searching for the devil’s mark by means of pricking: “finding their mark and then trying the insensibleness thereof.”¹²³ Convinced that Falstaff’s escape of death by water confirms the devil’s guardianship of the knight, Ford avows that he will expose the cuckold-maker in a tone of a zealous witch-finder: “But lest the devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places” (3.5.126-7). Then the jealous husband proceeds to rummage through the impossible places—the soiled undergarments and household linens. His search of laundry basket, risking airing out the intimate secrets of domestic matters for communal mockery, is as invasive and

humiliating as the witch-finder's invasion of the witch's body in search of the "bigge" or the devil's mark.

His invasion of the laundry basket, domestic peace, and women's domain, however, compromises Ford's masculine authority in a similar way in which male association with clothing branded early modern tailors with effeminacy and, thus, cuckoldry. Mistress Quickly as the fairy queen alludes to the Order of the Garter not only by comparing the fairy circle to "Garter's compass" but also by cataloguing the decorous attire and accessories a knight in the order would wear: "coat," "crest," and "blazon" (5.5.58-70). The wives' disrobing a knight only to dress him in a local witch's garb, and later transforming him into "an ass" (115), imply the possible subversion of the social hierarchy as well as the cultural discipline of the willful abuser of marital norms.

The self-proclaimed Windsor stag, now dressed in a frumpy old woman's garb, belies the fantasy of the buck, the horn; the skirt on the sexual usurper nullifies Falstaff's and Ford's fantasies. The grotesque body of the androgynous old "woman" literalizes the abjection of the old knight as the frumpy village witch, intimating Falstaff's loss of the horn—as if the skirt castrated him, Falstaff is as "crest-fallen as a dried pear" (4.5.82). Thus, the witch's garment, like an "off-the-hat" magic trick, delivers the medicine that redresses Falstaff's delusional fantasy of sexual omnipotence. In the common interest of marriage and capital preservation, the wives exploit male fear of witches in their ministrations of the medicine: in their cure of Falstaff, the degree of vicarious violence is permissible in the comedic humor only. Ford's cudgeling chase of Falstaff in drag is an exorcism of the witch from the household premises: "I'll prat her! Out of my door, you witch, you rag, you baggage, you polecat, you runnion!" (160-1).

To Ford, the medicine is an opportunity to enact his own fantasy retribution. Ford's cure comes from the witch, who Falstaff haphazardly, against his wishes, supersedes.

Evans reproves the frustrated husband who charges toward the laundry basket in his conviction that Falstaff is hiding himself again in the same laundry basket: "'Tis unreasonable; will you take up your wife's clothes?" (4.2.122). The ecclesiastic authority of the town, who most likely would have been the presiding authority in executions of skimmington, points out the reversal of hierarchy in the Ford household, making his observation a veiled threat of public shaming. Faced with the ominous prospect of skimmington, Ford bolts to beat up the witch found within his cudgel's reach:

A witch, a quean, an old, cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by spells, by th'figure, and such daubery as this is, beyond our element. We know nothing.—Come down, you witch, you hag, you! Come down, I say! (4.2.149-55)

With the use of male-bonding "we," Ford diffuses his fear of effeminacy onto the surreptitious visitor to his wife. With fellow townsmen's rather encouraging sanction of such wild humor (4.2.173)—since his masculinity has returned after his emasculating hassling with the intimate linens—Ford beats up his unfortunate rival, whose masculinity is hidden and undermined under a woman's outfit. Ford's physical confrontation with his rival, now unequivocally emasculated, is as therapeutic as it was to the young man of Ravensburg to revenge his sexual glamour on the village witch. Needless to say, that Falstaff is dressed as a local witch makes such a cure more effective.

To Ford, the old bearded woman is the dreadful embodiment of female power, one who can emasculate and castrate him either by casting a spell or by cuckolding him, which makes it

possible to see his aggression toward the alleged witch as a venting of anger towards his wife. Suggesting that Ford's witch-beating is in fact a symbolic wife-beating, Nancy Cotton argues that "Ford's unconscious identification of wife and witch suggests that he equates the witch's spells with the wife's power to cuckold or 'unman' him."¹²⁴ Even though Gillian of Brentford may have been a historical reference to the infamous woman who lived halfway between Windsor and London, this local witch rather serves as a psychological revelation of witch-scared Ford, who created a larger-than-life witch in his brain, the witch of Brainford. The witch-hunt mechanism cannot be but an *a priori*, preposterous redress, in that the symptom infers—or rather invents—the witch as its cause.

Like the young man of Ravensburg, Ford of Windsor needs the witch who is to confirm his sexual frustration as her malefic manipulation. Already defeated in his fear of the witch, the only resort for Ford is to rise up to face the fear in the form of violent confrontation, what one may call counter-witchery; hence, Ford declares: "I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you" (163). Out of his fear of and disgust with witches' implicit power in male sexuality, Ford uses physical force in driving the "witch" out of his household; the physical purging of the witch from his household convinces him that the witch's curse, his impotence, is undone.

While his search of intimate linens is deemed "unreasonable," Ford's thrashing of the neighborly old intimate is no more than wild "humor," which as such is condoned by townsmen. In a thick Welsh tongue, Evans—the one who earlier threatened Ford with the prospect of skimmington—derides the old woman for her masculine features: "By Jeshu, I think the 'oman is a witch indeed. I like not when a 'oman has a great peard" (4.2.167-8). Both the "pearded" "witch" and the laundry-diving Ford are transgressors of gender codes, and, in this instance, the

inept cuckold-maker and the paranoid cuckold face each other as unfit and unnatural—the confirmation that both are diseased and in need of remedy, which the last jest performed by the community is to deliver.

Falstaff disguised as the local witch faces a twofold jeopardy: not only the personal vendetta in the hand of witch-scared Ford but also the pillory that the civic authority might put on such a public nuisance as a witch. Regardless of her disquieting presence in the Ford household, the witch is an unauthorized office for sundry private matters, sometimes infringing on the territory of law enforcement. At the behest of the slim-witted Slender, Simple calls on the witch of Brainford who was spotted entering Falstaff's lodging. Equivocating through the consultation, Falstaff the witch tentatively confirms what his client Slender wants to hear about a stolen bracelet and the prospect of his courtship to Anne. In his swaggering earnest, Falstaff confides the truth of the witch's power: "Ay, that there was, mine Host, one [the wise woman] that hath taught me more wit than ever I learned before in my life" (4. 5. 48-9), meaning that even verifiable facts give way to the believer's desire to believe. As Cotton has observed, those evil and lustful wives exist only in masculine imagination as the witch of Brainford exists only in the minds of dim-witted simpletons and jealousy-stricken husbands.¹²⁵

As firmly convinced as he was in his affliction of witch's "glamour" that robbed him of his "edifice," once he confronted and beat up (what he believes is) a local witch, Ford now renounces his former misdeeds: "Now doth thy honour stand, / in him that was of late an heretic, / as firm as faith" (4.4.7-9). Ford acknowledges his wife's steadfast honor, in never having misplaced her outside marital estate, and avows his unwavering confidence in her; furthermore, the syntactic construction of his pronouncement closely positions "stand" along

with “in him.” The syntactic vacillation further invites an aporetic reading; does “as firm as faith” modify “heretic” or “stand”? Does Ford deprecate himself for his mistaken past conviction of female fickleness or is he jovially asserting his regained maleness? At the least, Ford is cured of his misogyny, which he achieves, ironically, by cudgeling a village woman.

The Mistresses’ Tale and its Gallant Genuflection

Windsor is replete with rebellious employees, contending suitors, shrewd wives, and conniving children, all seeking to justify their schemes as efforts to countervail the injustice imposed on them. In addition to such fabricated stories as the German duke and the “three Doctor Faustuses” (4.5.56), the unreality of the witch and the horned spirit provides narrative logic and thrust; the linguistic reification of the witch and the horn as mutually exclusive concepts present in a Christian matrimony creates the very structure of signification, on which concrete actions and consequences start to latch.¹²⁶ Chastising corrupt male sexuality via the agency of domesticity of the wives and the unlikely queen of fairies, the text seeks to counter the early modern cultural unease over inept male sexuality and rapacious female sexuality.

The witch is “nowhere else but in your [Ford’s] brain” (4.2.139) says Master Page; nonetheless, the unreal witch functions as the “nothing” that Ford seeks to escape; yet his fear itself confirms the reality of the witch since, the witch is the “antagonistic kernel,” against which the patriarchal governance develops its “positive consistency,” if I may borrow from Žižek.¹²⁷ According to Žižek, one’s concrete grasp of the social fabric—what he calls one’s “positive consistency”—is based on the reactionary formation of the “negation of the negation,” for example, the well-poisoning Jews or castrating witches serve as the traumatic “antagonistic kernel” whose negative and disruptive power is to be reneged for one’s formation of the social

identity. The “nothing” behind the curtain is another Žižekian metaphor that helps explain how the witch affects her victim’s reality. The “nothing” behind the curtain causes the curtain to function: the curtain invites the gaze that desires to see something beyond the curtain even though there is nothing. If the witch was the “nothing” that nonetheless builds the structure of fear and loathing for Ford, the horn is another “nothing,” a MacGuffin. The Satyr Parson Evans impersonates during the nocturnal masque is paradoxical: the joke is on the impossible sexuality of the religious celibate; even if he is not sworn to celibacy, the joke already makes fun of the clergy. The diverse significations teased out with the “horn”—sexual potency, sexual incompetence, religious celibacy, and clerical debauchery—point at the Žižekian “nothing,” which nonetheless fulfills the operational logic of the curtain: piquing one’s desire for what is (supposed to be) hidden.¹²⁸

Notwithstanding the paternalistic stronghold on the Logos and the means, the confirmation of patriarchal authority lies not in itself but in the affirmation of those who are disenfranchised in the rule of the fathers. The patriarchal self-doubt that bubbles up from this condition of “the incomplete whole” manifests itself as the fear of cuckoldry that one’s wife may “turn” to affirm another’s claim. Thus, the male fantasy of Satyr sexuality—the fantasy of bestial sexuality that can indiscriminately cuckold any man—may easily turn into the dread of Actaeon’s fate: the hunter that became the object of his former desire. Punished for desiring the impossible object of desire, the goddess Diana, Actaeon is transformed into the mockery of his desire, the hart’s horns on his head. Satyr and Actaeon, both frozen in their bestial metamorphoses, are emblematic of male fantasy and fear. Satyr ravishes all without suffering

decease in his desire and ability; yet, Actaeon suffers the ridicule of the object of his desire. For in the unfortunate hunter's case, the woman returns his gaze in curse.¹²⁹

Prior to 5.5, there are only two comments on Actaeon in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, both times as an allusion to cuckoldry. Pistol's taunting, "go thou like Sir Actaeon" (2.1.105)—the ironic tone of contempt in the honorific "sir" adds acerbic bite to this affront—frightens Ford with the imaginary horn that may jut out of his forehead at any moment. Ford tries to deflect such a scare onto his neighbor so that he may fantasize to "divulge Page himself for a secure and willful Actaeon" (3.2.35-6). Pistol's petulant taunt instills in Ford the misogynistic fear that his wife may decide to bestow the shameful horns on him. However, at the denouement, the cornuate Falstaff is hunted like Actaeon and battered by benevolent fairies. In 5.5., the "Actaeon," transformed by the wily wives of Windsor, walks into the nocturnal forest with horns on his head and a chain dangling. In his invocation of bestial potency, Falstaff bellows:

Now the hot-blooded gods assist me! Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa; love set on thy horns. O powerful love, that in some respects makes a beast a man; in some other, a man a beast! You were also, Jupiter, a swan, for the love of Leda. O omnipotent love! (5.5.2-6)

In his blinding narcissism, the knight of burning desire elevates his lust to mythical eros and fantasizes the horns on his brow as the emblem of the omnipotence of mythical deities.

Clinging to the narcissistic self-glory as the dear buck, the rascal courtier solicits the merry wives: "divide me like a bribed buck, each a haunch" (5.5.21). The fat knight's sexual vainglory meets epicurean perversity in his speech: "I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk" (21-3). But, as Ford has declared the contender to his wife's sexuality as "a damned epicurean rascal" (2.2.253), Falstaff's debasement has been

anticipated throughout the play: from a swellheaded stag, a trapped buck, to the low-quality quarry (rascal), the knight's stature dwindles. To Falstaff's dismay, there are unearthly beings in the forest that frighten him. Furthermore, at the behest of the fairy queen, played by the mistress of misrule, fairies start to pinch, prick, and burn the knight (5.5.81-4). This mock trial by fire presents an interesting reversal of logic that witch-finders used.

Witch-trials become a subtext to these fairies' assize in the way the masquerading fairies adopt the role of the tormenter to the self-indicting recreant. If innocent, when pricked with a long needle, the accused is supposed to bleed and cry in pain while those with devil's marks would not feel pain. If not flinching is a sign of satanic safeguard in witch-hunting discourse, the fairies—the benevolent practitioners of white magic—would rather construe it as a sign of godly aegis:

QUICKLY: With trial-fire touch me his finger-end.
 If he be chaste, the flame will back descend
 And turn him to no pain; if he start,
 It is the flesh of a corrupted heart. (5.5. 81-84)

The female playwrights of this civic masque and the leading character of their disciplinary theater (the mistress of misrule) build a double bind, with which the mistresses can hold longer the ill-bred, rampant, and troublemaking rascal under their disciplinary fire. The mistresses' jury declares the flesh of the loutish specimen of the upper social echelon the site of discipline: if he reacts to pain, he is lewd; to escape the self-indicting display of pain, he needs to hold still despite the burning pain. Corralled as a spectacle of mockery and as the deserving object of persecutory violence, the crestfallen knight confesses his sin of lust and indulgence; once the confession is secured, the fairies commence to exorcise Falstaff's venal flesh with a chant "Fie

on sinful fantasy; fie on lust and luxury" (90-91). The wives construct such a disciplinary double bind by blithely inverting the logic of witch-hunting.

In addition, as Page has declared, "No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns" (5.2.11-12); the carnival king's erotic paean to cuckolding horns deteriorates into idolatrous devil worship as soon as he steps into the forest with "great ragg'd horns" (4.4.29). Civilizing the wild forest, the citizens bring in their ethical and religious norms of married life to make the cuckold-maker's horns a symbol of demonic intrusion into Christian matrimony, the signifier of the devil's maleficence to a sacramental union. In fact, Herne the Hunter, who in the most dreadful manner "blasts the trees, and takes the cattle, / And makes milch-kine yield blood" (30-1), is endowed with the witch-like demonic agency. Fairies soon perform a mock-exorcism of the knight's sinful lust; the disciplinary fairies are as fictional as the witch and Herne the Hunter. When the veil of make-believe is dropped once the corrective ritual is complete, the victim of this punitive prank confesses that due to his inward guilt, the forest spirits Windsor denizens impersonated looked truly frightening. Does his confession imply that the frightening agency of the supernatural is in fact the reflection of the guilty conscience? Is witch's agency as fictional as Herne the Hunter or the witch of Brainford?

Sir "False Staff" has been "buck-washed," "crest-fallen," and now is to be "dis-horned" in public. His absurdly oversized horns along with Satyr's horns on Parson Evans's head reveal the fundamental inadequacy of the phallic authority of the cuckold-making horns. The horn, a synecdoche of the assertive and aggressive exercise of phallic authority, is taken off of its poor representative, the Lord of Misrule, and Falstaff is pronounced an ass (115); already once taken for "Mother Prat," the would-be marauder's masculine attributes are finally negated and

forfeited. Reduced to an ass, the buttocks, Falstaff's corpus becomes the locus of discipline.¹³⁰ Identified as buttocks, the fat knight is denied any claim of the horn as the ass is the other side of the penis. What is more, he is declared a pander, a facilitator of another's sexual gratification, even worse, an unsuccessful pander as he was unable to advance Master Broome's suit for bedding Mistress Ford. The butt of the joke, Falstaff finally capitulates: "Use me as you will" (5.5.151-3).¹³¹

The most prominent difference between the first two punitive jests and the last is Ford's role in the script the wives write. The first two remedial measures are afflicted on the pipe-dreaming cuckold-maker by the jealous husband who unbeknownst to himself fumbles into a role the wives prescribed for him. Ford plays a hunter who cannot see his quarry in those two jests. In the last, the theater of discipline is moved from the private domain of the Ford household to the communal space of Windsor forest; yet Ford knowingly participates in the public sport, in the dark forest, surrounded by spirits and wildly feminine elements of masquerading and dancing even though all such elements have clear associations with the, potentially frightening, aspects of witch-lore.

The public course of Falstaff's dejection parallels the private process of curing a husband of his jealousy and paranoia, whose successful therapy leads the reformed husband to join in the nocturnal discipline in the denouement. When Falstaff takes off his horned headgear, Ford is able to "stand"; the communal mocking of another man with horns grants Ford a chance to give a symbolic horn to his alleged sexual rival. The challenger to the householder's sexual prerogative is now symbolically castrated—by visually being dehorned in public—and this broken courtier is, further shamefacedly, indebted to the middle-class householder (Ford as

Broome) for the past expenses for wooing and scheming. Magically regaining his “edifice” and, needless to say, his mercantilist pride, Ford taunts the abject former contender: “To Master Brooke [Broome] you yet shall hold your word, / For he tonight shall lie with mistress Ford” (221-2). Berry has read this provocation as Ford’s veiled appeal for a proxy wish fulfillment; yet, a reading of the householder’s fear of malefic witchcraft on his marriage seems to confirm Ford’s sexual rehabilitation implied in that taunt.¹³² For the surrogate witch, the fat knight, has provided Ford with an opportunity to project his introjected fear of impotence onto the glamour-casting witch.

In sum, the three disciplinary ordeals Falstaff endures liberate Ford from his dreadful fantasy of imminent cuckoldry. First, the buck basket jest has threatened the husband with the hallucinatory image of the buck with cuckold-making horns when in fact Falstaff’s encased “horn” could not dare to “peep out.” Then, beating up the fat old man in the garb of the fat old village witch may be what “wild humor” led the frustrated husband, but it functions as counter-witchcraft, in that the glamour-stricken man’s only recourse was believed to be his physical confrontation with the witch. As a surrogate witch, Falstaff endures emasculation: he has to hide his breeches under a skirt, an intimation of symbolic castration. Finally, the dehorning ritual in the forest is not only a form of poetic justice for the courtier’s poaching of civic property but also a long-awaited visual confirmation of how inept the phallus the social superior has been brandishing really is.

There is a plethora of horns—horns that are feared, fantasized, put-on, and taken-off, not to mention the linguistic associations of “buck” and the visual associations of stag, buck, and rascal. Such a plethora vainly tries to disguise the fundamental lack of the horn: the fiction

of the phallic authority. Falstaff pursues what was promised to him, which is, nothing, on behalf of somebody else, Ford. The plethora of the buck and the horn only underscores what was not there. The horn, as a fragment of the Real, still develops its operational apparatus just as the MacGuffin, “a pure nothing which is none the less efficient,” carries the joke despite itself.¹³³

Similarly, the witch in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is a practical joke played at the expense of Falstaff as a screen onto which Ford throws the shadow of his paranoia. A gown and a hat may conjure up the semblance of a witch on the fat old man, which at the same time betrays what a fiction the witch is. The witch who “is” not there allows Ford to make sense of his sexual inadequacy and ensuing paranoia. This jest works if only the witch is a fiction. Mistress Page’s extempore appropriation of Herne the Hunter for the final prank is indicative of the wives’ and the text’s tongue-in-cheek approach to witchcraft discourse. Richard Helgerson raises the question of the wives’ affiliation with witchcraft since to him “the hat and gown evoke a world of witchcraft in which they [the wives] are no less concretely involved” than they are in the domesticity of buck washing.¹³⁴ Yet the wives inject an ample dose of healthy skepticism; for example, Margaret Page introduces Herne the Hunter as unequivocal superstition and untruth:

You have heard of such a spirit, and well you know
The superstitious idle-headed eld
Received, and did deliver to our age,
This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth. (4.4.33-36)

Herne the Hunter is as real as the witch of Brainford, who is no more than a gown and a hat on the copious corpus of Falstaff.

The brazen cheekiness of the wives’ revenge on the fat knight dovetails well with the therapeutic address of the sexual anxieties in the Fords and parental and spousal tug of war in

the Pages. However exaggerated and extemporaneous the witch-scare the beleaguered wives resort to, the wives—assailed both by the upholder of patriarchal misogyny and by a renegade of such values—utilize domestic and feminine props and pretenses as the laundry basket, a witch’s garment, disguises and masquerades. The elicitation of feminine domains and network as put forward by the leading female characters reveals unwarranted male paranoia and fantasy of female sexuality. Ford’s paranoia of the cuckold’s horns only ratifies the absence of the cause. The horn does not peer out; neither wives nor witches castrate men.

Under the pretense of community vigilance, the citizens’ wives engineer Falstaff’s public shaming to relieve the community of the misogynistic fear of “castrating” women, wives who may cuckold their husbands as well as witches who supposedly cause male impotence. The creation of the witch in the body of Falstaff attests that the “reality” of the “witch” is a fantasy of the patriarchal institution that utilizes a marital union as its nucleus of ideological reinforcement. It seems clear that the early modern ideological need to regulate the politics of marriage shapes the witch-making in this play so as to exorcise the witch from the ideal middle-class marriage. The confrontation between Ford and Falstaff not only invents and disposes of the figurative witch as a device embodying the antagonisms of married life, but it also manipulates the significations of “horns” and “horning” that regulate marital sexuality.

The last scene of the play turns a punitive fire into a festive bonfire by which all Windsor burghers and their domestics, including the dejected knight and his younger, more fortunate alter ego Fenton, will enjoy during a wedding reception. The denouement erases any lingering misgivings of profit motives from this consolidation of title and land; even though at the point of their elopement Anne has been disinherited, in the long run Fenton reclaims both

parental acceptance and the dowry he originally desired—in other words, his romantic justification of the property value this marriage promotes. The sole attraction of Falstaff, as the mistresses joked about, is the sense of shared peerage through sexual association—being “knighted” (2.1.43); Anne, in marrying above her class, is legitimately knighted. At the moment in which Falstaff’s venture at an “adulterous alliance”—to borrow Richard Helgerson’s coinage that describes the contest between the state and capital on women’s body—fails, Fenton reaps the profit from the alliances of title and land on Anne Page’s “estate.” Ford, now secure in his “occupation” of his “estate,” consoles Anne’s equally bested parents: “In love the heavens themselves do guide the state; / Money buys lands, and wives are *sold* by fate” (5.5.209-10; italics are added).¹³⁵ To the well-established Windsor burgher, as commonplace as the capitalistic venture of purchasing land is to the middling capitalist, the nuptial transaction of nubile women is married with capitalistic prosperity.¹³⁶

The anti-masque of the fairies also serves as an epithalamic invocation that seeks to ward off matrimonial troubles for the couple that is about to tie the knot: Anne and Fenton. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Oberon, benevolently intervening in the matchmaking matters of the Athenian mortals, asserts that benevolent spirits are of a different sort from the damned souls haunting the black (magical) world (3.2.389). Once reconciled, Oberon and Titania, the self-claimed “parents” of mortals, bless the wedded couples with children free from deformity and diseases. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the Elizabethan middling-sort version of merry old England, it is Hobgoblin (quite likely played by Pistol) and Satyr (Evans) who forewarn of pitfalls of marriage: poor housewifery. Hobgoblin lists unraked fires and unswept hearths as

reasons for pinching the attending maid until she turns “as blue as bilberry” (5.5.42) since “[o]ur radiant Queen hates sluts and sluttery” (43).

Hobgoblin builds the connection between slovenly housekeeping and sexual looseness. This fairy edict in fact advances a form of didactic housewifery: diligent attendance to the household matters attests to her sexual discretion. Satyr, belying the irony of the parson preaching pious sexuality under the emblem of promiscuous bestial sexuality, proscribes that those who do not pray for their sins and instead choose to nurse their sinful fantasies need pinching on the “arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides, and shins” (51). Now crestfallen, Falstaff acquiesced to his inadequacy in wooing and learned to fear mercantile mores and pride; with the bogus witch and the cornuate spirit exorcised from the community, there should be no malignant presence that hinders marital fertility. Hence, diligence and religious piety are prescribed as essentials of citizens’ prosperity. Fenton, the young courtier that captured Anne’s hart/heart, also speaks the language of the mercantile worth of a pious companionate marriage: forced marriage might have cost Anne “[a] thousand irreligious cursèd hours” (206).

In contrast to Oberon’s blessing of the wholesome progeny for the noble newlyweds, the values that the burgeoning capitalists in Windsor invest in their marriage are to be testified by, through, and on their wives. Even the password Slender and Anne choose, according to her father’s wishes, to discern each other among nocturnal disguisers is “budget” (5.5.181), a secret code Anne gives away to a postmaster’s boy. The “budget” imparts economic concerns and fiscal prudence, the quintessential capitalist values. Hence, the disciplinary pedagogy forced upon the prodigal philanderer also anticipates what Anne, highly sought for her dowry as well as virtues, has to impersonate as the ideal wife. It is not at all fortuitous that the national

identity, manifest in linguistic homogeneity Falstaff and others presuppose in the closing scene, is grafted onto the citizens' class awareness: in their conscious endeavor for economic, social, and moral betterment, civic pride meets nationalist awareness.

Through this ritualized communal purgation, in the shape of a courtly masque, the Windsor denizens honor the State and the Queen; in so doing, the English chaff the elements that refuse assimilation—the French Caius and the Welsh Evans. Even Falstaff, in the face of his physical plight, decries Evans's thick Welsh accent as a blasphemous defiling of the Queen's English: "'Seese' and 'putter'? Have I lived to stand at the taunt of one that makes fritters of English?" (5.5.135-36). In spite of their social gap, Falstaff reverberates his tormenters' civic patriotism in that the nocturnal fire that burns him in punitive pinches would be a lesser assault than Evans's slight on his vernacular tongue. The final acculturation of the alien residents, Caius and Evans, comes with the forced acknowledgement of their linguistic and sexual ineptitude: Caius is tricked into marrying a boy and Evans plays an ineffective Cupid for Slender and later lampoons himself as Satyr. The communal shaming ritual aimed at the stray courtier Falstaff concomitantly solidifies the English national identity (elevation of the vernacular—English and Englishness) and upward-mobile consolidation of the mercantilists through Anne Page's exogamous social elevation.

Fenton claims the nocturnal masquerade is the crux on which the "mirth" meets the "matter" (4.6.14): the matter of yielding the companionate marriage between him and Anne. As Falstaff, "as crestfallen as a dried pear" (4.5.82), nears to his self-renouncing surrender, Fenton rises to "husband" his matrimonial venture for mercantile and romantic gains (4.6.51). Ushering in a courtly masque into the space of civic autonomy, the middling sort embraces

their social superior as the son-in-law to the mercantile legacy; on the other hand, the gallant courtier initiates the daughter of a capitalist into the peerage, legitimating middle-class citizens' upward-mobile impetus. Fenton's "riots past" and former "wild societies" may picture him as a prodigal courtier like Falstaff, but Fenton is a Falstaff before his fall and flab, and now as an heir to the mercantilist's legacy, his presence in itself signals the integration of the city and the court. Tying the land with the title through companionate marriage, Fenton's marriage to Anne yields desire and wealth, the matrimonial and mercantile virtues uncontaminated by lust and luxury. Their union complies with the decorum and hierarchy of gender and status unlike their older counterparts who had to redeem themselves (Ford through humbling medicine; the Pages through mutual parental defeats).

The citizens of Windsor—a location with a unique status as a chartered city that has a royal residence—solidify their household, matrimonial, and civic autonomy through the disciplinary shaming of the boundary pushers of these values and norms. The noble poacher is seized by citizen reformers—he may eat an ill-gotten dish from the common plate but he shall not steal from a citizen's coffer or bedroom. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, despite its documented association with the Order of the Garter and its ceremony in 1597, decidedly shames a member of the Garter. During the antimasque, the Mistress Malapropic, who bungled William's Latin lesson singlehandedly, almost out of character delivers the motto of the order of the Garter: "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*"—shame to him who thinks evil of it—(5.5.66).¹³⁷ In the origin of the order, its embrace of ornate emblem, and feminine accoutrements, one easily detects conscious attempts to manipulate the male ego with comforting assurance that feminine trimmings do not compromise masculine authority.

governance. The poacher's wanton venture for lust and luxury is to be publically exposed and disciplined; however, Ford's rationale of domestic abuse is taken at face value and his violence against the local witch is tolerated as wild "humour" (4.2.173). The partial dispensation of empathy in administering remedies to Ford and Falstaff is the due dealing of marital norms that take the double standard in spousal role expectations for granted, further upholding the double standard as the very paradigm of marriage.

Chapter Three *Imagining the Witch at the Table: the Abominable Belly of Middleton's Women*

In the previous chapter, I sought to delineate the frightening intimation of the feminine inherent both in the profligate revelries and in the eerie cookery of the titular character of *Titus Andronicus*. Tamora's allegorical embodiment of "Revenge" and Titus's spiteful burial of Lavinia's molesters in the belly of their mother betray the bloodcurdling image of the feminine and maternal; in the process of mutual aggrieving, the malefactors in this tragedy achieve the formidable agency of the feminine evil in need of purgation. Purgating such feminine perils, Shakespeare vernacularizes the allegorical mould of the Greco-Roman witch—the foreign, menacing, and transgressive abstraction of prototypical "female" antagonists—into the embodiment of the "feminine" misrule and depravity. *Titus Andronicus*, in fact, shares the same misogynistic telos with the bona fide "witch play," *Macbeth*, in which the male title character cannot help but to embody the feminine at his own peril.

Thomas Middleton's body of work captures the crucial moments that epitomize the transformation of the seditious feminine of the Elizabethan stage into the farcical, trifling Jacobean witches. *Macbeth*, a Jacobean play about the feminine corruption of the state, is, according to Gary Taylor, as Middletonian as it is Shakespearean.¹³⁸ Not only is the singular agency of the Elizabethan witch diluted and dispersed among stock witch characters, but such stagecraft as levitating witches, as in 3.3., also turned witches into objects of spectacle rather than objects of fear. The stage was now populated with triads of hags and the bodily evidence of their demonic dabbling abounds: human body parts, a sinisterly bubbling cauldron, and the presence of a familiar, among other trappings.

The cogs of the witch-hunting plays of the Jacobean era were set in motion with a vapid literalization of witchcraft paraphernalia. Such effective, unequivocal purgation of satanic minions seems to vindicate Jacobean plays that resurrect fictional or real-life witches, since, for example, the Dog in *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) visits his erstwhile partner in witchcraft only to pronounce, “the witch must be beaten out of her cockpit” (5.1.48). Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* contains such Middletonian charm songs as “Come Away, Hecate” and “Black Spirits”—both first introduced in *The Witch* (1615). The disparity in Elizabethan and Jacobean representational modes is striking. The Jacobean witches exhibit the obsessive desire for comestibles and perverse fixation on the inedible and inappropriate foodstuffs much stronger than their Elizabethan counterparts and such recesses of imagination as the hidden kitchen in *Titus Andronicus* become more explicit and normative in the Jacobean era.¹³⁹ Thomas Middleton, for one, carved the Jacobean witch in the stark relief.

In this chapter I argue that Middletonian male characters in *The Chaste Maid of Cheapside* (1613), *Women Beware Women* (1620), and *The Witch* (1615) uphold the double standard of food consumption as the logic of gendered vilification of the “midnight surfeiter[s]” (*The Witch* 2.1.77) of sugar, spice, and all things nice: the village gossips, unwed mothers, prostitutes, and cuckolding wives. All these noisome characters are the untoward or illicit consumers of precious foodstuffs: the masterless townswomen incur expenses at their neighbor’s table; a postpartum maiden in her hideout gobbles up restoratives; a wittol’s wife nurses her adulterous belly at her husband’s expense; and the prostitute savors stolen suckets. These women overburden, transgress, or defy the matrimonial governance of the householder. The misogynistic barb of Allwit sums up the householder’s irritation and anxiety of wasteful

women: “his wife’s belly only broke his back” (*The Chaste Maid of Cheapside*, 3.2.75).¹⁴⁰ The engorged belly of women with a strong “appetite” corroborates to Allwit women’s *a priori* propensity for venery and intemperance. These salacious women with an uncontrolled appetite gobble up the gargantuan amount of cates and junkets, just like the witches: Middleton’s gluttonous women and witches are kindred spirits. Even though the double standard of consumption in gender and class conceives the witch as the embodiment of the basest form of feminine appetites, the witches’ proverbial penchant for “banqueting stuff” (sweetmeats and junkets) seems as mundane as the other women’s comportment at the table.

Rarely does Middleton allow identifiable or desirable traits to his characters, and most of his female characters are compromised by their sexual and gastronomical appetites. Even in the comedic world of London’s Cheapside, when the chaste maid, who may come closest to the ideological construct of the ideal housewife, enters the matrimonial bond, she is surrounded by other married couples who accept pretenses and façades to sustain their marital status. Ironies abound in the Middletonian model of the feminine virtue: Isabella of Ravenna, the virginal wife as a widow in *The Witch*, is spared from sexual and gustatory gluttony by the very dint of witchcraft. Even though the ideal housewife is an unsustainable premise in the Middletonian world, through the negative portrayal of the gluttonous witches, Middleton allows his “married virgins” to purport to claim the consummate middle-class housewifery. Middleton’s female protagonists, although self-effacing and indistinct, happen to be the fortuitous beneficiaries of the witches.

I use Gervase Markham’s *The English Housewife*, first published in 1615, in order to draw several comparisons to Middleton’s gluttonous women: the temperate and virtuous

middle-class housewife Markham advocates is the paragon of feminine virtues presupposed in fashioning Isabella as the ideal wife in *The Witch* (also first performed around 1615). Markham's recipe book—to be exact, it is a hodgepodge of recipes and household tips as well as a conduct manual—may have gratified its middle-class patrons' upwardly-mobile aspirations by "civilizing" their wives in kitchen management and table comportment. However, Mark Overton's historical revisiting of seventeenth-century Cornwall and Kent has demonstrated the incongruent coexistence of the fast-growing middle class who were eager for cultural and culinary adaptations (in Kent) and the stagnant economy and primitive cookery that relegated the contemporary Cornish dwellers to one-pot meals and meager sustenance. The vast distance between a five-course banquet with dispensable sugary artifacts (that Markham's cookbook flaunts) and the mush of all things edible cooked in a cauldron is quite striking; yet, the primitive cookery of these indigent women resembles the familiar trappings of witchcraft.

Throughout my analyses I keep in mind the possible correlation between the Jacobean middle-class awareness of class and gender and the Middletonian dramatic portrayal of the virtuously self-effacing women and the abominably gluttonous women. Regarding the comedic Cheapside and tragic Florence, I will focus on noisome female behavior that defies the double standard of consumption and its detrimental effect on the male protagonist's aspiration of "the fair banqueting house" of his own. The erstwhile wittol, Allwit, establishes a boarding house and labors to support his household: claiming husbandry, he now governs his wife and the ameliorative spirit of comedy in *The Chaste Maid of Cheapside*. On the other hand, Leantio in *Women Beware Women*, once wronged by his mother and wife who choose to enjoy illegitimate banquet outside of his premises, embarks to capitalize on Livia's lust for him: due to

his abject pursuit of the capital, his “fair” aspiration of self-governing household is irreparably sullied and damaged. I will then move to a sustained analysis of *The Witch* to elucidate how the Duchess slips from the respectful duchess consort of Florence to an unsuccessful regicide and fawner to the witches. Even though she is of royal parentage, the Duchess is the cautionary model for mistresses who ought to govern well by being governed properly.

The Contents of the Table: Recipes for Housewifery

Before Gervase Markham, there were Thomas Dawson (*The good Huswifes Ievvell*, 1587) and Hugh Platt (*Delightes for Ladies*, 1608), and many men and women followed them to make fortune and name in the cookbook industry. Yet Markham’s clear awareness of male encroachment on the feminine and female expertise and his ideological framework that promotes middle-class, nationalistic values in his encyclopedic *The English House-wife* (1615) provide a cultural context quite significant in analyzing Thomas Middleton’s fixation on gluttonous women.¹⁴¹ Both men shared a similar penchant for the spectacle at the banqueting table: Markham promoted sotelties of narrative scenes and the grandiose table setting, and Middleton routinely employed banqueting scenes in his plays.¹⁴² In addition, in 1615, Markham published *The English House-wife* and Middleton’s *The Witch* was performed; hence, the ideal housewife proposed in these two texts seems to be representative of Jacobean cultural poetics concerning the table of affluence and female asceticism. It does not seem to be out of the question to speculate that some of Middleton’s male characters, like Leantio, who dreamt of “honest wedlock” “like a banqueting-house built in a garden” of chaste flowers (*Women Beware Women* 3.2.8-9), were precisely the type of men who would purchase Markham’s recipe book.

Reprinted twice during his life time, Markham's recipe-cum-conduct book testifies to the growing body of the middle class, its class envy, and its ostentatious fantasy of self-assertion. Michael Best, the editor of a modern edition of *The English House-wife* (1994), claims "the women who read it were predominantly those of superior social status" since only one out of ten early seventeenth-century women was literate.¹⁴³ Markham's ideal English housewife is a well-governed housewife who in turn governs domestics and domestic economy. Markham clearly addresses the middling sort when he instructs the English housewife to "be a godly, constant, and Religious woman, learning from the worthy Preacher and her Husband, those good examples which she shall with all carefull diligence see exercised amongst her Servants."¹⁴⁴ Managing consumption and conservation, the middle-class housewife was the intermediary between governance and obedience.

Markham embraces the upwardly-mobile positivism of the middle class with the recipes, table arrangements, and codes of hospitality the housewife is to master; he promotes the accomplished middle-class housewife as a domestic agent whose painstaking preparation and execution of banqueting stuff, entertainment, and hospitality were to "showcase" her husband's generosity and prosperity. Markham promotes many recipes of sotelties and marzipans, both extravagant conceits to entertain the eye rather than the appetite.¹⁴⁵ Sotelties, of the medieval origin, are entertainment dishes that reconstruct the lifelike scenes of fowls and other animals through elaborate culinary steps and props; in addition, Markham was quite partial to sugar, adding it even to salad, and promoted sugared marzipan artifacts (what he calls "March-panes") as well as preserved fruits and suckets, all to pique the appetite for the edible to follow. Not only to tantalize an appetite but also to manipulate the appearance of affluence,

Markham instructs to open a banquet with a spectacle of sotelties: “first send forth a dish made for shew only, as Beast, Bird, Fish, Fowl, according to invention.”¹⁴⁶

Comparable to a modern-day centerpiece, this food for the eye and eyes only is made of expensive commodities such as imported sugar and white flour as well as almond paste and rose-water; hence, dispensable marzipan wonders and rosewater luxury were occasions not only for facilitating cook’s desire to toot her culinary horn and artful flair but also for flaunting the householder’s dispensable resources. Further pushing his sales pitch, Markham suggests that shame should be felt by a housewife who does not achieve and maintain the appearance of conspicuous consumption: “Banquetting stuff, and conceited dishes, with other pretty and curious secrets” are so “necessary for the understanding of our English House-wife: for albeit, they are not of general use, yet in their due times, they are so needfull for adoration, that whosoever is ignorant therein, is lame, and but the half part of an House-wife.”¹⁴⁷ Markham argues such “banquetting dishes” that gratify only one’s fancy are an essential component in presenting a banquet. William Harrison describes what awe-inspiring banquets well-to-do merchants would set forth: “it is a world to see what great provision is made of all manner of delicate meats, from every quarter of the country, wherein, beside that they are often comparable herein to the nobility of the land.” With all things domestic and foreign that money can buy, the middle-class table vied with the nobles’ table. The prudent preacher conveys his amazement at artificers and husbandmen who vied to outdo their means.¹⁴⁸ To the merchant host, the cornucopian presentation of his table was a confirmation of his prosperity, an idea he wanted to sell at all costs.

The aesthetics of destroyed banqueting stuff may seem to evince the mistress's authority and regulation of the household matters; the accomplished housewife who does not betray the meticulous care given to this scene of sugary ruins triumphs over such a scene of the sticky end. Tracking the early modern demand for sugar as a metonym of British colonial expansion, Kim Hall has observed that the early modern banqueting was an occasion to showcase not only the status of the householder but also the domestic control of the housewife: "The object was not to eat, but to destroy the table" since such a deliberate mess was the "paradoxical signs of domestic order" that the housewife could regulate.¹⁴⁹ Nonetheless, her autonomy and authority is asserted only on the limited space of the banqueting table, which was bound to be buried not only under the sticky mess of banqueting stuff but also the impression of householder's affordability of such precious commodities.

If she masters the social language of the banqueting table, Markham may advance her to "the office of the Clerk of the Kitchen." On top of the consummate execution of cookery, the mistress ought to master the rules of engagement and entertainment at the banqueting table: "if she want skill to marshall the dishes and set every one in his due place, giving precedency according to fashion and customs" "the office of the Clerk of the Kitchen" fails miserably like a Fencer "leading a band of men in a rout . . . [without knowing] how to put men in order."¹⁵⁰ A decorous reconstruction of the theater of proper manners, with dishes and guests of varied courses and ranks, grants the hostess a quasi-public office, a form of fantasy qualification. The consummate housewife in Markham's recipe-cum-conduct book is the self-effacing agent who not only gratifies her guests' eye and stomach but also legitimates his sense of social worth.

The housewife's predominant role was not of a partaker but of a purveyor of the banquet: it is her husband who "gives" the banquet just as the modern-day Thanksgiving feast honors the father, who says grace and carves the turkey, which the mother has duly prepared. The "compleat woman" in Markham locution is a patronizing overstatement since her autonomy is, as prescribed by Markham himself, intermediate between subjugation and governance, and her labor, however competent, is of unproductive nature. For one, her gastronomical labor is in itself of "voiding" nature: once the feast is consumed, the housewife's labor disappears and hunger comes back. In addition, the nature of her labor may invite the suspicion and disapproval of the householder: instead of producing capital or durable goods, she labors to spend. Either of the capitalist bias toward the zero-sum nature of domestic labor or the masculine comfort with feminine temperance—or both—early modern conduct books advocated asceticism for the housewife's own behavior of consumption. Markham also exhorts the mistress to govern her own person in disciplined, ascetic prudence, upholding the double standard that confined middle-class women within the codes of temperance and self-effacement.¹⁵¹ Women should neither be prodigal nor covet others' means since "as lavish prodigality is bruitish, so miserable covetousness is hellish."¹⁵²

As if to countervail the extravagance of his recipes of exotic ingredients and extraordinary amount of sugar and meat, Markham adopts a nationalistic voice to dictate that the housewife keep in check her appetite, comfort, and fancy for her own person. He commands the housewife's personal diet should "rather satisfie nature, than our affections, and apter to kill hunger than to revive new appetites; let it proceed more from the provision of her own yard, than the furniture of the Markets." Appealing to her patriotic sentiments, he

continues: “Let it be rather esteemed for the familiar acquaintance she hath with it, than for the strangeness and rarity it bringeth from other Countries.”¹⁵³ The housewife should also prefer a simple, pragmatic garment that would give away the modest matron under it: she ought to avoid “toyish garnishes, or the gloss of light colours, and as far from the vanity of new and fantastick fashions” “as lavish prodigality is bruitish.”¹⁵⁴ Homespun, muted domesticity is the proper mode of self-government for women. In sum, such quasi-dyspeptic asceticism and self-effacing dress codes pronounce her inner virtue. The housewife who wastes household resources, either through mismanagement or self-indulgence, is ill-equipped to enjoy “the freedom of Marriage” in Markham’s eyes. The wasteful and gluttonous women are declared unfit for marriage. Markham alienates the middle-class housewife from the gustatory experience of the banqueting table she herself set forth. For the fair banqueting house is a masculine and mercantile project, which the consummate middle-class house-wife facilitates without claiming a seat at the table.

The History of the Cauldron, the Grotesque, and the Witch

Despite the exponential growth of the consumer market during the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras and royal proclamations that promoted charity, many villagers still suffered malnutrition, making diseases such as scurvy a common condition. While the prospering burghers were able to showcase their cultural and social achievement through luxuriating in dispensable edibles, the poor had no other choice but to suffer famines, bad harvests, and the seasonal flux of supply, surviving on white meat (eggs), cheese, and coarse bread made of acorn flour.¹⁵⁵ The petty grievance one of the witches harbors in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* may reveal the socio-economic distance between the well-to-do and the penurious: chestnuts, what

might have been a substitute for wheat flour to the “weird” sisters, were snack food to “the rump-fed runnion” who gratingly “munched, and munched, and munched” (1.3.5, 4). The women who were branded as witches bore the traces of struggles for survival at the teeth of indigence; for example, one contemporary Italian physician wrote, witches were “miserable old women, beggars, existing in the valleys on chestnuts and field herbs.”¹⁵⁶

Undeniably, Jacobean witch accusations were closely correlated with the indispensable aspect of daily consumption even though the prosecuting party, including alarmist pamphleteers, sought to shed providential legitimacy on the witch-hunt. The anonymous pamphleteer of *The Wonderfvl Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower, daughters of Ioan Flower neere Beuer Castle* (1618) constructs an image of a cantankerous witch of petty divination ability, eclipsing the socio-economic standing of Joan Flowers, whose survival depended on neighborly charity and tolerance. Apprehended around Christmas of 1617, Flowers died in jail having begged for bread and butter, swearing her innocence: she “wished it might neuer goe through her if she were guilty of that wherevpon shee was examined; so mumbling it in her mouth, neuer spake more wordes after, but fell downe and dyed as shee was carryed to Lincolne Goale.”¹⁵⁷ Her final protest of innocence reads more like a last plea for food. Alimentary deprivation and the cold jail cell might have ironically helped her alleged ability of divination by precipitating her death.

Just as she supposedly bragged about her familiar’s foretelling that “shee should neyther be hanged nor burnt,” the preposterous validation of the witch’s self-fulfilling prophecy allows Joan Flowers the disturbing power of divination, only to validate the prosecution’s claims, whose just execution was usurped by the supercilious woman’s self-willed death. No matter

how mysterious and devastating the death and ailments of her alleged victims were, the 1617 Lincoln witch trials encompass the gritty reality of an old woman perishing in a freezing jail cell denied bread and butter during the charity-giving season of Christmas. As Thomas Tusser counseled his readers, "At Christmas be merye, & thankful withal / & feast thy poore neighbors ye gret with ye small," the Christmas season was the occasion of hospitality and the gentry were expected to treat their yeomen and husbandmen with finer bread and ale in honor of the spirit of "wassailing."¹⁵⁸ Denied of bread and butter, an old, deformed, and unemployed woman was starved and frozen to death in the Christmas season: the system of charity and communality was broken down.

The Wonderfvl Discoverie of the Witchcraft also reports that during the same assize session—again, in the Christmas season of 1617—the judges examined three other accused women from Leicestershire. Anne Baker of Bottesford confessed bewitching Elizabeth Hough to death "for that shee angred her in giuing her almes of her second bread; confesseth that she was angry with her and said she might haue given her of her better bread, for she had gone too often on her errands, but more she saith not."¹⁵⁹ In Baker's taciturn anger, her resentment for the breach of trust and understanding the two previously shared is detectable. A spinster and probably a self-fashioned wise woman, Baker seems to have depended on scraps of charity and meager compensations for the odd jobs she did for neighbors and the stingy treatment from Hough probably resulted in a neighborly rift. The anonymous pamphleteer strives to characterize the resentment those accused women harbored as *maleficium* (characteristic of English witchcraft discourse) to link it to the satanic pact (a routine feature in continental witchcraft fantasy).¹⁶⁰ Despite the author's description of witches' demonic complicity, beneath

the cantankerous old witch lies a deprived, dependent woman at odds with her well-to-do neighbors and who literally died begging for food. The pamphleteer's proselytizing moral about the deaths of Joan Flowers and Anne Baker veils the reality of the accused women's meager existence and dearth of food.

The female transgression of proper dietary self-government is likewise a conspicuous trait in the two rounds of Pendle witch trials in 1612 and 1634. In the former year, Lancashire was thrown into an escalating witch scare that eventually saw ten witches hanged and more expire while in jail. During this first Pendle witch trial, even young children testified against their own family members. Jennet Device, a nine year old, either confused with fear or inflicted with a short-sighted childish will for vengeance, testified against her own family.¹⁶¹ Thomas Potts, a court clerk who authored *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster* (1612), relays Jennet's testimony in this manner:

The said Jennet Device saith, That upon Good Friday last there was about twentie persons (whereof onely two were men, to this Examinates remembrance) at her said Grandmothers house, called Malking-Tower aforesaid, about twelve of the clocke: all with persons this Examinates said mother told her, were Witches, and that they came to give a name to Alizon Device Spirit, or Familiar, sister to this Examinee, and now prisoner at Lancaster. And also this Examinee saith, That the persons aforesaid had to their dinners Beefe, Bacon, and roasted Mutton; which Mutton (as this Examinates said brother said) was of a Weather of Christopher Swyers of Barley: which Wether was brought in the night before into this Examinates mothers house by the said James Device, this Examinates said brother: and in this Examinates sight killed and eaten, as foresaid.¹⁶²

Jennet's second "confession," which virtually reproduced the first testimony to the letter, has not Christopher Swyers but Robinson of Barley as the owner of the thieved wether. Neither Swyers nor Robinson seemed to have claimed restitution for his supposedly stolen property.

In such a discrepancy, a modern legal mind would detect factual contradictions that may invalidate her deposition. Yet it hardly mattered in prosecutor's argument. Not the niceties of legality regarding stolen property and its restitution but the implications of their seamy activities on Good Friday—meat eating and ram slaughtering—seem to have mattered more. In fact, the Good Friday meeting at Malken Tower was a reconciliatory attempt to mitigate neighborly resentment of embroiled families, and attendees seemed to seek arrangement for a jail break for the imprisoned. However, young Jennet's testimony painted it as a witches' Sabbath, in which blasphemous deeds were committed: the naming ritual of a familiar, a sacrilegious slaughtering of a ram, and the consumption of meat. Gibson's analytical reading suggests Potts inscribed his desire to hear his own voice echo through Jennet.¹⁶³ At any rate, the "willing" violation of dietary prescriptions by the matriarch Elizabeth Device and her family members provided ample damning evidence against themselves.

The willfulness to defy religio-social dietary norms of Good Friday incriminated the accused at the first Pendle witch trial only to reverberate again in the second Pendle trial.¹⁶⁴

This deposition comes from eleven-year-old Edmund Robinson on February 10, 1634:

[At the Hoarstones' dwelling] they had a fire and meat roasting in the said house. Whereof a young woman, whom this informer knoweth not, gave him flesh and bread upon a trencher and drink in a glass, which after the first taste he refused and would have no more but said it was naught. And presently after, seeing diverse of the said company going into a barn near adjoining, he followed after them and there he saw six of them kneeling and pulling, all six of them, six several ropes which were fastened or tied to the top of the barn. Presently after which pulling there came into this informer's sight flesh smoking, butter in lumps, and milk, as it were flying from the said ropes. All which fell into basins which were placed under the said ropes. And after that these six had done, there came other six which did so likewise. And during all the time of their several pulling they made such ugly faces as scared this informer, so that he was glad to run out and steal homewards.¹⁶⁵

The strange food at the Hoarstones and the supernatural banquet at the barn are reconstructed through a young boy confused with terror. The supposed witches' communion with spurious banqueting stuff, appearing from thin air, demonstrates a band of witches acquiring the undeserved abundance of "flesh smoking, butter in lumps, and milk" without cost and labor. The criminality of the accused lies in their uncanny access to foodstuffs.¹⁶⁶

Early modern witchcraft fantasy needs to be read with both improbable possibility and probable impossibility in mind: did the witches possibly fly in the air or was it possible only in the delusional mind of the harried with a rough life? If recipe books by Markham and his ilk testified to the upwardly-mobile aspiration and monetary prosperity of the middling sort, one locus that evinces the gap between pompous self-display and penurious survival is the stereotypical scene of witchcraft: the primitive cooking scene with a cauldron in which every possible ingredient goes in to supplement palatability and nutritional value. The hundred-twenty-year-old Hecate Middleton ridicules was obviously one who belonged to the old tradition of cookery and consumption even by the socio-economic standards of the seventeenth century. Hecate and her cronies hunching over the cauldron would have been quite similar to what the audience understood as the bizarrely realistic portrayals of old women without means.

The witches' primitive cooking utensils, such as cauldrons and pipkins, and the rudimentary recipes of stewing all ingredients in one pot bear the stark reality of the poverty-stricken, to whom sustenance was a bigger priority than style and variety. Mark Overton and others have investigated probate inventories in Kent and Cornwall during the period from 1600 to 1750, whose findings shed a light on the hackneyed correlation of Middleton's witch with her

cherished “brazen dish” (a cauldron), both a vanishing point of old myth and old economy. Entrepreneurial opportunities and geographical proximity to the continent and London facilitated the middling sort in Kent with more wealth—hence, more cooking utensils in number and variety—compared to their Cornish counterparts. Along with the growing use of serviettes, skillets (of evolving shapes and materials) and saucepans (which were to replace skillets during the eighteenth century) became household items faster in Kent, in which the use of different saucepans indicates “more intensive and skillful type of cookery,” a par with the popular reception of recipe books.¹⁶⁷ Kent had more “spit-jacks,” a mechanism for roasting a whole animal carcass, since Kent had more spits and probably more means to buy a whole pig.

In Kent, “wafering irons, spice boxes, cranes, irons to put before the fire to heat flagons of drink, and multitudinous types of pans” were commonplace, testifying to the various cooking methods with more convenience, while in Cornwall, “the variety of cooking and hearth equipment showed little change throughout the period.”¹⁶⁸ Cornish households used skillets on a consistent basis and were slower in adopting saucepans, which Overton explains indicates “less change in cooking methods and a smaller demand for new types of cooking utensils.”¹⁶⁹ The less diversity and fewer cooking utensils in Cornwall denote that the poorer community retained the older style and methods of dietary culture longer.

The quaint cooking device, the cauldron, virtually disappeared in Kent by 1690 even though over twenty percent of households in both counties owned them during the first three decades of the seventeenth century and the one-pot dishes prepared in a cauldron or in a crock gradually went out of style.¹⁷⁰ Instead of skillets and saucepans and without accompanying serviettes, the poor had to rely on cauldrons for a longer period of time. That the cauldron was

an already antiquated cookware by the end of the seventeenth century suggests that the formulaic featuring of witches with a boiling cauldron in early modern plays, including Middleton's, betrays the isolation, deprivation, and obsolescence to which many accused witches were relegated. The presence of more cauldrons in Cornwall may not directly correlate with more witchcraft accusation; however, such a routine feature in witchcraft paraphernalia as the cauldron clearly corresponds to the socio-economic prejudices against old mendicant women of the early modern era, who were the predominant demographical group in witch trials.¹⁷¹

The bizarre image of old hags, stirring revolting ingredients into their cauldron, reveals more about their socio-economic liminality than of their diabolic appetite. The farcical exaggeration of self-proclaimed witches who pile around cauldrons and hunt for eggs and herbs while supposedly gorged on banquetting stuff throws a thin veil over the socio-economic conflicts and resulting resentments of tax-paying neighbors toward those mendicant, unproductive, wandering population. The liminal presence of mendicant women during the seventeenth century, as their primitive cooking utensils intimate, seems to be related to the farcical and trifling portrayal of Jacobean dramatic witches. Real-life witchcraft trials and Markham's text set a socio-cultural context for Middleton's portrayal of gluttonous women: women's pronounced passion for edibles is already a transgression, which becomes easily associated with criminality. As a banquet on Good Friday criminalized Elizabeth Device, the eager bellies of Middleton's women are reprobate and satanic. The fattening bawds in Cheapside overburden their community with their base issue, and Livia's perversion of healthy consumption devastates Leantio's ideal of bourgeois marriage, eventually making her mansion

a vault “where carcasses lie rotting” (*Women Beware Women* 3.2.18). In *The Witch*, women’s intemperate pursuit for banqueting stuff renders Francisca, Florida, and the witches contemptuous and antagonistic toward matrimony.

Isabella as the paragon of the consummate housewifery is at best an oxymoron, in that she is married (twice!) but remains virtuous (meaning virginal). In order to safeguard Isabella as a married but unconsummated wife, the text relies on the improbable possibility of *deus ex machinae*: Isabella’s secretly-married husband, presumed to be a war casualty, returns to claim her as wife; her second husband, who is unable to consummate his marriage to her, falls to death through a trapdoor of which nobody was aware. In behalf of the virtuous virginal wife, the text adulterates tragedy with comedic incredulities, mixing chaste love with witches’ charm. My concern is that seeking to cast the ideal housewife as a sexual and gustatory abstinent, the text formulates an imaginary correlation between women’s daily and restorative food intake along with their occasional epicurean excursion to a banqueting house and their latency of sexual transgression; meanwhile, the wholesome consumption and sexuality of men are at the mercy of manipulative women with voracious appetite. *Divide et impera*—divide women into the housewife and the witch, and rule the former and cast the latter—that is the motto in Middleton’s *Ravenna*.

Indigence of Illicit Bellies: Her Appetite, His Purse

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside singles out desire for consumption as a female trait. Fattened on Sir Walter’s prodigality, his adulterous mistress Allwit gives birth to a bastard baby girl after a succession of bastard boys. Her illicit belly epitomizes female voracity: the village gossips who gobble up sweetmeats at the bastard’s christening, the numerous mistresses who

fake illness to circumvent Lenten restrictions, and the prostitute whose fleshly transactions are a means for obtaining edible flesh, confiscated meat.

Female dietary transgression results in an adulteration of the social system. Sir Walter attempts to prevent his bastards from disrupting his (future) legitimate children's birthright: "For they must not mingle / Amongst my children that I get in wedlock; / 'Twill make foul work, that, and raise many storms" (1.2.134-36). In his purist vision of primogeniture—mingling breeds foul issue—he fails to notice that his adulterous mingling with a commoner's wife is in itself foul. Aristocrats' bastards would be relegated to the middling sort, probably as apprentices as Wat and Nick are arranged to be, while a commoner's wife indulges herself in exquisite junkets.

Sir Walter, when hurt and humiliated, blames his fall on Mistress Allwit, claiming that he was "well" until the married woman seduced him (5.1.62-63). He also faults her for her bad mothering that harmed him, her child/lover. Quite self-centered, he assigns the motherly obligation of leading her son to the right path onto his partner in adultery and chides her for crying:

This shows like
The fruitless sorrow of a careless mother
That brings her son with dalliance to the gallows
And then stands by and weeps to see him suffer. (5.1.63-66)

The female adulterer is a bad mother to a helpless lover of hers as well as to her offspring. Adulteresses impoverish and demoralize the community by bearing superfluous base stock and leading naive men into destruction. In Sir Walter's apologetic penitence, his social and economic superiority in the unlawful union is conveniently ignored. In order to justify his appetite for philandering, he upholds a double standard in which sexual mingling with the

middling sort taints the bloodline of the gentry and women of easy virtue are branded as bad mothers.

A less fortunate noble philanderer, Touchwood Sr. is separated from the bed and board of his wife: he is unable to support his children born of lawful and gentle parentage and still harried with lust of flammable intensity. A penurious gentleman also overburdens the economic system of the community. This poor gentleman exposes his children to further social and economic disadvantages and one bastard child of his is even abandoned by his own mother, likely to be the parish's liability. Fortunately for him, in the mercenary world of Cheapside, he can "buy" material means with his seeds of the gentry and thus he secretly proceeds to "sell" his seeds to Lady Kix whose husband, as his family name Kix imparts a dried up plant stalk, is infertile. Sir Walter and Touchwood Sr. perpetrate socio-economic degeneration through uncontrolled sexual behavior; nonetheless, it is Mistress Allwit and the country wench, who abandons her bastard, that physically bear the proof of sexual transgression, bastards, and thus are made responsible for the economic downfall of the community. The fuller their bellies get, the poorer the community gets.

On the other hand, the surfeited male belly is, in the spirit of comedy, condoned. Touchwood Sr. takes pride in his belly and eagerly consumes aphrodisiacs. Trying to escape from paternal responsibility, he portrays his sexual appetite as generosity toward women: "if I ha't / Without my belly, none of your sex shall want it" (2.1.94-95). In fact, his expertise in philandering helps him discover the grounds of the Kixes' marital discord: he diagnoses that Lady Kix has "deep passion" "[f]or the imprisonment of veal and mutton" and weeps "for some calf's head now" (121, 22-23). The Kixes' marital squabble stems from male infertility, yet

Touchwood Sr. casts the blame onto Lady Kix's sexual discontent with her husband. The early modern belief in the female climax for sexual reproduction might explain the logic behind why sexual frustration causes marital infertility, but Lady Kix's supposed eagerness for a feast of veal and mutton implies her predisposition to cuckold her husband since such meats are known to "sharpen blood, delight health, and tickle nature" (2.2.94-96).

The couple's need for an heir in order to retain their household property within their direct blood line—Sir Walter has been leading the prodigal life counting on his kin Kix's infertility—forces them to accept Touchwood Sr.'s scheme to "treat" Lady Kix's infertility with his "little vial of almond milk" (3.3.104). The charlatan's semen is commodified as a sought-after restorative drink flavored with expensive almond. Avid to seek treatment for "her" infertility, Lady Kix has to bear the consequence of transgressive consumption and sexuality and she is already associated with bawds in their shared passion for veal, mutton, and calf's head. Moreover, she does not forget to specify that "the physic must needs please" (172). In service to the patrilineal heirship, Lady Kix needs to trade her marital chastity for a pregnancy; however, the bane is in her willingness in taking the "vial."

While Sir Oliver "cannot do withal" (2.1.140)—unable to stand, unwittingly evoking a wittol's fate through negating—and willingly pays off the "combustibly" virile Touchwood Sr., Allwit, the witting wittol, lives off Sir Walter in exchange for his marital bed and providing a nominal cover of paternity to his bastards.¹⁷² While both Sir Oliver and Allwit suffer the ignominy of the sexual inability to fill his wife's belly, it is Allwit the commoner who harbors and lets slip his contempt for gluttonous women—a thin veil over his self-disgust and anger towards

his constantly “full” wife. Allwit, spying on corrupt promoters fleecing Lenten meat smugglers, directs his disdain, strangely, to the voracious bawds not to the promoters:

The bawds will be so fat with what they earn,
 Their chins will hang like udders by Easter Eve,
 And, being stroked, will give the milk of witches. (2.2. 74-76)

The flabby prostitutes who transgress the Lenten regulations on fasting and abstinence by devouring confiscated meat, the flesh payment for their sexuality, are disparagingly associated with cow’s udders and then further vilified as witches: the dangling bovine blubber evokes the fantastic image of witches’ giving suck to their familiars.

This outburst reveals more than simple indignation toward infringers of Lenten customs and laws: Allwit’s disdain of gluttonous women seems to veil his aversion to female sexuality and pregnancy—sexually promiscuous women publicly exposing their engorged lactating breasts. In his repulsion toward the pregnant female body, Allwit conjures up a grotesque image of a wrinkly witch suckling her demon child. Sir Walter Whorehound accused his adulterous mistress of bad mothering; now, the cuckold projects his disgust of female sexual traffickers on the grotesque and malicious “mother,” the witch. Throwing a “fourtra” at the promoters, Allwit triumphantly declares: “My wife lies in” (107). New mothers as well as sick people were exempt from Lenten abstinence, which entitles him to override the dietary regulations the promoters seek to impose. Under his boast of Lenten waiver lie his complacency and disgust over the “ill-gotten” meat. Nonetheless, Allwit associates his cuckolding wife with the bawd who fattens during Lent and the witch mother who suckles her demon child.

In addition, the proverbial association of prostitutes and mutton is exploited here. To conceal veal for his wife and her kin on Good Friday, a smuggler pretends to carry “a pair of sheets and two of my wife’s foul smocks” (2.2.198-99); unwittingly, he implies that his wife’s desire for foodstuffs is as flagrant as her foul undergarment. Yet, it is specifically “a fat quarter of lamb” that the second promoter seeks to confiscate for “a kind gentlewoman in Turnbull Street that longs” for it (2.2.128-29). The “kind gentlewoman” in the notorious brothel district is a gourmand who has a keen appetite for meat dishes that “sharpen blood, delight health, and tickle nature” (94-96). The harlot’s sexual depravity overlaps her satanic defiance of Good Friday: she insists on a lamb dish.

Exploiting his well-established network of bribery, Sir Oliver is able to spare “[a] rack of mutton” and “half a lamb” (139) from confiscation. His excuse, “You know my mistress’s diet” (139), associates Lady Kix with mutton and lamb, implicating her willingness for sexual transgression. Her future pregnant belly may secure household properties through a violation of her marital chastity, but her husband’s pronouncement of her desire for mutton and lamb already elicits misgivings about her wifely virtue and their marital harmony. The unwed mother of Touchwood Sr.’s bastard also exploits the promoters’ venality: she camouflages her bastard with mutton and lamb, a small compensation for the unpleasant work of disposing a child. Her pretense of carrying mutton during Lent also underlines women’s proverbial partiality for mutton: “’Tis for a wealthy gentlewoman that takes physic, sir; the doctor does allow my mistress mutton” (2.2.164-65). In this scene of Lenten infractions, the all-too-human fault of craving what is forbidden is strongly associated with the female belly and its base issue—bastards that burden the community and household economy. The voracious female belly at

once transgresses religio-cultural abstinence rules, whose violation goes side by side with sexual impropriety, which breeds the unsettling possibility of producing the base issue. The overly eager desire for mutton women shamelessly admit is a reminder of a more insidious female desire for sex.

Soon after the institutionalized tradition of Lent is abused by the venal promoters, the meat smugglers, and the unwed mother, a private banquet celebrating the christening of the bastard girl is set forth. The keepsakes for the new child include spoons and a cup—items that revolve around consumption in its symbolic form. Village gossips, including two Puritan women, devour sweetmeats and wine at the bastard's christening. After guzzling down enough, the gossips blatantly start to pocket comfits into "the tasseled handkerchers" (3.2.58) to take home, snatching them away from the host. Allwit begrudges them even though his purse did not provide for this banquet: "These women have no consciences at sweetmeats, where'er they come" (70-71). This is not an isolated incident of greedy women. He continues: "No mar'l I heard a citizen complain once that his wife's belly only broke his back" (74-75). The voracious consumption of those women at a wealthier neighbor's feast is seamlessly linked with female sexual voracity that had bankrupted (and incapacitated, as the sexual innuendo has it) the householder.

His detestation of gluttonous gossips and fat bawds thinly camouflages his disgust of his wife's belly—the emblem of her sexual trading and prodigal consumption. However, Allwit's antipathy toward the gluttonous women is an outburst of his disgust toward himself as well as his wife. Allwit observes that when his wife lies in she consumes the gargantuan amount of restoratives, "Her sugar by whole loaves, her wines by runlets," enough to set up an

apothecary's shop (1.2.35-38). Under his mask of jovial complacency does his self-loathing lurk: "I am as clear / From jealousy of a wife as from the charge" (49-50). Trying to thwart Sir Walter Whorehound's marriage to Moll Yellowhammer, Allwit exposes not only Sir Walter as a whoremonger but also himself as a wittol. In spite of his resolve to keep his compliance secret, he starts to accuse himself as a trafficker in his wife's flesh, as butchers and poulters deal with animal carcasses: "'Tis his living, as other trades thrive—butchers by selling flesh, poulters by venting conies" (4.1. 236-38). Aside from his secret shame and self-loathing, Allwit equates women and meat. The comic but persistent obsession in this play with the female belly—the pregnant bellies of Mistress Allwit and Lady Kix, the village gossips' bottomless stomachs, and the mutton-craving mistresses in the background—betrays the early modern fear of uncontrolled female appetites that yield overall social degeneration in the busy side of London, Cheapside of the goldsmithing district.

The cure for the gluttonous female belly lies in the proper marital government of the householder: Allwit through labor, Oliver Kix through an heir, and the Touchwood brothers through financial security all rise up to claim the honor of the householder. Having gambled on others' misfortune, Sir Walter, spent and wounded at the younger Touchwood's sword, is easily driven out of the Allwit household, in which the erstwhile wittol reclaims the householder's authority: "whoe'er games, the box is sure a winner" (5.1.187)—the box (the house) is bound to be the winner while the gambler gradually squanders all his money. No more pandering his wife, he will now earn household income through labor, opening up a boarding house (5.2.176-81). Allwit contentedly observes his increased "household-stuff" (5.1.173) and notes with pride an

acquisition of “a closestool of tawny velvet” (5.1.180). Only the industrious householder can govern his wife’s appetite, which becomes otherwise unruly and destructive.

Lady Kix’s belly, notwithstanding the dubious conception, will provide Sir Oliver with an heir; Sir Oliver no longer has to “father” Sir Walter as an unredeemable prodigal son. The assured householder now congratulates himself on his regained manhood: “I think I have bestirred my stumps, i’faith” (5.3.2). The concerted performance of Touchwood Jr. and Moll to get married, literally triumphant over death, validates the romanticized ideal of marriage, and suggests the possibility of marital harmony other married couples temporarily seem to achieve. However, the only deserving housewife is the one who is still virginal, and the new husband, the younger Touchwood, shares the same family trait as his older brother, the combustible desire to burn (in sexual passion). Marital harmony is at best tenuous and still compromised in Middleton’s Cheapside.

The female belly, farcically exaggerated and denigrated in Allwit’s warped psyche, outlines a communal fear and loathing of the unchecked appetite of old village gourmards and salacious younger women. While mutton-craving young women are latent whores who eagerly seek to circumvent Lenten restrictions, old village gossips guzzling wine and gobbling comfits at a social banquet are an eyesore to the banquet givers. The reclaimed Allwit may forbid village gossips in his premises; however, Leantio, another frustrated householder in *Women Beware Women*, has one of them in his own household. Leantio’s widowed Mother, like an Italian version of the Cheapside gossips, embodies the unprepossessing gluttony of poorer neighbors, and her oblivious self-indulgence brings in a devastating consequence on Leantio’s marriage. In a darker climate apropos to tragedy, *Women Beware Women* resolves the intrigue of betrayed

sex, blood, and ambition, frequently delivered through food metaphors, during a royal banquet. To the female league of sexual transgressors, Livia, Isabella, and Bianca, tantalizing food metaphors are their means of manipulation.¹⁷³ On the other hand, the minor character of Leantio's mother is discourteously earnest in her desire for banqueting stuff and naively plays a detrimental role in Bianca's fall and devastates Leantio's aspiration for a self-governed bourgeois household.

While both the village widow and the Venetian importee may be socially insignificant, the eminent Florentine ladies, Livia and Isabella, speak the language of dietary perversion reflective of their apertness to sexual transgression. Once the virtuous façades Livia, Isabella, and Bianca put on come off, the language they adopt conveys their obsessive desire for the edibles: women's "tongue-discourse" (2.2.152) revolves around food metaphors. Livia compares husbands' marital privileges to their entitlement for delectables: "he tastes of many sundry dishes / That we poor wretches never lay our lips to" (1.2.42-43). Yet, she whets Hippolito's appetite for Isabella, portraying it as wholesome consumption: "'Tis but like saying grace before a feast" (1.2.155). Her vocabulary affects Hippolito, who rejoins in the same figurative consumption of desires that "feed inward" and "consume" him silently (1.2.163, 64).

In her overconfident mischief and misguided affection for her brother Hippolito, Livia incites Isabella to follow the path her stomach desires, saying "I'll make you no set dinner" (2.1.124). Won over by Livia's deceptively "virtuous pity" (184)—her elaborate fabrication of Isabella's parentage—the young girl now addresses her uncle in Livia's brand of gustatory figures, tantalizing her "friend" Hippolito to enjoy the banquet she is to set up:

When we invite our best friends to a feast,
'Tis not all sweetmeats that we set before them;

There's somewhat sharp and salt, both to whet appetite
 And make 'em taste their wine well. So methinks
 After a friendly, sharp, and savory chiding
 A kiss tastes wondrous well, and full o'th'grape. (2.1.199-204)

Now Isabella alleges that her initial aversion to her uncle's incestuous passion was in fact a taster's trick to arouse his senses. Her linguistic revision lands her a juicy kiss: her oral manipulation of an appetite is rewarded with the confirmation of oral pleasure. Fallen and incestuous, Isabella resorts to food imagery to observe, express, implicate, and manipulate, echoing Livia's lexicon.

Speculating on her marriage to the Ward, Isabella compares him to base victuals she has to accept as a cover for her libertine pursuit of rare delicacies, her incestuous object of desire. She proceeds to lay out her plan to keep her "friend" (occasional consumption of delicacies) alongside her husband (quotidian victuals). On the other hand, the Ward considers his appetite as the source of male sexual prowess: if "in presence of a fool, or a sack-posset" (1.2.120), he is willing to marry any maid. The "lusty" (123) Ward routinely consumes "eggs-in-moonshine" and swears by it: "There's ne'er a one I eat but turns into a cock in four-and-twenty hours" (125, 126-27). The aphrodisiac properties of certain foods he craves translate into his indiscriminate sexual activities. The Ward's desire for such foodstuffs may be vulgar and ridiculous but his vulgarity pales in comparison to Isabella's perversion of others' consumption. Sugarcoating her desire for "cates," Isabella seeks to cancel out morals of wifely chastity, and justifies female sexual dalliance as a matter of complaisance: "when she comes to keep house for herself" "She's glad of some choice cates then once a week, / Or twice at most, and glad if she can get 'em" (2.1.223-25). Isabella's wily formulation of wifely infidelity as a cultured behavior, coming from a self-willed high-class woman, must have challenged what most patrons of the

theater and subscribers to early modern conduct books cherished as the ideal of the well-governed, well-governing middle class housewife. Isabella's travestied appetite is what a maiden, "when she comes to keep house for herself," should be warned against.

Hippolito attributes the wonderous persuasion of Livia's "tongue-discourse" that transformed Isabella's language and attitudes to witchcraft: "'Tis beyond sorcery, this! Drugs, or love-powers— / Some art that has no name" (2.1.233-34). Women's manipulative tongue, in perverting wholesome and decorous consumption, is as diabolical and supernatural as sorcerer's verbal charms. Livia uses not only "tongue-discourse" but also actual foodstuffs in her machinations of others. Orchestrating the Duke's rape of Bianca, Livia virtually administers wormwood that poisons the young woman's healthy diet, her sexual fast for her travelling husband. With a bait of banqueting stuff, Livia lures and disarms the reluctant Mother and readies a "love banquet" the Duke can ravish. Double entendres, terms of equivocation, are rampant while Livia holds the oblivious Mother at the chessboard and her accomplice, Guardiano, readies Bianca for the Duke by deliberately exposing the young woman to pornographic paintings that will "prepare her stomach by degrees / To Cupid's feast" (404-5). As Livia observes "Sin tastes at the first draft like wormwood water / But, drunk again, 'tis nectar ever after" (2.2.479-80), Bianca all too quickly acquires the taste for the illicit banquet.¹⁷⁴ Livia's influence over Bianca is manifest through Bianca's changed attitude toward the bitter but addictive taste of wormwood. Even though due to its versatility and distinct flavor, brewers added it to wine and beer, wormwood, also known as *Artemisia Absinthium*, was often associated with the goddess of the moon and thus with witchcraft. Livia's influence on Isabella

and Bianca who now willingly transgress social and moral prescriptions on dietary prudence and decorum is analogous to witches' malevolent nurturing.

The top-down corruption of sexual and dietary depravity causes the disintegration of Leantio's marriage, whose demise demands blood from all malefactors against his middle-class project. At the wedding banquet of the Duke and Bianca, all banquet abusers get their just des(s)erts and Hippolito admits the appalling bloodbath at the banquet is the poetic justice for killing Leantio: "Leantio's death / Has brought all this upon us—now I taste it" (5.2.150-1). The dietary escapades of the banquet abusers destroy a meritocratic middle-class venturer and his aspirations for a self-governing middle-class household. Before his fall, Leantio endorses the Calvinist work ethic, considering material prosperity as the touchstone of matrimonial harmony and success: "man loves best / When his care's most" (1.3.22-23); "love that's wanton must be ruled awhile / By that that's careful, or all goes to ruin" (41-42). Hence, he is determined not to be a "spendthrift" of "fondness" toward his wife (54, 24) until his "chest's full / And the long warehouse cracks" (26-27).

In defense of the austere control of his affection and economy, Leantio uses the tropes of the body politic and casts the bourgeois household as a microcosm of the state:

As fitting is a government in love
 As in a kingdom; where 'tis all mere lust
 'Tis like an insurrection in the people
 That, raised in self-will, wars against all reason.
 But love that is respectful for increase
 Is like a good king that keeps all in peace. (1.3.43-48)

He proudly considers his good governance and resultant material prosperity more rewarding than pleasure in pastime and the company of his spouse. Leantio blindly believes his secret marriage is like a fair banqueting house with a solid foundation:

Honest wedlock

Is like a banqueting-house built in a garden
 On which the spring's chaste flowers take delight
 To case their modest odors, when base lust,
 With all her powders, paintings, and best pride
 Is but a fair house built by a ditch side. (3.2.8-13)

The fair banqueting house, however, carried—to some contemporary moralists at any rate—shady reputations as romantic hideaway, and the chaste spring flower, whom he prematurely plucked off her parental bed, is already powdered, painted, and driven by base lust. His ideal of lawful consumption at the banqueting house reveals his naïve understanding in that he closes his eyes to the decadence of secretive private banquets (the ones Livia abuses in her pandering of Isabella and Bianca). He is oblivious of the libertine indulgence surfeiting on banqueting stuff was believed to feed. Unable to see the trembling grounds of his marital project, Leantio is also blind to the fact that Bianca has turned out to be the “glorious dangerous strumpet” (3.2.14). His comparison of a strumpet to “a goodly temple / That’s built on vaults where carcasses lie rotting” (3.2.17-18) prophetically anticipates the catastrophic bloodshed at Livia’s banquet hall, which literally becomes the goodly temple that contains the dead bodies of high-class strumpets.

Nonetheless, in both marriages—first to the Venetian girl Bianca and then to the lusty Florentine widow Livia—Leantio seeks to establish a bourgeois household with stolen treasure. When cuckolded by his young bride, Leantio quickly discards his pride as an industrious independent householder, prostituting himself as a sexual comfort to a wealthy widow, earning “fair clothes by foul means” (4.1.111). Not only do Leantio’s pride and conviction in bourgeois self-rule collapse and dissipate all too easily, but also he fails in the proper patriarchal governance of his household, his wife and mother. Bianca, the dear stolen gem Leantio seeks to

hide from the public view, refuses to abide by her husband's rules. Peeking out of Leantio's window, which is already a transgressive act for a wife since the physical boundary of the window also indicates the household principles Leantio tried to establish, she solicits the gaze from the ducal procession. Once tasting wormwood wine at Livia's, Bianca grows discontented with her modest marriage to a merchant: "Methinks this house stands nothing to my mind; / I'd have some pleasant lodging i' th' high street" (3.2.46-47). Such haughtiness of a mercantilist's wife must have surely incited jeers of disapprobation from the audience. Somebody might have blurted out "Venetian vanity!" between his teeth.

May she be of noble birth, Bianca is a foreigner, yet she presumes her self-worth merits no less than a duke (no less than the Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose title replaced the Duke of Florence in 1569; thereafter, the Medicis held the duchy for two centuries): Bianca insults her husband's social class by extolling how the Duke provided her "the best content / That Florence can afford" (3.2.40-41). The pre-meditated rape the Duke commits is taken as his induction of the debutante into the Florentine aristocracy. Swollen with pride, Bianca renounces Leantio's proscription of public exposure and justifies her self-exposure at the window as "a sweet recreation for a gentlewoman" (49). Celia Daileader might find this window scene as the young Venetian woman's tantalizing self-presentation in the Aretine mode: she invites the viewer's gaze by "framing" herself as available but unwilling object of desire just like an Aretine pornographic "posture."¹⁷⁵ Her appetite was keen and salacious even before Guardiano tantalizes her appetite with "naked pictures" (2.2.406).

Having breached "a five days' [sexual] fast" (3.2.25) her husband prescribed for her during his absence, Bianca now voices her opposition to Leantio's dietary rules of abstinence. It

is not the young aspiring merchant but the Duke who with advanced age and status can secure means for Bianca to “rest / [g]row fat with ease” (1.3.32-33) and to “banquet and toy and play” (33). Bianca now speaks Livia’s language in expressing her newly-acquired worldly wisdom: “Restraint breeds wand’ring thoughts, as many fasting days / A great desire to see flesh stirring again” (4.1. 32-33). As Bianca and Leantio display mutual acrimony, Bianca’s outlook on dietary restrictions starts to counteract Leantio’s belief in bourgeois temperance.

Leantio is a robber—since he snatched the foreign girl from her parents’ house during one of his mercantile ventures—who in turn is robbed, and his convictions in bourgeois self-government in marriage easily waver; however, the wrongs done to him, not so much by the courtly banquet abusers as by his own household, compensate for his personal shortcomings and make this play the tragedy of Leantio. Mistakenly, Leantio places his confidence on his mother, believing “[o]ld mothers know the world, and such as these, / When sons lock chests, are good to look to keys” (1.1.177-78). Leantio’s Mother is unable to keep Bianca away from the window, and later, only to pocket some junkets, she takes her secret daughter-in-law to the table of her well-to-do neighbor. To lure Bianca to her house, Livia offers the old widow supper at her mansion, flattering her in such terms of cordiality as “neighbors” and “friends” (2.2.219, 41). The Mother’s intemperance in her appetite makes Bianca a helpless pawn of the chess game, leading to the loss of Leantio’s “most matchless jewel” (1.1.164). Livia and Guardiano snidely size up Leantio’s mother as “Sunday-dinner woman” and “Thursday-supper woman” (2.2.3,4).¹⁷⁶ Their disparaging nicknames for the village woman imply that Leantio’s mother is unremarkable except for her gluttonous appetite: with her individuality brushed off, she is only a noisome guest frequenting her affluent neighbor’s charity dinners. Having failed at keeping

her daughter-in-law away from the window, the Mother again betrays her son's confidence in her for some sweetmeats.

Leantio unsuccessfully assumes the overly protective and authoritarian role of a patriarch toward his wife and mother. He blasts his women for immodestly venturing outside the house, meeting up with "gallant bowlers" without wearing the masks (3.2.134, 35). But it is already too late: both Bianca and the Mother found means to escape the restraints and rules Leantio imposes on them. Bianca already tasted the forbidden banquet (adultery) during her supposed fast (her husband's absence) and the Mother for some sweetmeats sabotaged his secret marriage. Even now, the Mother seeks to justify her craving with a pretense of loyalty to the sovereign, who sent for Bianca under the subterfuge of a banquet:

MOTHER: I'll first obey the Duke,
 And taste of a good banquet; I'm of thy mind.
 I'll step but up and fetch two handkerchiefs
 To pocket up some sweetmeats, and o'ertake thee. (3.2.184-87)

Bianca, despite the Mother's unwitting support for her tryst, cannot conceal her scorn of the old woman's craving for "some dry sucket, or a colt in marchpane" (3.2.189).

While the Mother is blinded with craving for sweetmeat, the sumptuous banqueting stuff set forth by his cuckold-maker tortures and mortifies Leantio. Having to ingest both his patriarchal pride and maddening jealousy in front of the lavish banqueting stuff, Leantio is "[h]alf merry and half mad" (3.3.57) like a man who "eats his meat with a good appetite, / And wears a plague-sore that would fright a country" (58-59). He feels like "the barren, hardened ass / That feeds on thistles till he bleeds again" (60-61). Having failed in safeguarding Leantio's secret jewel, the Mother facilitates the despoiling of his appetite and marriage: her unruly appetite virtually invites the disastrous dissolution of her son's matrimonial union. Besieged by

corrupt ladies and lords, whose gluttony is as infectious as a “plague-sore,” the bubonic boil, Leantio cherished the dream of building a fair banqueting house with industry and meant to govern it with tact and economy; however, his false wife and voracious mother collaborate with the banquet abusers in destroying his fair banqueting house.

There is a detrimental female control over banquets and banquet partakers in this play. Livia and Isabella exploit gastronomical desires and customs in their manipulative verbal seductions, beckoning lustful men to enjoy the table before saying grace. Livia uses “sugar and spice and all things nice” to manipulate the voracious Mother and inhospitably “serves” the new wife to the Duke for his illicit consumption. Such banquet abusers who spoil the table without saying grace also abuse the institution of marriage. And much more gratingly, the false housewife transgresses the householder’s rules and symbolic boundaries he set for her, and the intemperate Mother only embitters the marital ideals her son nurtures. However, abused by female wayward appetite, Leantio and his middle-class aspiration are vindicated by the very same conceit of the banquet. Mutual “subtlety” and “art” (5.2.133) kill off Livia and Isabella in the forms of poisoned incense and flaming gold while Bianca’s “sports” (71)—an antimasque during which she tries to orchestrate a political assassination—turn out disastrous. Leantio gets his posthumous revenge on the gluttons who abused him and destroyed his dream of a fair banqueting house.

The Ward sets off a trapdoor, accidentally killing Guardiano, and Hippolito ends it all by impaling himself on “Cupid’s arrow.” Bianca drinks from the same poisoned chalice the Duke drank from and dies a literally “blemished” death with her “white” face eaten by the poison (5.2.207). Bianca may taste “the same death in a cup of love” (224) with the Duke; yet, the

destroyers of Leantio's "fair" banqueting house are destroyed before their matrimony is properly sealed. The self-effacement and temperance of housewifely virtues—if Bianca had abided by Leantio's household rules and the Mother reigned in her appetite—might have spared Leantio's marriage. Due to the wrongs his wayward household members have done him, this play ends up rehabilitating the frustrated marital project of an aspiring bourgeois Leantio in spite of his ineffective principles and self-contradictory conducts. Even though Bianca decries womankind's mutual malevolence, saying "Like our own sex, we have no enemy" (5.2.218), it is rather men who ought to beware their women. Leantio might have reigned, as if the king, in his fair banqueting house if he had married the English housewife who heeded Markham's lessons.

The Witch: *The Virtuous Ascetic and Domestic Saboteur*

Feminine seductive power is frighteningly moralized through women's manipulation of appetite and desire in *Women Beware Women*. In *The Witch*, female transgression of the norm of housewifery—temperate or ascetic consumption—imperils the social, economic, and political well being of the state; however, in witch-infested Ravenna, both men and women exhibit their obsession with foodstuffs. Antonio, the Duke, and Sebastian seek to control their corporeality and manipulate others through dietary practices; so do Isabella, the Duchess, Francisca, Florida, and the witches. Yet the "happy" reunions of the Duke and Sebastian to their reclaimed wives have nothing to do with their or their wives' wayward or virtuous consumption. Instead, the witches, the unwed mother, and the prostitute are pilloried and vilified for their craving for banqueting stuff. Sustaining the double standard in consumption to punish Antonio's prodigal consumption of sexual curatives, to resurrect the Duke from his supposed death, and to restore the returning soldier Sebastian's former identity, Middleton deals with

the witches as the grotesquely facetious antithesis to the consummate middle-class housewife: the self-effacing virtue of the new wife juxtaposed with the warped womanhood and motherhood of old women is the true concern of *The Witch*. In order to advance the temperate model of housewifery, the double standard that genders inordinate and illicit consumption as a feminine trait is selectively applied to Isabella the virtuous virginal widow/wife, who is peculiarly absent from the scene of consumption and thus of sexual indulgence.

Even though it is the male head of the state who initially desecrates Antonio's wedding banquet with a skull cup, his tyranny at the banqueting table is ultimately justified as a military measure to discipline his wife because his treasonous consort's rule of the duchy turns out to be disastrous. After "so many pledged already" (1.1.107), the Duke proposes one last toast in honor of the bride, a very "strange" health in a "strange" cup (104, 105). The Duke insists that his subjects including his wife drink from the skull cup since it is "an excellent way to train up soldiers" (143). He then proceeds to raise his toast in honor of the groom, "charging" Antonio for a male heir (145). In the manner of a "worthy and tried soldier" (147), the inebriated Duke seeks to reiterate his domestic and state sovereignty at a court favorite's wedding banquet. The Duke of Ravenna wants to flaunt both the skull of his former enemy and his daughter, now lovingly obedient to the slayer of her father, as his trophies. Her obedience in drinking from the skull of her husband's defeated enemy would have warranted him with another victory over his symbolic competition against her father for the Duchess's loyalty: the husband asks, "We're dearer than a father are we not?" (122). His disciplining of wifely allegiance through such an abominable and profane pledge, instead, infuriates the daughter of his enemy in his wife, who avows her vengeance on the abusive husband.

The Duke's brash use of the human skull is matched only by Hecate's cherished brazen dish containing the cannibalistic potion for her diabolic flight, as if to outdo each other's grotesque pursuits. The properties the skull cup represents, the husband's symbolic inheritance of the father's prerogatives and the unequivocal obedience of the wife, are parodied in Firestone's inheritance of Hecate's cauldron, the "brazen dish full of dear ware" of witchery (1.2.66). Nonetheless, the Duke uses the skull as a disciplinary apparatus, while the witches' use of the body of an infant, by stuffing it with the potent herbs of poisonous properties, is to elicit sensory pleasures. The Duke's employment of the cranium is misguided but ideologically justifiable and he eventually succeeds in affirming his domestic (and also political) authority over his wife.

Recent illness spares the Governor and bridal honor spares Isabella, but the Duchess, Antonio, Francisca, and Almachildes (this buffoon eagerly partakes, considering such an invitation of the skull toast as the recognition of his merit) drink to the Duke's directive. It is the drinkers from the skull who are in the end exposed with their secret deeds of indiscretion or criminality; on the other hand, the Governor and Isabella retain their integrity and virtue intact: each character's quality of mind is positively associated with the foodstuff each consumes. While the Duke takes advantage of the ritualistic nature of banquets for an exercise of his sovereign will, the magical properties inherent in food are commonly acknowledged by many, including Gaspero, Antonio, Francisca, and, needless to say, the witches. Antonio self-diagnoses his impotence—with the witches' charmed snake skin, Sebastian has inflicted impotence on the snatcher of his betrothed—and seeks to treat himself with "kitchen business" (2.1.31): two cocks boiled to jelly with half an ounce of pearl (11, 13), quite an extravagant recipe. Due to his

sexual surfeit that he believes inflicted him with impotence, Antonio becomes quite vexed at the abundant gifts Aberzanes brings: “I’th’ state that I am,” “ I shall go near to kick this fellow shortly / And send him downstairs with his bag and baggage” (150-52). Incapable of sexually performing with his wife, Antonio thinks his sexual exhaustion comes from his overindulgence in banqueting stuff; hence, Antonio takes Alberzanes’s gifts as a mockery of his condition.

Gasparo also believes in the restorative magical properties inherent in food. He imparts panada—rich bread pudding—can cure sexual exhaustion since such a sugary junket is apt to revive spent male virility. The sympathetic magic in jellied cocks and the sugar boost are not much different from the efficacy of witchcraft. Similarly, Gasparo attributes witchcraft to Florida’s sexual fidelity to Antonio even though witchcraft rendered him impotent with Isabella: “if ever there were man / Bewitched in this world” it is Antonio who can keep a courtesan when he is just married (3.2.42-43). The servant declares his loyalty in terms of culinary care he would give to “half an ounce of pearl and kitchen business” (2.1.31). Gasparo sets up a competition between his trust and a bowl of porridge: “I’ll break my trust in nothing, not in porridge” (33). Later, the servant’s cautionary action saves the suicidal Antonio from “poisonous” wine. Antonio’s impulsive abuse of food is again legitimized through male fidelity. Male integrity and loyalty are asserted as sublimating attributes that are above mere foodstuffs.

The trustworthy servant administers invigorating banqueting stuff to console the jealous courtesan, leading her to “yond private parlour” (1.1.65) for “ven’son, custard, parsnip pie. / For banqueting stuff – as suckets, jellies, syrups” (66-67). Meaning to stuff a prostitute’s belly with banqueting stuff, Gasparo observes the “fair building,” meaning Florida, could accommodate “some one and twenty inmates” of various vocations (70, 71) since if the

prostitute has an appetite for sweetmeats, she must have appetite for sex. Banqueting stuff is magic for the dispirited, providing the cure and consolation, yet the male bond is stronger than the male appetite for banqueting stuff as Gaspero claims. Even the shifty Almachildes decides to inform the Duke of his wife's murderous plan, risking the exposure of his supposed sexual encounter with her. The loyal friends, Sebastian and Ferdinand, exercise Spartan dietary restraints at the banqueting table. Gaspero, one of the ever-present spying eyes at court, observes how Ferdinand tries to refrain from drunkenness: "He hath not pledged one cup.../ And sticks to small drink like a water-rat" (1.1.43, 45). Indeed, Ferdinand is as repulsed as Sebastian by "gorged stomachs and overflowing cups" (35-36). Antonio's wedding celebration is such a wretched occasion to Sebastian that his "sighs drink life-blood in this time of feasting" (31). Sebastian, Ferdinand, and the virtuous Isabella refrain from feasting while indulgence characterizes Antonio's associations and the court in general, in which "he / That has the least he's certainly enough" (40-41).¹⁷⁷

The conspicuous non-participation, abstinence, lack of interest, and exclusion from consumption distinguish Sebastian and Isabella: their prudence at the table implies that they are not consumed by sexual appetites. They persevere in their self-restraint and are rewarded for their virtuous suffering. When all ends well with Sebastian's reclaiming Isabella, the Governor in proselytizing exuberance sanctifies the matrimonial (re)union of Sebastian and the freshly-widowed virgin Isabella: "For where heavens bounty holy groundwork finds, / 'Tis like a sea, encompassing chaste minds" (5.3.61-62). The end justifies the means; Sebastian's use of witchcraft to obviate Antonio's legitimate conjugal consummation does neither defile the "holy groundwork" of their union nor compromise his "chaste mind." To women, virginity or marital

chastity is not compatible with an appetite as the voracious mouth of the prostitute and the furtive swelling of the unwed mother intimate the correlation between women's appetite and their sexual conducts. Apart from the differing hypotheses of this play's exploitation of Frances Howard's scandalous second marriage to Robert Carr—the historical context implicit on the name of the sexually-precocious and manipulative “Francis-ca”—it is certain that *The Witch* operates on the cultural obsession with female virginity and chastity.¹⁷⁸

Even though the virginal Isabella best embodies such an incompatibility, it is the Duchess who plunges into the lair of the witches for defying her husband's disciplinary will. When her husband forces a perverted appetite on her, the Duchess contracts a hired assassin using her sexuality—or what the text leads the reader to believe. Her employment of a bed trick (after all, it is a contracted prostitute who slept with Almachildes) may have safeguarded her marital chastity, but from the moment of her failure in meeting her husband's challenge she is clearly lost in the eye of matrimony. Her self-will in defying her husband's authority and later in pledging her allegiance to witches is such a vice to a housewife that the atrocity of her abusive husband pales by comparison. The Duchess is a very poor example of the virtuous wife Isabella represents and her failure in governing herself and her household (the state) is correlated to the witches' misrule. As an amalgam of illegitimate authority, origin, and character, the Duchess is to be reclaimed through humility and repentance. Nonetheless, to rehabilitate the Duchess, the text invents a bed trick after the fact: if she exhibited a sexual appetite, this play could not retain its purported comedic spirit.

The love charm Almachildes procures to seduce the Duchess's lady in waiting implies that all women, including the Duchess, are fickle. Since the ribbon bears only the name of the

intended target of love spell—Amoretta—an accidental dropping of the charm frees the namesake waiting lady and the charm soon claims the Duchess, also named Amoretta, who happens to pick it up. This “sleight of the ribbon” exposes how fickle, deceptive, and suspicious the womankind are: the Duchess is no different from her underling. Amoretta previously agreed to “dissemble him / A loving entertainment” (2.2.69-70) to dupe the buffoon courtier to set up an assignation with the Duchess. Once the love charm wears off, Amoretta regains her loyalty to her mistress and carries out her role in entrapping Almachildes: female loyalty is an oxymoron. Women are not reliable. Even after the Duke’s sudden “death,” the Duchess remains a “stranger” (4.1.20), mistrusted by her subjects. The stranger in her own court—a captive enemy and woman—the Duchess is oblivious to the guarded intentions of Almachildes and the Lord Governor. The male solidarity is a blind spot Duchess fails to recognize. Even though she is exempt from practicing witchcraft against her husband, once she is left ungoverned, she freefalls into a diabolic sisterhood with witches in seeking a “sudden and subtle” death for her proxy. If “the intent most horrid” (5.3.64), murdering her own husband, were executed with the help of witchcraft, Duchess would have passed all points of redemptive tolerance (as well as it would test the play’s latitude as a tragicomedy).

The Duchess (the stranger inside) finally colludes with the witches (the outsiders within) when she is to dispatch the conceited pantaloon. Like a dutiful daughter or a pious communicant, the Duchess unquestioningly answers to Hecate’s catechism: “I did not doubt you mother” (5.2.33). Maternity in early modern drama was often disregarded—playing an old woman might have been too big a “stretch” for a boy actor and mothers were not expected to “voice” their opinion any way—a clearly pronounced maternal bond often elicited witchcraft

and Catholicism, both of whose discourse use “mother” as the term of respect.¹⁷⁹ The diabolic nature of the noblewoman’s allegiance to Hecate is evocative of Catholic rites—for example, Firestone, the sarcastic insider, quips about how witches’ covens are led in French and Latin: “when my mother’s mad and our great cat angry . . . one spits French then and th’other spits Latin” (30-32). Here, with the Duchess joining Hecate, witchcraft becomes a female cult that undoes social differences, uniting women in their malevolence. Now, Hecate conducts herself like a priest-mother in guiding her spiritual daughter: “Leave all to me and my five sisters, daughter” (37). The Duke’s domestic abuse fades in light of his wife’s murderous attempt and her submission to witchcraft, for not the misgoverning husband but the ungoverned wife is more dangerous to the welfare of the state.

Just as the Duchess, as the governing female head of state, turns out to be an ill-governed wife, the head of female collusion and malevolence, Hecate, is exposed as an ineffective authority. Hecate is unable to establish her authority over her heir of witchery. Fear and loathing of geriatric women, including his own mother, is clear in Firestone’s observation that the devil prefers women over “six-score years” (1.2.73). In addition, Firestone conflates the proverbial promiscuity of the womankind with the religious tradition of misogyny, implying that a tailor with a needle can best the devil with a seductive apple in his hand. The incongruous coupling of old age, drive for food, and sexual desire of women in Firestone’s imagery revolves around women’s perverse appetite for sex and food. Firestone’s defiance and resentment toward Hecate may be justifiable in terms of the tentative autonomy and authority of the female parent, who upon her son’s maturity becomes dependent on him. Yet, incestuous co-dependency between Firestone and Hecate demonizes the mother and the son who barter

sexual partners as their “kind” and “sweet” (96, 102) gestures. Furthermore, bestiality is added to incest when a cat spirit takes the place of the incestuous son.¹⁸⁰

Already implicated with unnaturalness—in that the heir of witchcraft challenges his mother and the hundred-twenty-year-old mother engages in cross-species and incestuous sexual escapades—the witches’ efficacy and authority are further debunked when her clients consult her. In addition to the aberrant motherhood and womanhood ascribed to Hecate, her claim of witchery is questioned and then plainly discredited. Hecate seeks to impress a solicitor but her imposture is all too thinly veiled: meaning to impress Sebastian, she unfortunately blurts out a charm against toothache—“A ab hur bus” (106). Like a fumbling cunning woman, Hecate tries to read Sebastian’s wishes, flaunting such sales pitches as raising tempests, blighting an enemy’s livestock and crops, or transporting properties. With two misses, Hecate’s claim of divination is debunked, and the witches’ alleged power in reshaping socio-economic maps is also put to question.¹⁸¹ Catching the luck of the draw, Hecate asks if Sebastian wishes “to starve up generation” of his rival (150). Then, she proceeds to proffer the skins of serpents that will obviate the performance of marital sexuality. Despite the daring wish of malefice the charm carries, the snake slough commonly elicits an image of the ineffective phallus; such a use of sympathetic magic, in that the dead tissue of a snake cannot but affect male sexuality, hardly endorse Hecate’s magical power. Her “I knew your grief” (152) is unconvincing, and her charm far from preternatural.

Hecate crows other “villainous barren ends” (1.2.162) in her thaumaturgic inventory: a needle that has sewn a dead man’s winding sheet and “a privy gristle” (166). The phallic needle in its association with the mortuary process and the condemned erection of a hanged man

implicate that an erection in a union that incites a grudge is inimical and criminal even though such a “standing” is an essential step in consummating a marriage. Similarly, her use of the body of an infant as a cooking vessel seems to impart more the baleful impression of such a witchcraft accoutrement than the magical properties intrinsic in human remains. Those inactive, dead, and condemned phallic images suggest the witches’ dependence on sympathetic magic and the power of self-fulfilling prophesy on the part of the client. The phallic symbolism of Hecate’s charms is again recycled in the love charms she proffers to Almachildes: a remora is fittingly dubbed as “a little suck-stone” (1.2.207) and a green frog’s bones that survived an attack by voracious ants may still retain its transformative versatility since its epithet “green” belies the polychromatic colors of its species. The witches have an odd inventory and lexicon, yet their purported power turns out to be quite facetious. To Middleton, the witches are an implement that facilitates spectacles that help him satirize the human affairs of malice and ploys that enshroud the court of Ravenna. For one thing, a suddenly impotent bridegroom (even though his symptom manifests selectively) does not suspect penis-stealing witches; neither does an unwed offspring seem to be imperiled by infanticidal witches (still, there is a body of an unbaptized infant the witches use as a magical ingredient, a “body” of evidence of irresponsible sexual debauchery at the court).

To Sebastian and Almachildes, the efficacy of witchcraft serves as fantasy alternates: the brave can win the beauty since law and courtship are open for them. Reclaiming his prior contract of marriage--his espousal—is not a matter of impossibility if Sebastian were to litigate the matter, as the legal scandal of Frances Howard’s divorce from her first husband must have resonated in the audience’s mind regarding the validity of matrimony without consummation.

Also, Almachildes's love charm only occasions humorous confusion between the two Amoretas. Witchcraft is not an absolute essential in resolving the domestic and marital conflicts surrounding Isabella and the Duchess. The witches in Middleton do not initiate any *maleficium*; they only respond to their clients' suits. The playwright uses them as a looking glass that reflects the sexual and moral corruption of Ravenna. When the (matrimonial) order at court is reestablished, the presence of witches becomes so insignificant that they are simply left out and forgotten.

The insignificant and illusory agency of the witches explicates the strange abandonment of the witches' tale at the end of this play. The improbably providential ending of this play redeems a murderous wife (the Duchess), reclaims a stolen wife (Isabella), and grants pity to a mistress with fidelity (Florida, the *de facto* widow of Antonio). The Duke also pronounces his forgiveness of his wife: "thy former *practice* dies" (5.3.126, my emphasis). To preempt witches' corrupting influence on housewives—their bad mothering—husbands have to govern their wives properly lest the Duchess inherit Hecate's witchery, since she already declared her allegiance to Mother Hecate and her weird sisters. The husband's absolution of his wife's "former practice" proclaims the end of domestic rebellion and witchcraft—the wayward rule of misgoverning and misgoverned women.

Witches' agency in *maleficia* in this play is bogus, yet it is clear that they are still the bogeymen of the kitchen matters. Under the spell of the ever waxing and waning Moon (Hecate, Diana's diabolic counterpart, invokes the lunar pull of waters in her Latin incantation), engorged with banqueting stuff, potent herbs, and other edibles, the witches teach the vice of full bellies to nubile women of Ravenna. In this sense, Hecate is the mother of all evil women: the

prostitutes, unmarried mothers, and *willful* wives. First the Duchess: desperate in her failure in ruling the duchy after her husband's presumed assassination and in need to eliminate Almachildes and her complicity, the Duchess plummets into the diabolic abyss by entering the witches' lair. Hecate suggests a waxen image of the purported victim, as it vaporizes at the blue fire kindled with a human eye, will produce the desired result in a month (5.2.4-5). Soliciting a swifter means than a consumed death, the Duchess deigns to be a spiritual daughter to Hecate, who readily welcomes her to the league of witches:¹⁸²

Leave all to me and my five sisters, daughter;
It shall be conveyed in at howlet-time.
Take you no care; my spirits know their moments.
Raven or screech-owl never fly by th' door
But they call in—I thank 'em—and they lose not by't;
I give 'em barley, soaked in infants' blood.
They shall have *semina, cum sanguine*,
Their gorge crammed full, if they come once to our house. (37-44)

Mother Hecate will command her familiar, may it be an owl or a raven, to carry out what her spiritual daughter wishes. The priest-mother confirms the Duchess's induction into witches' coven; additionally, she informs that her minion is beholden to her for the blood-soaked barley. Treating wild birds with tenderized grains, as if they were pet companions, might have indicated tender care and love, yet the dense barley grains are soaked in infants' blood and the bird engorges itself sinisterly. Witch lore permeates into the companionship the old woman keeps with her pet animals: the gluttonous familiar and her diabolic dam pervert maternal nurture with cannibalistic hunger.

Even though Hecate's promise is not delivered, her inimical maternity to the Duchess and her familiar becomes firmly pronounced and under the witch's control, gluttony becomes women's *modus vivendi*. The characterization of witchcraft as cannibalistic gluttony is deeply

rooted in the early modern understanding of the vices of undisciplined desires, which are broadly illustrated with the strokes of the feminine and the demonic. The nature of the female/illicit/demonic coven is further exploited through the niceties of the witches' banquet. Even though the nobles at court engage in dissolute and abusive banquets, it is the witches' banquet that is comprised of stolen, donated, or bogus foodstuffs that epitomize women's uncontrolled desire for food and sex.¹⁸³ In order to procure a love charm, Almachildes bribes the witches with the banqueting stuff he pilfered from the wedding banquet. Even though the marzipan toads ominously "spit" (1.2.221) sugary syrup, the banqueting stuff from the court is a valued foodstuff; on the other hand, Hecate's love charms, the bones of a green frog as well as remora or suck-stone, are to be furtively administered "by way of cup and potion" (205) in order to achieve their desired objective. Logistically speaking, both marzipan goods are made of white flour and almond paste with sugar; yet, a frog becomes a foul oddity in the witches' cauldron, while at the nobles' table it is an ephemeral artifact that testifies to the householder's generosity of spirit (and of sugar and flour).

Winning over the witches' trust with suckets, Almachildes earns himself an invitation to the witches' banquet, with Hecate's promise of "[t]he best meat i'th' whole province for my friends, / And reverently served in too" (226-27). There is even a spirit playing the fiddle—it is indeed "[i]n good fashion" (227). This banquet of witches, however, feeds the fantasy bites of such banqueting stuff to its partaker only to mock his empty stomach. Almachildes "ate some of every dish and spoiled the rest" (2.2.5), yet he was "as hungry as a tired foot-post" (7). Angry at his empty stomach and at the illusion, Almachildes disparages the witches' cookery: the love charm of "the brain of a cat" (28) should have been better cooked in a sauce and "a little bone

in the nethermost part of a wolf's tail" (30) is usable only to pick the witch's teeth. The witches' banquet is a delusion of starving bellies.

Witches harbor petty grievances when denied foods like "flour, barm and milk / Goose grease and tar" (1.2.52-53). Hecate feels entitled to alms since she restrained herself from spoiling their churnings, brewery, bread, and livestock; yet the farmer and his wife ungratefully ignored her self-restraint from malefice.¹⁸⁴ Vexed at such a slight, Hecate struck lame their piglets, ducklings, goslings, and a hog (58), and avows to send snakes to drain sheep and cows of their milk supply. Then, she will mar "their syllabubs and frothy feastings" (63). Hecate deliberately aims to spoil the household foodstuffs along with the neighbor's properties. Her grudge over denied charity food is of an inordinate intensity, such disproportionate ill will for such inconsequential kitchen stuff. The catalogue of "flour, barm and milk / Goose grease and tar" seems to epitomize the kitchen essentials in survival of the destitute.

In Act 3 Scene 3, Firestone brings in nineteen eggs, six lizard eggs, and three serpent eggs along with some bitter roots. Such an odd jumble of the triads of sinister reptile offspring suggests that these eggs were a source of protein ("white meat" that poor folk heavily relied on in lieu of meat protein). In addition, marmartin and mangragon, the medicinal herbs Firestone labors to gather, are known for their magical properties and semblance to a human body. Witches' cannibalistic cravings for human flesh might have been fabricated on the ground of their vegetation-based diet (while to the rest of early modern populace a bread and meat diet was the norm). Instead, the witchcraft-fantasy focuses on the anthropomorphic properties of these herbs: "marmartin" elicits the Martin Marprelate controversy during the 1590s, and mandragon (mangradora or mandrake) resembles a human body with spread-out limbs and

was believed to let out a scream when dug up. Witches' familiarity with mandrake again calls to mind their use of a dead infant and mummified human ingredients. The contemporary occult associated this herb to semen let loose from a hanged man at the gallows, and the scream this plant lets out was believed to drive anyone who dared to dig it out insane, so that dogs were tethered to the plant for unearthing.¹⁸⁵ Firestone makes it sure that every "blade" of them was "cut" by moonlight (3.3.31, 29) and Hecate's cryptic remarks, "How near he goes my cuttings!" (30), further conjure up the imagery of a man(drake) lacerated by the diabolic duo. The thaumaturgic ambience under the full moon (a metonym of Hecate's power of witchcraft) and Firestone's unscathed gathering of mandrake add the preternatural fright to this nocturnal scene. The poisonous herbs of human semblance are evoked for the sake of their easily-identifiable occultist properties; however, under such the surface of the witches' cannibalistic pursuit of bizarre eggs and bitter roots lurks the grim reality of the destitute.

The same scene features the spectacle of cross-dressed hags suspended in the air: a fantasy enactment of witches' transvection that stagecraft made possible. The heart of the matter lies not in witches' ability to levitate but in their obsession with the magical brew. From the start, witches' scenes revolve around their care poured on the brazen dish to which a dead boy is carefully added. As Almachildes almost stumbles into the cauldron after tripping on "a pipkin of child's grease" (1.2.185), the preserved fat of unbaptized bastard child is such a potent essential in the ominous potion that it becomes a routine accoutrement in witch-lore. The flying potion supposedly enables witches to "feast and sing, / Dance, kiss and coll, use everything" (2.1.28-29). The image of the witches in the air does not correspond to their helpless reality of gravity, geriatric arthritis, and hunger. Contrary to their reality of old age and penury, their

eerie recipe for flying portrays them as libertine pleasure seekers, quite meet to their (pseudo)cannibalization of buxom kitchen maids. Hoppo and Stadlin proudly report to Hecate that their brew is scalding more azure than the bruised bottoms of indolent maids. Fairies, the indigenous folkloric version of witches, were believed to punish sluggish kitchen maids, preferring domestic efficacy and diligence. Plying maiden buttocks until they turn azure blue for perverse pleasure, the malignant version of fairies becomes the bogey in the kitchen. Yet, the authority of witchcraft to whom Middleton is indebted, Reginald Scot, already unambiguously discredited witches' nocturnal flight as a fantastical self-delusion of old ignorant women.¹⁸⁶ In drawing his caricature of witches, Middleton cuts and pastes witchcraft tropes the skeptic Scot chronicled as evidence of their imposture, and thus the resultant portrayal of witches turns to be deliberately satirical and deflating. Middleton may let his witches fly on stage for the sake of spectacle, but it is clear from the onset that the theoretical ground of witches' transvection is never firm; so let the witches fantasize their nightly flights, the playwright seems to say.

Hecate also uses "lizard's brain" (5.2.49), "three ounces of the red-haired girl" (55), "the blood of a bat" (67), "libbard's bane" (69), and "The juice of toad, the oil of adder" (71). The witches' culinary process encompasses ingredients that are perishable forms of animal and human parts: the witch has to slaughter other living things before she achieves the murderous potency of her brew. She cooks to kill rather than to save. Putting diabolism aside, Hecate is a parody of a wasteful housewife who mismanages resources and mis-administers medicine. The poor housewife who wastes resources and provides deadly food instead of nourishing food is also a bad mother. Hecate leads her spiritual daughter, the Duchess, with a murderous potion; in turn, her biological son fantasizes putting a dram of the brazen dish in the posset for his

mother (1.2.85). The fantasy enactment of matricide takes the form of feeding the aging mother a milk-based drink that was reserved for infants and the infirm, in which the conventional image of maternal caretaking is reversed and warped into the murderous poisoning of the maternal body by the disgruntled son.

Firestone's matricidal fantasy is reflected in the infanticidal fantasy of Francisca, who puts the poisonous idea of posset administration to action to get rid of Isabella. Hiding her secret protrusion, Francisca encodes her condition and courtly mores in alimentary metaphors. Due to "a kind of swelling" (2.1.98), Francisca has no "hunger" for marriage (113) and she has already "a good bit that well may stay [her] stomach" (114). Her "fullness" means her sexual satiation. As merrymaking resulted in being too "fruitful" (40), indulgence in food induces easy pregnancy: "bottles of wine, chewets and currant custards. I may curse those egg-pies" (50-51). Francisca attributes her pregnancy to the potent properties of banqueting stuff she surreptitiously enjoyed; therein, she passes the blame of premarital sexuality on certain food with impregnating properties. Nonetheless, instead of practicing remedial fasting, Francisca consumes more precious restoratives during her lying in. Such continual gobbling of salutary delicacies is as foul as her maternal body that is not cleansed through proper churching. As Francisca depletes the magnanimous purse Aberzanes boasts of, female sexual transgression not only violates social mores but also depletes the householder's pocket.

Aberzanes, Francisca's secret "friend," supplies recuperative wine, sugar, and spices for Francisca during her lying-in, and pays off the midwife for her service and secrecy. Unlike his partner in fornication, who went through a drastic physical change, Alberzanes is glad that the string of his "purse" can be tied back (2.3.14). Nonetheless, he meticulously calculates his

expenses on spice and sugar and chides Francisca for her wasteful consumption. With only “some quarter of a pound of sugar / And half an ounce of spice” left (2.3.42-43), Aberzanes berates the cost of having a bastard delivered:

Here’s no sweet charge!
 And there was thirty pound, good weight and true—
 Beside what my man stole when’t was a-weighing,
 And that was three pound more, I’ll speak with least.
 The Rhenish wine, is’t all run out in caudles too? (2.3.43-47)

Quite different from his former magnanimity in gift giving, Aberzanes’s parsimonious payment to the midwife and his servant belies his claim to be “a friend at court” (2.3.39). Male overconsumption is a court custom while female consumption is linked with illicit sexuality and bastard-bearing, which is a dear cost to the courtier.

As she is unwilling to govern her sexuality within marriage, Francesca characterizes the culinary process as the hostile and destructive imposition of the public morals on her. She is afraid that Antonio might “powder up” Aberzanes and his kin upon detecting their secret affair (61): the nubile woman is familiar with kitchen matters but associates cookery with aggressive punishment—she is far from the ideal candidate for housewifery. The bad housewife is also a bad mother. An intimation of infanticidal fantasy lucks under her contemplation that “[a] yard of lawn will serve for a christening-cloth” (122). Bastard-bearing, in addition to communal demoralization and impoverishment, precipitates such criminality as “christening” the newborn in a yard of lawn.

At Antonio’s, the news of her suitor’s unexpected death, after “taking a violent surfeit at a wedding” (3.2.71), awaits Francisca, exposing her clandestine handling of childbearing to Isabella: her wronged suitor’s death serves as poetic justice to the surreptitious surfeiter of

wine and spices. Isabella deplores premarital sexuality—understandably so, since she is still a virgin after two marriages—as reprobate as enjoying a full meal without saying grace and chides Francisca: “if you did weep, it could not be amiss, / A sign you could say grace after a full meal” (94-95). The “virtuous” Isabella is an antithesis of Livia who taunts Hippolito to savor the banquet before saying grace.

Since women crave for junkets as much as they like gossiping, Francisca is convinced that Isabella is bound to throw up what she swallowed—her knowledge of Francisca’s secret delivery of a bastard:

She can keep it secret?
That’s very likely, and a woman too!
I’m sure I could not do’t—and I am made
As well as she can be for any purpose.
'Twould never stay with me two days—I’ve cast it—
The third would be a terrible sick day with me,
Not possible to bear it. Should I then
Trust to her strength in’t, that lies every night
Whispering the day’s news in a husband’s ear? (3.2.119-27)

Gossip fills up women like food, and too much of it will only sicken the consumer.¹⁸⁷ The cure is to purge, or “cast” out, what is overstuffed. Sexism may explain the degeneration of the word “gossip” from a godparent to a female village tittle-tattle, but Francisca, as if a mouthpiece of the male paranoia of the intimate bond of women’s solidarity, reconfirms the malicious association of female gluttony and female incontinence (making women fickle and leaky). Fearing that the stirring nature of her secret will make Isabella incontinent, Francisca decides to “expose” Isabella before the other has a chance to do so. Francisca wickedly cooks up a spiced “drowsy posset” (4.3.18), a soporific potion that incapacitates domestic servants so that she can frame Isabella in an adulterous scene.¹⁸⁸ Having consumed inordinate amount of salutary

foodstuffs, Francisca again misuses household resources such as milk, wine, sugar, and spices to make a sleep-inducing soup.

While the unqualified mother squanders and misuses valuable restoratives, Florida, the courtesan with fidelity, also surfeits on illicit banqueting stuff, hidden in a banqueting lodge, nursing her fantasy to replace the lawful wife in her marital bed. Seeking to “take [Isabella’s] lodging” (4.2.35), Florida justifies her encroachment of Isabella’s marital right with the argument that a woman’s worst enemy is another woman: “So ’tis our trade to set snares for other women / ’Cause we were once caught ourselves” (52-53). Physically occupying Isabella’s banqueting lodge during her assignations with Antonio, Florida also expropriates the love banquet Isabella is supposed to enjoy. The harlot’s contented belly is a sign of her violation of a lawful matrimonial union (the double standard of the time Isabella voices locates the fault of marital infidelity not in the whoring husband but in the hired sexual caterer; hence, women should beware women.). Such a feminine vice as illicit consumption is effectively correlated with venery and witchcraft in Almachides’s observation: the witches “have charms and tricks to make a wench fall backwards and lead a man herself to a country house [a banqueting lodge] some mile out of the town like a fire drake” (1.1.90-93). While Francisca relinquishes her motherhood with the least of care, Florida seeks sexual pleasure outside a matrimonial union, unmindful of resulting motherhood: both squander valuable household resources without meaning to reproduce.

The frightening transformation of food for nursing and nurturing into lethal poison also happens in the paranoid mental operation of Almachides, a possibility that Francisca has exploited with her soporific potion. The inequitable, inverse relationship between the socially-

inferior man and the Duchess with a previous marital experience puts Almachildes in a defensive and vulnerable position as if he were a child to the Duchess. Knowing all too well that the Duchess would like to dispatch him, Almachildes fears the “spoon-meat” (4.1.44). His fear of poisonous food served by the Duchess implicates the perverted, quasi-maternal relationship of care and protection the Duchess was supposed to provide for her lover/child, the courtly version of the incestuous maternity Hecate forms with Firestone. Almachildes’s fear of spoon meat and Francisca’s exploitation of the milky drink reinforce women’s potential to abuse their nurturing undertaking with tampered food and sinister intention. The witches’ lethal potion is implicitly linked to the criminal intentions of the Duchess and Francisca, who abuse female authority over the foodstuffs and perverse the maternal obligations of nursing and nurturing.

Middleton’s gluttonous women consume and consume more, while his male characters are fixated on the female engorged belly as both her pregnancy and consumption threaten the social reputation and financial expenses of the householder. Middleton’s witches walk onto the stage as a warning to any maiden who “comes to keep house for herself.” Regarding debauchery in sex and food, young women with reproductive potential (Mistress Allwit, Lady Kix; Livia, Isabella, and Bianca; and Francisca and Florida) are as seditious and destructive as their older counterparts (the village gossips in Cheapside; Leantio’s Mother; and the witches in Ravenna). Unwed or adulterous pregnancies and motherhood exhaust restoratives and delicacies, and prostitutes trade their flesh for forbidden food and sweetmeats. On the other hand, the virtuous housewife in the figure of Isabella of Ravenna, as well as in Moll from Cheapside, is a woman who disciplines her sexual and gustatory indulgences. Virginal Moll and Isabella are removed from the scene—or sin—of consumption although their virtue seems to

be transitory and temporary (as their virginity is) as all their married and widowed counterparts have proved so: women beware the women you might become, Middleton seems to be suggesting.

Middleton's virtuous housewife is spared from the sin of profligate consumption while his banquet abusers—gossips, courtesans, unwed mothers, and the witches—gobble down undeserved banqueting stuff; furthermore, Francisca exploits a soporific potion to frame Isabella, and the Duchess frightens Almachildes with “spoon-meat” while the witch brews a murderous potion. The ineffective and self-deluded witches in Ravenna are the farcical literalization of the Middletonian self-willed women with bottomless bellies: they are all kindred spirits. The sordid and uncanny femininity of the witches is a hyperbolic manifestation of women's pronounced desire for consumption, which in Middleton's highly sexualized dietary lexicon becomes redolent of moral lapse and seduction. The grotesque in *The Witch* lies not only in the reprehensible culinary and dietary process of the witches but also in the abominable belly of the unwed mother and the courtesan. The grotesquely old witch is the malevolent mother to all women who waste domestic resources in pursuit of their raw desires and wicked plots.

My argument about Middleton's gluttonous women has been focused on the widening distance between the iconic image of the housewife and the backward segment of the penurious women of antiquity, who were pushed into the blind spot of the industrial, civilizing, and prosperous progress. Having witnessed the rift the capital set on class and womankind, the Jacobean dramatic witch lost her agency to strike awe and fright. She is robbed of her secret recipe for scare.

Chapter Four *The Covenant Staged: Jugglers, Conjurers, and Skeptics on the Early Modern Stage*

Prologue: the Appeasing Magic of the Rowdy Theater

In this chapter, I seek to identify the presence of an interpretative agency of the early modern stage by analyzing two distinct plays that deal with human desire for diabolic agency: Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (performed around 1594) and *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621), a collaboration of Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley. In my discussion of *Doctor Faustus*, I also engage the latter additions by Samuel Rowley and William Birde, what is often referred as the B text, which was available in print since 1616. The Marlovian conjurers and jugglers in the Elizabethan play belong to a different time and space—continental Europe during the Papal Schism—compared to Jacobean Edmonton, in which supposed witches dwell among village tongue wagers and slanderous hypocrites. In addition, Faustian harangue and farcical jugglery convey a decidedly different mode and tone of representation than the implicitly complicated dynamics in a close-knit community in Edmonton. Yet, working with the invariability of the deserved death, respectively, of the semi-historical necromancer and a real-life confirmed witch, both texts devise various means of distraction and diversion until arriving at the inevitable execution of justice on the trespasser of socio-religious boundaries. When the form of representations contradicts its putative utility in corroborating the providential telos of the deserved perdition of the transgressor, the viewer is challenged to determine whether to trust the words of the magician or instead to peruse his sleight of hand. In both “killing” plays, theatrical jugglery, in literal and figurative forms, outshines the telos of the narrative.¹⁸⁹

I argue that there is an affinity the Marlovian inscription of the doomed life of Faustus shares with the Dekkerian version of Sawyer's condemnation: an attitudinal similarity of self-

parody and subversive interpretation of the source material. Even though the tone and mode of presentation in these plays might look vastly different, I might refer to them—in a jocose manner—as two contemporary texts with only two degrees of separation from each other (Marlowe—the elder Rowley—the younger Rowley). Dennis Kezar has examined the troubling question of the ethos of early modern stage which often conjured up historical or fictional villains and villainesses to kill them again in a moralistic reprimand. Kezar considers *The Witch of Edmonton* as “a killing poem,” a literary narrative that, in presenting the death of its protagonist, exposes “that subject's lack of ownership of its own representation,” and thus questions the ethical stance of the literary representation.¹⁹⁰ Kezar adjudges that, on the epistemological level, early modern tragedy was “killing poems” in that in telling already well-known narratives, poets’ main concern was to sustain intrigue and achieve legitimacy in setting up the protagonist’s death. As Faustus’s daring spirit of sublime defiance inevitably leads to his fall, and Mother Sawyer is summoned back from her grave to be hanged on the (off-stage) Tree in the Cockpit, both tragedies are “killing poems” that stage the punitive excision of the trespassers on religio-social boundaries. However, what if, in retelling the well-known narratives of the condemned, the stage mocks and parodies the authority that is implicit in the source narrative? Solemn sincerity might command a (dramatic) scapegoating ritual, which is hardly efficacious in the subversive spirit of parody.

In examining the subversive textualization of Faustus’s damnation, I focus on the logistics of juggleries and trickeries in terms of how the playwright sets up a taut tug between Faustus the vicarious iconoclast and Faustus the proud sinner and how he escapes this impasse. *Doctor Faustus* is not only about a magician but it is also a show of magic and juggleries. It is the

charmed tongue of the juggler that makes viewers believe him as the magician not the coin that has been hidden in his sleeve, and credulous viewers are free to believe that his verbal “hocus pocus” conjured the solid materiality of the coin from thin air. In the face of skeptics, the skillful juggler may wink a knowing wink, appreciatively daring the skeptic to spot the rough edges of his legerdemain. What if the skilled juggler intentionally drops a ball or two now and again? *Doctor Faustus* flaunts such flair and pomp through not only the anti-hero’s self-sabotage and self-defeat but also the bungling acts of juggleries and chicaneries his subordinates assay, patterning them after their master. I argue that the moral of the putative savaged death of the master conjurer has been deliberately undermined through the numerous rehearsals of clumsy and bungled thaumaturgical acts; furthermore, hoodwinking his marked victims with a false head and a leg, Faustus builds up the momentum for, what Reginald Scot calls, “the most notable execution”—the “decollation” of himself at the denouement.

Aside from the verity of magical wonders, how the tragedy of Faustus is experienced in the mind of the audience can be expounded through the way in which the audience experiences the magical displays attempted by the demonic agents, Faustus and his subordinates. Andrew Sofer, in his phenomenological exegesis of *Doctor Faustus*, reveals the disparity between the hollow efficacy of thaumaturgical claims and the realistic effects of descriptive speech. Appropriating J. L. Austin’s linguistic terms (illocutionary acts or constatives and perlocutionary acts or performatives, the former involving descriptive and declarative expressions and the latter purportedly ushering in perceivable outcome), Sofer claims the perlocutionary efficacy of jugglery and conjuration in this play is rendered void and unreal pitted against constative speech acts.¹⁹¹ Sofer points out that the wonder the theater conjures

up with words and poetry is more concrete and awe-inspiring than the juggling acts of conjurers that the stage can easily enact with trapdoors, bodkins, and waxen or marzipan figures. Sofer engages mostly the A text (1604) in his phenomenological analysis of the Marlovian linguistic efficacy; I argue that the multiple displays of magic in the B text (1616) successfully undermine the thaumaturgical claim of Faustus and the demonic delegation in order to maximize the efficacy of stagecraft the spectacle of Faustus's torn limbs is to convey.

The Marlovian stage travesties the religiosity of the source material authored by an anonymous Lutheran; this spirit of subversion and defiance is also evident in the Jacobean witch-hunting play, *The Witch of Edmonton*. Even though no dramatic descendants of the formidable Elizabethan witches—for example, Duessa, Acrasia, or Joan La Pucelle—survived the paternalistic Jacobean era, the theater does not seem to relinquish its interpretative agency in dealing with socio-religious issues; in reenacting the condemned life and death of Elizabeth Sawyer, Dekker and his collaborators exercise poetic license of dissention, leaving the moments of dramaturgic self-awareness left raw and exposed. I read the playwrights' unease with their mimetic exploitation in the way the figure of the Dog fluidly embodies and disembodies personal enmity, religious prescriptions, and social consensus.

I follow Julia Garrett's cue to read the periphery of the witch's circle, the fictional characters and contextual details—since the playwrights cannot undo Sawyer's death at the Tree.¹⁹² I also heed Jonathan Gil Harris's exegesis of the dramaturgic discursive proxy the playwrights adopt in departing from the source material, Henry Goodcole's proselytizing narrative of Sawyer's jailhouse confession. Moreover, Anthony Dawson and Dennis Kezar, each in his own perspective, reconcile the sympathetic initial drawing of Sawyer and the cold

dispatch of her at the gallows in the closing.¹⁹³ Dekker and others construct a close-knit community which in moving forward from communal culture of charity and support to mercantile individualism (as Dawson delineates) purges the scapegoat figure that will help strengthen the sense of communal health and solidarity (as Kezar argues).

The playwrights implicitly censure the community for its slanderous use of the defenseless beldam, and in the opportunistic mutability of the Dog, they see an analogue of their own epistemological conflicts in which Elizabeth Sawyer demands their humanist sympathy while social mores dictates her execution. As the Dog while being bound to his malevolent “mother” willfully inflicts his malice to others only to denounce her, the playwrights pay Goodcole by undermining the chaplain’s authorial intention; they empathize with Sawyer, yet they ventriloquize through the treacherous Dog that they mean to kick the witch out of the Cockpit. The writers seem deliberately to leave the evidence of their complicity with the social victimization and ongoing vilification of the old woman, for even after the “white” Dog rebukes his former mistress and abandons her in jail, there are “dogs” that torment Sawyer all the way to the gallows. In the dialogical relationship between Cuddy Banks and the Dog, I read the playwrights’ agnostical stance toward what the society pronounces as the demonic.

Engaging the dominant critical approach to *Macbeth* as misogynistic vilification of women and the feminine, Stephen Greenblatt asks, “Why shouldn’t we say that this play about evil is evil?”¹⁹⁴ Similarly, should we say that these plays about evil, *Doctor Faustus* and *The Witch of Edmonton*, are evil? I’d like to answer that question with another question: do these plays *report* or *reenact* what happened outside the “wooden O”? Marlowe with his later interpolaters and the Jacobean playwrights, in reporting the executions of Faustus and Sawyer,

reveal the inefficacy of magic and the dubious agency of witchcraft, while nonetheless punish the dabbler in magic and witchcraft. Exposing the unwarranted lay fear and abomination of necromancy with the very use of stagecraft, the early modern stage seems to have safeguarded its charter of interpretative freedom and tongue-in-cheek defiance.

The opening scene of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (printed in 1608) offers a meta-dramatic analogue to the symbolic function the stage played in early modern England. All's well that ends well in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, an anonymous early seventeenth-century favorite that nostalgically looks back at Merrie England, a world in which sundry poachers of a royal buck and of a carefully-guarded daughter of the gentry are allowed to enjoy their illicit spoils, and magic was an art "lawful as eating" (*The Winter's Tale* 5.3.111) in the spirit of "seize-the-day" merriment. The Prologue of this popular play exploits such referents as fairies, witches, and magicians for dramatic levity; yet, at the same time, the wish to rein in the rowdy elements of the theater—the audience's bad manners and the seditious effects of the sensational dramatic material on the audience—is quite apparent. The Prologue, like a master of ceremonies, entreats for an attentive audience:

Your silence and attention, worthy friends,
That your free spirits may with more pleasing sense
Relish the life of this our active scene
To which intent, to calm this murmuring breath,
We ring this round with our invoking spells. (1-5).¹⁹⁵

He proceeds to draw a circle around himself, "to calm this murmuring breath" (4). If the "round" drawn in the air is apotropaic magic to dispel the rowdy elements of the stage, what does he mean by "our invoking spells" (5)? If the play is tacitly understood as and equated to magic, is it

possible to read this “active scene” the Prologue promises as the *mise en scène* of the early modern stage’s relationship with magic and witchcraft?

The stage not only employed props and contraptions as a part of stagecraft but also practiced verbal magic in sublimating the audience’s manners and cultivating their imagination with poetry of civilizing magic. As an alchemist transforms base metal into precious gold, the Prologue spellbinds the audience to be the appreciative patrons of the stage. The actor’s personality may easily spice up such theatrical sublimation, making his performance a daring act of jugglery or a sober supplicating act. Such an invocative speech act and symbolic consecration of a protective ground may dangerously resemble Catholic rites to some draconian religious prudes, to whom Catholic priests were insidious jugglers and male witches, as Scot and other Protestant learned men of the time repeatedly emphasized.¹⁹⁶ For, as Sofer suggests, after the Reformation, the early modern stage filled the void left by the Catholic Church, inheriting the symbolism inherent in ritualistic representations.¹⁹⁷ The affinity between necromancy and Catholicism is rather strong, since the renowned necromancer later disguises himself as a local friar to help his pupil infiltrate the monastery in which his lover is confined. In order to stage Fabell’s magical act—including such an impersonation of a man of clergy—within the spirit of tragicomedy, the theater company needs to be tactful not to grate against the common disapprobation of Catholic enchanterers. A magical stroke should be light as a feather lest it hit on the quick.

While the Prologue of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* resorts to thaumaturgic conventions and locutions in securing a theatrically consecrated ground, the Induction stages an act of gratuitous magic: Fabell’s defeat of a devil’s envoy via a magical chair. The Prologue has

verbally enacted the magician's Odyssean victory over the diabolic—having tasted the fruit of demonic properties but still escaping the inevitable damnation—which renders the display of the necromantic chair quite unnecessary. The borrowed time motif (seven more years Fabell haggles with the straight-jacketed Coreb, the Devil's minion who comes to fetch Fabell to hell) is already established in the Prologue, casting the magus in a benevolent light: how altruistic is he to ask for a time extension only to help his friend marry his betrothed? The Prologue's revelation of Fabell's life with a grace period has foretold the mortals' call to be merry in a piquant tone: "let's live till we die, and be merry, and there's an end!" (5.1.276-277). This legendary anecdote of out-deviling the devil with a cunning contraption could have been saved from its literal representation as the Prologue's disclosure of Fabell's escape from eternal condemnation—"embodied" within the wall of a church to preempt the Devil's snatching of his soul (16-21)—unwittingly erodes the suspense of Fabell's confrontation with the evil.

What compelled the anonymous author of this play to include the Induction, which he "forgets" to bookend, resulting in a lopsided dramatic structure?¹⁹⁸ Fabell tricks the devil to sit on the enchanted chair (probably resembling the torture chair) and extracts Coreb's consent for a seven-year grace period. At the denouement, the text "forgets" to tell what befalls to Fabell once the seven years run out—the Prologue has already informed that Fabell, by encasing his dying body within consecrated church premises, laughs the last laughter. The stage clearly needed an awe-inspiring visual display of a necromantic feat since, belying his reputation as the merry fiend, Fabell's sleight and magic are limitedly employed only in disguise and prescience. The merriment of the chasers' and poachers' disoriented midnight wandering in the forest and switched signposts—in order to divert frantic parents away from the Inn of Saint George, in

which the matrimonial sacrament between Raymond and Millicent takes place—does not rely on any magical intervention. Instead, such blatant exploitations of magical paraphernalia in the Prologue and the Induction were quite essential for the sake of not only the entertaining employment of stagecraft but also the very legitimacy of this play as a “comic” “sad tragic show” (Prologue 41) of the merry devil of Edmonton. While this play is more idyllic than necromantic, nonetheless, the Prologue presents a meta-dramatic metaphor of the stage as the chartered zone for magical mutability.¹⁹⁹

In the dominion of the “Wooden O,” however, borders among stage playing, jugglery, magic, witchcraft, and sacramental rituals were so porous and fluid that there were ongoing negotiation and deliberation to contain and safeguard some of these seditious properties for theatrical currency. A sensationally iconoclastic playwright like Marlowe has to condemn his protagonist for dabbling in (ineffective and unreal) necromancy; an opportunistic venture like *The Witch of Edmonton* hides the playwrights’ indictment of the social and sexual double standard upheld by village elders, who their eponymous character calls “male witches.” Is the punitive condemnation of Faustus a conciliatory gesture to extenuate the rogue hero’s wayward desecrating (and flaunting at the same time) of Catholic symbolism and Protestant pride? Since the errant magician is punished for his juggling braggadocio, the player hidden under the character may blaspheme the cross as a prop, as Edward Alleyn wore the cross inviting Catholic association to Faustus’s religious depravity, and the playwright, hiding behind the immunity of religious pretense, mocks the Good Angel as well as the Bad Angel, both of whom frequent Faustus’s study to dispute Protestant spiritual redemption, just as he does with the ever-looming demons.²⁰⁰

On the other hand, Dekker and his collaborators undermine Goodcole's religious earnest—as a chaplain, the pamphlet author takes with solemn obsession his vocation to guide the condemned soul to confession and repentance—by making the Cockpit Sawyer refuse to repent. Although unequivocally malefic in her intention, Sawyer does not control the Dog and is betrayed by the Dog, and executed for his willful malefice. Yet, it is she who indicts male authorities, as city witches, and male calumnious tongue, as vicious dogs, at the court of assizi, which fails to convict her. Once Cuddy—an unabashedly carefree persona who represents the pragmatic cynicism of the theater—fails in domesticating the Dog, the playwrights seem to acknowledge the treachery of the Dog as their own and purge from the Cockpit the dissembling familiar who so far has served them in their maledictory tongue discourse. From an epistemological perspective, the authors seem to ask who the real witches are if not those with maledictory and hypocritical tongues, including their own.

Necromantic Stage: How to Sport the Art with Doctor Faustus

The performance of *Doctor Faustus* imparts a different message compared to what the text indicates: the enactment of varied forms of magic suggests necromancy is as deceptive as religion, while the narrative seems to promote a Christian condemnation that a demonic pact suffices for Faustus's perdition. Even though many English Protestants in the audience may have delighted in the ridicule and debasement to which the "infallible" pope is subjected, the time frame of this play, set during the Western Schism, may apologetically render this play's anti-Catholicism as a "catholic" objection to any form of religious authority. I argue, in the spirit of an iconoclastic satire, Faustus's mangled death is a wonder of stagecraft—the verisimilar necromancy the stage incorporates in its ostensible advocacy of Faustus's fall. First, I will

address the differences between the two earliest versions of *Doctor Faustus*, a 1604 quarto (A text) and a 1616 quarto (B text), introducing the unsettling interpretative possibilities the later edition interpolates on the earlier, shorter, and more boldly anti-Catholic text in order to demonstrate how the B text textualizes Faustus's growingly nihilistic and self-destructive displays of magic. Then, I will illustrate how the reading of Faustus as a conjurer (rather than an everyman on the edge of salvation and damnation) and the play as a series of, almost facetious, performances of juggleries and necromantic conjurations (rather than a tortuous journey to a certain doom) unites the jarring parts and bits of the two quartos into a coherent narrative.

Faustus's necromantic feats are hollow and insubstantial, whether he uses magic in anti-papal iconoclasm or in his service to the Holy Roman Emperor and the anti-pope.²⁰¹ Whether he acts as a vicarious agent of the anti-Catholic crusade or as a celebrant reveler at an imperial court, Faustus becomes what he defines as an icon: when Faustus becomes the resident necromancer for Bruno, Benvolio observes: "I would he [Bruno] would post with him [Faustus] to Rome again" (11.36). In fact, the skeptic pronounces Faustus as an addendum to a religious idol; poignantly, it is Faustus who helped Bruno, the anti-pope, to be invested. Earlier Faustus mocked and shamed the pope "despite of all his holiness" (8.120); at the papal feast, the invisible Faustus commanded the pope to "use that trick [crucifix] no more" (9.90), a moment in which the text uses magic to pronounce religious magic ineffective and delusionary. Now, Faustus creates "shadows not substantial" (12.55) to entertain the Holy Roman Emperor and the anti-pope. The difference is earlier Faustus entreats Mephostophilis to "in this show let me an actor be" (8.76) so that he can mock "this proud Pope" (77), now at Charles's imperial court, Faustus mocks his own false authority without recruiting his necromantic agent's help.

Christopher Marlowe's life in itself is a supportive argument for the authorial intention in Faustus's iconoclastic impulses. Christopher Marlowe embodies the Elizabethan mystique.²⁰² The gallant playwright was killed in a suspicious tavern brawl in 1593, probably in the Queen's service until the day he died. Evidence of his espionage comes from earlier days: in 1587, the Privy Council intervened on behalf of Marlowe on the dispute of his qualification for a master's degree that rumors about his supposed conversion to Catholicism jeopardized. The Queen's Privy Council put forward the Cambragian's qualification for an M. A. in those barely cryptic words: "it was not her Majesties pleasure that anie on employed as he had been in matters touching the benefit of his Countrie should be defamed by those that are ignorant in th'affaires he went about."²⁰³ His conversion seems to have been planned as an effort to infiltrate English Catholic exiles in Rheims. On the other hand, the scandalous charges against Marlowe made by one-time friends and other shady acquaintances testify to the poet's blasphemous spirit of atheism: in 1592, one of them, one Richard Baines, charged Marlowe for saying "the first beginning of Religion was only to keep men in awe" as well as for counterfeiting currency.²⁰⁴ On May 18, 1593, the Privy Council, acting on Thomas Kyd's confession, issued a warrant for Marlowe's arrest for atheist activities. The very next day, Richard Chomley, also embroiled in the "treasonous" atheist plot, confessed that "one Marlowe is able to shewe more sounde reasons for Atheisme then any devine in Englande is able to geve to prove devinitie & that Marloe tolde him that hee hath read the Atheist lecture to Sr Walter Ralieghe & others."²⁰⁵ Atheist or no, it will be at best dubious to ascribe to the author either Protestant sympathy or its counterpart, or even an Anglican compromise between the two, when suspicion of atheism persistently dogged Marlowe and his posthumous renown.²⁰⁶

In addition, the different texts of *Doctor Faustus* not only in its original play text but also in later revisions are an outcome of revision and collaboration, whose process at the least adulterates any singular—if there were any—assertion of religious affiliation in this play. The source of this play, *Historia von D. Iohañ Fausten*, penned by an anonymous Lutheran, was available in English translation by 1592.²⁰⁷ Thomas Orwin, the printer of the 1592 translation by P. E., had to fight for his right to publish *The Historie of the damnable / life, and deserued death of / Doctor Iohn Faustus*, ascertaining the commercially successful reception of this narrative in England.²⁰⁸ The title page bolsters the claim that this edition is “*Newly imprinted, and in conueni- / ent places imperfect matter amended: / according to the true Copie printed / at Franckfort, and translated into / English by P. E. gent.*” Without clarifying who did “amend” what, Orwin subsumes the ahistorical narrative of Faustus under the genre of “history.” Writing *Doctor Faustus*, inferably at the height of his supposed atheist effrontery, Marlowe elevates P. E.’s history to “*tragicall history,*” casting the chronological depiction of a wretched life in a classical mold of a great man’s deplorable flaw and his resultant fall. Clearly, Marlowe detected the human dilemma pendulant between a willful agency and the fear of eschatological verdict in the moral narrative of the Lutheran Faustus; nonetheless, Marlowe redacts the religious narrative into “*a divine in show*” (1. 3) to “*show*” the false authority of the church and the state.

Also, the authenticity of the Marlovian imprint that set the daring Faustus in high relief is a matter of no certainty. What Marlowe conceived at the end of the century continued to grow and transform itself even after his bizarre death. Even the earliest publication of *Doctor Faustus* falls in the Jacobean era—eleven years after the author was killed in Deptford. Assuming the A text of 1604 is the afterlife record of the Elizabethan performance of this play

and the 1616 B text is the molt of the stage performance that contains additions made by Samuel Rowley and William Birde, the B text was printed a quarter century after the author's death. The divergences in the length, spirit, and spirituality between Text A and Text B beg the question: "which *Doctor Faustus* do I choose to read?" For Marlowe's *Faustus* was drawn, after the playwright's life was cut short, by sundry hands that sought to capture and sustain, what Leah Marcus calls, the "Marlowe effect."²⁰⁹

There are two distinct approaches to Marlowe's opus with many compromises in between: an effort to excavate the clearly-cut, raw-edged Marlowe (a choice made by Leah Marcus) and an effort to fuse all partial issues into one conflation of comprehensive, but not mutually-exclusive, elements (the course John Davies Jump's Revels edition pursues). Marcus, in her project to reevaluate the editing practice of the Renaissance texts in *Unediting the Renaissance*, promotes the individual merits of each quarto, engaging the hermeneutic obsession to conflate diverse issues to posit a common progenitor that begot all those partial issues.²¹⁰ As she distills the disparities, Text A is clearly shorter, edgier, more starkly iconoclastic, and has *Faustus* hail from Wertenberg. The B text introduces new scenes (Adrian's papal feast, Carolean imperial court, and an augmented scene of the theater of war—or, what one may call, Benvolio's revenge—that supply more elements of pulling-the-leg sort of magic), flaunting more magical paraphernalia, juggleries, and conjurations. With more opportunity for theatricality and farce, Text B pictures *Faustus* in a close tie with the school of Wittenberg, a minor yet quite significant distinction, as Marcus delineates.²¹¹ One significant stance promoted by Marcus is that a deferred, dialectical reading of these two editions would better reveal the author function of the "Marlowe effect," that is, how the process of additions and

modifications (including Faustus's scholarly affiliation with the Duchy of Württemberg in the A text and with Wittenberg in the B text) sustains the oppositional nature of Faustus in terms of the stage's interaction with current cultural poetics.²¹²

Even though Marcus argues that the B text, with the priest-like Old Man supplicating Faustus's repentance, exhibits pro-Anglican, pro-imperial sentiments unlike the boldly iconoclastic (Protestant) impulses in the A text, I believe that B is as iconoclastic as A since the added scenes of conjurations and self-mutilating tricks further exploit the analogous semblance between iconoclastic magic and Catholic rituals, emphasizing Pope Adrian's fallibility and Faustus's nihilistic self-sabotage.²¹³ The extended scenes of papal mockery in the B text—a crowd pleaser probably penned by Samuel Rowley with all the right anti-Catholic tropes—read more radical (Protestant) than pro-Anglican.²¹⁴ Whether they were coeval or consecutive, the significant insight Marcus presents is that Faustus would have been portrayed as “the seductive antagonist of the style of belief” prevalent in the given locale, which would have insured “the highest possible pitch of ‘ravishment’ and horror,” the essence of the “Marlowe effect.”²¹⁵ I would like to open up Marcus's reading of the antagonistic Faustus to suggest that any religious form of spiritual authority—Puritan, Catholic, or Anglican—is the object of Faustian iconoclasm: in A, the “infallible” pope is “divested” to his bare mundane core; in B, Faustus, the resident conjurer for the Holy Roman Emperor and his appointed pope, destroys his own authority by brutally mocking another iconoclast, Benvolio—does the name Benvolio associate skepticism with (humanist) benevolence? Faustus who once embodied the indefatigable spirit of defiance now is degenerate as an icon, a fetish, in Bruno's papal court—the very object of his iconoclastic impulses.

The B text better substantiates this reading of Faustus's iconoclastic self-destruction with multiple incidents of magical undoing and self-dismemberment along with the development of the character Benvolio, who A identifies only as a knight. Also, B has Faustus's limbs strewn on the stage and his followers pay their homage to the dead icon in ritualistic solemnity; the remnants of a condemned soul deserve a due burial and funeral honors in B while the A text makes Faustus's alienated death a clear warning and a deterrent for others: his "fiendful fortune may exhort the wise" (Epilogue 5). The corporeal brutality of the 1616 quarto may seem more severe; however, the B text has already staged Faustus's magical self-decollation and his transubstantiation into a bundle of hay in addition to an amputation of a leg the A text features. In this sense, the elaboration of Faustus's magical adventures in the papal and imperial courts in the B text indicates the 1616 quarto was a later, amended version of the 1604 play text, as Jump in his editorial decision uses the B text as the main text while the A text is considered as a comparison point.²¹⁶

Thus, my reading of Faustian magical juggleries follows more closely the B text, a text a director-turned-critic, Andrew Sofer, calls a "theatrical" text as opposed to the "authorial" A text.²¹⁷ The B text further exploits the kinship between the magician and the player by densely textualizing Faustus's magical self-sabotage even though the A text stages more juggling opportunities for Robin and Ralph. They are skeptics for the logic of a staging act is the suspension of disbelief in what it purports to achieve, be it transformative magic or stagecraft. The coterie of the theater knew that the shock and awe the necromantic chair produces in the tragicomedy of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* was the sum of its mechanical parts and operation. Staging a play, magic, or witchcraft was in fact an act of disbelief in the same magical agency

that it strove to present. In this sense, the morris troupe looking for a man who can play a witch in *The Witch of Edmonton* is a meta-theatrical joke. The witch completes the cozening art the morris troupe wants to stage: the false witch earns money for them.

The skeptic of the magical efficacy in staged magic finds unlikely support in Reginald Scot, who in his spiritual crusade against Catholic chicaneries embarked to purge the superstitious baubles and delusive juggleries of which witches, magicians, and Catholic priests avail themselves. His learned stance must have been prohibitive to the general public; furthermore, James I made Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) virtually inaccessible by ordering the burning of Scot's book in 1603. Yet, skepticism of magical efficacy seems hardly to have been stymied; Samuel Rid, one of many unabashed Jacobean plagiarizers of Scot, made the cozening secrets of magic and witchcraft easily accessible by "authoring" a pamphlet called *The Art of Juggling* (1612). I will read the bungling juggling acts of Faustus and his cohorts alongside the manual of magic even though I have to admit that Scot's intention was to put an end to such cozenage while in Rid's case, his moralistic stance rings hollow and looks dissembling.

The emphatic conclusion of Reginald Scot's exposé of witchcraft is that all witchcraft is "in truth a cousening art."²¹⁸ Just as the Protestant skeptic of necromancy saw theatricality in magic and demonic impersonation, Marlowe seems to have seen the analogue of the counterfeiting in stagecraft and the institutionalized authorities of the church and the state: they are all counterfeit-able. On the one hand, Marlowe lets loose Faustus to expose the fallibility of the pope and his inept Catholic counter-magic; on the other hand, Marlowe the dramaturge employs charming words, trap doors, pulleys, verisimilar props, and ingenious

contraptions as forms of stagecraft in justifying Faustus's punishment. The play employs magic in punishing the villain hero for dabbling in magic: the entrance of hell is exposed, the Good Angel and the Old Man ascend, and Faustus's limbs are scattered on the stage. Marlowe counterfeits a moral like a Machiavellian who appeals for sympathy.

Unlike Marlowe, the skeptic of institutional supremacy, Reginald Scot is an advocate of spiritual singularity, on which his Protestant skepticism of miracles and exorcism is anchored. Well before Marlowe came to the theater, Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) was in circulation, unmasking the shock and awe of cozeners' juggleries. Conflating cozenage and "Romish" sacramental rites, Scot rebukes sensory confirmation of spiritual wonders: "popish charmes, conjurations, execrations, and benedictions are not effectuell, but be toies and devises onelie to keepe the people blind, and to inrich the cleargie."²¹⁹ Scot attacks Catholic priests for manipulating—that is, cozening—foolish believers, while patronizingly exculpating witches as old, lame, and senile women.²²⁰ Thus, according to Scot, there is no witch or magician who can truly affect—let alone command—the preternatural order.

Scot equates theatricality to baleful deception. Scot exposes how easy it is to fake a trance, religious or dramatic:

Make a poore boie confederate with you, so as after charmes, etc: spoken by you, he unclothe himself, and stand naked, seeming (whilst he undresseth him) to shake, stampe, and crie, still hastening to be unclothed, till he be starke naked: or if you can procure none to go so far, let him onelie beginne to stapem and sake, etc: and to unclothe him, and then you may (for the reverence of the companie) seeme to release him.²²¹

The boy "actor" simply enacts the script written by the cozeners. In mock sincerity, Scot advises to modify the script depending on the logistical condition of the performance. Years later, Samuel Harsnett, who was to rise up to the office of Archbishop of York, accused a Puritan

minister John Darrel of faking an exorcism in this manner. In *Discovery of the Fraudulent Practises of One John Darrel* (1599), Harsnett “discovers” how John Darrel rehearsed exorcism with his child accomplice, William Sommers, condemning Darrel’s “witchcraft”: “Of all the partes of the tragicall Comedie acting between him and Somers, there was no Scene in it, wherein M. Darrell did with more courage and boldnes acte his part, then in this of the discoverie of witches.”²²² Darrel’s scripted and rehearsed performance of Sommers’s possession and exorcism, in Harsnett’s eyes, is not much different from witchcraft, which in turn resembles a ridiculous performance of a tragicomedy: the Anglican father carps at the stage for its guilty association with exorcism and witchcraft. In dabbling in visual wonders and witch-scare tactics, the Puritan comes close to what he condemns: the witch. In the eye of the skeptic, neither Catholics nor Puritans were immune from religious cozenage.

In 1612, Samuel Rid published *The Art of Jugling, or Legerdemaine* to expose “all but meere delusions and counterfeit actions” of magic, jugglery, witchcraft, and even medicine.²²³ Unabashedly plagiarizing Scot’s *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, including the above passage on faking a trance, Rid adopts tongue-in-cheek sincerity in tearing down the glittering façade to reveal the magician behind the curtain. Copying Scot near verbatim, Rid perorates that if one so fondly believes in the Romish act of exorcism or cozening jugglers, he deserves ridicule since fools and money part their ways all too easily. Similar narrative and skepticism about possession and exorcism shared by Scot, Harsnett, and Rid aim their darts at such impersonators as cozening cronies, Catholic deceivers, and Puritan zealots. Suspicion of pretenders and players might be the only ground on which all three may agree.

Many early moderns opined that demonic possession and divine grace are easily counterfeited even though some did so out of their zeal to advance one form of religious practice over the other. Among them, Scot reaches out further to engage all forms of the spurious claims of wonder, including stagecraft. In *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, he describes how “the most notable execution” of jugglery can be staged and even includes a vivid illustration of the “magical” apparatus necessary for this performance. In order to perform “the decollation of John Baptist,” that is cutting off one’s head and laying it on a platter, the juggler needs two accomplices of comparable body (and head) size; a tabletop composed of two pieces of plank boards, each having two strategically-cut semicircles; a platter that has a hidden hole; and finally a long table cloth that covers up the secrets of this operation. With all in place, the master imposter may commence to,

(to make the sight more dredfull) put a little brimstone into a chafing dish of coles, setting it before the head of the boie, who must gaspe two or three times, so as the smoke enter a little into his nostrils and mouth (which is not unholosome) and the head presentlie will appeare starke dead; if the boie set his countenance accordingle: and if a little bloud be sprinkled on his face, the sight will be the stranger.

This is commonlie practised with a boie instructed for the purpose, who being familiar and conversant with the companie, may be knowne as well by his face, as by his apparell. In the other end of the table, where the like hole is made, an other boie of the bignesse of the knowne boie must be placed, having upon him his usuall apparell: he must leane or lie upon the boord, and must put his head under the boord through the said hole, so as his bodie shall seeme to lie on the one end of the boord, and his head shall lie in a platter on the other end. There are other things which might be performed in this action, the more to astonish the beholders, which because they offer long descriptions, I omit: as to put about his necke a little dough kneded with bullocks bloud, which being cold with appeare like dead flesh; & being pricked with a sharpe round hollow quill, will bleed, and seeme verie strange, etc. Manie rules are to be observed herein, as to have the table cloth so long and wide as it may almost touch the ground.

On the foundation of such crafty contraptions, the company of jugglers builds a “strange” and “dreadfull” scene of a decollation with an olfactory hint of terror enhanced with sulfuric fog and with the ocular proof of bovine blood spouting out of the victim’s false neck. The performer’s linguistic ability in engineering the audience’s empathy for the boy’s fainting and bleeding may enhance the “magical” efficacy of this act stronger than the sum total of the feigned act of beheading. The stage of wonder is achieved through the deceived eye of the beholder; however, Scot is clearly aware of the theatrical efficacy in which verbal distractions and thaumaturgic accoutrements infiltrate the viewer’s imaginative faculties.

Scot continues to disclose how a bloody sword fight or dismemberment is staged. The juggler is to wrap his torso with linen and proceed to wear a false belly made with dough and painted to the verisimilitude of his own belly. Scot indulges himself in mock theatricality:

[B]etwixt the plate & the false bellie you place a gut or bladder of blood, which blood must be of a calfe or of a sheepe; but in no wise of an oxe or a cow for that will be too thick. Then thrust, or cause to be thrust into your brest a round bodkin, or the point of a dagger, so far as it may pearse through your gut or bladder: which being pulled out againe, the said blood will spin or spirt out a good distance from you, especially if you straine your bodie to swell, and thrust therewith against the plate. You must ever remember to use (with words, countenance, and gesture) such a grace, as may give a grace to the action, and move admiration in the beholders.²²⁴

The impression of gushing blood is easily achieved with a bag of a young animal’s blood; the imposter fakes pain with words and gestures, ingratiating himself in the eye of the spectators. Mockingly, he reminds the aspirant imposter not to forget to bind the body part of attack and to make it sure to use the proper type of animal blood that does not easily congeal—avoid the squalidly thick blood of an old cow! Then, Scot amuses himself with the image of the imaginary imposter flexing his torso to squirt the pouch of blood further.

One may wonder at this point whether Faustus “cuts” his arm by nicking a hidden pouch of bullock’s blood only to complain that he cannot sign on the deed since his blood coagulates, just as Scot warned against using blood from an old cow. Theatrical language seems to be insufficient to convey such emphases on the liquidity of blood: “*View here this blood* that trickles from mine arm” (5. 57, my italics); “My blood congeals, and I can write no more” (62). When Mephostophilis fetches in a chafer of coals to warm his blood, Faustus exclaims: “So, now the blood begins to clear again” (71). Simply adding brimstone to the coal fire would have conveyed an olfactory confirmation of how condemnatory such a demonic pact is, as Scot would put it, making “the sight more dredfull.” Marlowe seems to salute Scot for his unwitting endorsement of dramatic efficacy by playing a visual joke on the fluidity of blood and then by ordering Mephostophilis to fetch a chafer of coal to warm the thick blood. The text returns frequently to the metaphoric image of blood, free-flowing or coagulated. The blood of the sacrificial little lamb is imagined to be profuse and liquid, while inundating despair stops Faustus from begging for Christ’s redeeming droplet of blood; instead, as if to confirm how thick and squalid his blood is, Faustus willingly cuts his head and leg, and for the final show of such a wonder, has all his limbs torn and strewn on the stage.

Scot deconstructs the visual wonders of early modern imposters (jugglers and players included) and exposes them as scripted and rehearsed performances that exploit ingenious contraptions and sleights of hand. As if the playwright were intent upon going against the grain of Scot’s warning of such juggleries, *Doctor Faustus* stages multiple acts of juggleries, throwing coins and a silver goblet up in the air. Wager, Robin, and Rafe—all underlings of the master magician—engage in bungling acts of conjuration, which in fact are no more than juggleries. As

Sofer illustrates, the early modern terminology of magical tricks was jugglery—simple and dry trickery—while “conjuring” conveyed the seditious potential of risking summoning words to produce magical consequence.²²⁵ In this sense, Faustus “conjures” and his underlings “juggle.”

Wagner seeks to bind Robin as his indentured servant, patterning it after Faustus’s contract with Mephostophilis as his attendant demon. Initially, Wagner tries to buy the simpleton’s servitude with guilders, or guldens. Never owned any guldens before—as his malapropism of “gridirons” for guldens reveals—Robin strives not to receive the coins, which Wagner is intent to deposit in Robin’s person, each trying to outjuggle the other about some coins. Assuring his rapport with the audience, Wagner takes the audience as his witnesses: “Bear witness I gave them him” (A Text 4. 42). Robin retorts: “Bear witness I gave them you again” (43). Their swift sleights of hand, endeavoring to outdo each other, mirror Scot’s instructions on how “to conveie monie out of one of your hands into the other by legierdemaine,” which is “prettie if it be cunninglie handled: for both the eare and the eie is deceived by this devise.”²²⁶ Any reader of Scot would have known how such a juggling act—if this scene was performed as such—was a sham. As no real coins, hence no contract, are “conveyed” throughout this pettifoggery, Wagner proceeds to summon demons to intimidate Robin into submission. Without going through any invoking rite, Wagner shouts out for “Baliol and Belcher” (45). Eventually, Robin agrees to serve Faustus’s servant in order to learn how to “raise up Banios and Belcheos” (59). Undoubtedly, the simpleton with a mangling tongue cannot master the necromantic command; nonetheless, the demons are ready to serve any supplicant regardless of incantatory aptness. If so, what did Faustus bargain for in exchange for his soul?

The Scene 10 of the A text stages another juggling act; this time the Vintner joins Robin and Ralph. Sternly commanding the Vintner, “stand by, you had best, I charge you in the name of Beelzebub” (21-22), Robin tosses the stolen goblet to Ralph, who does the same to Robin, and back and forth. Unable to brush off the Vintner, Robin gibbers in Latinate nonsense: “*Polypragmos Belseborams framanto pacostiphos tostu Mephostophilis!*” (27-28). Notwithstanding such an unlikely conjurer and the demon’s reluctance, Mephostophilis is summoned all the way from Constantinople. Once the Vintner is frightened away, Robin dismissively offers Mephostophilis sixpence for his drudgery. Pestered at the effrontery, Mephostophilis transforms the two yokel conjurers into an ape and a dog. The conventional thaumaturgy converges on stagecraft when the bestial transformation occurs right on the stage. At the expense of Robin and Ralph, juggling and stagecraft are soldered together. Having stolen a conjuring book from Faustus and a goblet from the Vintner, Robin dreams an inexhaustible well of wealth until being punished by what he conjures up. Wagner, Robin, and Ralph engage in clumsy performance of jugglery as if Marlowe is mirroring Scot’s instructions on “how to conveie coins and cups.” Yet, their disastrous dabbling in juggling and conjuring reflects Faustus’s iconoclastic magic: earlier in Scene 9, Faustus, magically invisible, snatched away the communion chalice and dishes from the papal table. The lowly characters engage in juggleries, while their social superior dabbles in necromancy; like a fever, conjuration spreads and masters and servants are on the road for stolen food and swindled privileges.

Having discovered the power of language—when Mephostophilis returns in the habit of a Franciscan friar upon his request, Faustus exclaims, “there’s virtue in my heavenly words” (3.29)—Faustus avails himself of linguistic manipulation. As warned—in fact, provoked—by

Faustus, the Horse-courser appears in Scene 15 drenched and *sans* his prize horse, which turned into straw upon contact with water, as the proverbial witch's horse would turn into a bundle of hay. The transmutability of water, celebrated in sacramental baptism and connoting female misrule and feminine mutability in witch-lore, is so firmly established in early modern culture that the marked man's wet grumbling suffices to signal the efficacy of Faustus's magic. The swindling magician's caveat to "ride him not into the water" (15. 11-12) compels the Horse-courser to test the horse in water.²²⁷ With such declarative speeches—"I charge thee to return and change thy shape" and "ride him not into the water"—language yields theatrical consequences as if they were thaumaturgic charms. When pitted against the phenomenological certainty of such imperative statements, magical charms and conjurations sound shadowy and hollow.

Sofer observes that Faustus is ambivalent to "demonstrations magical" (1.153), since he is unsure of "whether he craves the show of magic or the real thing" his conjuration is supposed to produce.²²⁸ Thereafter, he keeps his eye on the viewer—an audience member he posits who is equipped with commonsense and analytical attentiveness to how speech is effected—and follows how the audience experiences the two linguistic patterns of speeches, constatives (or illocutionary acts) and performatives (or perlocutionary acts). He concludes that in this play, "illocutionary" pronouncements (declarative assertions) yield theatrical transformative consequences while "perlocutionary" incantations (purporting to perform magical wonders) uncertainly hang between thaumaturgy and fortuity. I would like to add that the minor characters' fatuous attempts at juggleries as well as Faustus's self-parodic conjurations corroborate the protagonist's deliberate blurring of the boundaries between illusion of

prestidigitation and phenomenological reality. Furthermore, I believe the text deliberately undermines its dramatic reality and teleology by dint of the myriad entertaining but nihilistic and wonderous but calculated spectacles of magic.

The text inscribes multiple visual markers of wonderous magic only to undo and destroy what magic claims to produce; in doing so, the stage subsumes necromancy under stagecraft. These juxtapositions of thaumaturgic mimicry and effective stagecraft position Faustus as an anti-hero and dilute the severity of his transgression: a rogue hero who vicariously carries out the audience's secret wishes usually avoids the worst of punishments. The twenty-four-year grace period with a surety of his soul creates a Faustian dilemma of fettered freedom, in which what Faustus can do is either annul the contract and forfeit what he has gained or forsake his free will and try to have fun until the inevitable moment of reckoning. To deprive Faustus of time to review his contract, Beelzebub proceeds to entertain the new acolyte with a masquerade of pomp and allure: the seven deadly sins that Faustus is to try out one by one. Like the master of ceremonies, the demonic "stage manager" presents this "play" in such words: "we are come from hell in person to show thee some pastime" (6. 104-105).

Accompanied by music, the demons themselves impersonate the seven embodiments of human vices: Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, Sloth, and Lechery. The medieval Catholic Church utilized drama by using morality plays and miracle plays as didactic tools; here, the demonic nuncios preside over a travesty of a morality play: the masquerade flaunts vices with fantasy of pomp and transgression. Ostensibly, this "play within the play" staged by the demonic delegate is to reassure Faustus of the sensory rewards of the earlier soul-surrendering deed, yet this exhibition of the "vanity fair" of human desires introduces a much-lacking female

persona and feminine elements to this strongly homo-social, masculine dramatic world—Lechery is identified as “Mistress Minx” (7. 165)—and allows the theater company to showcase its wardrobe and prop inventory. The demons’ magical conjuration serves as a pragmatic device for the Admiral’s Men to maximize its inventory of actors and props. The theater is indebted to the demonic delegate for this theatrical opportunity.

The B text manifests pride, covetousness, wrath, and sloth in Adrian’s court. In his abuse of Bruno, the anti-pope backed up by the Holy Roman Emperor, Adrian voices his sense of entitlement, heavily relying on the repetition of “seven,” as if his assertion of supremacy were the verbal charm that invokes and reaffirms his infallible and invincible power:

Behold this silver belt, whereto is fix’d
 Seven golden keys fast seal’d with seven seals
 In token of our sevenfold power from heaven. (8. 153-55)

In ridiculing Catholic supremacy, the text equates Catholic friars and prelates to demons incarnate. Earlier, Faustus cheekily demanded a demon to change its appearance: “Go, and return an old Franciscan friar / That holy shape becomes a devil best” (3.27-28). Now, Mephostophilis and Faustus in cardinals’ habit trick Adrian to entrust Bruno into their hands; furthermore, Mephostophilis performs a demonic investiture of Faustus, so that the invisible prankster may have his way with the prelates and the pope:

Faustus, thou shalt; then kneel down presently,
*Whilst on thy head I lay my hand
 And charm thee with this magic wand.
 First wear this girdle, then appear
 Invisible to all are here:
 The planets seven, the gloomy air,
 Hell, and the Furies’ forked hair,
 Pluto’s blue fire, and Hecate’s tree*

*With magic spells so compass thee
That no eye may thy body see. (9.14-23)*

Lucifer's deputy anoints Faustus with this verbal charm and a magic wand that supplants the papal scepter. The sash that signifies a prelate, instead, renders the wearer invisible: the metonymic religious garb makes the clergyman (or the imposter) unaccountable for what he does. The ireful triad of the Furies juxtaposed with Pluto and Hecate reifies Hell, whose necromantic authority "consecrates" Faustus in invisibility and immunity from consequence. As an antagonist to the "infallible" pope, Faustus comes to quite close to what he condemns.

The following scene of the papal banquet ridicules Adrian's claim of infallibility and exposes his fleshly indulgences in wine and meat; furthermore, the tacit consent between the audience and the stage regarding the invisibility of the anti-prelate prankster questions where magical efficacy originates, from the preternatural agency of Mephostophilis or from the human faculties of imagination with which an everyman is equipped. During the broad daytime performance, it is nothing but the audience's leap of imagination that helps them to suspend their disbelief in the corporeality of the actor who plays the invisible Faustus (needless to say, of the formidable Edward Allyen, the Elizabethan specialist of the Marlovian protagonists). Under the tacit consensus of the theatrical magic of "make believe" invisibility, the invisible prankster intercepts a goblet and a dish, spoiling the papal feast; in the mean time, the pope is helpless against the invisible "demon" despite thrice crossing himself. The concreteness of the inefficacy of the papal crossing—Faustus's iconoclastic magic that debunks the Catholic agency in exorcism—depends on the viewer's voluntary subscription to theatrical mutability, theatrical magic.

The ludicrous mock-exorcism the cardinals perform at the pope's irate injunction utilizes books, bells, charms, and numerological magic as Faustus carries his disdain in the anadiplosis of words and movements: "Bell, book, and candle; candle, book, and bell; / Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!" (9.98-99). Soon, chanting friars cast an exorcist circle while cursing at the "troublesome ghost" (86). In the friars' chanting of "*Maledicat Dominus*" (9.103; afterwards, the charm is repeated four more times), it is the pope who is "exorcised" from the stage, not the necromantic duo, who ironically chase away the exorcist-friars at the end of their dirge of malediction. Unlike the scripted performance of providential exorcism such as Scot and Harsnett exposed as a deceptive act of religious fanaticism, Faustus breaks the premises of a scripted exorcism—a concerted performance of the possessed and the exorcist respondent to verbal cues, symbols, and signs that have intrinsic efficacy, while yielding the same result of debunking the efficacy of clerical counter-magic. Faustus, the antithesis of the possessed victim, nonetheless, is the unwitting accomplice of this staged exorcism, for which he is to be punished.

In Scenes 11 to 17, the necromancer spirals into nihilistic self-destruction. The religious icon Faustus mocks earlier returns as a simulacrum of itself—an anti-pope Bruno, whom Faustus helped invest in office. The benefactor now as a resident conjurer serves the former "footstool" of Adrian: the iconoclastic Faustus helps to build a simulacrum of the papal icon, another Faustian dilemma of his own making. The only escape from this Möbius strip is to cut it at the risk of cutting himself. A dumb show featuring Alexander the Great with his paramour is staged for the royal guests of honor, Charles V, Bruno, and the duke of Saxony. Despite the resident conjurer's swaggering flourish, the mime is cut abruptly when the emperor advances toward Alexander; understandably, the Holy Roman Emperor seeks to touch the specter, the

emblem of the superb military might, as if it were an apotropaic token for his own future military campaigns—an image of sympathetic magical properties. Faustus admonishes the emperor for seeking to interact with the phantoms: “in dumb silence let them come and go” (12.48); “these are but shadows, not substantial” (55). Yet, his interdiction against trespassing on the domain of necromancy is only to be broken by Faustus himself; having conjured such a specter to entertain the viewer’s fantasy by tantalizingly reminding the viewer of the otherworldly wonder, Faustus is soon overcome by his own transgressive impulses.

Provoked by his own interdictions, the conjurer stages the theater of war, or what the B text may call Benvolio’s revenge and acts out a conqueror’s role. This time he does not recruit Mephostophilis to assist him; he becomes something of an automaton in his impulse to undo, nullify, and dismember himself. Looking down from an elevated window, a critical vantage point, Benvolio exposes how papacy met conjuration in the Bruno-Faustus alliance: “Has not the Pope enough of conjuring yet? / He was upon the devil’s back late enough” (11. 33-34). Benvolio—like the once antagonistic Faustus, indignant at the “folly” of the prelates (8.10)—cannot hide his contemptuous anger at the magical baubles and juggleries: “Zounds, I could eat myself for anger to think I have been such an ass all this while to stand gaping after the devil’s governor, and can see nothing” (12.39-42). It would not be a surprise if the exposé of juggleries by Scot or Rid (if plagiarism counts) enlightened Benvolio. This skeptical outlook is what characterized Faustus’s view of Adrian’s sin-ful court. Now Faustus himself seeks to inhabit the papal court with flimsy, insubstantial specters of necromancy; Faustus’s personal animus toward Benvolio and his muffling of Benvolio’s loud voice of skepticism under Actaeon’s stag head seem to suggest his shame and self-loathing.

By becoming an icon (the “pope-maker” and figurehead for “wandering Egyptians”) and by muffling the voice of dissension, Faustus becomes anti-Faustus.²²⁹ Benvolio mocks the illusory aspect of Faustus’s conjuring act: “thou bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor, I’ll be Actaeon and turn myself to a stag” (12.51-52). Benvolio swears how null the corporeality of Faustus’s conjuration is against the impossibility of the hunter turning himself into a quarry of his pursuit. Faustus ripostes: “And I’ll play Diana and send you the horns presently” (53). Benvolio in his spirited skepticism has hit Faustus where it hurts and needs punishing. Like Actaeon who discovers Diana naked, Benvolio “discovered” the falsity of Faustus’s learning. Ironically, this is the first moment Faustus is identified as willfully feminine authority of black magic. Even though Faustus may claim to play Diana’s role, his malefic transformation of Benvolio into a symbolic cuckold evokes instead the image of Hecate.

The dumb show demonstrates Alexander’s confiscation of Darius’ crown, which he places on his paramour’s head. Adopting his narrative cues from the dumb show he himself conjured up, Faustus stages his own theater of war—he self-plagiarizes! The sorcerer’s self-conscious infringement on the epistemic incompatibility of the demonic and human boundaries condemns the sorcerer; however, at the same time, the performatives of the false head trick (along with its variation in the leg trick that obviates the Horse-courser’s money-back demand) allow Faustus an escape from unequivocal condemnation, while supplying the stage with the shock and awe of a decapitated head and spurting blood. After being deliberately decollated, Faustus springs up again to mock Benvolio and the company of knights who were busy devising means to desecrate the severed body parts. Faustus cries: “Nay, keep it [the head]; Faustus will have heads and hands, / Ay, all your hearts, to recompense this deed” (69-70).

This macabre joke of a bloody head prepares a meta-joke at the expense of the audience; for that, the conjurer makes himself literally a “straw man” by stuffing himself with a load of hay he defrauds the Carter, and in addition, he masterminds the Horse-courser to pull his leg off—literally. This hollow nihilistic joke betrays Faustus’s nonchalance and perverse delight at the prospect of his dismemberment the play has in store for him. It seems that the joke is on the viewers since the fitting death for this demonic dabbler—his violent dismemberment—was in fact a pre-rehearsed physical prank, practiced already twice. May Frederick indulge himself in somber pomp for now: “Was this that stern aspect, that awful frown, / Made the grim monarch of infernal spirits / Tremble and quake at his commanding charms?” (13. 46-49)—how it presages Faustus’s *admiratio* of Helen!

As if the tool to facilitate the stage with magic and spectacle, Faustus purveys exotic, delightful, and surprising antics as well as absurd, self-undoing pranks. Scene 17 features Mephostophilis fetching a bunch of grapes from the Antipode; to humble Faustus, the low and vulgar elements of the Carter and the Horse-courser along with Faustus’s former stable hands intrude into the ducal court even though these rowdy yokels are dumb-struck and expelled from the court. The life-like marzipan grapes, fake as magic yet tantalizing as magic, and the “void” (the show of rowdy destruction and wonder at a sumptuous table of display) anticipate Faustus’s last banquet, which culminates with the necromantic union of Faustus and Helen. Banqueting custom is appropriated in the plotline that anticipates the moment Faustus is satiated with a surfeit of food and pleasure.

The B text, teeming with what Sofer calls “jeune parlor tricks,”²³⁰ trifling magical act of exhibitionism pulled at Adrian’s papal court and Charles’s imperial court, reifies the abstract

attributes of human vices on the corporal body of authority figures of the pope and the emperor as well as Faustus himself: pride, wrath, sloth, covetousness, greed, and gluttony—except for lechery. Finally, Faustus “acts out” this vice of sexual debauchery at the eleventh hour of his life; with Helen of Troy, he mimics Alexander’s kiss, conveniently forgetting his own forewarning that mortals are not to mingle with “shadows, not substantial” (12.55). Having sustained the taut tug between the moralistic telos to disown the soul trafficker and the subversive Fabellian backtalk of “let’s live till we die, and be merry,” the text now has to pass the long-awaited sentence of “*consummatum est*” (5.74) to let go of Faustus and kissing a “succubus” does it. Faustus, who sold his soul to “live in all voluptuousness” (3.94), truly *consummates* his desire to defy human limitations and taboos of the sublime in a demonic sexual contact.

Faustus’s kiss of Helen—who may well be the same devil Mephostophilis disguises as the “hot whore” (5.150) who would quench the new acolyte’s desire to be wived—is a moment in which the theatrical efficacy of performativity (the verisimilar demonstration of a magical act) exploits the purported consequence that theatrical poetry called into existence. Devils may transform into or disguise as beautiful women; however, Faustus’s kiss of the female specter legitimates the “shadow not substantial” as corporeal being with the seditious suggestion that the necromantic reality is as actionable and real as the Christian reality. The conjurer may, with a certain degree of immunity, demonstrate the illusive specters from the preternatural realm since they exist as the antithetical shadows of the divine; however, legitimating their existence through an interaction, needless to say a sexual encounter, inculcates the transgressor. With

the sealing of lips, the play completes a full circle: Faustus has tasted all lethal vices; in other words, the play has broken all proscriptions by acting out religious and social taboos.

Helen is not only a female persona a male actor impersonates but also a demonic incarnation, a human disguise a devil puts on. Faustus's first request once the deed was signed is, quite unimaginatively, to be wived; Mephostophilis easily diverts the request with a sleazy version of an acceptable Christian wife and then proffers a magical book for perusal since "[m]arriage is but a ceremonial toy" (5.151). Now, nearing the end of the grace period, Faustus is reunited with the female incarnation of the demonic sexuality. Even though Faustus has haphazardly adopted the theological concept of predestination to form a technical loophole that "we must sin, and so consequently die" (1.44) and led a life of "what will be, shall be" (47), at the eleventh hour, the Old Man visits Faustus to make a final plea to Faustus to repent: the text points out that Faustus's theological exegesis on predetermination was flawed and the salvatory Grace will be granted to any repentant soul as freely as the blood Jesus shed on the crucifix. Mephostophilis and the Old Man fight their war of persuasion—as if they parody the dialogic role the Good Angel and the Evil Angel play.

The Old Man finds his logic in dualism, seeking to convince Faustus that he can save his "amicable" (43) soul if he denies his body of any further sinful desires: he implores, "[c]hecking thy body, may amend thy soul" (54). To defeat the Old Man's argument, Mephostophilis hands a dagger to Faustus since self-murder in despair ensures eternal damnation. With a suggestion of "a vial full of precious grace" (62), the Old Man stays Faustus from suicide; however, Mephostophilis, having earlier whetted Faustus's appetite with the visage of Helen, prevails to lead Faustus to "glut the longing" of his desire with Helen (91). Glutting on necromantic lechery,

Faustus loses not only his soul but also his last chance at salvation since at this moment the precarious equilibrium between repentance and despair that has kept Faustus in the pendulous momentum breaks and Faustus falls to eternal perdition.

As lethal as the dagger of despair, Helen is the corporeal metaphor of the body that tempts the soul to damnation. Helen is the bodily temptation that *consummates* Faustus's sins. In this often-recited Marlovian speech, Faustus juggles a classical *admiratio* and a Christian mythos:

Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships
 And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flies!
 Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
 Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
 And all is dross that is not Helena. (18. 99-105, my italics)

The celebration of humanist desires, the aesthetic ideals Helen symbolizes in Greek antiquities, converts into a eulogy for his lost soul. Instead of earning immortality, Faustus is deprived of his "soul." Like a succubus, Helen sucks the soul out of Faustus and the nebulous aura of a human trespassing into the diabolic in this speech folds together humanist wonder and Christian abhorrence. Trapped within the fault line between Hellenistic pursuits and Christian prudence, Faustus willingly relinquishes his own soul. Mephostophilis got the promissory note from Faustus but Helen takes the payment.

Mephostophilis, the partner in their adventure errant, is replaced with Helen, who claims Faustus's soul for payment of his demonic service. Faustus earlier declared: "Had I as many souls as there be stars, I'd give them all for Mephostophilis" (3.104-5); now, it is Helen, to whom Faustus dedicates his poetry: "O, thou are fairer than the evening's air / Clad in the

beauty of a thousand stars” (18.112-13). Helen is not a woman but a demon just as Mephostophilis is not a man but a demon and it would be a mistake to read this scene from a gender-conscious perspective. For example, Leah Marcus “strongly suspects” that this scene was perceived as the ultimate deal-breaker in the eyes of its early modern readers or audience.²³¹ She suggests that overlapping the implicit image of Eve with the lethal apple in one hand on Helen might be a reflex reading coming from our modern awareness of perennial anti-femininity. Marcus, in her feminist sensitivity, seems unduly to dismiss the cultural paranoia of the time this scene provokes: Helen’s demonic sexuality. The seduced-seducer Eve is seditious for her femininity that she shares with all her “daughters,” yet Helen does not represent the ultimate femininity but is posited as a spectral visitation from the netherworld. The object of Faustus’s *admiratio* is not a woman but a demon impersonating Helen.

Under the Hellenic encomium lurks the Christian awareness that demonic branding occurs on the oral orifice of the willing partner of the demonic pact. Helen, another incarnation of the “she-devil” that Mephostophilis earlier suggested as a substitute for a lawful wife, returns as a succubus that robs Faustus of his soul. Once bereft with his soul, Faustus declares his willingness to fight an epic battle to be reunited with the possessor of his soul just as Paris fought a losing war for the sake of another kiss of Helen (106-11). However, in his adoration of Helen, Faustus goes through an emasculating transformation. He claims she is fairer than the morning star accosted by thousands of stars, brighter than “flaming Jupiter” that unwittingly incinerated Semele, and lovelier than “the monarch of the sky” that frolics on the fountain of Arethusa (114-18). Such comparisons drawn from a pagan mythos emasculate the supplicant for a reviving kiss: Faustus in his sinful lechery subjugates himself under the demonic sexuality,

fantasizing Helen as the transformative agency of overwhelming dominion; in his gradual fall to trivial magical pursuits, Faustus has identified himself as Diana in punishing Benvolio; with Helen, he goes through further emasculating transformations. No longer does Faustus command the demonic: he is in service of the demonic.

As Shakespearean Prospero abjures magic once he consummates his goals, *Doctor Faustus* comes to the point in which magic needs to be renounced. Kissing Helen, ironically, does not demand any magical manipulation. Faustus's locutionary speech conjures up the most transgressive act of demonic sexuality. All these magical feats ridicule and expose the fiction of exorcism and resurrection, which is culminated in the spectacle of his dismembered death. The audience who willingly suspend their sensory certainty of the physicality of the "invisible" Faustus would laugh at the yokels whose greed blinds their eyes to Faustus's resurrection scheme pulled with a false head and a false leg. As shown above, this play's success as dramatic entertainment depends on its willingness to exploit the precarious, yet visually stimulating, dealings of the damned art. Such exhibitions of magical display thread through the anecdotal adventures of the scholar in order to create a dramatic narrative that condemns the use of black art only to revel in it.

As Edward Alleyn, the actor known for his conspicuous physique and impressive stature, playing Faustus flaunted a cross on his scholastic garb—a daring gesture that would invite a strong approbation from Protestant patrons—Doctor Faustus, the villain-hero, seeks to provoke, and thrives on, the unease and amazement of the audience.²³² In 1632, William Prynne of *Histriomastix* zealotry reported a tale that during a performance of this play, real devils once appeared on the stage to everybody's shock.²³³ There were multiple reports of transformation

or conversion after watching *Doctor Faustus* (into manic breakdown and into a reformed charitable life). At Exeter and later in London, an extra devil took even the actors (!) by surprise and a London stage was so creaky that all got so shaken in fear.²³⁴ Such sensational reports seem to betray the stage's willingness to exploit these wonderous and fearful accounts as an early modern form of the sales pitch, granting that each generation has a fair share of those essentialists like William Prynne, to whom words always mean only what the letters spell.

The B text reifies Faustus's demise, unlike A's agonized throes of eternal perdition, as punitive dismemberment of his body is discovered probably in the discovery space that is assumed as Faustus's study; however, the physical pranks Faustus plays—the false head, his gargantuan appetite for hay (only in the B text), and the false leg (in both quartos)—undermine the absoluteness of Faustus's violent perdition. When the actors repopulate the stage to bow, even the most literal-minded viewer would be assured with the fiction of Faustus's condemnation. The violent and disturbing end of the B text might have been a perverse sort of a tribute to the dead author that “launch'd a thousand dares,” so to speak. The dervish ravishment the play spins out has to be contained somehow; however, Faustus, the master conjurer, may well have rehearsed the most daring act of juggleries, self-decollation and self-dismemberment. The trickster each time has sprung back up to laugh at his terrified gulls: Benvolio might mistakenly assert, “the devil's dead; the furies now may laugh” (13.45); however, it is Faustus who retorts vindictively that “Faustus will have heads and hands . . . to recompense this deed” (69-70). Faustus cannot be killed until the twenty-four years run out. Similarly, the Horse-courser may hope to outrun the one-legged Faustus after he thinks he pulled one leg off the sleeping swindler, but Faustus laughs at the unfortunate horse trader

since “Faustus hath his leg again” (15.40-41). Such a confined space as the discovery space is optimal to hide an ingenious contraption to reveal body parts here and there as strategically spaced holes would allow multiple actors to protrude their head or limbs. Faustus’s terrorizing final moment is a version of decollating jugglery, which was well-known in the circle of jugglers, demonologists, and other skeptics.

Faustus, in his magical progress through the terrains of the known world of the Catholic other, “beats the bounds” of Rhode, Trier, Paris, Naples, Rome, Venice, Padua, Constantinople, and other continental landmarks, as if he were “consecrating” the imaginary base of Catholicism so that he brings down such dramatic space at the moment of his fantasy perdition: this play elaborately constructs a floating garden of evil, so to speak, only for the sake of staging its epic destruction. In doing so, the dramatic ritual of *Doctor Faustus* flaunts its magical simulacrum of the oldest institutional authority, however maledictory it may be.

The Stage Strikes Back, or the Blame Game in The Witch of Edmonton

The multiple scenes of magical pranks in the B text of *Doctor Faustus* were probably written by other playwrights who endeavored to sustain the enthralling effects the original Marlovian stage created. In amending the earlier prompt book in 1602, Samuel Rowley and William Birde seemed to keep the pitch of the Faustian bombast at the top of their voice (in writing). The way in which the B text incorporates self-mimicry and self-destruction in dramaturgy discloses the stage’s deliberate, measured, and rehearsed performance of magic, which not only contextualizes the ambivalence in the moralistic Faustian narrative but also implies how the theater community might have presented a cultural antidote for the socio-

religious dictates of the time. The conditional endorsement by the theater on magical wonder is, to a degree, an *a priori* condition of the theater.

Similarly, analyzing a late Jacobean play, *The Witch of Edmonton*, in terms of the operational logic of the theater will help disclose the stage as an interactive sphere in which diverse wills and contentions found challenges and compromises; furthermore, this topical dramatic narrative deliberately exposes the seams marking the three pieces individually created by three collaborating playwrights, which I read as dramatic depositions of the ethical discomfort the dramatists voiced in their inscription of the recently-executed “witch.” *The Witch of Edmonton* was a project of collaboration, and the multiplicity of voices and rhetorical interests on the matter of witchcraft and witch-hunt calls for a thorough reading of the way in which the parts come together as a whole, inviting and—at the same time—resisting a singular perspective, or what I call the legitimacy of the morals.

Elizabeth Sawyer was hanged on the “Tyburn Tree” on April 19, 1621.²³⁵ Sawyer, an old wife of a country dweller in Edmonton, then seven miles away from the capital, was arraigned on April 14 and five days later was executed on the “three-legged stool.” Afterwards, many vied to capitalize on the sensationalism the spectacle of a public execution of a convicted witch produced. Sternly chastising his competitors as “lewd balladmongers,” Henry Goodcole, a chaplain at Newgate gaol, hurried to publish his version of the “providential” unfolding of the case, in which he seems like an unrelenting soldier of God who stuffs salvation and repentance into Sawyer’s mouth. Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley (if not without a potential extra hand) each brought in his idiosyncrasies and narrative frames, and by December 29, 1621, their play already arrived at court via the Cockpit. The reference to the well-known play *The*

Merry Devil of Edmonton in the Prologue (“The Two of Edmonton hath lent the stage / A Devil and a Witch, both in an age” [1-2]) betrays the opportunistic nature of this topical play.²³⁶

Capitalizing on his access to the incarcerated, Goodcole, in his epistle to the reader, claims that the probing demand from the public prompted him to publicize the proceedings. He proceeds to remedy the misinformation spread by base balladmongers, who outsped him in publication. Under the imprimatur of “Published by the authority,” Goodcole one by one disputes the fictions that balladmongers were promoting such as the bewitching of a corn field, familiars in the shape of a ferret and an owl, a woman inflicted with suicidal insanity, and a dog familiar frequenting Newgate. However, the authoritative assertion in Goodcole’s foreword is point by point undone in its dramatic rendition. In the face of Goodcole’s castigation that those false reports are good only for ale-bench chitchat, the Cockpit has Anne Ratcliffe dash her own brains out and the Dog visits Sawyer in Newgate in his white incarnation. Goodcole’s puritanical fixation on the metaphysical absolutism of words—the belief that saying it makes it so—jars against his earnest in searching for the “body” of evidence, an ocular proof of the witches’ bigg in Sawyer’s doubled-up geriatric body. His need to substantiate his spiritual conviction with outgrown skin tissue in the witch’s body as well as to secure the witch’s verbal endorsement on his tract makes him ironically dependent on his examinant. Goodcole’s officious daily visits to Sawyer, going beyond vocational obligation, may signal his fantasy to preempt the jail cell and its spiritual domain from the witch’s spirit, a satanic nuncio. The chaplain’s desire to fill the soul of the convicted and guard the space of Newgate eerily resembles Catholic priests’ counter-witchcraft, exorcism. Having the Dog strut about in proximity to Sawyer deliberately damages the Anglican father’s zeal in de-possessing, in exorcising his vocational domain. Again, while

Dekker's Sawyer remains adamantly unrepentant, Goodcole's Sawyer sheepishly collaborates with the chaplain in producing a self-incriminatory deposition, which secures Goodcole's victory in spiritual warfare.

To force the compliance of the foul-mouthed convicted, Goodcole pronounces Sawyer's mouth as the site of the perdition of her soul as he puts it: "That tongue which by cursing, swearing, blaspheming, and imprecating, as afterward she confessed, was the occasioning cause, of the Devils access vnto her."²³⁷ The wild, unauthorized female tongue is to be censored, controlled, with a metaphysical bridle of self-condemnation. It is to be depressed with masculine authority. Goodcole seeks to stop Sawyer's unauthorized mouth—the cursing mouth—and attempts to stuff it with his own ventriloquized words, that is, "to stop her mouth with Truths authority."²³⁸ Ironically, the vapid interrogative session Goodcole faithfully reproduces in his pamphlet evokes the catechism likely to be conducted by his Catholic counterparts, whose foreign tongue, liturgical Latin, he intently vilifies. Goodcole obviously conducts an "exorcism," counter-witchcraft, before carrying out a confessional. The Cockpit Sawyer, however, keeps failing in her incantation of "hollowed be thy name" in its Latinate version. Sawyer's inability to recite the satanic (that is, Catholic) incantation, burlesques not only the delusional self-will with which the witch beguiles herself, but also the soldier of god who wages a spiritual warfare on the senile spirit of this ill-equipped, feeble woman.²³⁹

While Goodcole's Sawyer is a spinster with husband and children, the Cockpit Sawyer is without a husband or children; her vocation as a spinster becomes her marital status, charactering her as a masterless dependent on the community's charity and goodwill. The Cockpit Sawyer's social isolation—from patriarchal protection, economy, community, and even

from the neighborly network of women—affords the illusion of the perfectly sanitary excision of the pestilence when she is executed. On the other hand, the catastrophic consequences of Frank Thorney’s bigamous dealings and Cuddy Banks’s obsessive pastime pursuits are fictional inventions, not included in Goodcole’s or other historical records of the case.

Overall, the Cockpit Sawyer departs from the prevailing image of the caricature-like Jacobean witch, whose mere presence (sans intrinsic, or acquired, agency even after she is fully “anointed” in the presence of satanic nuncios) would easily signal the reality of the imminent threat and malice of the preternatural over quotidian peace and health, either as the spirit of misrule or as a false authority. Quite dissimilar to such stock characters of grotesquely burlesqued femininity—for example, Middleton’s Hecate and her crinkled coven of witches—Elizabeth Sawyer is allowed a moment of self-justification, in which she relays past abuses and injuries she suffered, both of seemingly unjustifiable cause and degree. As with other witch-hunting plays of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, *The Witch of Edmonton* functions to legitimate the operational virtue in identifying, prosecuting, and executing the witch as the ultimate communal gesture of purgation and relief; however, the Cockpit Sawyer brandishes her own indictment of social injustice and chooses to die in defiant recalcitrance, to a degree, holding onto the subjectivity she purchased with her own Christian soul.

In addition to the translation processes of the source material from a historical event into a dramatic performance, there was also the calibrating, compromising, and commissioning to settle among the playwrights. With a quasi-legal deposition Goodcole claims to be directly from the accused, the concern with how to construct the literary frame that supports the conceptual shape of facts and things become issues to face. Jonathan Gil Harris, engaging this

play as “an embryonic *praxis* of dissident reading,” points out the subversive recoding and decoding playwrights applied to Goodcole’s proselytizing pamphlet that claimed to be the veritable version of the historical event.

Is the absence of a singular perspective, what McLuskie calls the “ideological project,” a compromise or inadequacy of this play? Surely, this play is hard to read. A New Historicist might argue that the text awaits the privileged knowing eye (that discerns the departures and gaps the dramatic narrative inscribes on the providential account Goodcole delivers) to discover the subtle but resonant incidents of subversion and deconstruction of the seamless telos. Another might challenge this brand of liberal optimism (that is, poets may not be persecutors), claiming that the moment of deconstructive freedom is transient and the teleological one-line lesson the audience brought home from the Cockpit might have served as a mantle of morality that neatly covers the subversive fault lines. Each will present a different answer if asked whether the disturbance and unease Sawyer instigated is successfully contained by the end of the play or whether this play has summoned a dead witch from her grave and let her talk.

Anthony Dawson reads the play as an absolution of Frank Thorney’s bigamous, murderous deeds at the expense of Sawyer’s death. Sawyer’s knowledge of social intolerance and persecution is embodied, in that her old lame body becomes the receptacle of abuse and injuries. In Sawyer’s death, Dawson reads the collapse of the traditional charitable culture, in which community had been bound by religious obligation to relieve its poor.²⁴⁰ Dawson’s reading of the anadiplosic couplet of the 1658 quarto edition of this play—“Forced marriage, murder; murder blood requires. / Reproach, revenge; revenge hell’s help desires”—emphasizes the parallel structure of the second plot (Sawyer’s revenge) and the first plot (Frank’s bigamous

murder). The play seems to sustain this parallelism only to indemnify Frank's infractions by denying to Sawyer a subjective agency at the end of the play—a reason why Kezar considers this play as a “killing poem.” In considering the scapegoat status to which Sawyer is consigned at the end of the play, Gail Kern Paster argues that despite the sympathetic portrayal of Sawyer's plight, Sawyer is not more than “the vehicle for a comic exposure of female bodiliness not unlike what we have already seen.”²⁴¹ Dawson maintains that the text subjugates Sawyer as the backdrop for Frank Thorney's absolution, and the collapse in the socio-cultural mores of charity relief renders Sawyer as the extra burden that is first to be jettisoned.

On the other hand, Jonathan Gil Harris reads the play as the dramatists' subversive (what he calls “*tu quoque*”) retorts to Henry Goodcole. While adopting chronology and circumstances from Goodcole's ideological reconstruction, the playwrights surreptitiously coded their own skeptical reception of the providential accounts of a witch well-dispatched, Harris argues. From the sympathetic allowance given to Sawyer for her self-pity and vitriolic exposé of the known secrets of moral and sexual depravity of the community, Harris (based on the premise that Thomas Dekker was responsible for the sympathetic characterization of Sawyer) claims the plausibility of subversive agency in the dramatic portrayal of Sawyer.²⁴²

The divergent exegeses of Dawson and Harris, with their oppositional perspectives on the dramatic utility of Sawyer, hint at the modern awareness of the self with which the playwrights endow Sawyer. Aware that deformity and social dependency are the causes of her plight, Sawyer undauntedly voices social injustice and seeks personal justice; nonetheless, she eventually proves to be the victim of her agency, a tool of her own perdition. Her realization of social inequity, her subsequent “fall” at the Dog's tempting tongue, and her unrepentant will

(despite the ultimate betrayal by her familiar) defines a character that defies defeat. However, rehabilitating Sawyer's subjectivity does not resolve the issue of the text's organic unity since the theatrical attention the village clown, Cuddy Banks, claims and his rather inessential fellowship with the Dog seem clearly to be more ponderous than the dramatic gains any comic relief may make. How can Cuddy Banks interact with the demon incarnate and why is he indemnified from his solicitation of witchcraft?

The dual, counterbalancing structure of the 1658 quarto's epigraph—one anadiplosis on murder and the other on revenge—seems to warrant such exegetic approaches as weighing Sawyer's subjectivity against her utility as a ransom for the sake of the redeemable soul of the fellow executed, Frank Thorney. An exegetic approach to the parallel structure of the Frank and Sawyer plots, however, ignores the tertiary playwright's contribution to the play: the indiscriminate epicurean Cuddy Banks. The Elizabeth Sawyer plot has been attributed to Thomas Dekker, while the bigamy plot is believed to be John Ford's portion. The officiously eager fool, Cuddy—a name that evokes the eagerness and asininity as Shakespeare's Bottom—seems to be the brainchild of the riotous actor/writer William Rowley. Partitioning these three narrative plots may hold an answer for this play's repeated self-expression of voluntary forfeiture of legitimacy, which I will explain with a reading of the dialogical relationship between the Dog and the Fool.

Is it justifiable to punish Sawyer for murder when it is her proxy agent of malefice who willfully inflicts harm on others without her instigation? The bloody and sudden tragedy of Susan, Anne, Frank, and Sawyer in this small rural community is of a traumatizing nature; nonetheless, the historical Sawyer was found guilty only of killing Agnes Ratcliffe.²⁴³ According

to Goodcole, with a report of Agnes's deathbed accusation of Sawyer, the jury proceeded to find the evidence of Sawyer's *maleficarum* against Agnes, by recruiting three "grave" matrons from the street—only one of them is identified as Margaret Weaver, a respectful widow—to search the recalcitrant accused woman (B3r). The chaplain feels quite abashed to report such an act of immodesty—"which my pen would forbear to write . . . for modesties sake"—yet, he relays that Sawyer's desperate acts of hostility do not prevent the grave matrons from discovering a hidden teat "a little about the Fundiment of *Elizabeth Sawyer*," that is "the bignesse of the little finger, and the length of halfe a finger, which was branched at the top like a teate, and seemed as though one had suckt it, and that the bottome thereof was blew, and the top of it was redde" (B4v). The fact that Sawyer lied about her teat "gaue some insight to the lury, of her: who vpon their consciences returned the said *Elizabeth Sawyer*, to be guilty, by dibolicall help, of the death of *Agnes Ratcliffe* onely, and acquitted her of the other two Inditements" (B4v). The three female examiners, who report how hostile Sawyer was to them, unwittingly betraying their own hostility to the examinee, confirm the male jury's suspicion of Sawyer by discovering the devil's mark on Sawyer: why would she act so stubbornly if she has nothing to hide? Her "suspicious" behavior and "outright" lie about her "teat," an ocular proof of her witchery, confirms Agnes's wild accusation. The unfortunate skin abnormality on the old woman becomes irrefutable evidence of her role in Agnes's inexplicable death.

The male jury in *The Witch of Edmonton* also resorts to circumstantial evidence, in this case, to confirm Sawyer's guilt of Susan's death. They infer her responsibility, for what Frank has done, from the fact that she already lied about her involvement with Anne's death. Furthermore, the play equivocates on the etiological cause of Anne's delirious suicidal impulses:

it is during the failed mob court session that the delirious Anne happens to pass by, talking about “the man in the moon” and “the art of grinding” (4.1.175, 77). Sawyer acknowledges Anne’s insanity as her familiar’s infliction at her bidding: “Ho, ho, ho! I thank thee, my sweet mongrel” (178); however, this is the only time Sawyer explicitly instructs the Dog to “touch” Anne (189). Anne was already delirious and suicidal before encountering Sawyer at this mock trial.

The playwrights deliberate how to dispatch Sawyer without endorsing the state version of justice (her Tyburn execution as a felon who committed witchery against Agnes Ratcliffe) and church version of truth (according to Goodcole’s impassioned script, Sawyer confessed her demonic pact and malefic execution of her diabolic pledge). The verdict delivered in the Cockpit does not fit the crime—the dramatic Anne Rafcliffe after being rubbed by the Dog falls sick and “beat[s] out her own brains” (4.1.210)—nor is Sawyer contrite and confessional at the gallows. Tormented by “these dogs” (5.2.41), Sawyer throws her reluctant confession at one of them:

OLD CARTER thou’dst best confess all truly.
 ELIZABETH SAWYER Yet again?
 Have I scarce breath enough to say my prayers,
 And would you force me to spend that in bawling?
 Bear witness. I repent all former evil;
 There is no damned conjuror like the devil. (5.3.46-51)

Irritated and equivocating, the Cockpit Sawyer is a resolutely different persona from Goodcole’s catechetical addressee.²⁴⁴ Consider how Goodcole puts his words in the mouth of Sawyer, who like an eager child endorses what the chaplain claims to be her own words:

Answer

This confession which is now read vnto me, by Master Henry Goodcoale Minister, with my owne mouth I spake it to him on Tuesday last at New-gate, and I here doe acknowledge, to all the people that are here present, that it is all truth, desiring you all to pray vnto Almightye God to forgiue me my greeuous sinnes.²⁴⁵

The cantankerous riposte Sawyer shoots at Old Banks in the Cockpit is indeed a vastly different character from the Tyburn Sawyer.

A sweeping condemnation of the playwrights would be overly simplistic since they portray the village men and women from an equal distance of critical detachment. As the play demonstrates, if the male tongue is bifurcated, a woman's tongue is barbed. For example, Anne, in her mad wisdom, equates a lawyer with a male witch: "Art thou [a lawyer]! I prithee let me scratch thy face, for thy pen has flayed off a great many men's skins" (4.1.184-5).²⁴⁶ The real damage men of power can wreak on common people is much more dangerous than what a witch may wreak, the deranged woman seems to argue. On the other hand, Sawyer at this impromptu mob court (which fails to indict Sawyer even though Goodcole's pamphlet specifies how the 1621 assizi exhausted all necessary devil's advocacy before executing the convicted) defends herself cunningly (in keeping with a Dekkerian sensitivity to social injustice), principally by depriving words of their absolute values of signification—in other words, by equivocating. Are you a witch? asks the justice. Sawyer defends herself: "I am none. *None but base curs so bark at me. I am none. Or would I were!* If every poor old woman be trod on thus by slaves, reviled, kicked, beaten, as I am daily, she, to be revenged, had need turn witch" (4.1.76-79, my italics). Standing her ground, Sawyer counterattacks her detractors, denies being a witch, and, at the same breath, admits to being one, speaking in the subjunctive mood.

Sawyer voices what her social superior deems to be a "saucy" and "bitter" (82) indictment of social injustice: "Men in gay clothes" are far more witch-like "if I be a witch" (87, 89). In addition, she criticizes the double standard in social justice:

Now an old woman

minde.”²⁴⁷ Dekker and his collaborators let Anne and Sawyer bellow their mad wisdom without restraint while the calumny hurled by the male jury falls off without hitting its target.

The impromptu trial scene (4.1) soon turns into a paranoid persecution by the elders in Edmonton, indicting her for her alleged *maleficia* on their household matters. The anxiety voiced by a countryman—“[o]ur cattle fall, our wives fall, our daughters fall and maidservants fall; and we ourselves shall not be able to stand” (12-4)—belies male fear of losing patriarchal control over matters, including sexual control. The insinuation, however, reaches further to suggest that a witch’s presence in the community is like a widening venereal contagion. For example, village patriarchs accuse Sawyer of causing glanders (a contagious disease of horses). Glanders, Old Banks swears, was inflicted by “this jadish witch” (4). The route of contagion begins at a jade, a wretched work horse, spreading to the valuable riding horse Banks owns. A diseased jade associates the old, lame, and cantankerous woman with her debauching sexuality. However unrealistic it might be, Banks insinuates Mother Sawyer is like a harlot, if not one.

Similarly, First Countryman confides how his wife claimed to have been bewitched to commit adultery. “[E]xamining my polecat, why she did so, she swore in her conscience she was bewitched” (4.1.7-8), the cuckold claims, displacing his shame onto a witch. The belief of the witch’s pervasive power in corrupting female chastity is confirmed and normalized through the male tongue. Second Countryman seconds the cuckold: “Rid the town of her, else all our wives will do nothing else but dance about other country maypoles” (10-11). *Maleficia* ripple like a venereal contagion. The male indictment of female revellers, ironically, is preceded by the morris troupe dancing “a high morris” (3.4.4) as a part of celebratory revelry, whose public mirth helps legitimate a marriage.²⁴⁸ The double standard in dancing revelries is left without

any attempt of justification, which seems to call attention to the playwrights' discomfiture toward the villagers' sexual politics.

The male jury, "a bed of serpents" (4.1.28) in the eyes of the accused, accuses her in the language of paranoid abstraction and supports her guilt with superstition and faulty causality (*post hoc ergo propter hoc*, that is, thatch was burned and Sawyer rushes in; therefore, thatch-burning summons the guilty witch) as well as pseudo-scientific observation ("the pox in a snuffling nose is a sign a man is a whore-master"). As in the case of syphilis, the witch (or the woman) may not show her true intention (or symptoms) but the witch's victim (or the man with syphilitic manifestations) can surely tell the cause of his affliction; in both cases, the guilty party is hard to determine even though victimhood is unmistakable. As the etiology of witchery is difficult to prove while the victim demands justice, benevolence and *maleficium* are interchangeable. A countryman accuses Sawyer of facilitating early delivery of a sow: "she bewitched Gammer Washbowl's sow to cast her pigs a day before she would have farrowed, yet they were sent up to London, and sold for as good Westminster dog-pigs at Bartholomew Fair as ever great-bellied ale-wife longed for" (5.3.36-40). A benevolent act of midwifery is dubbed as chicanery that defrauds the natural realm. Precipitating littering also suggests the preternatural ability this old woman has over nature: via the witch, the demonic infiltrates the domestic economy.

As Kezar and Dawson point out, Sawyer's transformation into a diabolic ill-wisher parallels Frank's double-dealing murder; however, this parallel barely succeeds in insinuating Sawyer's *maleficium* toward married security. It seems to be the time to lighten up the mood: from tragedy to comedy. The Prologue of *The Witch of Edmonton* makes a claim that this play

will deliver mirth and matter. Kezar, with an implication that the nomenclature of “tragicomedy” used in the 1658 quarto may not reflect the authorial intention, reads the tag through the lexicon Samuel Harsnett chose in his exposé of John Darrel’s rehearsed exorcism: “all the partes of the tragickall Comedie acting between him and [William] Somers.”²⁴⁹ In Kezar’s analysis, Frank’s fear of “the misery of beggary and want” (1.1.18) parental wrath would impose on him drives him to invent fiction (a fake letter to cover up a secret espousal and hence an unavoidable second marriage), which comes back only to jeopardize his reality demanding him to marry Susan. The tragedy implicit in Frank’s willful fiction becomes a *tragicomedy* when his rightful stature as a reclaimed prodigal son and repentant husband is posthumously reinstated. In its search for a witch in order to secure patriarchal investment in the institution of marriage, this play is a tragicomedy whether or not its titular character dies at the three-legged stool. For Winnifride, the adulterous servant girl who successfully remakes herself as a gentleman’s widow, confirms the prevailing spirit of this play: a tragedy that employs a page-boy-impersonator to deliver the epilogue would be quite out of the norm.

The playwright John Ford, who was responsible for the portrayal of Frank’s two marriages, willingly forfeits legitimacy of any sort for Winnifride and her child. Seeking to fashion herself as a dear purchase of a wife, Winnifride presents herself quite deceptively in claiming that Frank “had / The conquest of my [her] maiden-love” (1.1.32-33). Flaunting her virginal love for Frank, the illicitly pregnant woman secures the young husband’s dutiful protection and steadfast love. The child she conceived with Sir Arthur Clarington becomes a bait of marital bonding since, Winnifride entreats, Frank should have “some pity / Upon the child I go with that’s your own” (51-52). The paternity of Winnifride’s child is furtively sold and

bought; her pre-marital sexual activities are nullified, as she insists, with a promise of future chastity. Her marriage to Frank, however, is kept secret until the bigamous catastrophe visits Susan. Winnifride's widowhood is secured when her espousal is validated at the expense of Susan. Winnifride, with an illegitimate child, seems to be gleeful when she deliberates remarriage. Her delivery of the Epilogue carries a somber tone of optimism for another husband:

I am a widow still, and must not sort
A second choice without a good report,
Which though some widows find, and few deserve,
Yet I dare not presume, but will not swerve
From modest hopes. (1-5)

Rehabilitated via her penitence and legitimated through a dead husband, the honest whore, so to speak, is now an acceptable member of the bourgeoisie, a social rank that she would be able to sustain through a new marriage. From Winnifride's point of view, this play is definitely a comedy.

The legitimacy of Winnifride's marriage kills Susan; unaware of her illegitimacy as a wife, Susan speaks the language of love without hearing the echo of an adulterous lust. Regardless of public sanction and parental approval, her chaste marital desire is branded as adulterous lechery. Frank's secret knowledge of Susan's marital illegitimacy starts to gnaw at the heart of the knowingly deceptive partner, whose psychological self-torment turns murderous toward Susan who, he considers, seeks to arouse an illicit lust in him. The posthumous acquittal of Frank clearly testifies to the ideological investment in the marriage institution: it is not the legitimacy of the bloodline of her child but the sanctity of the institution that makes the case for Winnifride as a lawful widow of Frank Thorney. On the other hand, another woman, who

with Frank goes through the customary marriage rituals, is condemned as an imposter and whore. Through Frank's death, the discords in the blood and the law are reconciled: Old Thorney accepts his son's secret wife as a daughter-in-law and Old Carter suddenly develops sympathy toward his daughter's murderer's wife.

Ford's use of bawdy puns further loosens the control of linguistic absolutism in Frank Thorney's world. Winnifride undoes the "cuts"—an allusion to the vagina that is open and damaged with sexual entry—with a pronouncement of her future chastity, quite conveniently for her. Now with "the cured wound" (178), Winnifride seeks to remake herself as virtuous legitimate wife as if the open wound (vagina) could heal (close) on its own. The knowing innuendo Sir Arthur loads in his retort, "this was cleanly carried" (1.1.159), is pushed aside by his former mistress—now the honest, reformed whore—who advocates "conversion" (212). Marriage grants her class, respectability, money, and family, and thus, in her newly anointed worldview of moral positivism, her former lust is characterized as a "sacrilege" (204) against the sanctity of marriage. Such religious points of reference as sacred oaths, holy marriages, hallowed temples, and sainthood are employed in Winnifride's chastisement of Sir Clarington. With her declaration of marital virtues, she modifies the truth of her virginity and pregnancy. When married to Susan, Frank's hidden knife "cuts" his illicit wife, sexually and murderously; on the other hand, the spouse murderer treats himself with a "cut" of a restorative chicken dish and wishes to be "cut" to excise imposthumes. The free-floating, multiple referents of "cuts" reveal the arbitrary terms under which Winnifride and Frank seek to fashion their own identities and to invent justifications for their respective fictions. However, the take-home

moral of the text might be discomfiting not only because of Frank's redemption at the expense of Sawyer but also because of Winnifride's self-fashioning at the cost of other people's deaths.

Not only are Sawyer and the prosperous Carters unacquainted, but her familiar, the Dog, inflicts *maleficium* on Frank without Sawyer's behest only because his "mind's about it now" (3.3.2): Sawyer cannot be responsible for Frank's murder of Susan. In the paradoxical mutual binding—in that the proxy of the witch's *maleficia* acts like a demon child that sucks his dam but claims the ownership of his mistress sexually and spiritually—the Dog holds a rather arbitrary serfdom, entitlement, and dependency for the witch. The invisible Dog "rubs" Frank the wrong way, making him think that Susan seeks to arouse him. Guilty of sinning with Susan on his bigamous wedding night—his "body forward" (3) that the Dog's touch effects—makes him punish Susan for having "dogged [her] own death" (39). Susan accepts the revelation of her unlawful matrimony and thus her whoredom as "some good spirit's motion" (41). The Dog, even though invisible, is physically and metaphorically present on the stage.

After killing Susan, Frank self-inflicts stab wounds to claim that Susan's spurned suitor attacked them; in so doing, his murderous act and cover-up scheme smack of the diabolic. First, he seeks to justify his punishment of the sexually forward adulteress, relying on the double standard that she is guilty of adultery even though it was he himself that assured her that she engages in a legally-sanctioned sexual relationship. Frank considers Susan's open wounds as the indictment of her sexual promiscuity and proceeds to "heal her wounds by dressing of the weapon" (67), by inflicting fake stab wounds on his body. Consider how Winnifride rebuffs Sir Arthur's advance: "To open a cured wound" is "[a] sin so monstrous" (1.1.178, 77). Even at death, Susan, the unknowing partner in bigamous sex, carries the "wounds" of ignominy. Two,

the invisible Dog assists Frank in accomplishing the tricky task of tying himself around a tree trunk, a magical feat since the Dog is supposed to be invisible. The problem is that Sawyer is not liable for the Dog's ill will, which he carries out simply because he feels like "touching."

The prothalamic celebration featuring the morris troupe turns out to be a charivari with the sullyng presence of the Dog even before the news of the "attack" and arrival of officers with warrants. The degeneration of the morris and the leading fiddle, now sounding like "a beetle of a cow-turd" (3.4.46), evinces the Dog's arbitrary and autonomous agency, operating separately from Sawyer, not only in *maleficarum* but also in revelry. Sawyer has at best a weak influence on the fallen-flat morris, via her association with the Dog. The text corroborates the male indictment using Sawyer's animus toward Anne Ratcliffe as circumstantial evidence. Sawyer's interactions with the Carters or the Thorneys are at best tangential; however, Anne Ratcliffe's and Old Banks's fallouts with Sawyer are well-publicized. Since a sour dispute over a sow and soap, Sawyer has harbored resentment and vengeful will toward Anne, and when equipped with a means, she wills the Dog to inflict insanity on her neighbor, who goes mad and soon dashes out her brains. Even though the Dog touches Frank out of whim and Anne according to Sawyer's behest, Sawyer's malevolence toward Susan or Frank is never established.

Relatively few scholars, including Leah Marcus and Anthony Dawson, access the three relatively independent dramatic realms in this play, subsuming Cuddy Banks's morris dance as a comic relief or considering the Cuddy plot as a ligature that connects the loosely causal and tenuously interdependent plots of Sawyer's witchcraft and Frank's bigamy.²⁵⁰ It needs to be acknowledged, however, that the Young Banks is hard to dismiss as an invention of expediency. Cuddy Banks, the butt of the joke who literally stuffs himself inside the rear end of a hobby

horse, dabbles in almanac divination and develops a dangerously “chummy” relationship with the demonic Dog. When crossing paths with Sawyer, the Second Dancer in his morris troupe entreats Cuddy to counter the witch: “Bless us, Cuddy, and let her curse her tother eye out” (2.1.89-90). Cuddy is a counterwitch, a stage invention in the spirit of “sport.”

The Clown—as foot-loose as the Dog who freely traverses the households of the gentry and the commoners—commingles with a social pariah, interacts with a demonic agent, and disports in the village entertainment in morris, interconnecting all three plots. The exuberant actor/playwright Rowley seems to have carved out a theatrical emblem in the character of Cuddy Banks.²⁵¹ Without pitting the third piece of the puzzle against the others, the text in itself may become an aporia that defies a singular unilateral meaning or organic structure, or what McLusky calls “an ideological project.”²⁵² When the “dialogue” between the fool and the Dog is well heeded, the text seems to voice its clear stance toward the damned art and its dabblers. Their quasi-didactic dialogue secures the safety zone—in which borrowing and returning, or retorting, the necromantic paraphernalia and discourse is freely and frequently conducted—even though it may be positioned in the peripheries of Sawyer’s malefic circle and of Frank’s matrimonial events.

Julia Garrett applies epistemological barometers, borrowed from sociological discussions on deviancy, to the construction of the two social deviants in Edmonton, the murderous bigamist Frank Thorney and the vindictive witch Elizabeth Sawyer. Starting on the commonsensical ground that Dekker and his collaborators cannot undo the execution of justice of the state—Sawyer was hanged and the play cannot end her life in any other way but that—Garrett claims that the playwrights’ account of the real-life case is empathetic, inferable by way

of the portrayal of fictional characters who are born out of the playwrights' imagination of the village life Sawyer lived. Even though she limits her analysis of the fictional characters to only the other deviant, Frank Thorney, the fortuitous one of the two criminals as if he were hanged on the "right" side of the Savior, her reading of Thorney's confessional superfluity and Sawyer's equivocating refusal to repent clearly elucidates the bifurcated paths of Thorney's and Sawyer's souls. Sawyer's reluctance to confess, as Garrett points out, is one way the playwrights depart from Goodcole's proselytizing account of Sawyer's jailhouse "confession."

In order to illustrate the attitude toward witch-lore and witch-scare on the stage of *The Witch of Edmonton*, I would like to listen to the dialogue between the Fool and the Dog, which I believe balances the Christian moral of penitence and reconciliation in the Frank Thorney plot against the Sawyer plot, in which discomfort in the companionship between humanist sympathy and literary opportunism is hard to hide. For Cuddy is the outcome of stage spirit, and the Dog the epistemological alter-ego of the playwrights. The persistent occupation of the stage by Young Banks's morris troupe is not the desultory end result of a collaborative project but a deliberate process that follows Cuddy's boundary-testing escapades: between human and demonic realms and also between high and low classes, Cuddy bumps and fumbles around (including once being subjected to ducking, as if he were a witch). As a form of comic relief functioning to decompress the built-up tension and friction, the low level of entertainment in which Young Banks participates incorporates the murky reality of the supernatural, transforming the fear of it into the laughable; the morris and its accompanying tomfoolery releases and diffuses tension. The frowned-upon foolery of morris dance in which Cuddy Banks takes one role too many is still a tolerable way of letting a possible flare-up subside on its own.

Poldavis, a barber's boy, plays a witch in the morris; the morris can accommodate a witch even though the community can hardly tolerate a real witch.

There are two modes of witches within the dramatic boundaries of Edmonton. Cuddy Banks and his morris troupe, appropriating the local witch-lore, invent a dramatic witch to sport with her; even more, the Clown invites a devil to their morris frolicking. The other type of the witch, the corporeal Elizabeth Sawyer, resists this form of homeopathic effort of the community (and also of the stage, metaphorically speaking). To a certain degree, the disturbance a witch might pose to the community can be tolerated in (or absorbed back to) the community through such carnivalistic merrymaking as the morris dance. The allowance of holiday license, even though limited, seeks to normalize the mingled—if it is still containable—cooptation of the high and low, legitimate and surreptitious, male and female, godly and superstitious. When, however, what Leah Marcus calls, “escape-valve” does not adequately regulate homeostasis of the status quo, a more aggressive treatment is in order.²⁵³ This form of violent excision—comparable to surgical removal of gangrenous tissue—utilizes the always already inveterate fear of contact/contagion, which ends up with the infectious witch-scare and witch-hunt.

With the release the morris achieves, Edmonton can to a degree defend itself from a communal disease (the figurative disease in the body politic *and* the discomfiting sanctimony Puritan extremists imposed on the rest); a witch in the morris serves as a homeopathic antidote to the corporeal witch. The kinetic energy the morris imports and the flattering endorsement of Jacobean state policy on public mirth it implies (recall that this play was performed in front of royal audience during Christmas season of 1621) convincingly testify to the importance of the morris in this play.²⁵⁴ With this play within the play, the text depicts the precarious equilibrium

between the artful mastery of the beast (that is, embedding the elements of witchcraft within stagecraft) and the buried but telltale fear of the beast (unsure of how close and intense the embrace could be, so to speak). The morris and Cuddy are meant to provide mirth; yet, it is overly simplistic to dismiss the third plot as a matter of comic relief. For Cuddy safely walks away even after he interacts with the Dog, neither falling into the mob hysteria of witch-hunt nor becoming a “sitting duck” for the demonic ensnarer. To the audience, Cuddy is a case study in how to deal with the ambient presence of the diabolic; more importantly, Cuddy is there to deliver an apology for the theater for dabbling in witchcraft. With the kind of immunity given to fools and clowns, Cuddy embodies the stage that dallies with thaumaturgic language and spectacles.

Even after being led by a Spirit into the ditch and subjected to a ducking, Cuddy still courts the Dog, with such incentives like “jowls and livers” and “maids and soles” (3.1.132), into participating in the morris dance, which the Dog willfully despoils. Having such fool’s bravery and wise man’s ease, Cuddy Banks is the one who approaches nearest to the heart of the matter of legitimacy—the concern about the legitimacy of stagecraft that encompasses witchcraft. The fellowship Cuddy develops with the Dog, most specifically in Act 5 Scene 1, questions the absolute antagonism between good and evil, the normative and the demoniacal, and provides a navigational guide to the world in which the threat of preternatural harm and damnation lurks. This dialogue scene, reminiscent of the didactic device that George Gifford uses in *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcrafts* (1593) among other demonological dialogues of the time, explains how such necromantic wonder as the Spirit in the shape of Katherine, the object of Cuddy’s lust, is staged.

The dialogic bond between Cuddy and “Tom” reveals the fine line the stage carefully draws regarding its dealings of the diabolic. Young Banks proclaims: “This remember, I pray you, between you and I, I entertained you ever *as a dog, not as a devil*” (5.1.108-9, my italics). “True, and so I used thee *doggedly, no devilishly*. I have deluded thee for sport to laugh at” (110-1, my italics), the Dog retorts. The anthropomorphized Dog confirms that he disguised himself as Catherine “in her form, habit, and likeness” (112-3) and flaunts his protean ability to morph into any shape, be it “dog or cat, hare, ferret, frog, toad,” or a human being (117). This meta-theatrical conversation reveals the transformative and manipulative nature of the stage, while keeping trade secrets tantalizingly off-limits: while “[t]he garment-shape you may hire at broker’s,” the source of the body is not to be disclosed (123-5). The Dog avers, “[i]t avails thee not,” only to relent shortly (125). Tom then divulges that a lecher might find in his embrace a *revamped* body of a “self-strangled wretch” (139) or strumpet—two women from the community, the suicide Anne Ratcliffe and the murdered adulteress Susan, are in the demonic inventory available for *necromantic* sexuality. Cuddy is grateful that he was subjected to being ducked in the water rather than being allowed to satisfy his desire with the spirit: fools are often lucky.

All “this counsel” (150) from the minion of the devil buys Cuddy’s sympathy and in the spirit of puerile fellowship and dalliance, Cuddy seeks to dissuade Tom from his serfdom to a witch by recommending to him various employment opportunities, for example, a ladies’ pet companion or an animal “actor” that with training could “brook the wheel and turn the spit” (168).²⁵⁵ Cuddy’s suggestion of such domesticated roles, for one, dissociates the Dog from the preternatural; additionally, the fool reminds the audience that the theater has availed itself of

animals, bears and dogs among others, in dramatic narratives and also in bearbaiting. As the name of the *Cockpit* insinuates, trained hunting dogs were in demand during bearbaiting or cockfights. Ironically, such suggestions also point at the metaphoric affinity between the fool (an actor who pretends to be “Cuddy”) and the Dog (an animal “actor” who *impersonates* a demonic agent). While both nomenclatures of “familiar” and “spirits” betray the unease about inter-species interaction in off-stage reality, Cuddy’s eagerness to employ the Dog in a legitimate capacity belies the underlying apprehension of the stage regarding its ambivalent power in embodying what it is not. This crucial conversation, right after the Dog visits Sawyer in Newgate goal to renounce her, humanizes the Dog so that the stage can banish him from the dramatic reality. The playwrights are as Machiavellian as the facetious Cuddy may be.

Unsuccessful in his effort to rehabilitate the Dog as a communicative member of a society, Cuddy performs a mock-exorcism of the Dog, calling him “you cur”: “I will beat thee out of the bounds of Edmonton, and tomorrow we go in procession, and after thou shalt never come in again. If thou goest to London I’ll make thee go about by Tyburn, stealing in by Thieving Lane ... and the devil go with thee” (193-200). The Tyburn Tree (with its association with Catholic traitors) and the commonly derided legal profession (a ubiquitous lawyer joke) are joined together for the sake of vindictive humor and, on a metaphysical level, for a repudiation of the demonic presence from the rural Edmonton: the fantasy purgation of both the “city witches” in the male jury and the convicted witch.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, the Dog’s banishment from the bounds of Edmonton—that is, the bounds of the *Cockpit*—acquits the stage of its guilty exploitation of Sawyer. Cuddy, without ambiguity or self-consciousness, declares “I’ll give no suck to such whelps, therefore henceforth I defy thee. Out and avaunt!” (179-80). While the

witch is kicked out of the Cockpit by her rebellious familiar, the familiar himself is beat “out of the bounds of Edmonton” (193) by the fool. Now, the white Dog, like an atavistic reincarnation of the medieval Vice, disappears from the mundane and corporeal into the collective memory of the preternatural like the proverbial Black Dog. The playwrights have “consecrated” their bounds after exorcising the demon within.

Notwithstanding, the text does not dispel or exorcise the wonder or magic from the stage completely. It expounds the mechanics and logistics of staging a Spirit incarnation of Katherine, yet refuses to unpack the significance and efficacy of her sister’s ghost. To awe Frank into a compulsory confession of murder, Susan’s ghost has to move swiftly from one end of the bed to the other—stagecraft, probably moving the ghost (actor) on a dolly, would enhance the shock and awe of this visitation. The genuine wonder of the preternatural in this scene, however, is irrelevant to witchcraft of stagecraft; as many revenge tragedies of the time feature a bloody specter, this kind of spectral visitation to the killer may be perceived as divine intervention for Frank’s repentance. The mechanics of stage witchcraft and a necromantic metamorphosis are explained by the Dog himself; yet, the wonder that affects the viewers’ own perception of such a providential event and the quality of Frank’s conscience is through the stage magic, stagecraft, whose ingenious mechanism is kept from the audience while its magical efficacy is unmistakable to the characters and the audience. The dialogue between Cuddy and the Dog is not only a meta-theatrical commentary on the mechanical, operational logic of stage metamorphosis, but also it performs an exorcism of the stage of its ill will and opportunism; it ought not to be forgotten, however, that the stage, in disclosing the mechanical

secrets of its operation, makes it clear that the magical wonder it conjures up is larger than its mechanical sum total, a genuine experience neither Scot nor Rid would be able to refute.

Witches in the small town abound; there are three or four more witches in addition to Sawyer, a morris player reports. Cuddy frequently announces “I am bewitched” and a barber’s boy readily plays a witch; Edmonton is not sanitized of witches and the division between the good and evil is rather arbitrary, an understanding the other playwrights also seem to share. First, in depicting Sawyer’s relationship with the Dog, Dekker implies that the material, corporeal counterparts of the demonic will are latent in the community members themselves. The Dog, the embodiment of the metaphoric black cur—Old Banks that “barks and bites, and sucks the very blood” of his neighbor (2.1.116)—visits Sawyer to abet her *maleficarum* and to serve her sexually only to mock and renounce her when she is under prosecution. Old Banks’s fixation on the behind of the cow mirrors the Dog’s sucking of blood from the bigg just above Sawyer’s fundament. Sawyer’s diabolic lactation and Old Banks’s perverse desire for “anal kiss,” a telltale feature of witch-lore, are not dissimilar in their preposterousness. Banks’ persecutory zeal and Sawyer’s *maleficarum* are inextricably interconnected as witch-haters are also believers in witchcraft.

Not only is there an inter-morphing of the metaphorical cur and the corporeal Dog, but the Dog keeps redrafting his relationship to the symbolic order. The folkloric English Black Dog, an imaginary creature larger than life and more menacing, is a portent of death; however, the Dog taunts his former mistress, now in Newgate, that he came in white to remind her of the winding sheet that awaits her (5.1.37). The literary appropriation of the folkloric Black Dog also indicates not only the autonomous and arbitrary agency of the White Dog but also the text’s

ability to loosen up the definite binding in linguistic signification. The dog familiar in Goodcole's catechetical pamphlet is no more than a corroborating proof of Sawyer's demonic pact as Goodcole reports that a dog, suspected to be her familiar, visits the accused in Newgate; in the Cockpit, however, the Dog is fully embodied with anthropomorphous shape and functions. Yet, while with concrete physicality, the black cur whimsically transforms himself into a white dog: the Dog is corporeal *and* metaphysical at the same time, unbound by the physical limitation.

If the Black Dog is the realization of Sawyer's malevolent fantasy of beastly Old Banks, the White Dog, willfully opportunistic and self-indemnified, is an embodiment of the "role of the theater in shaping fantasies of persecution," to borrow from Dennis Kezar.²⁵⁷ Kezar reads Dog's abandonment of Sawyer as a conscious move the playwrights made to absolve the theater from knowingly exploiting the exploited, in other words, a means of requiting the debt they owe to their dramatic material. In this sense, according to Kezar, Sawyer's repudiation of the White Dog for its "puritan paleness" (5.1.53) implies the playwrights' self-knowledge of their "occupational proximity to the Dog," a theatrically encoded confession of their opportunism and guilt.²⁵⁸ After letting the Dog exploit and renounce his dam, the playwrights themselves partake in exorcising the Dog from Edmonton (and the stage), but they do not forget to vindicate themselves and the stage for exploiting the victim with a healthy dose of stage realism. The demonic may be real, hovering beyond human control and comprehension, but dogs could be "dogged" while not necessarily being "devilish." Even though the rapport was short-lived, since the Dog and Cuddy soon part ways, predetermination to treat the Dog as a "devilish" dog would have claimed a damned victim in the fool. As Kezar argues, the rift between the dam and the familiar, when the former is executed and the latter disappears into

unreality, might reveal the compromise in the writers' sense of ethos, as if the writers hammered a metaphorical nail into the witch's coffin; yet, I would point out that the previously discussed dialogue between the wise fool and willful devil occurs right after the Dog's desertion of his mistress. The non-essential interpolation of the dialogue might speak for the writers who seem to have tried to interject the wisdom of realism: essentialist condemnation of preternatural meddling is not much different from endorsing the essential power the diabolic holds.

Epilogue: Stage Skepticism

Even though reclaiming the subject position for Sawyer may be a postmodern fantasy just as the "witch" in *The Witch of Edmonton* refers to Sawyer as a cipher rather than as an individual, my adumbration of the fault lines of the three plates of this play by Dekker, Ford, and Rowley reveals that the Cockpit Sawyer is decidedly different from Goodcole's version of the wholehearted penitent. In sum, the secular skepticism of the three wordsmiths who talked back to the "authority" Goodcole assumed betrays the collision between those who endorse the essential power of words, both thaumaturgic and confessional, as manifestations of the spiritual and preternatural, and those who consider words as a pragmatic and consensus-based means in understanding the quotidian representations of the metaphysical.

The dramatists of the Cockpit challenge Henry Goodcole's proclamation of his "copyright" on what happened in Edmonton in 1621, by presenting the epistemic fluidity between black malice and white evil and by deliberately leaving the lacunae in legal justice that relegates Sawyer to the gallows: with their equivocating, defiant Sawyer at the gallows, the playwrights cheekily rebuke the chaplain's effort to monopolize the power of words. In fact,

just like their Cockpit venture, the man of the religious order was commercially motivated to rush his pamphlet through publication (within five days of her execution). The cheeky revolt the authors inscribe to top the chaplain's tauntingly hypocritical moral righteousness and religious singularity might have been further precipitated by the nature of collaborative writing—the multiple perspectives and multi-vocality it brings. With the lacunae and fault-lines preserved in the three plates in retelling what happened in Edmonton in 1621, this play is a retort to the arbitrary but irrevocable legitimacy of religious and political forces.

The morality of the theater, or the potential for it, in *The witch of Edmonton* comes from its willingness to backtalk to the authority the source material claims, which serves as an antidote to the positivism promoted by the Assizes and the Sunday pulpit. Furthermore, the playwrights seem to suggest that Goodcole, the believer in the divine operation in the witch-hunt, is commensurate with the witch-hating abuser who corners an old woman until she starts to howl back: the witch-scared with-hater Old Banks declares Sawyer as a witch (2.1.17) and the indolent village youth (the morris dancers including Young Banks) brand her as “the witch of Edmonton” (98), which precipitates Sawyer's transformation into a witch. Ironically speaking, the witch-haters “transform” Sawyer into a witch, so that they can embark on a witch-hunt. In weaving such a dramatic tapestry, the playwrights, as if they were Diana, avail themselves of the transformative agency of language to invent a witch out of Sawyer, who the village “hounds” harass to doom. The witch-haters are the believers of witchcraft, since they invent a witch out of no witch just as Macbeth's vision of the “air-drawn dagger” prompts him to draw his own out of the sheath.

Not only does the text imply the playwrights' epistemic awareness of their similarity to the calumnious men of Edmonton, but also it features Rowley's dialogic duo of the Dog and the Fool in the limelight. Sawyer is charged with criminal acts of witchcraft, yet the playwrights indict the villagers and the White Dog for sins of hypocrisy and sanctimony. Furthermore, the playwrights appoint Cuddy as the apologist for the theater and theatrical magic: without the presupposition of the absolute nature of good and evil, the theater with immunity can employ the Dog and engage in thaumaturgic stagecraft. Cuddy, despite all his puerile assertions of ego and eros, is immune from frolicking and interacting with the Dog since he entertains the Dog "as a dog, not as a devil" (5.1.108-9). "True, and so I used thee doggedly, no devilishly" (110), the Dog assures the Fool, which in turn secures a theatrical safety zone on the stage.

This chapter has examined two early modern dramatic texts, one late Elizabethan and the other of the late Jacobean, which are separated by only two degrees (Marlowe—the older Rowley—the younger Rowley). In fact, the B text, which I have followed more thoroughly for the sake of its multiple blundering acts of juggleries and conjurations, enjoyed a lively Jacobean stage life until it was published in 1616, and again in 1619, 1620, and 1624. The amazement necromantic wonders created in the audience might have been a means for lucre and fame; nonetheless, the affinity among the author and revisers of *Doctor Faustus* and collaborators of *The Witch of Edmonton*—in taking a leap of skepticism and then delving into a deliberate misappropriation of the source material—seems to provide an antidote to the prevailing cultural mores that could turn deleterious at the hands of moral absolutism.

Conclusion

The early modern witch fantasies the English stage witnessed and engineered were of the male fantasy of masculine women. The bearded witches in *Macbeth* and other witch plays are threatening, first of all, because of their physicality that blurs the safe divide between feminine women and masculine men. On the other hand, the hag and the beldam with the shrewish and equivocating tongue metaphysically penetrate the masculine control and authority. The mistresses who write the corrective scripts for Falstaff's libidinous fantasy and Ford's fear of cuckoldry in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* confute both the former's presumption in his cuckold-making fantasy and the latter's fear of castrating witches: there is no lusty wife or misandric witch within the bounds of Windsor except that existing within the male paranoia. *Titus Andronicus* vernacularizes the classical mode of the female witch into the everyday version of the domestic witch by interlinking Tamora and Titus, both of whom are purged out of Rome. Tamora, the formidable witch of foreign origin with her malefic familiars, and Titus, the old and defenseless father of the ravished households who finds the means of revenge in the effeminate servile role of a cook, destroy each other. Both female sexuality and the frightening femininity in the surreptitious cookery are intimated as witchery. The abominable belly of Middletonian women is another venue of the feminine covert: her seditious ability to falsify the paternity of her child. Allwit's animus toward women with gustatory desire veils all too thinly his self-loathing of trading his wife's sexuality for his indolent comfort. His cuckold-making wife is commensurate with the unabashed gossips and also with the witches. The final chapter on the stage of *Doctor Faustus* and that of *The Witch of Edmonton* depicts the Cheshire cat's vanishing smirk: the early modern English stage was able to use the form against the content. It

sometimes let the textuality or performativity of the narrative subvert what the stage is purported to convey—the stage was one of the few venues on which magic and witchcraft were “an art lawful as eating.”

ENDNOTES

Introduction

¹ According to one of the more conservative estimates, between 1428 and 1782, there were 40-50,000 executions. See Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 132.

² Robin Biggs, *Witches and Neighbors: the Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (New York: Penguin, 1998), 6.

³ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

However, according to Lyndal Roper, historical reality complicates the neat models of Calvinist exaction or Catholic cruelty since

In Germany, Catholic prince-bishoprics were the most fearsome witch-hunters, but in Catholic Italy, Portugal and Spain, where the Inquisition played an important role in trying witches, the numbers of deaths were comparatively small. Calvinist Scotland suffered a very serious witch hunt and Lutheran Sweden had a late outbreak of witch-hunting in which many children were involved. (*Witch Craze*, 17)

Instead of imputing the violent psyche of witch-haters to their Protestant or Catholic religiosity, Roper observes how the fervid energy of the religious authorities converged on old women as the object of witch fantasies. In the case of England, Christina Lerner has documented that there was no increase of witch executions during the Interregnum, a fact that contests the hypothesis, advanced by Diane Purkiss, that Protestant zealotry was the misogynist baseline of witch persecutions.

⁴ As the North Berwick witch-hunt of 1590-91 was politically expedient for the young King James VI, soon after he became the sovereign of England, James reenacted an act prohibiting witchcraft in 1604. Christina Lerner, *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Blackwell, 1984), 78.

⁵ Eric Ross, "Syphilis, Msogyny, and Witchcraft in 16th-Century Europe," *Current Anthropology* 36. 2 (April 1995): 333-37.

⁶ Stephen Walters, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002); and Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

⁷ Many scholars, including Marion Gibson and Barbara Rosen, explore English witch fantasies at the turn of the century including not only the fantasy (news) narratives such as *News from Scotland* but also royal proclamations, pamphlets, and popular ballads. Marion Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft: Stories of Early England Witches* (New York; Routledge, 1999); Barbara Rosen, *Witchcraft in England 1558-1618* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1969).

⁸ For the demographical findings on early modern witches, see Brian Levack, ed., *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology* volume 4: Gender and Witchcraft (New York: Routledge, 2001).

⁹ Lyndal Roper has traced the revisionary processes in confessions made by the thirty-five witches who were burnt at the stake between 1590 and 1598 in Nördlingen, Germany.

Margaretha Minderlin, a widow of a gravedigger, was accused of witchcraft without any corroborating material evidence; however, torture started to “help” her remember the vivid details of each infant buried and later exhumed for consumption and magical potion. To Roper, Minderlin seems to be recycling other tortured women’s confessions, weaving them into a single coherent narrative that would satisfy her torturing interrogators but also guarantee her perdition. Despite her “willing” confession, it was later confirmed that no infants she claimed to have consumed had their graves disturbed (69-81). Also see *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

¹⁰ Deborah Willis, *The Malevolent Nurture: Witch-hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

¹¹ Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth Century Representations* (New York; Routledge, 1996).

Chapter 1

¹² Kent Cartwright, “Language, Magic, and the Dromios, and *The Comedy of Errors*,” *SEL* 47. 2 (2007): 331-354.

¹³ Stephen Greenblatt, “Shakespeare Bewitched,” in *New Historical Literary Study: Essays on Reproducing Texts, Reproducing History* edited by Jeffrey Cox and Larry Reynolds (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 121.

¹⁴ Gareth Roberts, “The Descendants of Circe: Witches and Renaissance Fictions,” in *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* edited by Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 195.

¹⁵ Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* Book 1 Chapter 3 (New York; Dover Publications, 1972), 3.

¹⁶ Brian Levack, ed., *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology: Witchcraft in England* (New York: Garland Publication, 1992), 17.

¹⁷ Scot, 4-5.

¹⁸ Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), 64-65.

¹⁹ Scot, 4.

²⁰ Frances Dolan reads the early modern cases of domestic violence and spousal murder in terms of the legal legacy of coverture, a notion that the husband legally “covers” his wife upon marrying her: a wife’s assumption of her subjectivity within marriage is her act of rebellion, violence against the householder’s authority, and thus she invites his violent redress of her “petty treason”—the rationale of domestic violence. Hence, Dolan concludes: “coverture granted this notion prestige, focus, and authority, making it not real but rather a particularly powerful construction of reality” (273). I might add that women who were not “covered” by their husbands, such as widows and spinsters, had no protection from the social abuse the community of tax-paying citizens might inflict on them. See “Battered Women, Petty Traitors, and the Legacy of Coverture,” *Feminist Studies* 29. 2 (2003): 249-77.

²¹ Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Religion and Sexuality in Early Modern Europe* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), 40. Roper locates the Reformation’s exemplar of evil motherhood in prostitutes while, she observes, its male counterparts were Catholic clerics (43).

²² Lyndal Roper, “‘Evil Imaginings and Fantasies’: Child-witches and the End of Witchcraze,” *Past & Present* 167 (May, 2000): 107-39, especially 137.

²³ Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 207-11.

²⁴ Mary Beth Rose, “Where Are the Mothers in Shakespeare?: Options for Gender Representation in the English Renaissance,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 42. 3 (1991): 291-314.

²⁵ Quoted in Rose, 301.

²⁶ Kenneth Branagh’s 1996 film version of *Hamlet* (Columbia Pictures) takes advantage of this reading of Hamlet’s frighteningly strategic display of suicidal aggression by staging Act 3 Scene 1 in a room surrounded by mirrored doors; radically departing from the previous interpretations of this scene and the prince’s cryptic line, “To be, or not to be, that is the question,” Branagh as Hamlet delivers his soliloquy as if it were intended for the concealed listeners.

²⁷ Janet Adelman, “Man and Wife is One Flesh: *Hamlet* and the Confrontation with the Maternal Body,” in *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare’s Plays, from Hamlet to The Tempest* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), 11-37.

²⁸ Paster, 245.

²⁹ Rose, 306.

³⁰ Philip C. Kolin, in “*Titus Andronicus* and the Critical Legacy,” sums up various readings on the protagonist’s ambivalent moral authority (14-19). Kolin contends, “The central problem of the play...is the protagonist” (14). Philip Kolin, ed., *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays* (New York and London: Garland, 1995).

³¹ From the fact that Titus delivers no soliloquy, Larry S. Champion infers that Titus lacks philosophical depth as a tragic protagonist (quoted in Kolin, 17).

³² A. B. Taylor, “Animals in ‘manly shape as too the outward showe’: Moralizing and Metamorphosis in *Titus Andronicus*,” in *Shakespeare’s Ovid*, edited by A. B. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 66-80, especially 71.

³³ Taylor, 75. Reading the rhetorical premises in *Epistle* 49-62 and 108 against Ovid, Taylor underlines how Ovid’s innocuous gentle nymph, Echo, transforms into a bawd promoting illicit sexual transactions in Golding’s Christian morality while the nurse Aaron slays is branded as “babbling gossip” in *Titus Andronicus* (4.2.150, 168).

³⁴ Taylor, 78.

³⁵ Maus, *The Norton Shakespeare*, 377.

³⁶ Frances Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550-1700* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 22-58. Dolan illustrates how the contemporary accounts of murderous wives fostered the fantasy of the seditious domestic domain of the kitchen.

³⁷ Chris Meads, *Banquets Set Forth: Banqueting in English Renaissance Drama* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2001), 5. Meads observes that after Davenport’s *A New Trick to Cheat the Devil* (1625), banqueting scenes were frequently associated with witchcraft and the supernatural; however, there had been a routine characterization of witches who hanker for banqueting stuff on stage and in witchcraft literature.

³⁸ Ben Jonson contemptuously denounced *Titus Andronicus* as a “typical old-fashioned play” that facilitated unsophisticated Elizabethans’ need for boisterous narrative while William Hazlitt

saw it as “an accumulation of vulgar physical horrors” (quoted in Kolin, 4). Much later, T. S. Eliot condemned it as “one of the stupidest and most uninspired plays” (quoted in Kolin, 5).

³⁹ J. Dover Wilson, Introduction to *Titus Andronicus*, edited by J. Dover Wilson (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1948), xii.

⁴⁰ Kolin, 17.

⁴¹ Marion Gibson, ed., *Witchcraft and Society in England and America, 1550-1750* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 2.

⁴² Gibson, 4. On the other hand, James I saw witchcraft with the most alarmist immediacy. “An Act against Conjurat[i]on, Witchcraft and Dealing with evil and wicked Spirits” of 1604 stipulated that tampering with human body parts warranted the death penalty:

That if any person or persons...take up any dead man woman or child out of his her or their grave, or any other place where the dead bodie resteth, or the skin bone or any other parte of any dead person, to be employed or used in any manner of Witchcraft Inchantment Charme or Sorcerie, wherebie any person shalbe killed destroyed wasted consumed pined or lamed in his or her bodie, or any parte thereof;...shall suffer pains of death as a Felon or Felons, and shall loose the priviledge and Benefit of Cleargie and Sanctuarie. (Gibson, 6)

⁴³ Meads detects a growing trend of magical elements and witchcraft in banquet scenes during Caroline era until the closing of the theater (5).

⁴⁴ The sensationalism regarding witches somehow filtered out the presence of early modern male witches, who, for example, represented thirteen percent of the prosecuted in Essex from 1560 to 1602, and sixteen percent in Scotland from 1560 to 1709. Lara Apps and Andrew Gow, *Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003), 45.

⁴⁵ Apps and Gow, 111.

⁴⁶ In 1590, James VI of Scotland availed himself to turn the tempest (that frustrated his return voyage from Denmark with his new bride) into an accusation of witchcraft against him. Through the so-called the North Berwick witch trials, over which the King himself presided, James was able to implement his newly-kindled fervor of witch persecution in prosecuting real-life culprits; at the same time, those highly-scandalized trials of 1590-91 afforded the King with a means to uproot and dismember the political faction of the Earl of Bothwell (Francis Stewart). Deborah Willis reads James’s ambivalence toward his absentee mother (Mary, Queen of Scots who was executed in 1587) as the main psychological drive behind his witch-hunt furor of this period. Deborah Willis, *Malevolent Nurture: Witch-hunting and Maternal Nurture in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 117-208. As the Brothers Grimm tell the story of Gretel, who comes to terms with her own freedom (from hunger and her stepmother) by incinerating the witch, the King seems to have been at a psychological bifurcation at age twenty-four, still mindful of his bad (biological) mother’s execution three years ago and the good (nurturing) mother’s glorious defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. And at this very juncture, as Willis suggests, the young King started to burn witches at the stake.

⁴⁷ Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 184.

Purkiss considers John Dee as the physical embodiment of Elizabethan concept of the “national magician”; on the stage, Purkiss identifies at least three Elizabethan dramatic narratives that feature nationalistic sages: the anonymous *Sir Clymon and Sir Clamydes*, William Rowley’s *Birth of Merlin*, and Robert Greene’s *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*.

⁴⁸ Writing *Endimion, or the Man in the Moon*, John Lyly endeavors to marry allegory to dramatic efficacy only to run into the conceptual dilemma in portraying the aging Queen as the chaste goddess of the moon, Cynthia, argues Purkiss (188). She pronounces that Lyly failed in distinguishing the flattering portrayal of Cynthia from the mundane existence of aging, farcical Dipsas, who is the more realistic representation of the aging heirless Queen; it seems that the Queen’s patronage over literary discourse dealing with witchcraft or witch-like characters might have been like the Albatross around her ruff. For, to Elizabeth, witchcraft discourse was politically loaded with cumbersome association with her fateful mother.

⁴⁹ Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* provides an interesting reference point for the absurd humor in *The Tragedy of Titus Andronicus*. On August 14, 1590, the two parts of *Tamburlaine the Great* as “*The twoe commicall discourses of TOMBERLEIN the Cithian shepparde*” were entered in the Stationer’s Register. Richard Jones, the printer for whom those two plays were entered, wrote in his dedicatory letter, “I have here published in print for your sakes the two *tragical* discourses of the Scythian shepherd Tamburlaine” (italics added). Jones seems to pride himself in his play “reading” ability as he writes, “I have purposely omitted and left out some fond and frivolous gestures, digressing and, in my poor opinion, far unmeet for the matter, which I thought might seem more tedious unto the wise than any way else to be regarded.” See Christopher Marlowe, *Complete Plays and Poems: Christopher Marlowe*, ed., E. D. Pendry (London: Everyman, 1976), 3-5. Whether this paradoxical classification of genres comes from Jones’s perfunctory mistake or from the conflicting nature of the two parts of *Tamburlaine*, the clashing antonyms undoubtedly acknowledge both the comical and tragic elements in this narrative.

⁵⁰ Michael Neill, “‘Exeunt with a Dead March’: Funeral Pageantry on the Shakespearean Stage,” in *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theater*, edited by David Bergeron (Athens: U of Georgia P, 1985), 153-93.

⁵¹ Neill, 169.

⁵² Exoticism was often a feature in early modern pageantry. In addition to Jonson’s masque with blackened dancers, the panoramic panel of Sir Henry Unton’s portrait (1596), currently housed in the National Portrait Gallery in London, testifies to the significance of exotic elements in masques. On the lower right section of the panel, a banquet is being held in honor of Unton, and the procession of mythological figures, including women disguising as nymphs and children with blackened faces and limbs, enters the banqueting room through the stairs. Accompanied by musicians and masquers, including Amazons and blacks, the guests of importance enjoy the pageantry of a masque and display of affluence at the table: a cornucopia of meat and sweets. This banqueting scene is a showcase of festivity, exoticism, and civility of the late sixteenth-century English culture.

⁵³ Neill, 169.

⁵⁴ In indigenous English mummings, disguised men visited houses, accompanied by musicians, to play a game of dice in silence. In order to hide their identities, those players wore vizards and

relied on miming to communicate; hence, the visualized symbolism and miming in dumb shows on English stage find their roots in mummings.

⁵⁵ Io, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, transformed into a heifer by jealous Juno, reveals her identity by marking dirt with her hoof. Likewise, Philomel discloses the identity of her assailant by weaving a pictorial tapestry. The misused, maimed bodies of those women are the body of evidence that inscribes and indicts the sexual violence committed against them; in *The Rape of Lucrece* (1593), Shakespeare revisits the scene of such sexual crime and allows Lucrece to testify against her assailant, Prince Tarquin.

⁵⁶ The first recorded mumming in England involves masked London citizens presenting—by deliberately losing it—a jewel to the future Richard II at a game of dice (Chambers, 150). This occasion epitomizes the nature of Elizabethan and Jacobean masques, that is, the display of power disguised under merriment in the deferential form of presenting a gift.

⁵⁷ Even in such a highly-symbolized ritual as Holy Communion lies cannibalism: partaking of the consecrated wine and wafer, the believer (consumer) fantasizes ingesting Jesus Christ's own blood and flesh (human flesh) so that he transubstantiates the host. All forms of consumption are violence against the consumed even in the Eucharist.

⁵⁸ Wendy Wall, *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 194.

⁵⁹ The appropriation of banquets and masques in Marlowe and early Shakespeare seems to betray laymen's wary disapprobation of extravagance and indulgence in those aristocratic activities. For example, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, a play featuring various royal pastimes such as dicing, disguising, and masques, Rosaline, in quipping "Well, better wits have worn plain statute-caps" (5.2.281), might be betraying professional masqueraders' feelings towards noble amateurs.

⁶⁰ Ovid, *The Metamorphoses*, translated by Horace Gregory (New York: Viking, 1958), 182.

⁶¹ The example of Senecan poetry (drama as poetry to be recited) can be found in Marcus's long speech in 2.4., which seems absurdly counterproductive to the visual testimony of Lavinia's piteous assailed body.

⁶² *Seneca's Tragedies*, vol. 2., translated by Frank Justus Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), 173.

⁶³ Anne Wilson, ed., *The Appetite and the Eye* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 21.

⁶⁴ Michel de Montaigne, "On Cannibals," *Essays*, trans. J. M. Cohen (London: Penguin, 1993), 117. The noble savages Montaigne acclaims in "On Cannibals" consume the flesh of the prisoner of war believing in the corporeal assimilation with their ancestors whom their enemy tribe previously consumed. Montaigne relays a ballad reportedly written by a prisoner before his ritualistic murder: "'these muscles,' he says, 'this flesh, and these veins are yours, poor fools that you are! Can you not see that the substance of your ancestors' limbs is still in them? Taste them carefully, and you will find the flavour is that of your own flesh.'" Unlike Europeans who kill without purpose and benefit, those new world "wild" dwellers sublimate cannibalism into a purgative communal affair while without losing respect for human life, according to Montaigne. In Montaigne's utopian Antarctic France, consuming the enemy through ritualistic execution relieves the tribe of their antagonism and fear toward the enemy and consolidates themselves via the ancestral spirits they now collectively share.

⁶⁵ A Jacobean masque by Ben Jonson illustrates the fantasy of cannibalistic revenge with great gusto. The Cock-lorell's song, the fourth song out of nine in *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* (1621), narrates a Devil's feast prepared by Cock-lorell, a notorious London thief. After allaying his queasy stomach with a poached Puritan (40.22), the Devil starts the course of human dishes. The course of human dishes catalogs the vices of sexual trades, effeminacy, and monetary greed, social ambition, and legal venality. After devouring the pastry of a midwife and a painted lady and the flesh of a jailer and an alderman in a seafood dish with wine to gulp all down, the Devil culminates the feast by destroying the banquet:

Then from the Table he gave a start
 where banquet and wine were nothing scarce
 All which he blew away with a fart
 from whence it was called the Devils arse. (43.5-8)

Jonson's satirical purging of the socially loathed jettisons the norms of hospitality and civility of a banquet as a whole since both the host and the guest of this banquet represent social and religious vices themselves. This perverted banquet identifies, destroys, and eliminates social irritants in the abominable body of the Devil. George Watson Cole, ed., a variorum edition of *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* (New York: Century, 1931), 242.

⁶⁶ Shylock's pursuit of the inedible pound of Christian flesh testifies to his inhumanity. For example, Graziano dehumanizes Shylock for his animal hunger, even risking an unwitting propagation of the Pythagorean theory of the transmigration of souls: the "currish" spirit of the hanged wolf migrated into incubating Shylock in "thy [his] unhallowed dam" (4.1.135). Relying on the pagan theory of the transmutation of human and animal spirits, the Christian gossip recycles anti-Semitic cants and alleges that Shylock's oral desires "Are wolvis, bloody, starved, and ravenous" (4.1.137). Shylock's vengeful drive is as base as canine predation and consumption.

⁶⁷ Ruth Morse, "Unfit for Human Consumption: Shakespeare's Unnatural Food," *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft West* (1983): 125-149, especially 132.

⁶⁸ Similarly, Prospero calls the subhuman Caliban, the son of the condemned Sycorax, "this thing of darkness" (5.1.278). In his voluntary servitude, Caliban promises to Stefano and Trinculo that he would provide food: "I'll pluck thee berries; I'll fish for thee" (2.2.152-53). Caliban's petty treason against his master, at first, encompasses his relocation of his service of preparing food and supplying wood from Prospero to the drunken louts; later, he dares to attempt to murder Prospero. The metaphysical darkness of the witches in *Macbeth* and Caliban in *The Tempest* finds its juncture in the unlawful supply and preparation of food.

⁶⁹ Taylor, 68.

⁷⁰ Ovid, 188.

⁷¹ The supposedly grotesque body of the witch results from the old age and the rough life of the accused; with such labels as "paps," "teats," and "biggs," witch-finders provoked abhorrence and fear toward the deformity of the accused witch.

⁷² Ironically, Muliteus, a Moor who married a "fair" woman, has a "fair" offspring who will supersede the black bastard of Aaron and Tamora as the changeling.

⁷³ Cataloging the folkloric tomfoolery (5.1.125-34), Aaron invokes a vivid picture of the medieval stereotypical character of the Vice:

Oft have I digged up dead men from their graves
 And set them upright at their dear friends' door,
 Even when their sorrows almost was forgot,
 And on their skins, as on the bark of trees,
 Have with my knife carved in Roman letters
 'Let not your sorrow die though I am dead.'
 But I have done a thousand dreadful things
 As willingly as one would kill a fly. (5.1.135-42)

Aaron prides himself in his willing degradation of humans as if they were flies, which echoes the "mad" humor of Titus in his fantasy of killing the fly as the secret agent who poisons his food.

⁷⁴ Diane Purkiss reads ethnic alterity in mythological witch characters such as Medea, Circe, and Dido, all of whom contributed to the making of "the witch of the margins of race," such as Sycorax in *The Tempest*. *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 250-71.

⁷⁵ Paster, reading the early modern belief of blood circulation in ideating female physiognomy, detects the "metonymic replacement of mouth for vagina" (98) in the wounded body of Lavinia. Her choice of quotation reveals how Marcus's absurdly long lamentation of the mutilated and bleeding body of Lavinia verbally stages the unrepresentable rape, a peculiar blend of "eroticism and horror" (98):

Alas, a crimson river of warm blood,
 Like to a bubbling fountain stirr'd with wind,
 Doth rise and fall between thy rosed lips,
 Coming and going with thy honey breath. (2.4.22-25)

Even though Paster reads eroticized femininity in the dead bleeding body of Caesar and male satisfaction in the sacrificial/ritualistic murder of Caesar in the assassins' rhetoric, it is the very female body of Lucrece and Lavinia that becomes the cause and result of the sexual crime. *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

⁷⁶ Jeanne Addison Roberts characterizes Tamora as "a creature of the Wild," but when she says "[t]he struggle is between men, but the necessary pawns are women, and the arena of the power struggle is the forest" (quoted in Kolin, 36) in favor of a postcolonial reading of the alienated Aaron, she overlooks how *Titus Andronicus* engenders the Wild. The Wild is the dreadful maternal body; for example, the forest is "a barren detested vale," where "nothing breeds" (2.3.93-96).

⁷⁷ John Marston, *The Tragedy of Sophonisba, Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, eds., Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986).

⁷⁸ Paster, reading *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, reasons the body of Mistress Allwit, who bore children out of wedlock, as the focus on which "the greedy mouth merges with the greedy womb" (56).

⁷⁹ The gang-rape of Alyce Arden, whose sensational husband killing *Arden of Feversham* (1592) dramatized, documents how the community punished her sexual license before the accused was officially executed. Here, female libido resembles gluttony. John Ponet, referring to the similar fate "the wicked woman of Feversham" met, justifies Cakanus's murder of Romilda after

having her gang-raped: “at length when he thought her tired, and her insatiable lust somewhat stanch’d (for belike it would never have been fully glutted).” Quoted in Lena Cowen Orlin, *Private Matters and Public Culture in Post-Reformation England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 80-81.

⁸⁰ Orlin, 82.

⁸¹ Paster, 109.

⁸² According to Galenic medicine, due to their colder, moister disposition women are plethoric, and to bring a balance to their bodies, women must discharge the excess of blood through menstruation (Paster, 79).

⁸³ Paster, 105.

⁸⁴ The deceased mother of Young Lucius left him a copy of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* as a keepsake. Also Titus urges Lavinia to beguile her sorrow by reading stories. Titus’ ability to “read” Lavinia’s narrative of sexual violence and revenge through women’s idling hobby of storytelling further associates the military hero with feminine attributes.

Chapter Two

⁸⁵ Roger Moss, “Falstaff as a Woman,” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 10. 1 (1995): 31.

⁸⁶ Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, vol. 2 (London: Routledge, 1975), 17.

⁸⁷ K. M. Biggs, *Anatomy of Puck* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1959), 51.

⁸⁸ Marcus and Wall are truly enlightening in their analyses of the early modern patriarchal perceptions of female sexual and domestic governance and thus my reading is to branch out to supplement their critical frames in an attempt to shed light on the drab background, the negativity of witches’ malice that affirms the positivity of the patriarchal reason and order.

⁸⁹ Leah Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 90.

⁹⁰ Marcus, 89. Also see Edward Berry, *Shakespeare and the Hunt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 152.

⁹¹ All references to Shakespeare’s texts, including *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, follow the pagination and editorial decisions of *The Norton Shakespeare*; each departure from this edition will be specified accordingly.

⁹² Wendy Wall, “Why does Puck Sweep? Shakespearean Fairies and the Politics of Cleaning,” *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 92.

⁹³ In exploring the origin of the character of Falstaff, Jean Howard navigates early modern religio-historiography regarding John Oldcastle and his Lollardism. She also offers another exposition of the name of Fastolf, a name Shakespeare featured in *1 Henry VI* and did safely recycle in a subsequent reincarnation of the character. For the historical significance of the Falstaff references, see Jean Howard’s introduction to *1 Henry IV* in *The Norton Shakespeare* 1152-4.

⁹⁴ Wall, 118.

⁹⁵ Wall, 119.

⁹⁶ Wall, 112.

⁹⁷ Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 151-55. Roper’s *Witch Craze* documents early modern German cultural

obsession with the potential misapplication and complications of female (in)fertility, which was closely interrelated with the witch-scare. In the chapter on “Fertility,” Roper draws a rich tapestry with multiple drawing and images, many of which depict witches’ devious, demonic sexuality. In this specific drawing, *Witch Flying Backwards on a Goat*, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) imagines the witch sitting in a commanding profile, while fully naked with wrinkled skin; she grips one of the goat’s horns, which seemingly touches her rectum. With her right hand, the witch holds a broomstick as if it were a scepter. There are four cherubs who complete a virtual circle that starts with the witch’s leg, naked and bent; one boy pulls himself up with a stick; two others compete over a stick while the last buttresses a globe on a stick.

Hans Baldung Grien (1480-1545) also did several paintings of witch fantasies. Using the latest innovation—called chiaroscuro—in creating those woodcut images, Baldung Grien, in *Witches’ Sabbath* (1510), portrays naked witches sitting under a bare tree next to their sticks, which obviously are the vehicles of transvection while one witch flying backwards on a goat uses her stick in stirring up a tempest in a pot. In this woodcut image, the witches display their innovative, familiar usages of the sticks—like pitchforks or broomsticks used in roasting sausages, brewing up a storm, transporting, and even for decorative purposes. In other woodcuts called *The Witches Sabbath* (1514) and *Witch and Demon* (1514), Baldung Grien further explores the implicit possibility of the sexual utility of the stick amongst nubile and procreative witches.

⁹⁸ Stephen Greenblatt *et al.*, eds., *The Norton Shakespeare* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 1274.

⁹⁹ Leah Marcus illustrates the irreconcilable discrepancies between the “bad” quarto of 1602 and the more “legitimate” 1623 folio; in so doing, she elucidates the assimilatory trajectory of this play from the earlier city comedy to a play that bears a conscious awareness of nationalist sentiment and civic gestures in support and adulation of the royal supremacy.

¹⁰⁰ René Girard, *Violent Origins*, ed. Robert Hamerton-Kelly (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

Girard explains the mimetic rivalry in a way that is pertinent to the Shakespearean erotic mimicry in *The Winter’s Tale*:

As I imitate the desire of my neighbor, I reach for the object he is already reaching for, and we prevent each other from appropriating this object. His reaction to my desire parallels my relation to his, and the more we cross each other, the more stubbornly we imitate each other. My interference intensifies his desire, just as his interference intensifies mine. This process of positive feedback can only lead to physical and other forms of violence. (123)

Leontes detects such mimetic semblance between himself and Polixenes and develops fierce rivalry and jealousy toward him; yet, he uses his paternal authority against his domestics rather than against his mimetic rival. He forcefully and abruptly removes Mamillius from his mama; as his name implies, such rash weaning from *mammilliae*—even though the royal mother did not breastfeed him—becomes a perilous end for the young son, causing the lengthy suffering of the mother.

¹⁰¹ Berry, 151.

¹⁰² In another Shakespeare jealousy play, *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes uses a metaphor of infringed property when he suspects Hermione for adultery with Polixenes:

There have been,
Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now,
And many a man there is, even at this present,
Now, while I speak this, holds his wife by th'arm,
That little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence,
And his pond fished by his next neighbor, by
Sir Smile, his neighbor. Nay, there's comfort in't,
Whiles other men have gates, and those gated opened,
As mine, against their will. (1.2.191-9)

Leontes fears cuckoldry by his bosom buddy who is commensurate with himself in birth and status. In such a male fantasy of cuckoldry (either as a bragging right or as the mockery of the oblivious fool or the complacent wittol) the conniving wives and mistresses become the corroboration of the myth of female sexual voracity. The householder's proprietary over his wife's sexuality is compared to the gated estate in which the wife-like water flows as willingly as if the sluice gate conveyed excess water. Polixenes is suspected to have despoiled Hermione's "sluice," "gate," and "pond"—his neighbor's property. Like the cuckoo bird that lays eggs in another's nest, the cuckold-maker can bastardize the patrilineal edifice of the wittol.

¹⁰³ Leontes, suffering from jealousy, seeks solace in deflecting his shame onto the split half of himself. As Ford does so frequently through the dreams and visions he confesses he has, Leontes also describes an out-of-body experience in having to face his own cuckoldry. He objectifies himself as the dupe who is complacent in his ignorance of his wife's "open" sexuality. While holding his royal consort's arm, he projects himself as the objectified cuckold who is holding his wife's arm. The jealous king attempts to deflect the dupe's fate onto the split half of himself, so that he can objectify and mock the shamefaced cuckold (which is none other than himself) by joining in the male gaze that dispenses stern disapproval to the unqualified proprietor of female sexuality.

¹⁰⁴ For this illustration, see Wall 105.

¹⁰⁵ Greenblatt, *The Norton Shakespeare* 1226.

¹⁰⁶ Just as the authority figures in Windsor reveal their inadequacy in letters (for example, Parson Evans's blundering Latin lesson and Justice Shallow's malapropism), Falstaff misinterprets and acts on his misconstruction of Mistress Ford: "I spy entertainment in her. She discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation. I can construe the action of her familiar style, and the hardest voice of her behavior (to be English'd rightly) is, 'I am Sir John Falstaff's'" (2.3.44-48).

¹⁰⁷ With an illustration of Ford's obsessive governance of domestic economy, Wall observes that Ford "experience[s] domesticity as a threat" (119).

¹⁰⁸ James Stuart, *Minor Prose Works of King James VI and I* (Edinburgh: Scottish Text Society, 1981). In *Daemonologie*, King James allows those lines to Epistemon: "it appears that God hath appointed (for a supernatural sign of the monstrous impietie of the witches) that the water shall refuse to receive them in her bosom" (56).

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in Wall, 90.

¹¹⁰ In tautological bombast, Evans chides Pistol for redundantly saying “He hears with ears” (1.1.123); such “affectations” provoke Evans into decrying the “tevil and his tam” (124), referring to the duo of Falstaff and Pistol. His inability to curse properly deprives the father of religious authority, which may explain the unlikely role the clergyman plays during the nocturnal masque: Satyr of all characters.

¹¹¹ Wall, 92.

¹¹² Heinrich Kramer and Jacobs Sprenger, *The Malleus Maleficarum*, translated by Montague Summers (New York: Dover, 1948), vii-viii.

¹¹³ In addition to numerous pamphlets and treatises authored by anonymous or self-effacing writers, there were an impressive number of learned men who exerted themselves to “father” the ultimate exposition of the diabolic workings of the devil and his dam. The following texts on demonology and witchcraft, which were all coeval with such a popular form of merriment as *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, were authored by men of learning and stature: Reginald Scot’s *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584); George Gifford’s *A Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devilles by Witches and Sorcerers* (1587); Henry Holland’s *A Treatise Against Witchcraft* (1590); King James’s *Daemonologie* (1597); William Perkins’s *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (1608); James Mason’s *The Anatomy of Sorcerie* (1612); Alexander Roberts’s *A Treatise of Witchcraft* (1616); and Thomas Cooper’s *The Mystery of Witch-Craft* (1617).

¹¹⁴ Three years prior to the publication of *The Malleus Maleficarum*, the Bull of Innocent VIII declared that when “husbands cannot know their wives nor wives receive their husbands,” the responsibility lies in witches, who have “blasted the produce of the earth” (Summers xliii). The graphic specificities of the papal decree are reprinted as the preface to the 1487 witch-hunting manual. The language of the tract vividly puts it: “when it is stirred and becomes erect, but yet cannot perform,” and “when a woman is prevented from conceiving” “it is a sign of witchcraft” (Summers, 56, 66).

¹¹⁵ As the duke’s wedding in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* was a lucrative opportunity for Bottom and the “rude mechanicals” to make six pence, to players and playwrights, aristocratic weddings were welcome breaks. Anne Barton, hence, posits that this play might have been commissioned for a wedding celebration at Whitehall (*The Riverside Shakespeare* 323). There is no doubt that *The Tempest* was a part of festivities celebrating Princess Elizabeth’s marriage to the Elector Palatine in the winter of 1612-3. High-profile weddings were an integral part in running the business of playing companies.

¹¹⁶ As it was celebrated in such works as Edmund Spenser’s *Epithalamion* and *Prothalamion*, the early modern marriage of nobles married politics to culture, forming history and customs with their marriage. The virgin queen calculatingly deliberated on her marriage possibilities, using marriage as “the impossible point of reference” in maintaining her political autonomy. Her successor, James I, attempted to marry his two kingdoms under the name of Great Britain in such locution: in 1604, he wooed the parliament by declaring “I am the husband, and all of the whole isle is my lawful wife” (quoted in Greenblatt, 25). Surrounded by, very likely, skeptical English men, James endeavored to fold monarchical supremacy into patriarchal prerogatives as head of both state and family.

¹¹⁷ Walter Stephens, “Witches Who Steal Penises: Impotence and Illusion in *The Malleus Maleficarum*,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 28. 3 (Fall 1998): 529.

Stephens asserts that Kramer's guilty verdict of witches resulted from the religious father's ultimate goal of substantiating the sacramental magic of Christ's union with his bride, the Church: "[Kramer] had to prove implicitly that sacramental magic is real by demonstrating that witchcraft is manifestly not unreal." The witch in the *Malleus Maleficarum* is dialectically devised as a religious necessity, the indispensable component in fortifying the religious institution and Christian matrimony since the latter serves as quotidian analogue of the former.

¹¹⁸ Stephens, 529.

¹¹⁹ There is, however, an inherent incongruity in this analogical modeling of the perfect spiritual union of divinity with humanity that is to be reflexive in patriarchal union in matrimony, in that the latter can be plagued with impotence or infertility, abortion, miscarriage, and even the death of the infant. Kramer, the Dominican monk, copes with this discrepancy by asserting the impeccability of God's plan in human sexuality that is to be fruitful. Accordingly, there must exist an antagonistic power that could cause imperfection in a Christian marriage: witchcraft. For the undisputed prevalence of such beliefs Kramer and Sprenger advanced that witches (more specifically, midwives who had an intimate access to the newborns and the mothers) manipulated the outcome of pregnancy, see Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 76-80.

¹²⁰ Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger, *The Hammer of Witches: A Complete Translation of the Malleus Maleficarum* translated by Christopher Mackay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 323.

¹²¹ Another anecdote the authors embed in their theological elucidation does not fail to thwart the authorial intention:

As for what pronouncement should be made about those sorceresses who sometimes keep large members of these members (twenty or thirty at once) in a bird's nest or in some cabinet, where the members move as if alive or eat a stalk or fodder, as many have seen and the general report relates, it should be said that these things are all carried out through the Devil's working and illusion. In this case, an illusion is played on the viewers' senses of perception in the ways discussed above. A certain man reported that when he had lost his member and gone to a certain sorceress to regain his well-being, she told the sick man that he should climb a certain tree and granted that he could take whichever one he wanted from the nest, in which there were very many members. When he tried to take a particular large one, the sorceress said, "You shouldn't take that one," adding that it belonged to one of the parish priests. (Kramer and Sprenger, 328)

Even though the writers belabor to prove the penises nested on a tree are nothing more than an illusion of the afflicted—the result of the devil's own presdigation—the ribald barb the witch delivers animates this anecdote with carnivalesque realism. In a footnote, the translator Mackay reminds his readers that in the Romance languages, a "bird" connoted a penis (328). Thus, the bird's nest that contains numerous penises denotes the female genitalia and its sexual rapacity. For example, Dr. Rat, in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, slinks through the backdoor to Goodwife Chat's house to grope "so deep in Goodwife Chat's hens' nest" (5.2. 225). As Dr. Rat alludes to the nest's semblance to the pudendum, the witch's nest in the *Malleus Maleficarum* pictures a grotesque form of male fantasy of female sexuality that frivolously

emasculates numerous men. Having scandalized female sexuality in such a broad stroke, the narrative voice, in spite of itself, admits that the witch willingly intervened to remedy the male affliction.

¹²² Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), 157.

¹²³ Žižek, 157.

¹²⁴ Nancy Cotton, "Castrating (W)itches: Impotence and Magic in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 38 (1987): 320-26.

¹²⁵ Cotton, 325.

¹²⁶ As Lacanian psychoanalysis explains, the symbolic order such conceptual signification creates allows the imaginary order to marshal the concrete presence of the concept in the way the subject experiences her reality. Hence, one might even argue language embodied such an immaterial concept as witchcraft—reified via preposterously inferential suspicion and distrust—and thus the reality of witches' maleficia becomes as concrete as the springboard on which either malevolent aspirations or fearful charges might bound and rebound.

¹²⁷ Žižek, 176.

¹²⁸ With the metaphor of the stage, Žižek develops an allegory of the Lacanian Real: the curtain presupposes what needs to be shielded until the curtain is pulled up; henceforth, the assumption of something hidden, which is nothing, becomes the logic of the theater. Even though one may be unable to transangulate one's relationship to the Real, her inchoate understanding of the Real allows a frame of textualization of her linguistic and social knowledge of her world.

¹²⁹ On the one hand, the poacher in the first scene turns out to be the game in the closing; on the other hand, the aspirant ravager with the headgear of antler's horns is to learn that his fantasy of cuckoldry is enacted on him by those who he has pursued. Falstaff's transformation from horned Satyr to horned Actaeon is as sudden and certain as the changes in the significations of the horns are; since both Satyr and Actaeon desire the same, the one who is outdone is to bear the shame of desiring what is beyond his reach.

¹³⁰ Shakespeare plays a similar pun with the foolishly forward Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: his metamorphosis into an ass is a visual prank played by Robin Good-fellow. The mischievous spirit transforms Bottom the weaver into one who wears an ass's head.

¹³¹ Jeanne Addison Roberts, *Shakespeare's English Comedy* (Lincoln and London: U of Nebraska P, 1979). Roberts considers connecting Falstaff to Actaeon paradoxical and proposes three dramatic purposes in such an ironic representation of the horned Falstaff: "(1) the removal of the sexual potency of Falstaff; (2) the transferral of this potency to Ford; and (3) the final exorcising of the specter of cuckoldry" (78).

¹³² Berry, 157.

¹³³ Žižek relays a conceptual joke called a MacGuffin, which is in fact "the pure pretext whose sole role is to set the story in motion but which is in itself 'nothing at all': "the original anecdote is well-known: two men are sitting in a train; one of them asks: 'What's that package up there in the luggage rack?' 'Oh, that's a MacGuffin.' 'What's a MacGuffin?' 'Well, it's an apparatus for trapping lions in the Scottish Highlands.' 'But there are no lions in the Scottish Highlands.' . . . 'Well, you see how efficient it is!" (163). This empty cipher is nonetheless quite efficient in signaling the narrative desire, the force that puts forward the storyteller's

perspective as the rules of engagement, a reason probably why this device is frequently used in the genre of detective movies.

¹³⁴ Richard Helgerson, *Adulterous Alliances: Home, State, and History in Early Modern European Drama and Painting* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000), 68.

¹³⁵ Othello bemoans the end of his marital bliss, which Iago easily achieves with verbal insinuations: "Othello's occupation's gone" (3.3.362). His wife's fall nullifies his social claim as a military protector of Venice; furthermore, his wife's cuckoldry preempts his sexual "occupation" of her body. As Leontes and Ford do, Othello also objectifies himself as the third person, the object of his ridicule and deflection of shame.

¹³⁶ The play's emphasis on love over land is first pronounced when Evans volunteers to play a go-between for Slender, whose inappropriate manners, obsession with "stewed prunes," and, worst of all, lackadaisical response to the call for marital affection toward Anne make him an explicitly unqualified match for her (1.1.180-216).

¹³⁷ The mock masque is cut short by noises of hunting. With the sudden transition, the civic deer hunting of the stag commences. In addition, Mistress Quickly, the mistress of misrule, is more apropos to preside over the antimasque than to lead the decorous masque of resolution and harmony; in this sense, Mistress Quickly's superceding Anne for the role of the fairy queen seems quite apropos.

Chapter Three

¹³⁸ Arguing that "the typography of [their] 'generic text' emphasizes the process of adaptation rather than the original or the final state of the text," Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino include *The Life of Timon of Athens* as well as *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* in the first single volume of the works by "our other Shakespeare." Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino eds., *The Collected Works of Thomas Middleton* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 21.

¹³⁹ There are four extant broadside sheets (ca 1655-65) that literalized *Titus Andronicus* with a pictorial narrative and lyric to the tune of "Fortune my Foe": "The Lamentable and Tragical History of Tutus Andronicus . . . with his revenge upon them for their cruell an[d] inhumane act." It is not the cannibalistic banquet but the scene of slaughtering and collecting blood of Chiron and Demetrius that takes center stage in its story. This broadside ballad, circulated a half-century later, testifies to the enduring shock value of the gore and the grotesque in *Titus Andronicus*, a pictorial "recipe" Wendy Wall might argue as a frightening but routine feature of early modern kitchen. Recalling how Thomas Heywood illustrates the daily labor of food preparation and consumption as "Massacre of meat" in *The English Traveller* (printed in 1633), Wendy Wall notes that "animal and human bodies were not separated taxonomically in cookbooks, medical guides, or actual household space." *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 192.

¹⁴⁰ For the quotations of *The Chaste Maid in Cheapside* and *Women Beware Women*, I use *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology* (New York: W. W. Norton 2002) while I use the New Mermaids edition for *The Witch* (London: A & C Black; New York: W. W. Norton, 1994). Regarding the scholarly discussion on the year of composition of *The Witch*, see Elizabeth Schafer's introduction to the New Mermaid edition (xi-xix) and also Anne Lancashire, "The Witch: Stage Flop or Political Mistake?" in *Accompaning the players": Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980*, ed. Kenneth Friedenreich (New York: AMS, 1983), 161-81.

¹⁴¹ Even though Hannah Woolley achieved a remarkable distinction and financial gain during the 1660s, the early trailblazers in the cookbook industry were exclusively men. Markham felt compelled to pay lip service to women for encroaching on their supposed specialty: “though men may coin strange names, and feign strange art, yet be assured she that can do these, may make any other whatsoever” (53). Gervase Markham, *The English Housewife, containing The inward and outward Vertues which ought to be in a compleat Woman* (London: Printed by W. Wilson, 1664).

¹⁴² Gary Taylor advances Thomas Middleton’s authorship for *The Bloody Banquet*. See his “Thomas Middleton, Thomas Dekker, and *The Bloody Banquet*,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 94: 2 (2000): 197-233.

¹⁴³ Michael Best ed., *The English Housewife* (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994), introduction ix. However, the editors of *The Norton Anthology of British Literature* claim that Markham’s intended readers were women of middle and low classes while Richard Braithwaite, the author of *The English Gentlewoman* (1631), addressed aristocratic women. See *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: the Norton Topics Online*: <http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/17century/topic_1/markham.htm>.

¹⁴⁴ Markham, 2.

¹⁴⁵ For Markham’s obsessive attention to nationalizing the practice of English husbandry, see Wendy Wall, “Renaissance National Husbandry: Gervase Markham and the Publication of England,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 27. 3 (1996): 767-85.

¹⁴⁶ Markham, 98.

¹⁴⁷ Markham, 87. However, gendering of cookery is a tricky issue. Playwriting was comparable to “the cook’s laborious workmanship” without the feeling of self-deprecation; in addition, many affluent households hired French male cooks.

¹⁴⁸ William Harrison, *The Description of England*, ed., Georges Edelen (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1994): 123-44.

¹⁴⁹ Kim Hall, “Culinary Spaces, Colonial Spaces: the Gendering of Sugar in the Seventeenth Century” in *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects*, eds., Valerie Traub, Lindsay Kaplan, Dymphna Callaghan (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 168-190, especially 174, 175.

¹⁵⁰ Markham, 98.

¹⁵¹ Markham, 98.

¹⁵² Markham, 3.

¹⁵³ Markham, 3.

¹⁵⁴ Markham, 3.

¹⁵⁵ The early modern staple of diet heavily relied on animal protein and bread. Because of the lack of refrigeration techniques and the need to slaughter cattle before winter, large quantity of meat had to be cured in salt. William Harrison’s *Description of England* enumerates different kinds of flours available to each social group, acorn flour being the poor folk’s staple along with beans, peas, and oats (126). For the overview of the early modern food culture, see <http://www.folger.edu/html/exhibitions/fooles_fricassees/>.

¹⁵⁶ Jerome Cardan quoted in Levack, 134. Nicolas Remy has also given a similar observation: witches are “for the most part beggars, who support life on the alms they receive” (quoted in

Levack, 134). Brain Levack, *The Witch-hunt in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Longman, 1987).

¹⁵⁷ *The Wonderfvl Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower, daughters of Ioan Flower neere Beuer Castle: Executed at Lincolne* (1618), reproduced in Marion Gibson ed., *Early English Trial Pamphlets*, volume 2 of *English Witchcraft 1560-1736*, eds., J. A. Sharpe et al. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2003), 298.

¹⁵⁸ See <http://www.folger.edu/html/exhibitions/fooles_fricassees/>.

¹⁵⁹ Gibson, *Trial Pamphlets*, 303.

¹⁶⁰ In the lengthy preamble and again in the conclusion, the anonymous pamphleteer writes: “Let them dye (saith the Law of England) that haue conuersation with spirits, and presume to blaspheme the name of God with spels and incantation” (Gibson, *Early English Trial Pamphlets*, 323).

¹⁶¹ Jennet Device had to defend herself at the 1634 Pendle witch trials, nearly losing her life—witchery was believed to be passed along the female line.

¹⁶² Marion Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft: Stories of Early English Witches* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 58.

¹⁶³ Gibson claims that since Potts treats the written records of pre-trial examination as if they were oral deposition, his narrative point of view already “presupposes” the accused are guilty (*Reading Witchcraft*, 203).

¹⁶⁴ During the second Pendle trials, growing skepticism about witchcraft and the timely royal intervention prevented further witch persecution in Lancashire.

¹⁶⁵ Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome, *The Witches of Lancashire* (London: Globe Education, 2002), Appendix, 165-66.

¹⁶⁶ Gibson, *Trial Pamphlets*, 298.

¹⁶⁷ Mark Overton et al., *Production and Consumption in English Households, 1600-1750* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 101.

¹⁶⁸ Overton et al, 101-2.

¹⁶⁹ Overton et al, 100.

¹⁷⁰ Overton et al, 100.

¹⁷¹ For the demographical makeup of early modern witches, see Brain Levack’s *The Witch-hunt in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Longman, 1987), 116-45.

¹⁷² As in **thyme**, **Thames**, or Neander**thal**, the early modern pronunciation of “th” was close to a harsh “t,” which suggests that Oliver Kix, in his emphatic denial of “cannot do **withal**,” unwittingly admits his fate as that of a **wittol**.

¹⁷³ Illustrating the insidious return of the repressed desires in *Women Beware Women*, J. A. Cole demonstrates how the recurring images of food in this drama signify “more than just the simple equation of food and sex.” Livia and Isabella test and transgress the restraint on diet, which Cole contends “parallels restraint in sexual relations” (90). J. A. Cole, “Sunday Dinners and Thursday Suppers: Social and Moral Contexts of the Food Imagery in *Women Beware Women*,” *Jacobean Drama Studies*, ed., James Hogg, *Salzburg Studies in English Literature* 95:4 *Jacobean Miscellany* 4 (1984): 86-98.

¹⁷⁴ Harrison informs that skillful brewers prided themselves in making wormwood wine and beer (127). As Livia implies, a frequent junketer, no matter how young and sweet her palate

may be, will soon acquire taste for the bitter wormwood. The *Artemisia Absinthium* was also known for its powerful hallucinogenic properties, and thus for its association with witchcraft. Despite such negative literary connotations of feminine lechery and witchcraft, wormwood seems to have figured as versatile and valuable ingredient in home brewing as well as home remedies.

¹⁷⁵ Celia Daileader pieces together the Aretine references in the pornographic whetting of the sexual appetite in Middleton. Celia Daileader, "Back Door Sex: Renaissance Gynsodomy, Aretino, and the Exotic," *ELH* 69 (2002): 202-34.

¹⁷⁶ The upwardly-mobile mercantilists seemed to have styled their version of neighborly communality to charity giving the high class practiced: the leftover of the merchant's banquet table would feed "commonly forty or three score persons" "to the great relief of such poor suitors and strangers also as oft be partakers thereof and otherwise like to dine hardly" (Harrison 128). Leantio's aspiration of the fair banqueting house of his own seems to be just a pipe dream since his mother is known as "Sunday-dinner woman" and "Thursday-supper woman" to her affluent neighbors.

¹⁷⁷ The riotous courtly banquet is gendered as feminine, and forgetfulness and surfeit, that lead to lustful fornication and bastardy, are registered as her vices. In *The Revenger's Tragedy*, which is now attributed to Middleton, Spurio, a self-proclaimed offspring of a "gluttonous dinner" (1.2.181), depicts the mores of the courtly banquet:

When deep healths went round,
And ladies' cheeks were painted red with wine,
There tongues as short and nimble as their heels,
Uttering words sweet and thick, and, when they rose,
Were merrily disposed to fall again—
In such a whisp'ring and withdrawing hour,
When base male bawds kept sentinel at stair-head,
Was I stol'n softly. (1.2.182-89)

The bastard Spurio, the very physical manifestation of moral laxity at court, attributes sexual depravity to inebriated women, who then aggressively initiate sexual escapades. Courtly women are depicted with their eagerness to have full bellies. Thomas Middleton and Cyril Tourneur, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, ed. R. A. Foakes (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

¹⁷⁸ Scholars of *The Witch* struggle over what circumstances compelled Thomas Middleton to write this play of sexual frustration and annulment of legally-binding but morally-incompatible marriage. Basing on Middleton's well-known penchant for topical satires and Protestant sympathies (since the powerful pro-Catholic faction of the Howards was politically invested in both marriages of Howard), Elizabeth Shafer contends that the topical relevance concerned here points to Frances Howard's scandalous marital trading of Essex for Carr and her confessed murder of Overbury. Therefore, it follows in Shafer's argument that the "forced happy ending" is in fact a detracting commentary to Frances Howard's almost scot-free evasion of culpability in committing a murder. On the other hand, Anne Lancashire reads this play as "whitewashing the Howards" (172), corroborating it with the fact that Middleton's own masque, *Masque of*

Cupid (now lost), was performed as a part of 1613 wedding celebration for Howard and Carr union.

¹⁷⁹ Counteractive to the Marian veneration and the celebration of courtly love in the Middle Ages, the early years of the Reformation had no rhetoric of motherhood, observes Lyndal Roper (40). Instead, she argues that the Reformation rhetoric saw the embodiment of evil womanhood in prostitutes—a counterpart to the evil maleness in Catholic clerics. *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 43.

¹⁸⁰ Early modern demonologists considered the witch's interdependency on her familiars as a maternal bond. The supreme demonologist, King James in *Daemonologie* (1597), describes how the devil "feeds" and "fills" those who are ignorant, evil, careless, and contemptuous of God: he "visits" the one in despair and "gives" her a mark on a secret spot (Bk. 2 Ch. 2). The royal premise suggests that the devil recruits his minion with sexual favors, which the witch recompenses through sexualized mothering. See James's *Daemonologie in forme of a dialogue, diuided into three bookes*, (Edinburgh, printed Robert Walde-graue): 1597, 32. Similarly, in *The Witch*, both familiars and Firestone do Hecate sexual favors, perform odd household chores, and carry out her *maleficia* in exchange for her provision; Hecate in a perversely sexualized way mothers both her devils and the son.

¹⁸¹ Thomas Heywood, in *The Wise Woman of Hoxton* (New York: Routledge, 2003), writes of a cunning woman who relies on her wits and eavesdropping. The spirit of comedy in Heywood's play tolerates the cunning woman's imposture and condones her seedy dealings (including backstreet abortion); in Middleton, Hecate's imposture undermines the witches' self-claimed power, and she becomes a parody of herself.

¹⁸² From the indictment of witches for suckling demonic animal companions, Diane Purkiss recognizes "an elaborate or quasi-maternal interchange" between the nurturer of the familiar who is cared by the familiar and the familiar as the child who facilitates the witch's desire (135).

¹⁸³ Along with sexual deviance, incest and bestiality, succubus copulations, and promiscuity, strong food drive is an easily identifiable trait of witchcraft: "In the few English confessions involving accounts of the sabbath, food is much more central to events than sex" (Purkiss, 137).

¹⁸⁴ Many mischievously benevolent fairies like Robin the Goodfellow in folklore may explain Hecate's perverse sense of entitlement. For the discussion of early modern beliefs in fairies, see Diane Purkiss, *At the Bottom of the Garden: A Dark History of Fairies, Hobgoblins, Nymphs, and Other Troubling Things*, (New York: NYU Press, 2003).

¹⁸⁵ Schafer, 56 note 26; Michael Taussig, "The Language of Flowers," *Critical Inquiry* 30. 1 (2003): 98-131, especially 111-21.

¹⁸⁶ Middleton could not have failed to detect Scot's disapprobation of the so-called learned yet gullible men, such as Johannes Baptista Neapolitanus, who gave merit to this kind of fantastical imposture. From his encounter with an old deranged woman, Scot argues those self-proclaimed witches experience vivid airborne fantasies with the help of certain soporific agents: this brand of self-delusion works "onlie with old women that are melancholike, whose nature is extreme cold, and their evaporation small." *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (New York: Dover, 1972), 105.

¹⁸⁷ Bernard Capp reads the male fear of female friendship that could undermine, and expose the lack of, patriarchal control within the household in Samuel Rowlands's pamphlets, *Tis*

Merrie When Gossips Meet (1602), *A Whole Crew of Kind Gossips* (1609), and *The Gossips Greeting* (1620). Not only women but also men gossiped; yet, the unsupervised female solidarity presented an unsettling threat to male authority. "Gossip" meant a godparent of either sex but gradually and exclusively indicated a woman and women addressed their female friends as gossips. *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 49-68.

¹⁸⁸ Francisca's use of a numbing potion conjures up the particular criminalities of Frances Carr who confessed having administered poison to Sir Overbury who died in the Tower in 1613. Diane Purkiss reads *The Witch* as a discursive example of the various repackaging of early modern male anxiety regarding virginity and witchcraft (216). Purkiss identifies the auxiliary role and superficial portrayal of Hecate with the role of Anne Turner, the cunning woman who abetted Howard's liaison with Carr and Overbury's poisoned death. Turner was accused of and executed for being "a whore, a bawd, a sorcerer, a witch, a papist, a felon, and a murderer"; on the other hand, her client was pardoned (quoted in Purkiss, 222). Turner departs from Middleton's Hecate who is reduced to "a signifier of disorder," Purkiss argues, since Turner at the gallows fashions herself as a symbol of penitence and modesty in order to "speak" her last words and "be heard and understood" (224).

Chapter Four

¹⁸⁹ For a book-length discussion of the playwright as a metaphorical magician, see Alvin Kiernan, *The Playwright as Magician: Shakespeare's Image of the Poet in the English Public Theater* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979). Stephen Greenblatt furthers such metaphorical affinity between the supernatural agents and their human creators in "Shakespeare Bewitched" in *New Historical Literary Study*, eds., Jeffrey Cox and Larry Reynolds (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 108-35.

¹⁹⁰ Dennis Kezar, *Guilty Creatures: Renaissance Poetry and the Ethics of Authorship* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 15.

¹⁹¹ Andrew Sofer, "How to Do Things with Demons: Conjuring Performatives in *Doctor Faustus*" *Theatre Journal* 61 (2009): 1-21.

¹⁹² Julia Garrett, "Dramatizing Deviance in *The Witch of Edmonton*" *Criticism* 49. 3 (2007): 327-75.

¹⁹³ Anthony B. Dawson, "Witchcraft/Bigamy: Cultural Conflict in *The Witch of Edmonton*," in *Renaissance Drama* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press and The Newberry Library Center for Renaissance Studies, 1989).

¹⁹⁴ Greenblatt engages the prevalent critical trend that proscribes the misogynistic moral *Macbeth* supposedly advances, asking this question: "Why shouldn't we say that this play about evil is evil?" (111).

¹⁹⁵ All quotations of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* come from the Globe Quartos edition, edited by Nicola Bennett (London: Nick Hern Books, 2000).

¹⁹⁶ Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* Book 16. Chapter 7 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972), 280. After countless analogues and allusions of witchcraft to Catholicism, Scot perorates in "A conclusion against witchcraft, in maner and forme of an Induction": "All protestants perceive, that popish charmes, conjurations, execrations, and benefidctions are not effectuall, but be toies and devices onelie to keepe the people blind, and

to enrich the cleargie. All christians see, that to confesse witches can doo as they saie, were to attribute to a creature the power of the Creator" (280).

¹⁹⁷ Sofer rejects the view of "the London playwright of the 1580s and 1590s as modeling a skeptical, Protestant gaze," arguing that there was the "opportunity for those playwrights to fill the imaginative void left in the wake of the suppression of the mystery plays and the old Religion" (12).

¹⁹⁸ As we have seen in the debate over the structural unity of *Taming of the Shrew* in contrast to the neatly book-ended *Taming of a Shrew*, the lack of an end frame to this play begs the question about the organic integrity of the text. For the discussion regarding Christopher Sly's normative role in *The Taming of a Shrew* unlike *The taming of the Shrew* in which Sly does not make his entrance in the denouement, see Richard Hosley, "Was There a 'Dramatic Epilogue' to *The Taming of the Shrew*?" *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1. 2. (1961):17-34.

¹⁹⁹ In his discussion of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*—one of the most densely contextualized texts that engage witchcraft and witch-lore in analyzing Shakespearean literary texts—Gareth Roberts illustrates how the playwright creates the ambience of female sensuality and transformability in Ephesus, relying only on linguistic allusions to witchcraft, barring any semblance to witchcraft paraphernalia or witch-like characters. There is not a witch in Ephesus but only a plethora of referents to witchcraft, which nonetheless transforms the foreign soil as if it were an otherworldly enchanted land with the proverbial sirens and mermaids. The Greenblattian aphorism rings true in Ephesus: "Shakespeare bewitches." See Gareth Roberts, "The Descendants of Circe: Witches and Renaissance Fictions," *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, eds., Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 183-206.

²⁰⁰ A 1609 eye witness reports that the actor Edward Alleyn playing the sorcerer's role wore a cross on his garb; this form of a forthright association of Faustus with Catholicism would have provoked audience's unease, indicating the stage's self-awareness and agency in transgression (Marcus, 61). Similarly, regarding Alleyn's personification of Faustus, Sofer relays a passage from Samuel Rowlands's *The Knaue of Clubbes* (1609) that references to Alleyn's stage appearance: "The Gull gets on a surplus, / With a crosse upon his breasts, / Like *Allen* playing *Faustus*, / In that manner he was drest" (1).

²⁰¹ Valdes cajoles Faustus into magic with a fantasy that magic "[s]hall make all nations to canonize us. / As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords, / So shall the spirits of every element / Be always serviceable to us three" (1. 119-22). Valdes travesties such Catholic parlance as canonization and (Spanish) liturgical services, in declaring the sorcerous trinity of Faustus, Cornelius, and Valdes.

²⁰² All discussion of *Doctor Faustus* follows the Revels edition of the play, edited by John D. Jump (London: Methuen, 1962). The circumstantial argument of Christopher Marlowe's employment under Francis Walsingham and later under Thomas Walsingham definitely adds more mystery to his stabbing death over the "reckoning of the bill."

²⁰³ Jump, xix-xx.

²⁰⁴ Richard Baines quoted in Jump's Introduction, xxi.

²⁰⁵ Chomley quoted in Kuriyama, 215. Constance Brown Kuriyama, *Christopher Marlowe: a Renaissance Life* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

²⁰⁶ The rumor that Marlowe planned to convert to Catholicism on the Continent was squelched by the Privy Council. Even if the conversion was planned, it would be difficult to tell whether it was out of personal faith or a matter of expediency, considering the Privy Council's vested interest in Marlowe's supposed "activity" in Rheims, the then temporary French shelter for English Catholic exiles.

²⁰⁷ Jump, xxiv-xxv.

²⁰⁸ By 1592, the German tale was already a hot commodity, obviously inspiring many imitations and revisions. Regardless of chronology and nationalistic origin, Faustus in his bravado is to command the lesser ilk of necromancers: such nationalistic magi as Friars Bacon and Bungay and Peter Fabell, and cunning women like Mother Bombie and Gammer Gurton all walked into the folkloric penumbra upon the arrival of the German sorcerer. The renowned John Dee, the astrologer for the Queen, shined to the zenith with his hermetic apparatus until he suffered a Faustian fall. Diane Purkiss points out how the Elizabethan magi characters were to be superseded by Jacobean trifling witches (184-85); however, Sofer detects the decided path multiple representations of such characters inevitably set: the parody of itself. Sofer writes: "Just as parody can make an original seem campier in retrospect . . . *Faustus* may have played quite differently with audiences in the wake of, say, Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (published in 1594) or Jonson's *The Devil Is an Ass* (1616)" as well as Rowland's *The Knave of Clubbes* (11). Whether it was Marlowe or Greene who first penned the conjurer of the national magnitude, the symbolic status of nationalistic magus got tainted with parodic imitation, Sofer claims. See Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

²⁰⁹ Marcus describes the "Marlowe effect" in such words: "For renaissance audiences of Doctor Faustus . . . watching 'Marlowe' meant watching a theatrical event balanced on the nervous razor edge between transcendent heroism and dangerous blasphemy—transgression not only against God but also against cherished national goals and institutions" (42). Leah Marcus, "Textual Instability and Ideological Difference: the Case of *Doctor Faustus*," *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 38-67.

²¹⁰ Marcus characterizes the A text as "more nationalist, and more Calvinist, Puritan, or ultra-Protestant" while the B text is "more internationalist, imperial, and Anglican, or Anglo-Catholic" even though both texts depict the protagonist "at the extreme edge of transgression" (42).

²¹¹ According to Marcus, the Duchy of Württemberg, as 1604 quarto refers as the origin of Faustus's scholarship, was the hotbed of radical Zwinglian Protestants and an important foreign ally to the English, and its duke was a pro-English, crypto-Calvinist; on the other hand, Wittenberg of the B text was closely associated with Lutheran movement, a bit more conceded stance compared to the radical Zwinglianism (45).

²¹² Marcus claims that as 1663 version has Faustus confound and mock Salomaine, the victorious Turkish sultan, the revisers of *Doctor Faustus* continuously have renegotiated—revised the "author function" (to borrow from Roland Barthes)—the normative authority as a counterforce as the target of challenge and subversion. Marcus rightfully compares the Ottomite seraglio to the debauching, profligate court of Charles II; conclusively, she locates the revisers' indefatigable attempts in exposing the corrupt source of authority as the force that sustained the "Marlowe effect" (64).

²¹³ In addition, the source material for staging Adrian's humiliating use of Bruno as a footstool (John Foxe's Protestant religio-historiography *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, touching Matters of the Church*, commonly-known as *Book of Martyrs*) colors the papal scenes of the B text with a Protestant nationalistic sensibility.

²¹⁴ With a degree of reservation, Jump endorses W. W. Greg's comparative inference of Rowley's hand in those papal scenes, basing it on Rowley's single-authored *When You See Me You Know Me* (published in 1605), since "Rowley likes to place polysyllabic adjectives ending in 'al' after the nouns that they describe" (xlv).

²¹⁵ Marcus, 54-55. On the interrelationship between the 1604 and 1616 texts, Marcus says "if the company were on tour, the capacity to present a more strenuously Protestant or a more conservatively Anglican version of a popular play would allow the actors to match the prevailing belief system in a given locale," be it Puritan Banbury or conservative Northumberland (54). Yet, the question why the B text enjoyed more performance value fully a decade longer than A is still unanswered in her postulation that those two scripts might have existed simultaneously in Henslowe's repertory.

²¹⁶ To the contrary, Michael Keefer in editing *Doctor Faustus* (Buffalo, New York: Broadview Press, 1991) prefers the A text, which he supplements with the B text as an Appendix.

²¹⁷ Sofer, 10.

²¹⁸ Scot equates witchcraft and Catholicism: "witchcraft is in truth a cousening art, wherin the name of God is abused, prophaned and blasphemed, and his power attributed to a vile creature. In estimation of the vulgar people, it is a supernaturall worke, contrived betweene a corporall old woman, and a sprituall divell" (Book 16. chapter 2). The imposture of wonder is orchestrated by a Catholic priest through an imbecilic old woman; hence, Scot creates a fantasy alliance between the old religion and witchcraft, that mutually implicates socio-religious condemnation, since both of them involve spurious rituals and deluded perception.

²¹⁹ Scot's conflation of witches and Catholics indefatigably repeats itself. However, belief in Catholicism can easily turn into atheism in his eyes. For example, his often-quoted definition of the identity of the early modern witch inherently encompasses her Catholic belief, or equally horrendously (without any sense of irony), her atheism: "witches are women which be commonly old, lame, bleare-eied, fowle, and full of wrinkles; poore, sullen, superstitious, and papist; or such as knowe no religion: in whose drousie minds the divell hath gotten a fine seat" (Book 1. chapter 3). Here his misogyny (clearly delineated through his disgust towards geriatric women) is coupled with his dogmatism, even though Julia Garrett detects in Scot more than "scientific" skepticism of witchcraft, what she considers as "strategic skepticism," whose ostensible misogyny was Scot's logic in his apologetic defense for the old, lame, and delirious women who otherwise might end up at the gallows (350-51).

²²⁰ One Mr. Paterson, also known as "the pricker," proves Scot wrong—at least partially. In "his" discovery of witches, "he" relied on the fear and self-doubt, under which "his" targets would crack. See S. W. McDonald, "The Devil's Mark and the Witch-prickers of Scotland," *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 90 (September 1997): 507-11. A woman in male disguise for lucre and fame, let alone using a false bodkin in enacting a "show" of discovering a witch, cannot be but a skeptic of the innate agency of what she manipulates. Man or woman, Paterson was a disbeliever in witchcraft who, nonetheless, capitalized on the credulous fear of those early

modern villagers in Inverness. Functionally speaking, the skeptic of witchcraft results in practicing malefic in her witch-finding.

²²¹ Scot, Book 8 Chapter 30, 192.

²²² Dennis Kezar, *Guilty Creatures: Renaissance Poetry and the Ethics of Authorship* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 126-7.

²²³ Samuel Rid, *The Art of Juggling, or Legerdemaine* (London: printed by Edward Allde, 1612), B3v.

²²⁴ Scot, Book 13.Chapter 34, 198.

²²⁵ Sofer, 9-10.

²²⁶ While keeping a tester (a fake coin) securely lodged on the node of a finger in the right hand, the juggler pretends to transfer the coin from the right hand to the left one; afterwards, employing a knife to jangle against the coin in the “left” hand, the juggler is to reveal the tester “disappeared” from the left hand (Scot, Book 13. Chapter 24, 184).

²²⁷ This water ordeal the necromantic agent wrecks on greedy gulls also occurs in *The witch of Edmonton*. Cuddy, the hobby horse specialist, is subjected to cucking, “like an ass” as he is, for recruiting witchcraft to gratify his sexual desires (4.1.143). Quotations from *The Witch of Edmonton* follow *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays: Sophonisba, The Witch, and The Witch of Edmonton*, eds., Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1986).

²²⁸ Sofer, 8. Sofer’s textual quotations are based on David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen eds., *Doctor Faustus and other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). Sofer draws his subversive exegesis of Faustus’s self-destruction mostly from the A text’s phenomenological duality of illocutionary and perlocutionary acts and concludes that both forms of theatrical speeches question the essential agency of magic while blurring it with the phenomenological efficacy (since one actor’s imperative speech act produces a concrete reaction in the other actor) and the imaginative reification (that declarative speech acts produce in the listener’s mind). As implied in Faustus’s warning, “Be silent, then, for danger is in words” (5.1.24),” words on stage have the power to conjure thoughts and matters (Sofer, 21). Even though this chapter arrives on the exegetic shore within a close proximity to Sofer’s, I plunge into the waves of juggleries and conjurations that the B text features with multitudes.

²²⁹ Samuel Rid prefaces his summation of the origin and pedigree of the English gypsies and jugglers in his *The Art of Juggleries*, a significant portion of which is pirated from Scot’s *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*. The “counterfeit Egyptians” are the English wanderers who sought to self-style themselves after the Egyptian exiles who first brought the delusive and illusory arts of magic and juggleries, yet most of their English followers soon fell into beggary and thievery (Rid, B2v, B2r). As Rid deplores the wandering throng of would-be jugglers and imposters, who were perceived no better than beggars on the street, in *Doctor Faustus*, Wagner, Robin, and Ralph join Faustus and Mephostophilis in their magical tourism, roaming over the European cities in search of gulls and sheep. Magicians, itinerant priests, and witch-finders all were on the road for employment and purpose, just as thespians during off-sessions went town to town for patronage and audience. The epistemological nature of necromancy is seditious, and the theater of entertainment—may it be magic or a play—and the theater of religious devotion bring a potential unease to the community with their unproductive and uncounted populace

with power of manipulation. While Henry Goodcole specifies that Sawyer held a job (as spinster) and sold brooms to her neighbors (B2v), the Cockpit Sawyer picks up sticks in Old Banks's land: she is portrayed as an unproductive supernumerary member of Edmonton, as I will discuss further at the later point.

²³⁰ Sofer observes that the A text is more "authorial" than the B text, which is a "theatrical" version that externalizes and theatricalizes "what the A-text makes a matter of private conscience and conviction" (10).

²³¹ Marcus, 53.

²³² A 1609 eye witness reports that the actor Edward Alleyn playing the sorcerer's role wore a cross on his garb; this form of a forthright association of Faustus with Catholicism would have provoked audience's unease, indicating the stage's self-awareness and agency in transgression (Marcus, 61). Similarly, regarding Alleyn's personification of Faustus, Sofer relays a passage from Samuel Rowlands's *The Knave of Clubbes* (1609) that references to Alleyn's stage appearance: "The Gull gets on a surplus, / With a crosse upon his breasts, / Like *Allen* playing *Faustus*, / In that manner he was drest" (1).

²³³ E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* Vol. 3. (London: Clarendon, 1949) 423-4; and Marcus, 42.

²³⁴ Marcus, 42.

²³⁵ Jonathan Gil Harris, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of Social Pathology in Early Modern England* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 173, and Notes 65 and 68. Harris chronologizes the speediness of the publication of Goodcole's pamphlet and the staging of the play.

²³⁶ In addition, this play seems to claim another form of inheritance from the earlier play: the boisterous Banks in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* may be related to the Old Banks in the later play. Sawyer warns Young Banks that he "so in time may [turn out like his father]" (2.1.197). *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* and *The Witch of Edmonton* share not only geography but also genealogical proximity of characters: Edmonton, the small town nearby London, is imagined as a close-knit community.

²³⁷ Goodcole, B1v and B1r.

²³⁸ Goodcole, B1r.

²³⁹ Harris observes that Sawyer's self-incriminating tongue was to Goodcole "a locus of satanic orality and a form of providential writing" (130). Even though Sawyer bungles her oral delivery of the Latin Lord's prayer, *nomen tibi sanctibicetur* ("hollowed be thy name"), her appeal to the false authority, Catholic orison, infuriates Goodcole (Harris 131). In need of the accused woman's endorsement on the veracity of his interrogation, as the irony goes, Goodcole has to depend on her wild, uncontrolled tongue, which he sought to "stop her mouth with truths authority," a testimony of the paradoxical nature of the tongue according to Harris (131).

²⁴⁰ Malcolm Gaskill, "Witchcraft in early modern Kent: Stereotypes and the Background to Accusations," in *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief*, eds., Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 257-87. Gaskill observes: "[t]he poor were disadvantaged as villagers rejected their dependants, and guilt at failing to fulfil neighbourly duties was then projected as fear of the revenge of those who had been denied charity" (259).

²⁴¹ Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 255.

²⁴² As Simon Trussler puts it, Dekker “had an instinctive sympathy for those who suffered poverty or injustice, even before his own imprisonment gave him all too personal experience of both” (quoted in Harris, 174).

²⁴³ Henry Goodcole, *The Wonderfull Discouerie of Elizabeth Savvyer A Witch, late of Edmonton, her conviction and condemnation and Death. Together with the relation of the Divels accesse to her, and their conference together.* (London: William Butler, 1621), B2v, B2r.

²⁴⁴ Garrett, 360-62. Garrett sums up: “Sawyer’s refusal to confess suggests that in this case culpability still rests with the community and not the individual” (362).

²⁴⁵ Goodcole, D2r and D3v.

²⁴⁶ Scratching and bleeding a witch (especially above the mouth) was believed to counter a witch’s charm, implying that the villagers’ pseudo-scientific witch-hunting test is in fact an act of witchcraft.

²⁴⁷ Goodcole, D3v.

²⁴⁸ Male merrymaking is like a salve to the communal pain—hence, legitimate and warranted—while female merrymaking is sexually transgressive. Needless to point, the leader of the morris troupe (a fiddler named “Father Sawgut,” a name fittingly phallic) is deferentially called “father”; the “mother” that prefixes Sawyer carries a subtle mockery of her misappropriation of authority. Like in *Mother Bombie* as evoked in this play, “mothers” are cunning impostors at best and possibly complicit with the illicit power of the sorcery and Catholicism (as the older version of Christianity adopted “Mother” as a term of respect for devoted female believers).

²⁴⁹ Kezar, 126-7.

²⁵⁰ Leah Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 2-3.

²⁵¹ George R. Price, *Thomas Dekker* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1969), 101. Discerning Rowley’s trademark in this scene—“prolonged drolling [sic] perhaps contributed greatly to the audience’s pleasure”—Price believes William Rowley was responsible for writing Act 5 Scene 1 and argues that Rowley himself acted the role of Cuddy Banks.

²⁵² It may seem that this quasi-docudrama lacks “a clearly defined ideological project,” as Harris agrees with McLuskie’s pronouncement (174. note 82). However, the playwrights’ collective decision in sending Sawyer to the gallows unrepentant and defiant strongly undermines Goodcole’s Christian ideology; furthermore, leaving the legal lacunae unfilled, the authors question the irrefutability of the state authority. If we use “ideology” in its broad definition of shared belief system or orientation, rather than its narrower focus on doctrinal fidelity to political or religious tenets, *The Witch of Edmonton* clearly reveals the stage’s subversive outlook toward the ideological singularity the state and the church monopolized.

²⁵³ Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth*, 6-9.

²⁵⁴ James I and his ill-fated son, without much success, sought to reign in the time’s high-strung bickering factions of religious practices through rationing and regulating physical release of the repressed: religious oppression of the spirit through the body. The morris in this play, as well as its demonological topic, may have been meant as a courteous homage to the king. James, already having authored *Daemonologie* and *The Book of Sports*, was an enthused scholar of

demonology and a royal promoter of physical exertions, evocative of such a mantra as “sound body, sound mind.” Also a writer of *Basilikon Doron*, a treatise on “princely” governing, James seems to have been keenly aware of the dialogical correlation between the mind and the body. The royal patron of this play at its December performance must have appreciated this brand of the “politics of mirth,” in whose terms the oppositional structure of “mirth and matter” this play employs.

²⁵⁵ For the roles trained animals played on the early modern English stage, see Louis B. Wright, “Animal Actors on the English Stage before 1642,” *PMLA* 42. 3 (1927): 656-96.

²⁵⁶ The Tyburn Tree—a gallows contraption that stood witnessing many hanged, including such noticeable Catholic figures as John Story in 1571, Edmund Campion in 1581, and Robert Southwell in 1595—has had a strong association of anti-Catholic persecution since Mary I. Indeed, during the Reformation, from 1535 to 1681, a hundred and five (treasonous) Catholics were hanged (often put through posthumous drawing and quartering) on the Tyburn Tree. Yet, during Mary’s counter-Reformation campaign, some three hundred Protestants were burned at stake. Afterwards, burning was perceived as Papist and barbaric, which is probably the reason why English witches were hanged unlike the Continental witches who were burned—belying the epithet “witch-burning.” The devil and the Dog, Cuddy Banks execrates to go to Tyburn, are maligned by association with Catholic traitors; in Cuddy’s repudiation of the Dog, a counter-exorcism of Catholic exorcists is implicated.

²⁵⁷ Kezar, 137.

²⁵⁸ Kezar, 137.

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ABSTRACT**BEWITCHING THE STAGE: ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBAN WITCH-LORE AND WITCH-HUNT**

by

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This project hypothesizes that the early modern stage witch's grotesque femininity and her masculine presumption of agency were the effective signifiers of the feminine covert, what men fantasized about the reproductive secrets of womanhood and their control over the feminine activities. My investigation of late Elizabethan and Jacobean drama indicates that the fictional witch is postulated as the negative example of female fertility and feminine nurture: the witch not only interferes in the natural process of fertility in humans as well as in nature but she also contaminates maids and mistresses with her mismanagement and overconsumption of household resources. I suggest that the early modern stage appropriated the historical witch, the anti-mother, and cast her as the anti-housewife whose negative example was to discipline femininity and domesticate housewives.

In "*Titus Andronicus* and Catering for Bloody Banquets: the Witch in the Kitchen," I postulate Tamora as anti-mother and Titus as anti-wife: while the queen of Goths defiles nature and nurture, Titus literalizes the fright in the feminine by cooking and serving a cannibalistic banquet. The text encodes the witch on Tamora's eroticized maternal body and in Titus'

feminine labor and control in the kitchen. In “Is There a Witch in this Text?: the Troubling Provenance of the Witch of Brainford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*,” I illustrate how the wives, using a local witch’s garb and cuckold’s horns, dissipate the male fantasies of witchery and cuckoldry while the *numen* of the “fairy queen” disciplines, remedies, and harmonizes the elements of communal dis-eases. Chapter Three, “Imaging the Witch at the Table: the Abominable Belly of Middleton’s Women,” examines the gustatory and sexual appetite of indolent housewives—daughters of the witch—who destroy the middle-class aspiration of the fair banqueting house. In “The Covenant Staged: Jugglers, Conjurers, and Skeptics on the Early Modern Stage,” I investigate the theater’s epistemological dilemma in appropriating the violent fantasies of the witch-hunt, detecting an interpretive agency in staging the witch.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Kyoung Lee lives in Texas with her husband and their daughter and teaches at the University of Texas, Pan-American.