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Figuring the Feminine in the Bannatyne Manuscript (c. 1568)

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'Mercy!' cried Gandalf. 'If the giving of information is to be the cure of your inquisitiveness, I shall spend the rest of my days answering you. What more do you want to know?'

'The names of all the stars, and of all living things, and the whole history of Middle Earth and Over-heaven and of the Sundering Seas,' laughed Pippin. 'Of course! What less? […]'

- J. R. R. Tolkien, 'The Palantír', *The Lord of the Rings*.

For my parents, for everything;

for Peter for being there;

and for Andy,

who would have written even more.

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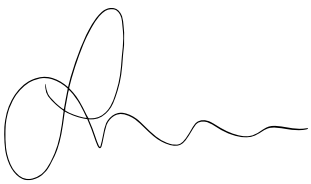
Declaration of Originality

This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Department of English Literature, School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures, part of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Edinburgh.

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Signed



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Nevertheless, I persisted – and I'm very glad I did.

"[…] some things you do for money
and some you do for love, love, love."

~ The Mountain Goats, 'Love, Love, Love'

Abstract

This thesis examines the Bannatyne manuscript (c. 1568) as a cultural repository of verse, and the significance of the representation of women and female voices in parts three and four which, this thesis argues, can be seen as a manifestation of the broader *querelle des femmes* debate. This focus has been hitherto occluded and circumvented by analyses which have focussed on less politically gendered themes, such as national identity or book history. In looking at the implications of the Bannatyne for medieval feminism, and considering poems often overlooked yet still critically useful, this thesis will argue that the Bannatyne is a text which not only deals with the implicit questions of the *querelle des femmes*, but also offers unique insight into the reception and understanding of this debate in Scotland at the time. The way in which the reign of Mary Queen of Scots, contemporary to the manuscript, influences and adapts the attitude towards women in the miscellany is of huge importance. By analysing the influence of Mary on the manuscript, we can observe how the *querelle* lives on in not just the inclusions, but also in the absences that comprise Bannatyne's collection.

Parts three and four of the manuscript will be discussed, where the subjects of comedy and love are the focus, and within both sections the key questions remain the same regarding a feminist reading of the anthology. Underpinning these questions are strong thematic overtures, related to material and historical circumstance such as: the nature of Bannatyne's editing process, the influence of the Reformation, and the contemporary circulation of the manuscript. Bannatyne's use of indexing and categorisation is a key indicator of his thematic concerns. Alongside consideration of the rhetoric of love, the nature of comedy, both in the Bannatyne manuscript and more

broadly in anti-feminist rhetoric, is a prominent part of my interest in the latter, with close consideration paid to the economic politics of gender and class.

Notes on Editions Used

All quotations and references from the Bannatyne manuscript within this thesis are taken from the 1934 Scottish Text Society edition, edited by W. Tod Ritchie. As access to the physical manuscript is limited, this edition provides an accurate and summative account of the contents of the manuscript and its notable features. This edition comprises four volumes, and line references will be given within the thesis, utilising the edition number alongside page numbers and folio references as given by Ritchie, e.g. IV, p. 50 fol. 269b. Poems will be numbered according to the Tod Ritchie indexing conventions, though Roman numerals have been transposed to Arabic numerals.

Quotations from 'The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo' are taken from Priscilla Bawcutt's 1998 edition of *The Poems of William Dunbar.* Reference is made to both the Bannatyne manuscript edition of Gavin Douglas' prologue to the fourth book of his *Eneados*, and to the Scottish Text Society edition of 1957, edited by David Coldwell.

Chapter One utilises some work from my own MPhil thesis, written at the University of Glasgow (2012). A version of my work on Dunbar's 'The Golden Targe' and 'Sen þat I am presoneir', discussed in Chapter Four, is published in *Études Épistémè: Revue de littérature et de civilisation (XVIe – XVIIIe siècles)* Vol. 34, (2018).

Unless otherwise specified, glosses to the text are derived from the Dictionary of the Older Scots Tongue (DOST) and have been composed with a view to an idiomatic and prose translation of the poems.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis will examine the Bannatyne manuscript (c.1568) as a cultural repository of verse, and the significance of the representation of women and female voices in parts three and four which, this thesis argues, can be seen as a manifestation of the broader *querelle des femmes* debate. This focus has been previously occluded and circumvented by analyses which have focussed on less politically gendered themes, such as national identity or book history. In looking at the implications of the Bannatyne for medieval and early modern feminism, and considering poems often overlooked yet still critically useful, it argues that the Bannatyne is a text which not only deals with the implicit questions of the *querelle des femmes*, but also offers unique insight into the reception and understanding of this debate in Scotland at the time. The way in which the reign of Mary Queen of Scots, contemporary to the manuscript, influences and adapts the attitude towards women in the miscellany is of huge importance. By analysing the influence of Mary on the manuscript, we can observe how the *querelle* lives on in not just the inclusions, but also in the absences that comprise Bannatyne's collection.

Parts three and four of the manuscript will be discussed, where the subjects of comedy and love are the focus, and within both sections the key questions remain the same. This thesis, in tandem with existing criticism, will establish a clear pattern whereby Bannatyne relies upon the replication and inclusion of popular and established authorial voices such as Chaucer, Dunbar and Henryson, to underline the key moral messages of his categorisation, and in doing so, enforcing the perceived authority of the views on

women displayed in their work.[1] Having established the importance of this system of inclusion and emphasis, this research considers what this means for the manuscript and what effect it has upon our reading of the text, and also what can be observed about the function of the *querelle* as an organising principle of Bannatyne's work. This thesis examines what information can be gleaned from the historical context in relation to Bannatyne's ultimate output, in other words, the finished manuscript.

Underpinning these questions are strong thematic overtures, related to material and historical circumstance, such as: the nature of Bannatyne's editing process, the influence of the Reformation, and the contemporary circulation of the manuscript. Previous theoretical work on the feminist aspect of late medieval Scottish literature will be considered (cf. David Parkinson, Sarah Dunnigan, Evelyn Newlyn) alongside key works in the *querelle des femmes* school of thought (cf. Joan Kelly, Francis L. Utley).[2] In terms of

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[1] David Parkinson and Carolyn Ives, 'Scottish Chaucer, Misogynist Chaucer', in *Rewriting Chaucer: Culture, Authority and the Idea of the Authentic Text, 1400-1602*, ed. by Thomas A. Prendergast and Barbara Kline (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1999), pp. 186–202; Theo van Heijnsbergen, 'The Bannatyne MS Lyrics: Literary Convention and Authorial Voice', in *The European Sun: Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Scottish Language and Literature* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press, 2001).

[2] David Parkinson, '"A Lamentable Storie": Mary Queen of Scots and the Inescapable *Querelle Des Femmes*', in *A Palace in the Wild*, ed. by Alasdair A. MacDonald, Sally Mapstone, and L. A. J. R. Houwen (Leeuven: Peeters, 2000), pp. 141–160; Parkinson and Ives; Sarah M. Dunnigan, 'Scottish Women Writers', in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. by Douglas Gifford and Dorothy MacMillan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. 15–43; Sarah M. Dunnigan, 'Feminising the Early Modern Erotic: Female Voiced Love Lyrics and Mary Queen of Scots', in *Older Scots Literature*, ed. by Sally Mapstone (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2006); Sarah M. Dunnigan, *Eros and Poetry at the Courts of Mary Queen of Scots and James VI*, Early Modern Literature in History (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Sarah M. Dunnigan, 'Undoing the Double

editorial process and book history, the work of Alasdair A. MacDonald, Theo van Heijnsbergen, Sebastiaan Verweij and older critiques such as JTT Brown's 1904 article will be utilised.[3] In examining these three theoretical strands, a key sense emerges of the

Tress: Scotland, Early Modern Women's Writing, and the Location of Critical Desires', *Feminist Studies*, 29.2 (2003), 299–319 <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178511>; *Women and the Feminine in Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, ed. by Evelyn Newlyn, C. Marie Harker and Sarah M. Dunnigan (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004); Evelyn Newlyn, 'Luve, Lichery and Evill Women: The Satiric Tradition and the Bannatyne MS', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 26 (1991); Evelyn Newlyn, 'The Function of the Female Monster in Middle Scots Poetry: Misogyny, Patriarchy, and the Satiric Myth', in *Misogyny in Literature: An Essay Collection*, ed. by Katherine Anne Ackley (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), pp. 33–66; Evelyn Newlyn, 'The Political Dimensions of Desire and Sexuality in Poems of the Bannatyne Manuscript', in *Selected Essays on Scottish Language and Literature: A Festschrift in Honor of Allan H. MacLaine*, ed. by Steven R. McKenna (Lampeter, Wales: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), pp. 75–96; Evelyn Newlyn, 'A Methodology for Reading Against the Culture: Anonymous, Women Poets and the Maitland Quarto MS (c.1586)', in *Women and the Feminine in Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, ed. by Evelyn Newlyn and Sarah M. Dunnigan (England: Palgrave, 2004); Joan Kelly, 'Early Feminist Theory and the *Querelle Des Femmes*', in *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* (Chicago, [Ill.] ; London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 65–110; Francis Lee Utley*, The Crooked Rib: An Analytical Index to the Argument about Women in English and Scottish Literature to the End of the Year 1568* (Columbus: The Ohio State University, 1944); Sebastiaan Verweij, *The Literary Culture of Early Modern Scotland: Manuscript Production and Transmission, 1560-1625* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[3] Alasdair A MacDonald, 'The Printed Book That Never Was: George Bannatyne's Poetic Anthology (1568)', in *Boeken in de Late Middeleeuwen: Verslag van de Groningse Codicologendagen 1992*, ed. by Jos. M. M. Hermans and Klaas van der Hoek (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1994), pp. 101–10; Alasdair A. MacDonald, 'The Bannatyne Manuscript: A Marian Anthology', *Innes Review*, 37 (1986), 36–47; Alasdair A MacDonald, 'Poetry, Politics, and Reformation Censorship in Sixteenth-Century

Bannatyne Manuscript as much more of an active participant in a broader literary culture than has previously been appreciated. It is important to note the singular role of Bannatyne as an editor, rather than a poet in and of himself. This purportedly objective role allows Bannatyne the opportunity to shape the debate through curation, arranging and assembling verse in specific and often pointed ways.

In order to enable this analysis, a number of points will be addressed: in terms of the Bannatyne, the nature of its compilation and cultural significance is examined. The implications of the *querelle* for Scottish literature in the 1560s are a crucial consideration, alongside the role of Mary Queen of Scots in enhancing gendered tension at this time. The miscellaneous verse of the fourth section is analysed, showing a new understanding of the pervasiveness of *querelle* rhetoric in the manuscript. Bannatyne's editorial process is a key concern at all points within the thesis, with his use of indexing and categorisation as a strong indicator of his thematic concerns. Alongside consideration of the rhetoric of love, the nature of comedy, both in the Bannatyne manuscript and more broadly in anti-

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Scotland', *English Studies*, 64.5 (1983), pp. 410-421; Alasdair A. MacDonald, 'Catholic Devotion into Protestant Lyric: The Case of the Contemplacioun of Synnaris', *Innes Review*, 35 (1984), 58–87; van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention and Authorial Voice'; van Heijnsbergen, 'The Interaction Between Literature and History in Queen Mary's Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Manuscript and Its Prosopographical Context', in *The Renaissance in Scotland: Studies in Literature, Religion, History and Culture Offered to John Durkan*, ed. by A. A. MacDonald, Michael Lynch, and Ian B. Cowan, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), pp. 183–224; van Heijnsbergen, 'Masks of Revelation and "the 'female' Tongues of Men": Montgomerie, Christian Lyndsay and the Writing Game at the Scottish Renaissance Court', in *Literature, Letters and the Canonical in Early Modern Scotland*, ed. by Nicola Royan and Theo van Heijnsbergen (Scotland: Tuckwell Press, 2002); J. T. T. Brown, 'The Bannatyne Manuscript: A Sixteenth Century Poetical Miscellany", *Scottish History Review*, i (1904) pp. 135-58.

feminist rhetoric, is a prominent part of my interest in the latter, with close consideration paid to the economic politics of gender and class.

A Note On Methodology

This thesis offers a sustained close reading of a large number of texts within the Bannatyne manuscript. It gives a firm critical grounding in new readings of not only anonymous, overlooked verse, but also established Bannatyne mainstays such as the work of Dunbar. This research locates these poems in an historical and political context, while privileging their literary content as indicative of contemporary misogynist sentiment. In so doing, the way in which Bannatyne structures his collection is brought into fresh focus; his organisation and thematic grouping repositioned as a dialogic and intentioned participation in a heated political climate.

A close reading methodology is adopted throughout the thesis: while recognising that provenance is of importance to each text, this analysis focusses strongly on the poems as they appear within the manuscript and as they would have been understood as parts of a larger anthological tapestry. Texts have been organised primarily by means of close readings, listed in the contents and loosely grouped by thematic similarity. Chapter Three varies slightly as it considers a number of poems from the comedy section in specific thematic groupings. This has been done to isolate the specifically feminist issues from these poems, which have often been looked at with the key focus being on their comic nature, without a specific consideration of misogyny. The *querelle des femmes* offers a particularly good focal point for the feminist concerns of this research, in particular relating to the discourse of love and desire outlined in Chapters One, Two, Four and Five.

While the *querelle* does feature in the third chapter, discussion is moved towards the abstracted notions of femininity that pervade Bannatyne's anthology and thus influence the debate in more intangible ways than an oblique rhetorical debate. It proposes a reading of these texts as being most fruitful when they are read in dialogue with one another.

The thematic concerns of this research, though based initially in the *querelle* tradition, soon became illuminations of other avenues of feminist research. With this in mind, there are overlapping and concurrent questions of gendered identities; love, desire, and sexuality; the politics of class and gender, and the resonance of this late medieval and early modern context in modern society. Whilst the anthology was compiled in the 1560s, the vast majority of texts within the collection date from the fifteenth-century onwards, giving the collection an identity as a late-medieval miscellany. Allowing for the intricacies of periodisation, the terms 'late medieval' and 'early modern' will be utilised throughout the discussion, with individual definitions dictated by the content and dating.

'The Littill Yle / þat Clepid is Albione' – The Manuscript's Scottish Context

> Cupeid into quhois commandiment
> The gentill kinreid of the goddis sa hyr
> And peple infernal bene obedient
> And all mortall folk serving buselye
> Off the goddis sone Sytherea onlye
> To all thame þat to our deitie

Bene subiectis / hairtty greeting send we (ll.1-7)[4]

(Cupid whose commandment the noble kindred of high gods and the demonic realm [lit. infernal people] obey, and all human folk busily serving the god's son, Cytherea only; to all of them that to our deity are subject, we send hearty greetings)

In such a vast collection as the 1568 Bannatyne manuscript, short epigrams are often subsumed by longer, more notable works by writers such as William Dunbar, Alexander Scott, or even Chaucer. It is strange when a reader's attention is brought anew to an extant verse, curious as to why this particular poem has eluded them. One such poem is number 361: erroneously attributed to Chaucer, it is long and unwieldy in many ways.[5] Nestled between a verse by Mersar, and another Chaucer text, this 'lettre of cupeid' is nonetheless hugely important to the overall implications of the Bannatyne. The reasons for its importance are manifold: in a rare appearance of the poem in critical discourse, Dunnigan devotes a substantial part of her chapter on 'Demonic and Angelic Women: The Erotics of Renunciation and Mariology in the Bannatyne Manuscript' in her monograph *Eros and Poetry* to discussing this poem, calling it 'the section's argumentative kernel'.[6] The text is a copy of a 1402 translation of Christine de Pizan's *L'Epistre au Dieu D'Amours*. The vernacular translation is a lengthy piece. Sixty-eight stanzas of rhyme royal elucidate the address to Cupid, a deity to whom all men 'bene subiectis' (l. 7).[7] As with much of Christine's work, the key intention of the poem is to raise awareness of 'laydis of honour

[4] *The Bannatyne Manuscript: Writtin in Tyme of Pest*, ed. by W. Tod Ritchie, Scottish Text Society, IV vols (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons Ltd., 1928), IV, p. 49 fol. 269a.

[5] IV, Poem CCCLXI, p. 49 fol. 269a-274b.

[6] Dunnigan, p. 62.

[7] IV, p. 49 fol. 269a.

and of reverens' (l. 9),[8] but here this is deployed with a pointed reference to the complaints of 'the littill yle / þat clepid is albione' (ll. 15-16),[9] a transcreation of the text from its original French setting into a specifically Scottish context. The text itself is a copy of an early fifteenth-century translation by Hoccleve. Critics are divided over its validity as an adequate representation of Christine's original text,[10] yet its presence within these collections is crucial and begs discussion as to the contribution of other verse within the miscellany to the overarching debate of the *querelle des femmes*.

The presence of this poem in the largest extant miscellany of Older Scots verse is fascinating, and opens up three key lines of enquiry: how does the 'lettre' inform our understanding of the contemporary political climate, and with it, the questions of Mary's influence on the literary production of the period? Furthermore, what do the sources of the 'lettre' tell us about the origins of this ongoing dialogue regarding women? And how does the *querelle* impact upon the reading of an urban Edinburgh literary culture, nearly two hundred years after its inception?

The *querelle des femmes* will be defined and engaged as a method of analysis of the Bannatyne manuscript. What this 'lettre' shows is vital to the remit of this research: its inclusion indicates not only an awareness of, but an active engagement with, the tradition of the *querelle des femmes*, and the likely familiarity of the compiler with its source material. It is a highly politicised piece, anticipating much modern feminist thought, not only in its content but also in its close association with Christine, a key figure in early feminist thought. The appearance of this verse in vernacular Scots within the Bannatyne opens up

[8] IV, p. 49, fol. 269b.

[9] IV, p. 50 fol. 269b.

[10] Dunnigan, p. 62.

a new realm of enquiry regarding the nature of feminist scholarship in relation to this important miscellany. Furthermore, as even the title of Dunnigan's research indicates, the proximity of this debate to the reign of Mary Queen of Scots is inherent in the very fibre of the Bannatyne manuscript.[11] Each of these concerns is central to this thesis and a sense of the scope of both the manuscript and the *querelle* is essential.

The Bannatyne Method – Editorial Structure and Divisions

Compiled by George Bannatyne in 1568, the Bannatyne manuscript comprises five primary sections, thematically structured around theology, morality, comedy, love and animal fables. The third and fourth sections of the text, comedy and love, are the primary focus of this thesis, being of particular relevance to the *querelle* in their depictions of women and female voices. While the theology and morality sections certainly have considerable interest for scholars of this period, the remit of this thesis is such that the most important work for the study of the *querelle* comes in the more obliquely secular sections of the manuscript, and therefore leads us to the poems of love and comedy, and some of the miscellaneous verse in the fifth section.

Bannatyne's attention to detail in his meticulous curation of this wealth of material is remarkable: critics have discussed many aspects of this process over the years, and as recently as 2016 Verweij summarised the manuscript and its reputation thus:

[11] This poem acquires further significance as it is also present within Arch Selden B. 24, a manuscript containing the sole witness of the *Kingis Quair* and known to be held by Henry, Lord Sinclair, patron to Gavin Douglas, whose Fourth Prologue to the *Eneados* is also a crucial component of the fourth section.

> Not a chapter but a book (or several books) would be required to formulate, let alone answer, the range of questions arising from this manuscript: firstly from the manuscript as a physical object, secondly, from the poetry contained therein, and thirdly, from the point of view of its compiler George Bannatyne and the historical and cultural contexts that shaped his world. In terms of content alone, there are over 400 items included (largely poetry, but also other genres), ranging from two-line moral aphorisms to very long works (e.g., David Lyndsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, a number of Robert Henryson's *Moral Fabillis*). The manuscript is a crucial witness for a range of works by canonical Scottish poets […] and for a bewilderingly large array of poetry, much of it anonymous, that represents almost the entire generic range of the Older Scots literary tradition.[12]

J. T. T. Brown's 1904 work on 'The Bannatyne MS: A 15th Century Miscellany' in the *Scottish History Review* is one of the early foundations of later criticism surrounding the manuscript, perhaps due to the thorough and exacting nature of his work. Denton Fox's essay in *Bards and Makars* works neatly in tandem with Brown in supplying primarily factual information about the manuscript and its circulation, while Hughes and Ramson's 1983 monograph *Poetry of the Stewart Court* provides a somewhat incomplete edition of the manuscript, but also some pivotal work in terms of its context as a courtly artefact.[13] Recent work by Elizabeth Elliott and Theo van Heijnsbergen has taken the more bibliographical analyses of the text and offered a cultural context for the miscellany.[14] What we can garner from the popular history of the text is as follows: George Bannatyne was a young Edinburgh merchant who collected over 400 discrete pieces of writing in his

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[12] Verweij, p. 135.

[13] Brown; Denton Fox, 'Manuscripts and Prints of Scots Poetry in the Sixteenth Century', in *Bards and Makars*, ed. A. J. Aitken (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press, 1977); Joan Hughes and W. S. Ramson, *Poetry of The Stewart Court* (Australia: Australian National University Press, 1982).

[14] Van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention and Authorial Voice' (2001); van Heijnsbergen, 'Masks of Revelation' (2002); Elizabeth Elliott, 'Scottish Writing', in *Medieval English Literature*, ed. by Elaine Treharne and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

manuscript. Bannatyne himself was the scribe, the whole manuscript was largely written in one hand, with various errata and amendments apparent throughout the pages, where a later hand sometimes appears. There exists also a draft manuscript which ultimately ended up being the bulk of the fourth section of the manuscript as a whole, and an integral part of the structure of John MacQueen's *Ballatis of Luve*.[15]

Utilising colophons and introductory verses, Bannatyne works hard to establish that this text was compiled 'in tyme of pest' and completed in 1568. There are evident political implications for this dating, which will be discussed further in Chapter One.[16] One of the most intriguing arguments around Bannatyne's meticulous categorising is provided by Alasdair A. MacDonald's work on 'The Printed Book That Never Was: George Bannatyne's Poetic Anthology (1568)'. There, MacDonald furthers Ramson's arguments that what we see in Bannatyne's curation is the work of an editor preparing a text for print:

> One can immediately perceive that the Bannatyne Manuscript is remarkable not only for the large number of poems which it contains, but also for the extremely careful organisation and presentation of this material… By contrast, the other Scottish miscellanies display either no general principle of ordering at all, or else a crude and simple system (such as the division of the Asloan Manuscript into first prose, then poetry).[17]

Irrespective of these overall plans, the manuscript which has been preserved to this day is a handwritten collection of 375 folios, not a print. Bannatyne's work as a cultural curator and rudimentary information technologist is remarkable, and despite some constraints of

[15] John MacQueen, *Ballatis of Luve* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970).

[16] See Chapter One, 'Religious Reformation and "Residual Mariology"', pp. 48-56.

[17] Alasdair A. MacDonald, 'The Printed Book That Never Was', 1994, p. 105.

time and language, allows a reader access to some of the oldest and most important verse in Scottish history.[18] The extraordinary process of collation will be returned to throughout this thesis, particularly in regards to the fourth section and its post-Reformation context. In order to give a thematic framework for the pursuit of the *querelle* within this thesis, the fourth section will be considered first and foremost.

'The Woman Question': Defining the *Querelle des Femmes*

In order to foreground the argument of this thesis, it is necessary to consider the phenomenon to which the 'lettre' is so integral: the *querelle des femmes*. This requires us to delve outwith the immediate realm of specifically Scottish scholarship and into the broader field of medieval feminist criticism pertaining to the *querelle*. It is impossible to do this without considering the ground-breaking work of Joan Kelly. Though Kelly's work is very much a product of a specific era of second-wave feminism, her arguments for reframing history from its patriarchal narrative are, in a sense, evergreen: their implications have no less relevance today than when they were first published. Crucially they have not been applied to the Scottish context of late medieval and early modern poetry. In her 1982 article, Kelly argues that, contrary to popular opinion, the '*querelle*' phenomenon was instigated long before the French Revolution, over a period of four hundred years, arising in the fifteenth century, comfortably pre-dating the Bannatyne

[18] I would like to thank Professor David Parkinson for his input as to the idea of Bannatyne as being an 'information technologist' in a productive conversation in 2017. This has been very useful in establishing the role of the editor in modern parallels.

Manuscript.[19] The '*querelle'* is then defined by Kelly as the debate surrounding the value of women, and the resultant rhetorical responses it provoked. This early feminism is laid out in Kelly's article as constituting 'basic positions' of the debate, which are: the promotion of the use of **polemic** as a stylistic tool in the defence of women, creating a sense of deliberate dialectic opposition to the existing male-authored discourse; a **focus on 'gender'** in the sense of social as well as physical formation, thus negating the popular view of women as 'a defective sex';[20] and a resultant '**universalist** outlook that transcended the accepted value systems of the time […] a truly general conception of humanity'.[21] This article was shortly superseded by a longer essay, published in *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* in 1984. This piece elaborates on the key points established in the original article, while adding more historical context to many of the assertions it advanced. The position of the *querelle* in the late medieval and early modern period is detailed and the three points mentioned above are extended in her discussion of the debate and its implications. Of particular interest to the timeframe of this study are the points which Kelly makes in regards to the emergence of humanism in European culture, and the conflictingly retrograde influence it had on women:

> Imbued with renascent ideas of civic virtue, humanism was unhappily far more narrow in its views of women than traditional Christian culture had been. The religious conception of women, although misogynist in its own way, did regard them as equally capable of the highest states "man" could attain: salvation and sainthood. Classical republican thought, rooted in a society that confined women to a *gynecaeum* and reserved political life for men, threw in doubt this sense of a single human destiny – or even a single human nature […] only as viragos, as exceptions to their sex, could women aspire to the Renaissance ideal of "man".[22]

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[19] Joan Kelly, 'Early Feminist Theory and the *Querelle Des Femmes*, 1400-1789', Signs, 8 (1982), 4 – 28 (p. 5).

[20] Kelly, p. 7.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Kelly, 1984, p. 71.

This dichotomy, the development of societal progress on the one hand and the relegation of women to the domestic realm on the other, is a crucial facet of the period traversing the later medieval period and the early modern, leading into the Reformation.

In terms of the timeframe of the Bannatyne manuscript, the work of Kelly in her essay 'Did Women Have A Renaissance?' is also pertinent. Arguing that in the broader European context,

> not until the Renaissance reformulation of courtly manners and love is it evident how the ways of the lady came to be determined by men in the context of the early modern state. The relation of the sexes here assumed its modern form, and nowhere is this made more visible than in the love relation.[23]

Certainly in Scotland, there is evidence to support the existence of a broader sense of freedom for women in the medieval period. Historical examples from Scotland at this time show us real-life scenarios of women's agency and roles within the community transgressing what one may expect from this era: Elizabeth Ewan's 1992 article 'Scottish Portias: Women in the Courts in Mediaeval Scottish Towns' describes women 'in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, […] appearing in court, pleading cases both on their own behalf and that of others'.[24] Ewan's research responds directly to the assertions of Christine de Pizan's *Book of the City of Ladies* regarding women's role in legal proceedings:

> Although there are women to whom God has given great understanding, nonetheless, because of the decency they are inclined to, it would not be

[23] Joan Kelly, 'Did Women Have A Renaissance?', in *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* (Chicago, [Ill.] ; London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 19–50 (p. 36).

[24] Elizabeth Ewan, 'Scottish Portias: Women in the Courts in Mediaeval Scottish Towns', *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 3.1 (1992), pp. 27-43 (p. 28).

> appropriate for them to go and appear boldly in court like men, for there are enough men who do so. What would be the good of sending three men to lift a load that two men can carry easily?[25]

Kelly's work on the *querelle* and on the Renaissance is of vital importance in its examination of the embryonic feminism that begins with the writing of Christine de Pizan. There is something of a gap in the critical canon in terms of the overlap of specifically Scottish scholarship and the reception of the *querelle*. As mentioned, there are exceptions to this: the work of Ewan, Newlyn, Dunnigan, Parkinson et al, well supported by the inclusion of the 'lettre' in the Bannatyne. Yet the way in which the *querelle* is invoked in Scotland specifically is something that has not been directly addressed: thus, a working definition of the *querelle* is essential.

In relation to the literature that provoked the initial controversy in France, the ethos of chivalric and courtly literature was challenged by the emergence of work that veered towards obscenity, and crude bourgeois *fabliaux*, a conflicting style that was strongly reflected in Jean de Meun's continuation of *The Roman de la Rose*. While Kelly points to the 'minor *querelle de la Rose'* of 1399 as the beginning of the cultural phenomena,[26] it is Christine de Pizan's 1404 response to Matheolus that truly provokes the *querelle* on a larger scale, at the heart of which Christine chooses 'to investigate as well as rebut misogyny'.[27] Her subsequent work on the *City of Ladies* is described by Kelly as 'a

[25] Christine de Pizan, *The Selected Writings of Christine de Pizan*, ed. by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, trans. by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Kevin Brownlee (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), pp. 134–35.

[26] Kelly, 1984, p. 72.

[27] Ibid, p. 73.

book that would be a citadel, fortified by such arguments that women of all stations might there withstand the assault of their male attackers.'.[28]

One of the counts on which Christine criticized Jean was for the use of obscenity in his writing. In his article 'Words and Deeds: Jean de Meun's "The Romance of the Rose" and the Hermeneutics of Censorship', David F. Hult describes Jean's dedication to the use of vulgar language in terms of a broader argument about the 'phenomenon of reception' and offense:

> There is no "rational" explanation why certain words would have been acceptable in the garden of Eden but judged obscene in the fallen world, which is why Reason cannot understand the Lover's dismay when she uses the words *coilles* (balls) and *viz* (cock). Shame is the enforcer of obscenity restrictions, yet shame is also the sign of (or even punishment for) original sin. By a rather perverse logic, Jean is suggesting that those who recoil at, or strive to censor, obscene language (that is, those who see no distinction between words and things, who believe that to mouth the word *coilles* is an act of fellatio) are the most marked by the condition of the Fall while, correspondingly, those nominalists who can shamelessly use any words (since naming is arbitrary) are somehow closer to a divine condition. Jean demonstrates rather subtly that shame is a phenomenon of reception and that the moral responsibility for obscenity rests squarely on the shoulders of those who would detect, and subsequently censor, the obscene.[29]

The argument surrounding the use of obscenity, both in terms of vulgar imagery and vulgar language is highly pertinent to the consideration of the Bannatyne manuscript. In contributing to courtly culture, writers such as William Dunbar, Robert Henryson and Gavin Douglas operate within the parameters of the vernacular: though they do so with style and a command of poetic form, this distance from the 'Inglis' of the day marks their work as ripe for critical comment and broadens the scope of their 'courtly' writing to

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[28] Kelly, 1984, p. 71.

[29] David Hult, 'Words and Deeds: Jean de Meun's *Romance of the Rose* and the Hermeneutics of Censorship', *New Literary History*, 28.2 (1997), pp. 345–66 (p. 353).

embrace obscene imagery and carnal description. This arguable adherence to Jean's conception of the privileging of vulgar language is perplexing, and offers another way in which writers of this era engaged with the thematic concerns of the *querelle*. While it is unlikely that each act of writing in the vernacular when describing sexual congress was a conscious reference to Jean's 'divine' philosophy, the use and embellishment of vulgarity is a frequent feature of poems in both the third and fourth section of the anthology.

In his contribution to *The Roman de la Rose*, Jean takes it upon himself to continue the earlier work of Guillaume de Lorris, whose original text ends at the conclusion of the chapter 'Hope and Despair'. Jean resumes the narrative from the 'Advice of Reason': his addition to the text vastly extends the original input by Guillaume. The widely circulated romance depicts the process of the lover's journey, presented as an allegorical dream vision, through a walled garden, to obtain the fabled Rose. The text suggests a number of things about medieval misogyny, primarily in its depiction of women as wanton and deceitful. The real catalyst for the *querelle* comes from two particular incidents within the text, illustrated here by excerpt. The first concept is the veracity of misogyny, endorsed by the role of *auctoritas*:

Si vos pri toutes, vallainz fames,
Soiez damoiseles ou dames,
Amoureuses ou sanz amis,
Que se moz i trouvez ja mis
Qui samblent mordant et chenins
Ancontre les meurs femenins,
Que ne m'an voilliez pas blamer
Ne m'escriture diffamer,
Qui toute est por anseignement;
C'onc n'i dis riens certainement,

Ne volanté n'é pas de dire,
Ne par ivrece ne par ire,
Par haïne ne par envie,
Contre fame qui soit en vie;
Car nus ne doit fame despire,
S'il n'a queur des mauvés le pire.
Mes por ç'an escrit les meïsmes
Que nous et vos de vos meïsmes
Poïssons connoissance avoir,
Car il fet bon de tout savoir.
D'autre part, dames honorables,
S'il vos samble que je di fables,
Por manteür ne m'an tenez,
Mes aus aucteurs vos an prenez[30]

(I beg all you worthy women, whether maidens or ladies, in love or without a lover, if you find any words that seem to you to be a harsh and savage attack on feminine behaviour, please do not censure me or speak ill of my writing, which is intended only to instruct. It is certain that I neither say nor wish to say anything in drunkenness or anger, hate or envy, against any woman alive. No one scorns a woman unless he has the worst of all hearts. The reason why we put these things in writing was so that we and you might know about you, for it seems good to know everything. Moreover, honourable ladies, if it seems to you that I am making things up, do not call me a liar, but blame those authors who have written in their books what I have said, and those in whose company I will speak. *I shall tell no lie, unless all the worthy men who wrote the ancient books also lied*.)[31]

[30] 'Excerpt 8: The Author's Apology', in *Reading the Roman de La Rose in Text and Image*, ed. by Christine McWebb, MARGOT: Uncovering French Medieval Culture (Canada: Univeristy of Waterloo, 2009), fol. 127vb <http://margot.uwaterloo.ca/ROMAN/excerpttext/excerpt8.html> [accessed 3 July 2018].

[31] Jean de Meun and Guillaume de Lorris, *The Romance of the Rose*, trans. by Frances Horgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 235. Emphasis my own.

Evidently, there are problems with the argument posited here: it seems to accept the reliance on a male narrative as writ, with reference to the 'worthy men'. There is an alternative reading of this as being tongue-in-cheek, however this is jarring in comparison to some of Christine's previous sentiments. Moreover, Christine's apologetic tone, and anxiety about being spoken ill of, can be read as indicators of weakness on her part, something not typically associated with a strong argument. Again, this could be symptomatic of the performative nature of the epistolary structure rather than a genuine sense of remorse on the part of the author. Irrespective of these issues, we now have another instance of overlap between the broader debate and Scotland. Thematically, the notion of *auctoritas* is essential in any discussion of the Bannatyne manuscript: there is a considerable reliance upon literary inheritance in Older Scots literature, with references to classical writing and Biblical figures a ubiquitous feature of most writing – consider Henryson's address to Aesop in his *Morall Fabills* or Gavin Douglas' catalogue of references in his *Palis of Honore*. The way in which the inherited sense of literary authority impacts upon Bannatyne's editorial decisions cannot be overestimated: his use of established literary authorities in his system of inclusion and exclusion is evident and has ramifications for the subsequent political attitudes woven throughout the text.

The second concept which correlates directly to the *querelle* is the existence of obscenity within the text. The obscenity found in the crudely carnal depiction of the human body and genitalia, poorly masked by euphemisms, within the *Roman de la Rose* is a matter of grave concern for Christine. Within the text, the figure of Genius talks openly of the dependence of male identity on the testicles and 'purse' while the allegorical symbolism of the garden and rose is visceral in its symbolic depiction, exemplified in the climactic passage whereby:

> this tiny, narrow pathway that I have mentioned and through which I sought to pass, allowed me to break down the barrier with my staff and introduce myself into the aperture, but I could not get even halfway in. It grieved me that I could get no further, but I was powerless to go on. Nothing, however, could have prevented me from sliding my staff all the way in. I did so without delay, but the scrip with its pounding hammers stayed dangling outside.[32]

Christine's response to this cumulative affront is pointed and eloquent. Her sense that women are consistently portrayed in a false light is exemplified in the following passage from *The God of Love's Letter*:

> Why then if women are so weak and flighty, and easily manipulated, silly and lacking self-control, as some clerkly authors say, why do those who pursue them have any need of ruse? And why do women not give in at once, without requiring that strategies and tricks be used to catch them? For it is not necessary to go to war for a castle that is already captured. And even a poet as subtle as Ovid, who was later exiled, and Jean de Meun in the 'Romance of the Rose': what great exertion! What an elaborate enterprise! And what great learning, both accessible and obscure, what adventures he described there! […] I do not understand or believe that such great effort is needed to capture a weakly fortified place, nor scheming, nor ingenuity, nor great subtlety. It is necessary to conclude that, since scheming, great ingenuity, and great effort are required to deceive a noble or low-born women, they are not so fickle as it is said, nor is their behaviour so changeable.[33]

The strength of Christine's dialectic style is distilled in this excerpt. When faced with years of seemingly authoritative textual bias, she uses the logic of these men against their own arguments. If they insist on tales of conquest and struggle, she argues rationally that there must be something to struggle against: were women as weak as men believe, they would require no husbandry, no dominance of the kind described by Jean. The admission of the male authors that control of women is difficult therefore concedes a degree of power to them. Looking once again at vulgarity and subtlety, there is a parallel drawn in the above

[32] de Meun and de Lorris, p. 333.

[33] Christine, p. 22.

passage between the literally 'subtle' Ovid and his exile, and the emergence of Jean. The movement from subtle description to obscenity, and with it vulgarity of both image and language, is therefore embodied in this shifting perception of authority.

The Inclusion of the *Querelle* in Bannatyne's Discourse

The key point is the subject and discussion of this issue as a matter of rhetorical interest. The vernacular translation of Hoccleve within the Bannatyne corroborates this and exemplifies the importance of the *querelle* to the Bannatyne as a whole. Though the verse format and nature of the adaptation does not allow for a parallel line by line interpretation, there are some useful excerpts regarding Ovid and Jean:

> Perde this clerk this subteill ouyde
> And many ane vþir dissauit has be
> Of women as it is knawin full wed
> That no man moir / and þat is grit dente
> So excellent a clerk as wes he
> And vþir mo þat coldin full weill preche
> Betrappid war for oft they could teche
>
> And trust ȝe weill þat it is no mervell
> for wemen knawin planely their intent
> Thay wate how softly thay can thame assaill
> And quhat falsheid that in their hartis ment
> And thus tho cleirkis in thair dengir hent
> W^t^ wennome an nother is distroyd
> And thus theis clerks wer oftin annoyd. (ll. 246-252)[34]

[34] IV, p. 57 fol. 272a.

(Indeed, this clerk, this subtle Ovid and many other men have been deceived by women, as is known widely – indeed no man more so than he, and that is a great joy considering how excellent a scholar he was. And others who could preach very well [about such things] were often caught in a trap despite all their teaching. You should trust well that it is no marvel, for women, knowing plainly their intent, they know how softly they can assail them and what falsehood is meant in their hearts. And thus those clerks [were] held in their disdain. With one venom another[35] is destroyed, so these scholars often were annoyed.)

To Mr Iohne de mone as i suppoiß
That it was a lewd occupatioun
In making of þe romant of the roiß
So many a sle Imaginnatioun
And perrelis for to rollin vp and doun
The long Poces so mony a slyt cartel
for to disaiff a silly dammosell. (ll. 281-287)[36]

(To Mr John de Meun I suppose that it was a lewd occupation, making of the Romance of the Rose, so many so many deceitful imaginations and dangers to contemplate during the long process for so many a sly challenge, in order to deceive an innocent damsel.)

Though some of the subtle complexity of prose may not survive in a verse translation, the emphasis remains largely the same, particularly in relation to Jean – the use of the term 'silly dammosell' is, however, interesting. While Christine's original text refers simply to a 'maid', the connotations of the word 'silly' are more varied and could arguably indicate a level of bias on the translator's part that may occlude the resonance of Christine's

[35] This reading utilizes the term 'another', however there is a case for the text referring to 'a mother' assuming an error in original, which would emphasise the argument that to disrespect women is inadvisable, as they are mothers and bringers of life.

[36] IV, p. 58 fol. 272b.

original argument by undermining this female character, or at the very least, supposing their naivete or inexperience.[37]

In framing her argument in this way, and saying that in their complaint, men have inadvertently admitted the strength of women, Christine calibrates a new level of agency. This is reflected in her original writing of Cupid's remarks on Eve:

> […] concerning the deception because of which God sent us bitter consequences, for which lady Eve, our mother, is blamed, I say in truth that she did not deceive Adam, but simply repeated to him the words that the Devil had said to her, believing them to be sincere and true. Thus it was not fraud or deception, for innocence, with no concealed malice, should not be called deception. […] Of what great evils can women thus be accused? Do not women have Paradise as their reward? Of what crimes can one accuse them? And if some foolish men wish to amuse themselves with love (may they be cursed for this), they cannot succeed; let wise men refrain from this; he who, having planned deceit, is himself deceived, has no one but himself to blame.[38]

Again, we can find meaning within the vernacular translation that chimes with Christine's original letter:

> Quhairfor I say this gude woman Eve
> our fader Adam dissauit nocht
> Their may no man for dissait it preue
> Propirly / Bot þat scho in hairt and thoᵗ
> Had it compassid first or scho it wrocht
> And for suche wes noᵗ hir intentioun
> Men may call no dissait of hir by ressoun. (ll. 365-371)[39]

[37] 'Sely Adj.', *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (Scottish Language Dictionaries Ltd., 2004) <http://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/sely> [accessed 12 June 2018] DOST defines the 'sely' term in a number of ways, including 'holy', 'saintly' or 'good', sometimes being 'used sarcastically'. Further definitions touch upon the image of weak animals, or someone 'foolish, lacking intelligence or sophistication, simple; besotted.

[38] Christine, p. 26.

[39] IV, p. 61 fol. 273b.

> (*Therefore I say this good woman Eve did not deceive our father Adam. No man may prove it conclusively to be deceit unless she had planned it first in heart and thought before she carried it out, and since such was not her intention, men may not reasonably term it her deceit.)*

It is apparent that the 'lettre' contains the essence of Christine's original argument, with some alterations in the translation. The inclusion of this central hinge of the *querelle* is a strong indication of the prevalence of this debate in the literary discourse preserved in the Bannatyne manuscript.

Continental Influences

Despite the inferences which, as argued here, can be drawn from the inclusion of the 'lettre', and prior critical commentary, sustained evidence of direct references to the *querelle* in medieval and early modern Scottish literature remains elusive. the wider question of continental influence on Scottish literature must be considered: while the *querelle* itself may not appear as obviously as it would have in other countries, issues such as the use of rhetoric in debate and poetry, and the maligning of women persist. The debate, though arguably less formalised, was nonetheless pervasive in collections such as the Bannatyne. This thesis will use some of the themes set by Kelly in her description of the *querelle des femmes* to interrogate the content and structure of the Bannatyne manuscript, specifically its fourth section. In terms of the broader British context, aspects of the debate are discussed in C.S. Lewis's *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama*, where the nature of Anglo-French inheritance in Scotland is approached, the '*grands*

rhetoriqueurs'[40] having been the true source of the aureate characteristics of supposedly 'Chaucerian' Scottish verse. This emphasis on the importance of a French inheritance is mirrored in modern Dunbar criticism, and will be returned to in Chapter Four in relation to the theoretical work of William Calin.[41] Lewis does not refer directly to the *querelle,* but does allow the reader to infer that the systems through which the *querelle* was negotiated in Europe more broadly were systems with which a Scottish writer and reader would have been familiar. Similarly, the body of R. D. S. Jack's volume on *The Italian Influence on Scottish Literature* yields no direct references to the *querelle* but offers a substantial survey of other cultural incursions into the Scottish canon.[42] In particular, Jack looks at the familiarity of Scottish thinkers with continental humanism, and the grammar of rhetoric, both of which are aspects of the *querelle*.[43] Interestingly, Jack concurs that the primary influences on the Bannatyne are primarily French rather than Italian:

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[40] C.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 75.

[41] William Calin, 'William Dunbar , The Goldyn Targe and The Thrissill and the Rois', in *The Lily and the Thistle: The French Tradition and the Older Literature of Scotland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), pp. 53–65; Anthony J Hasler, 'William Dunbar: The Elusive Subject', *Bryght Lanternis: Essays on the Language and Literature of Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, 1989, pp. 194–209; Joanne S Norman, 'A Postmodern Look at a Medieval Poet: The Case of William Dunbar', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 26.1 (1991); Joanne S Norman, 'William Dunbar: Grand Rhétoriqueur', *Bryght Lanternis: Essays on the Language and Literature of Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, 1989, pp. 179–94.

[42] R.D.S. Jack, *The Italian Influence on Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970).

[43] See also John-Mark Philo, 'Tudor Humanists, London Printers, and the Status of Women: The Struggle over Livy in the *Querelle Des Femmes*', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 69.1 (2016), pp. 40–79.

> […] a detailed study of […] the Bannatyne lyrics generally, has uncovered not one lyric which can confidently be assigned to an Italian source […] One must therefore come to the conclusion that the interest in French *rhétoriquers* and, later, in Wyatt and Surrey, eclipsed any potential influence from further afield.[44]

A plethora of essays exist on the topic of Christine de Pizan,[45] but none outwith the work of those critics already mentioned examine her influence in Scotland, with the exception of some cautious work on the *querelle* more generally which pertains to the next section of this chapter.

How, then, can we begin to surmise how the *querelle* was received in sixteenth-century Scotland, where classical language remained, to a large extent, impenetrable for an urban audience outwith the educated elite or their exposure to church Latin? Consider Alcuin Blamires' observation that the recurrent references to the works of Ovid, Virgil and even Boethius in the works of Jean and his contemporaries emphasise a level of familiarity with Latin texts that could not be expected of women: 'there was therefore a sense in which Latin remained a linguistic enclave where antifeminism perpetuated itself

[44] Jack, 1970, p. 42.

[45] Kevin Brownlee, 'Rewriting Romance: Courtly Discourse and Auto-Citation in Christine de Pizan', in *Gender and Text in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. by Jane Chance (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1996), pp. 172–194; David F. Hult, 'The Roman de La Rose, Christine de Pizan, and the *Querelle Des Femmes*', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Women's Writing*, ed. by Carolyn Dinshaw and David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Earl Jeffrey Richards, 'Rejecting Essentialism and Gendered Writing: The Case of Christine de Pizan', in *Gender and Text in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. by Jane Chance (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1996), pp. 96–131; Helen Moody Fletcher, 'Debate of the Rose: The "Querelle Des Femmes" as Court Poetry' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1981).

and could be indulged with particular impunity, safe from female retort'.[46] In Scotland this enclave was not solely delineated by gender, being also impacted by class; however, Scottish verse miscellanies of the sixteenth century, circulated among families and the educated classes, offered a different medium for the proliferation of literature. Verweij argues in his 2016 monograph that there was a broader audience for manuscript culture of this time, comprising the upper echelons of society. While this is certainly true, Verweij also postulates

> a more select manuscript readership for [the Bannatyne manuscript]. The fact that it was never printed may then intimate that Bannatyne felt no need for such a print, since his manuscript could effectively cater to interested readers, whilst it remained in the editor's control […][47]

In this instance then, the lack of printing lends itself to higher chances of female readership. What Scottish texts such as the later Maitland Folio and Quarto indicate is a *status quo*, in which women have, to an extent, equal access to the vernacular Scottish materials, thus allowing a more open discussion of the issues at hand. Verweij notes that '[t]here is undeniable evidence of women's active and sustained engagement in the book trade […]',[48] particularly in the time period immediately after the Bannatyne's publication.

[46] Blamires, Alcuin, Karen Pratt, and C. W. Marx, eds., *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 148.

[47] Verweij, p. 137.

[48] Ibid, p. 120.

Current *Querelle* Scholarship

There have been substantial additions to the wider field of *querelle* studies since Kelly's work. This is helped by the resurgence of interest in medieval feminist studies, reflected in the increased visibility of scholarship from members of the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship, and inspired by provocative articles such as Judith M. Bennett's seminal work 'Medievalism and Feminism' in a groundbreaking issue of *Speculum*,[49] which dealt specifically with the redressing of feminist interest in the medieval period. Bennett addresses the problematic title of the journal as symptomatic of 'a narrow perception of our field, a perception which usually treats the combination of feminist studies and medieval studies as curious or anamolous or even appalling'.[50]

Beyond the reclamation of feminism more generally, and looking towards the *querelle* specifically, an array of work was invaluable in providing context and substance to this thesis. One of the most distinctive contributions of recent years has been Gisela Bock and Margarete Zimmerman's edited collection *Die europäische Querelle des Femmes: Geschlechterdebatten seit dem 15. Jahrhundert*,[51] which provides – amongst many other articles – a recent bibliography of sources for the *querelle*. Bock continues the research chronicled

[49] Judith M. Bennett, 'Medievalism and Feminism', *Speculum*, 68.2 (1993), 309–31 <https://doi.org/10.2307/2864555>.

[50] Ibid, p. 311.

[51] Bock and Zimmerman, eds. *Die europäische Querelle des Femmes: Geschlechterdebatten seit dem 15. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart; Weimar: Metzler, 1997).

in the 1997 volume with her 2001 chapter '*Querelle des Femmes*: A European Dispute'.[52] Aside from Bock's extensive work on the *querelle* in Europe, Helen Fletcher Moody's 1981 doctoral thesis on *The Debate of the Rose: The 'Querelle des Femmes' As Court Poetry* foregrounds the relationships between the debate and courtly literature that underpin much of Bannatyne's political context.[53] These texts, alongside Helen Swift's 2011 monograph *'Pourquoy appellerions nous ces choses differentes, qu'une heure, un moment, un mouvement peuvent rendre du tout semblables?': Representing Gender Identity in the Late Medieval French Querelle des femmes*, and Sharon L. Jansen's *Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe* indicate a cross-section of sustained interest in the *querelle* but also limit current study to the European context outwith Britain, and Scotland.[54]

The most extensive study of the *querelle* in 'British' literature of the sixteenth-century remains Francis Lee Utley's *The Crooked Rib* which details an analytical index of 'the Argument about Women' up to and including the Bannatyne. Published in 1944 and focused heavily on Scottish sources, it is very useful in highlighting areas of Scottish work

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[52] Gisela Bock, '*Querelle Des Femmes*: A European Dispute', in *Women in European History*, trans. by Alison Brown, Making of Europe (New York: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), pp. 1–27.

[53] Moody Fletcher, 'Debate of the Rose' (1981).

[54] Helen Swift, '"*Pourquoy Appellerions Nous Ces Choses Differentes, Qu'une Heure, Un Moment, Un Mouvement Peuvent Rendre Du Tout Semblables*?': Representing Gender Identity in the Late Medieval French *Querelle Des Femmes'*, in *Representing Medieval Genders and Sexualities in Europe: Construction, Transformation, and Subversion*, 600-1530, ed. Elizabeth L'Estrange and Alison More (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 89–106; Helen J Swift, *Gender, Writing, and Performance: Men Defending Women in Late Medieval France, 1440-1538*, Oxford Modern Languages and Literature Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Sharon L Jansen, *Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

which Utley argues shows conscious presence of the *querelle*. His proposed timeframe is inherently useful as Utley is evidently at pains to include the Bannatyne manuscript:

> I have chosen [1568] simply because it has permitted me to include without argument the remarkable collection completed in 1568 by George Bannatyne, a manuscript which contributes about one-fifth of the poems in the Index […].[55]

Utley claims that 'after the second third of the reign of Elizabeth' (i.e. the late 1560s onwards) the *querelle* was demoted in literature, never considered as 'anything more than an epigram or a digression'.[56] Once again, although the *querelle* is not necessarily a definitive feature of Scottish writing in any formal way, Utley's observation of its later absence from literature indicates a prior presence. Clearly, the Bannatyne is of great importance, given the number of its texts which feature within *The Crooked Rib* and for the parameters of this period in Scottish literature more generally. Utley further observes the negotiation of the *querelle* in Arch Selden B.24 and B.14, as well as Ashmole 48 and others. These references comprise poems by authors such as Robert Henryson, William Dunbar and Gavin Douglas. *The Crooked Rib* is a superbly detailed account of these poems, yet the density of data within the text requires a great deal of analysis in order to indicate its usefulness for this study; it is more effective as a highly useful guide to research.

A survey of recent monographs relating to the late medieval period in Scotland reveals very little about the *querelle*. Joanna Martin's *Kingship and Love in Scottish Poetry, 1424-1540* mentions the *Roman de la Rose* only in relation to the echoes of typical siege imagery in 'King Hart' and 'The Answer to the Kingis Flyting'.[57] More general discussion of the *querelle* in a Scottish context is somewhat limited. Analyses by Parkinson, Dunnigan,

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[55] Utley, p. ix.

[56] Utley, p. ix.

[57] Joanna Martin, *Kingship and Love in Scottish Poetry*, 1424-1540 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008).

MacDonald and Newlyn in relation to this question are perhaps the most prominent discussions of the topic,[58] all of which touch upon the unavoidable question of Mary's reign. Given the contextual importance of the *querelle*, it is pertinent to first of all understand the manuscript itself, in terms of its scale, scope and unparalleled methodical indexing. This is something best done in tandem with an understanding of the historical context in which George Bannatyne operated, and in this vein, attention turns now to diverse political and religious influences in the formation of his anthology.

[58] Sarah M. Dunnigan, 'The Creation and Self-Creation of Mary Queen of Scots', *Scotlands*, 5 (1998), 65–88; Dunnigan, *Eros and Poetry*; Parkinson, 'A Lamentable Storie'; Newlyn, 'The Function of the Female Monster'.

CHAPTER ONE ~ 'Leful Love' in the Time of Mary Queen of Scots

Categorisation of the Fourth Section

> Heir followis ballattis of luve
> Devydit in four pairtis The first
> Ar songis of luve The secound ar
> Contemptis of luve And evill wemen
> The thrid are contemptis of evill
> fals vicius men And the fourt
> Ar ballattis detesting of luve
> And lichery[1]

> *(Here follow ballads of love, divided in four parts. The first are songs of love, the second are songs competuous of love and evil women. The third are songs contemptuous of evil, false, vicious men. And the fourth are ballads, detesting love and lechery.)*

The very categorisation of the poems within the fourth section betrays much about contemporary views of love and, accordingly, the discourse of love within this section is mediated primarily by a late medieval understanding of women's roles. In this sense the *querelle* can be utilised as a tool for understanding the varied and sometimes conflicting views depicted within this section. The subsection 'songs of love' precedes the more negative sections, giving Bannatyne ample opportunity to advocate a supposedly rational and moralised attitude to the topic before entering into his critique. This immoral aspect of love, or rather the critique of its failings, is integral to an early modern understanding, judging by the inclusion of multiple 'contemptis'. According to the W. Tod Ritchie edition

[1] III, p. 240 fol. 211a.

of the manuscript, the next officially numbered poem of the manuscript is 238, 'to the redair', which reads as another colophon to the collection:

> Heir haif ye luvaris ballatis at your will
> How evir your natur directit Is vntill
> Bot wald ye luve Eftir my counsalling
> Luve first your god aboif all vder thing
> Nixt As your self your nichtbur beir guid will (ll. 1-5)[2]
>
> *(Here have you lovers' ballads at your will, however your nature prompts you in this regard. But if you were to love according to my advice [you would] first love your God above all other things, and next bear good will to your neighbour as you would to yourself.)*

Curiously, this is *not* the next verse transcribed in the manuscript. Following the initial 'ballatis of lufe' statement comes a verse which seems to carry on from the final poem of the third section, 'my mistres is in music passing skilful', which is discussed later in this thesis.[3]

The second colophon is followed by a short, stylistically simple sonnet which is catalogued by Tod Ritchie as poem 239. While 238 draws attention to the villainous female figure, 239 draws out another thematic strand of Older Scots amatory verse, that is to say, the levelling nature of love and desire: 'Strypis hes stremes alsweill as fludes hes springis / So luve Is luve in peure men As in kingis' (ll. 13-14) (*'Strips of land have streams, just as well as floods have springs. And so too is love in poor men as it is in kings')*.[4] Thus, are pure

[2] III, p. 241 fol. 211b.

[3] Chapter Two, 'A Musical Mistress', pp. 93-97.

[4] IV, p. 242 fol. 211b.

men and kings equals in the trials of love. The images utilised in the sonnet are homely, earthy images: an ant and a stickleback, a tree and a wren, a stone and a pearl. This verse draws the reader into the idea of love as a universal concern. In allying universality and the dangers of women, Bannatyne treads a well-worn path. Joan Kelly's early feminism is calibrated on the importance of universality and the recognition of women and men as part of humankind; to assert the failings of women as part of universal truth is to undermine this assertion at a fundamental level. If women are all castigated as failures, based on sparse exemplars, they are not equal.

The juxtaposition of poems within the Bannatyne manuscript, both in relation to one another and to their categorisation as a whole, is of great interest. When we examine the juxtaposition of the poems, we find that they offer understanding, as discussed further in Newlyn's critique, of satire as a misogynist vehicle within the text.[5] Dunnigan points out the 'relatively indifferent'[6] tone of the original opening sentiments of the fourth section, ascribing responsibility initially to the reader; something which is short-lived and submerged in a 'christianised retraction of love'.[7] This retraction is ultimately sustained throughout the fourth section and epitomised in Gavin Douglas' closing sentiments, though some attention is paid to other incarnations of love and amatory discourse. Dunnigan's argument that responsibility is ascribed to the reader is useful in the context of debate, as the moral imperative of the fourth section returns, time and again, to the necessity of self-governance and sacred love. This tension between *caritas* and *concupiscence* pervades the text and becomes firmly located in the symbol of the female figure. The

[5] Newlyn, 'Female Monster'.

[6] Dunnigan, *Eros and Poetry*, p. 49.

[7] Ibid, p. 50.

critical commentary provided by Newlyn in her 1992 article is pertinent in invoking the question of the 'double Venus', as termed by George Economou, in reference to *cupiditas* and *caritas*.[8] If we accept that the two Venuses are present within the Bannatyne manuscript as a whole, the fourth section of the Bannatyne may pertain to the question of love as *caritas*, while the question of love as *cupiditas* is scattered throughout the other sections of the text. As Newlyn points out, under the guise of 'ballatis mirry' and the later fifth section, we find poems which concern themselves with a more explicit sexuality and embody the endemic patriarchy of inherited medieval values. Newlyn describes the focus of the fourth section as being a locus for 'positive attitudes towards love, [containing] mainly paeans of praise or lamenting rededications to an idealized but romantically distant lady'.[9] Sexuality and desire are 'essentially excluded'[10] from the fourth section as a result.

Gavin Douglas' prologue sets out the argument for this exclusion on a much larger scale, thus rendering his prologue a suitable framework for the section as a whole. The 'Prologue to the Ferd Buke' of his *Eneados* is a fascinating and telling addition to the fourth section, and gives the impression of having been inserted somewhat hastily, appended after the final colophon, before leading into the fifth section. Ritchie's edition notes that prior to the beginning of the 'Prologue' we can see the lines 'heir endis the haill four pairtis offis / of this ballat buke anno 1568' only to see that 'these two lines have

[8] George D. Economou, 'The Two Venuses and Courtly Love', in *Pursuit of Perfection: Courtly Love in Medieval Literature*, ed. by Joan M. Ferrante and George D Economou (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat, 1975), pp. 17–50; Newlyn, 'The Female Monster in Middle Scots Poetry: Misogyny, Patriarchy, and the Satiric Myth'.

[9] Newlyn, 'The Political Dimensions of Desire', p. 75.

[10] Ibid.

been inked over'.[11] A precedent is set within the fourth section of the Bannatyne manuscript by this inclusion. Not only does the concept of Venus cast a long shadow over the fourth prologue, in which Douglas opts to focus on only one side of a potentially more balanced outlook on human engagement with love and lust; but moreover thematically impacts upon the Bannatyne manuscript as a whole in its engagement with the female voice. What Douglas' fourth prologue offers the fourth section in this *querelle* context is a legitimised critique of desire and love. What emerges further from Douglas' prologue is a sense that the *querelle des femmes* is often negotiated in terms of women of antiquity. Mythological figures such as Cresseid and Dido serve as allegorical representations of the perceived flaws of women, and are highlighted in the debate, while the shadow of Venus underpins a number of medieval texts. This imagery further includes allegorical figures such as Fortune, and planetary gods, as seen in texts such as Dunbar's 'The Golden Targe' and the *Kingis Quair*.

It is evident that Bannatyne utilises his editorial power to guide the reader into a set way of moralised thinking: a good example of this is the poem just discussed, which serves as an emphatic iteration of the moral message of the fourth book, the superiority of religious love over secular love, which would be entirely in keeping with the Protestant ethos of the post-Reformation audience. The *Eneados* is itself a text in which Douglas glosses an existing mythology in order to achieve his own objectives regarding Scotland and his religious convictions, and in this sense provides an even more sonorous resonance with Bannatyne's own editorial practice. The prologue begins with a thirty-stanza reflection on the nature of love, followed by an eight-stanza rumination on the plight of

[11] IV, pg. 107, fol. 290b. Footnote, ibid.

Dido, addressed directly to the Queen of Carthage herself.[12] The relationship between the two parts helps to articulate the problematic nature of Douglas' own treatment of the Dido material, and with it, women. Within the first part of the prologue, detached from the large prose translation of the *Eneados* as a whole, he adopts a lyrical, philosophical approach to the notion of love as a motivation for behaviour. Though ultimately scathing of the nature of love's 'febill seid' (l. 8),[13] he alludes to broader themes of past epics and speaks in reverent tones of the power of love, false though it may be: 'Thou makist febill wight and lawiß hie; / Thou knyttis frendschip quhair thair be na parage[...]' (l. 43-44) (*'you make the feeble strong, and lower the high. You make friendship between people who are not equals […]'*) .[14] In separating love and lust in this manner, Douglas plays into the aforementioned tradition of the 'two Venuses', choosing to focus upon the side which he feels to be most detrimental to the male gender, that which affects his physical senses.[15] Douglas deliberately embraces only the divine and rational side of a multi-faceted concept: for Venus to be present and positive, her energies must be directed heavenward. Rather than mitigate the presence of a concupiscent element, Douglas intimates that outwith this

[12] Lucy R. Hinnie, '"Dido Enflambyt" The Tragic Queen of Carthage in Gavin Douglas' Eneados (1513)' (unpublished MPhil, University of Glasgow, 2012).

[13] IV, p. 108 fol. 291a. In the 1957 Scottish Text Society *Eneados* ed. by David F.C. Coldwell, 'febill' is read as 'fykill'. The weakness of love in comparison to its unreliability provides an interesting editorial decision and/or interpretation on Bannatyne's part: where 'fykill' emphasises the power of love, 'febill' seems to weaken it further, an interesting choice given the moral implications of a 'Reformed' text.

[14] IV, p. 109 fol. 291a.

[15] Economou, 'The Two Venuses'; Teresa Lynn Tinkle, *Medieval Venuses and Cupids: Sexuality, Hermeneutics, and English Poetry* (Pan Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

Christian piety only a complete lack of Venus' presence can be construed as a positive force.

The poem itself is in many ways generically typical of late-medieval style, cataloguing and castigating the effects and impact of love on heroes both classical and theological, and further utilising aureate language and rhyme royal. On the one hand, Douglas provides readers with a sermon-like treatise on the dangers of secular love and desire, yet on the other this sentiment is inextricably bound to the tale of Dido, a warrior queen. Our familiarity with her tale, position and plight evokes association with a contemporary context, in this case Mary Queen of Scots, whose tumultuous reign provoked a number of pressing political questions. A key notion that resonates here is the idea that Bannatyne, in his role as a tastemaker or authoritative voice within the text, inserts well-known poets into the manuscript to validate and further emphasise the moral messages that temper the myriad anonymous and miscellaneous verse within the fourth section. Poets such as Douglas and Dunbar, therefore, can be seen to constitute a particular kind of intellectual or literary authority seen as definitive.

Where certain critical perspectives have examined the manuscript from a wholly historiographical approach, further critical work has focussed on the thematic implications of Banantyne's editorial process. Critics have considered not only the social implications of a revised protestantised perspective, but also the textual intricacies of such a shift. Evelyn Newlyn writes that the omission of specific references to Mary Queen of Scots serves to conflate the already explicit misogyny of the text with current events. Though she argues that ultimately '[the] increased misogynist voice in Bannayne's

manuscript […] results from no such manifest exterior force'[16] (referring to socio-political forces) Newlyn is emphatic in her assertion that Bannatyne as an editor and writer 'displayed an exceptional vigour and enthusiasm in incorporating […] additional misogynistic material, not just new poems, but also his own titles and rubrics as well' citing the sheer volume of anti-feminist poetry as testament to this.[17] It is clear that there is a strong bias towards the anti-feminist; however, while Newlyn ascribes this to Bannatyne's personal politics, the enthusiasm of Bannatyne in appealing to a contemporary audience specifically preoccupied with queenship and the feminine is perhaps less of a personal politics and more of an enthusiasm for his project in its reformed state. Van Heijnsbergen writes extensively about the possibilities of an audience for the manuscript in his 1994 article 'The Interaction Between Literature and History in Queen Mary's Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Manuscript and its Prosopographical Context'. Van Heijnsbergen's venture into collective biography focuses on the extant 'Memoriall Buik' compiled by George Bannatyne and focussed on the godparents of the many Bannatyne offspring. Through van Heijnsbergen's thorough examination of the contemporaries listed therein, he draws the conclusion that there may have been a more balanced audience than our initial impressions of the Reformation may lean towards, with a more dynamic approach to 'the fluctuations of Catholic and Protestant sympathies within this group of people'.[18]

[16] Evelyn S Newlyn, '"The Wryttar to the Reidaris": Editing Practices and Politics in the Bannatyne Manuscript', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 31.1 (1999), p. 29.

[17] Newlyn, 'Editing Practices and Politics', p. 29.

[18] Van Heijnsbergen, 'The Interaction Between Literature and History', p. 186.

Religious Reformation and 'Residual Mariology'

In keeping with van Heijnsbergen's work on the audience of the text, the Bannatyne manuscript can be defined as a 'reformed' text in a number of ways: it is 'reformed' in light of the Scottish Reformation and its anti-Catholic sentiment, and it is 'reformed' in terms of its conception of the female, influenced heavily by the turbulent reign of Mary Queen of Scots. The female figure that would have been the focus of a collection of love poems is muted, the focus removed from her figure, and instead the collection looks to the concept of 'leful' love and religious devotion. The scandals and issues of queenship that arose from Mary's reign add nuance and curiosity to Bannatyne's editing process.

It is unsurprising therefore, that there is an element of censorship to the Bannatyne and the way in which it circumnavigates the difficulties presented by the problematic queen and her Catholicism. Yet the way in which Bannatyne alters the shape and emphasis of the whole collection is an act of editorial nuance that transcends mere omission and redaction. This textual 'reform' creates not only one of Scotland's most long-lived textual resources, allowing the reputation and importance of the text to endure through periods of great change, but furthermore creates an historical artefact that can speak to the interlinked issues of queenship, religious reform, and political unrest merely through the way in which it juxtaposes key texts.

The concluding colophon to the completed manuscript in its entirety reads thus:

> The wryttar to the redar
>
> Heir endis this buik writtin in tyme of pest
> Quhen we fra labor was compeld to rest
> In to the thre last monethis of the 3eir

Ffrom oure redimaris birth Ta knaw it heir
Ane thowsand Is / Ffyve hundredth / threscoir awcht
Off this purpois Namair It Neiddis be tawcht
Swa till conclude god grant ws all gude end
And eftir deth Eternall lyfe ws send (ll. 1-8)[19]

(The writer to the reader: Here ends this book written in time of plague, when we were compelled to rest from labour until the final three months of the year, one thousand, five hundred, three score and eight years from our Redeemer's brith, to be exact. Of this purpose no more needs to be taught, so to conclude, god grant us all a good end and after death, send us to eternal life.)

As Alasdair MacDonald notes, Bannatyne here implies that he is writing his conclusion at Christmas 1568, creating a sombre religious tone which, in terms of moral reform as MacDonald rightly observes, 'would have been found quite acceptable to the Protestant authorities'.[20] Furthermore, Bannatyne claims to have completed this task within three months. As MacDonald goes on to discuss, and as we can freely imagine in relation to a manuscript of such scope as the Bannatyne, there is an element of ambiguity about specific timings, despite Bannatyne's protestations. Throughout the text and throughout the editions that have emerged, editors have been keen to point out recurring references to different dates, some erased, some highlighted: J. T. T. Brown and Denton Fox have both scrutinised the dates of 1565 and 1566 inscribed in the text and later altered. Furthermore, the claim that Bannatyne completed his transcription in the space of three months has been the source of some contention. Since Fox and Ringler's 1980 facsimile however, the three month claim has been more readily accepted with the assertion that

[19] IV, p. 332, fol. 375a.

[20] MacDonald, 'A Marian Anthology', p. 37.

'the scribe would only need to spend three hours per day on the job'.[21] It is worth nothing that Bannatyne also makes direct reference to another contemporary political event, describing the text as having been 'writtin in tyme of pest'. Whether this was an attempt to align the manuscript with the literary legacy of Boccaccio's *Decameron* is debateable, but the way in which Bannatyne refers openly to concurrent history is interesting: clearly he is keen to locate this text very specifically to 1568, and to do this by reference to a single event (the plague) rather than a monarch's reign. A link to the *Decameron* offers an interesting perspective on the role of verse curation in the context of plague literature, and the storytelling which features as a narrative device in Boccaccio. Though the Bannatyne is something of a different prospect, being a collection primarily of verse rather than stories, the parallel of collection within a time of contemporary turmoil, both political and social, is intriguing.

Regardless of the specificities of the date, it is clear that there is a concurrence between Bannatyne's drafting process and the later turbulent events of Mary's life: in June 1566 James VI is born, by February 1567 Darnley is dead at Kirk o' Field, and June sees the abdication of Mary in favour of her son. Therefore, 1568 is something of a watershed in the Marian timeline – it is the date by which Mary is no longer in power, and a year in which public opinion takes an ever more drastic turn against her with the revelation of the Casket Sonnets and the rejection of Mary by her cousin Elizabeth. For Bannatyne to be working in 1568 is not necessarily a direct causal result of Mary's life – it is known that he was drafting the collection in the years prior – however, his insistence on a 1568 date, and a late 1568 at that, is indicative of a desire to separate his collection from the problematic legacy of Mary, and garner approval with the newly Reformed authorities. It

[21] MacDonald, 'A Marian Anthology', p. 38.

is not unreasonable, therefore, to look to the editing practice of Bannatyne to examine the ways in which this reform shaped his text, particularly given the existence of the draft manuscript.

Here the nature of the fourth book is of particular interest. It is posited and widely accepted by critics that this specific collection may have begun life solely as a collection of love poems, dated 1565. MacDonald states that such a claim 'may be granted a certain *prima facie* historical plausibility', and once again the life of Mary is reflected in this analysis: 'there could have been no more auspicious time for a collection of love poems than in the first half of 1565'[22] when Darnley returns from England and is married to Mary by July. Within the short timeframe of 1565-8 as MacDonald points out 'the political and religious situation was so utterly transformed that it would have been difficult for anyone to have published any courtly literature in Scotland until things settled down again'.[23] Macdonald persuasively argues that had Bannatyne missed his opportunity for publication of such a collection 'his expanded anthology would […] have to be 'pitched' rather differently, with the emphasis seen to be falling not on courtly love verse but on good religion, good morality, and, perhaps, on a patriotic pride in the Scottish literary tradition'.[24] While the patriotic pride in Scottish literature paid dividends in the longevity of the manuscript, it is the notion of 'good' religion and morality that pervades the fourth section as we know through its distinct divisions of love. In this structuring, unique to the finished manuscript and absent from the draft, we see what MacDonald refers to as 'a reformed, moralistic 'gloss' being imparted to material assembled before 1567 for a

[22] MacDonald, 'A Marian Anthology', p. 40.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid, p. 41.

different purpose'.[25] The sense of this tension between the original collection in the draft manuscript and the final manuscript is palpable in the textual amendments apparent throughout the volume, and the way in which the absence of Mary is in itself a comment on her influence and an engagement with the debate. In reading the Bannatyne manuscript, the notion that what is not explicitly on the page can offer as much meaning as that which *is* there is essential. The manuscript offers a unique opportunity to look at a substantive account of an artistic canon, a crystallisation of taste at a specific point in history, and examine the absences, rather than the usual fragmentary nature of late medieval manuscript collections.

Looking to the notion of a reformed depiction of femininity, Parkinson's article, 'A Lamentable Storie: Mary Queen of Scots and the Inescapable *Querelle des Femmes*', is hugely suggestive from its title alone. There is an element of Mary's influence that is inescapable in any examination of the Bannatyne manuscript, and Parkinson's article teases out the subtleties of what is specifically omitted from the text and its links to the broader European trend of a *querelle des femmes*. As Parkinson states 'the themes of this debate emerge and re-emerge during the upbringing and early reign of Mary Stewart'[26] with Mary's own education and rhetorical prowess 'a troublesome blessing'.[27] Though ostensibly desirable qualities for a monarch, they were not desirable qualities for a woman, and thus the complex relationship between Mary's gender and reign grew. Paralleling the legacy of the *querelle*, this loquaciousness was a heavy burden for a woman: texts by known poets can take on a deeper meaning when considered against the attributes of Mary. Consider the work of Kennedy in the final poem in the third section of 'evill wemen', one

[25] MacDonald, 'A Marian Anthology', p. 43.

[26] Parkinson, p. 145.

[27] Ibid.

of the most misogynist and offensive pieces, in which Kennedy ascribes the epithet of 'thankless mowths' to women, a description which intimates a patriarchy in which women are reduced to the synecdochal image of their mouths. A mouth allows a woman to communicate, to articulate and present her own thoughts, and the synechdochal reduction of this power to an ungrateful orifice provides a crass image of femininity as something base and undesirable. An unsatisfactory conclusion overall seems to capitulate to the patriarchy, resonating uncomfortably (or perhaps too comfortably) with the trajectory of Mary's own narrative and the *querelle des femmes*.

Speaking specifically about the infamous Chastelard affair, in which a courtier was found in and dismissed from Mary's bedchamber, and at the behest of the queen later executed, Parkinson illustrates the *querelle* 'at its most politically charged'.[28] The dignity of the queen is undermined in this exploitation of her perceived sexual appetite, and thus her worth as both a monarch and a woman is depleted. This example of inappropriate conduct is something which continues to plague Mary's reign, examples that are cited by detractors such as John Knox as emblematic of her lack of decorum. Parkinson points out the resonance between some of the anonymous verse of the Bannatyne and works pitted against Mary by writers such as John Knox and Robert Sempill. These works include Knox's 'last literary labour… annotat[ing] the *Annals of Bavaria* by Aventinus' to castigate both Mary and women generally,[29] and Sempill's 'broadside poems on the murder of Darnley'.[30] As Parkinson rightly observes 'explicit connection does not occur in the Bannatyne Manuscript […] Bannatyne's compilation suspends the most obviously harmful and dangerous sorts of conflict, between Catholic and Protestant, Queen's Man

[28] Parkinson, p. 146.

[29] Ibid, p. 151.

[30] Ibid, p. 148.

and King's Man'.[31] Yet there still exists within the misogynist categorisation a plethora of anonymous verse, its sheer number and ethos testament to the intense misogyny, often Marian-related, of the period, further fuelled by the scandals.

It is reasonable to say that the reign of Mary in Scotland negates Francis Lee Utley's claim of a less pronounced interest in the *querelle* in the post-1560 era, the time of the Bannatyne's compilation. Evelyn Newlyn's earlier article on the 'Female Monster' also locates the *querelle* as a key issue in the compilation and content of the Bannatyne manuscript. It is perhaps reasonable to say that there is an inherent paradox in the worship of the Virgin Mary at this time, further complicated by the resonance of her name with that of Mary Stuart. In a more general sense, Marina Warner writes extensively about the 'cult' of Mary, and in her chapter 'The Penitent Whore' she addresses specifically the paradoxical nature of this infatuation for a Catholic audience. The incapacity of the church to admit fault in any figure of worship, is a counterpoint to its fascination with human error.

> The Virgin Mary could not meet this condition [of human error], for in her absolute purity and her exemption from the common lot she was free from all sin. Another figure consequently developed to fill this important lacuna, that of St. Mary Magdalene, who, together with the Virgin Mary, typifies Christian society's attitudes to women and sex. Both female figures are perceived in sexual terms: Mary as a virgin and Mary Magdalene as a whore – until her repentance. The Magdalene, like Eve, was brought into existence by the powerful undertow of misogyny in Christianity, which associates women with the dangers and degradation of the flesh.[32]

This paradoxical need for both an epitome of grace and an embodiment of female sin is central to religious mythology. Yet within the historical context of Mary, and her

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[31] Parkinson, p. 152.

[32] Marina Warner, *Alone Of All Her Sex: The Myth And The Cult Of The Virgin Mary* (London: Picador, 1990).

interactions with figures such as Knox and the derision of those such as Sempill, this tension is exacerbated, with Mary *de facto* in the role of Magdalene. Newlyn recognises this when she states that satire emerges as a 'genre most hospitable to the misogynistic side of the *querelle des femmes* in the Middle Ages',[33] and this hospitality extends into the Bannatyne manuscript and 1560s Edinburgh with the juxtaposition of 'Marys' implicit in much of its rhetoric. Warner's critique is naturally ahistorical, and there is little space within this study for an extended and temporaneous study of the complex relationship between Catholic imagery and Mary's reign. [34]

This fascination with Mariology is furthered in critical work around the manuscript. As Newlyn states

> As one would anticipate from a late medieval anthology, the Bannatyne Manuscript contains a number of poems from the popular genre of misogynist satire; not only has satire long been "persistent in Scottish poetry" (Morgan xi), but Bannatyne's anthology postdates most of the salvos in the *querelle des femmes*, and therefore contains a large variety of satiric poems about women.[35]

It is only natural, therefore, to expect this debate to impact upon the text in both content and structure. This literal lack of Mary in the fourth section, the absence of reference to her life and her voice, the lacunae from which we can attempt to draw meaning and Bannatyne's intent, is summarised by Dunnigan. Referring to the Bannatyne, she states

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[33] Newlyn, 'The Satiric Myth', p. 34.

[34] For extended research on the complex issue of Mary and parallels with the Magdalene figure, Dunnigan's work on *Eros and Poetry* covers this in depth, particularly in her chapter on 'Demonic and Angelic Women: The Erotics of Renunciation and Mariology in the Bannatyne Manuscript' (pp. 46-75)

[35] Newlyn, 'The Satiric Myth', p. 35. Newlyn refers here to Edwin Morgan, *Scottish Satirical Verse* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1980).

that 'while there is scant explicit textual evidence of Mary, she is symbolically incarnate in the 'Contemptis of luve and evill wemen'.[36] Dunnigan furthers the notion that the fourth book was a collection repurposed in the light of Mary's reign: 'The realm of the feminine in the Bannatyne fourth corpus appears both censored and unexpurgated, the site of a residual Mariology as well as its suppression'.[37] This notion of the presence through absence of a political question is intriguing and imbues Bannatyne's collection with meaning. Each of these critics, Newlyn, Dunnigan, and Parkinson, draws our attention to the underlying *querelle des femmes*: what is touched upon by Parkinson is aptly summarised by Dunnigan when she states that within the manuscript, 'the *querelle des femmes* is implicitly also a *querelle de Marie'*.[38] This symbiotic relationship between Mary and the figure of womankind is a relationship that can only be constructed in light of the historical context of the manuscript.

Chapter Conclusion

While previous studies of the manuscript have focussed their discussion primarily on the plethora of verse attributed to Scottish 'makars' such as Dunbar and Henryson, it is within the overall tapestry of the manuscript that these ideas about the *querelle* can truly develop. Though individual verses offer insight into particular poetic styles or the shared vocabulary of literary inheritance, these smaller insertions and the interplay between poems is a liminal site of interpretation, guided by the editing hand of Bannatyne. It is

[36] Dunnigan, *Eros and Poetry*, p. 51.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid, p. 47.

through his editorial interventions that we can explore and expand upon the implicit presence of the *querelle*. Having considered the historical and cultural context of the manuscript as a whole, this fourth section will be considered through a number of close readings: in keeping with the debate format, the 'schort epigrammis agains wemen' will be examined in counterpoint to the verses subtitled 'the reproche of fals vicius men'. In so doing, the tension between both sides of the academic debate will be brought to light in terms of the similarities and variances that constitute verse of this genre.

This chapter has outlined the importance of the *querelle* as a tool for understanding the multifaceted and often conflicting views contained within the Bannatyne manuscript and its fourth section in particular. It has drawn parallels between Kelly's idea of universality in regards to feminism, and Bannatyne's focus on self-governance. Further to this, it has highlighted the inferred responsibility of the reader as an interpreter of moral meaning. The exclusion of sexual desire as material for discussion tied in with the emphatic moral message of Douglas' fourth prologue have been examined as evidence of the importance of auctoritas within the text, while the influence of Mary Queen of Scots and her symbiotic relationship with the text and the querelle have been outlined in relation to existing theoretical work. This leads now to the discussion of the understudied selection of epigrams within Bannatyne's anthology, and the misogyny therein.

CHAPTER TWO ~ Wicked Wives and Vicious Men – The Short Poems

Epigrams Against Women

The most explicit example of dialogic engagement in Bannatyne's anthology is the short selection in the fourth section signposted as cases for and against women and men. Bannatyne's approach to categorisation is unique insofar as the direction it gives to the reader is notable, in terms of defining the genre and purpose of the texts. Dunnigan notes in *Eros and Poetry* that '[t]he amatory corpus in particular exemplifies the 'editorial' rigour which characterises Bannatyne's text, a carefully designed anthology rather than a miscellany'.[1] This rigour is by no means lacking in Bannatyne's structuring of the debate between men and women, which is orchestrated under titles such as 'schort epigrammis agains women'[2] and 'ballatis of the prayiss of wemen and to þe reproche of fals vicious Men'.[3] In this sense, the *querelle* is here re-enacted in an active and intentional way, expanded to include – to a limited extent – the failings of men.

Though the index invites the reader to think that there are eleven poems in Bannatyne's 'schort epigrammis agains women', it is important to note that there is no official 'end' to this section, denoted by a 'heir endis' or similar. Poems 337 to 342 are by definition short, one stanza poems that are then followed by poems 343 to 347, each of which is a considerably longer verse. In this sense, there are in fact six 'schort' epigrams and five considerably longer verses. Of these longer poems, four are attributed: 343 to

[1] Dunnigan, p. 49.

[2] IV, pg. 22, fol. 258a.

[3] IV, pg. 48, fol. 268b.

'Chauseir'; 344 to Sr. John Moffett; 345 to Weddirburne and 346 to Dunbar (this being 'Thir ladies fair', which shall be returned to in relation to Dunbar's *oeuvre* in Chapter Four). Though the section starts with a curated selection of what is very literally short verse – ranging from six to eight lines apiece – from poem 343 onwards the tone shifts as the verses become longer, largely focussed around the common classical tropes, warnings against women and the failings of their sex. Though these longer texts are useful in establishing in the reader's mind a sense that misogyny will be prevalent, the six true 'epigrammis' are an interesting miscellany of key images and ideas crystallising the core of accepted discourse. An epigram is, by definition, 'a short poem with a witty turn of thought; or a wittily condensed expression in prose'.[4] Each of these eleven poems is included in Utley's *The Crooked Rib*. With the exception of 341, each of the shorter verses exists in unique copy in the Bannatyne,[5] and the stylistic juxtaposition of these poems together suggests they are intended to work together as a rhetorical group to facilitate debate.

Opening the section is poem 337, addressed to a former lover, voiced by the wronged party, presumably a man, elucidating the transience of love and its illusory happiness:

My lawtie garris me be lichtleit allaik

[4] Chris Baldick, 'Epigram', *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Oxford Paperback Reference (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 83. It is interesting to note that Baldick also correlates 'epigram' with 'aphorism', something echoed in Verweij's description of the manuscript contents.

[5] As noted in the facsimile edition, this stanza (an excerpt of *The Remedy of Love*) occurs also in the Devonshire MS (BL Addit. 17492). Facsimile, xxxvi.

3our luve lestis not I had it bot of lane
All 3oure unkyndnes compt I not a kaik
Ffor I sall get als gud quhen 3e are gane
Will god I sall not weir the siching bene
Nor walk on nichttis Thocht 3e haif wrocht me wrangis
I lyk richt weill I latt 3our luve allane
God be 3our gyd also gud luve cumis as gangis (ll. 1-8) [6]

(My loyalty makes me dishonoured. Alas, your love does not last, I had it only on loan, and I don't reckon all your kindness worth a fig [lit.], for I can get as good as you when you are gone. God willing, I shall not wear the sighing, nor walk the nights, though you have wronged me. I am very glad that I am leaving your love alone. God be with you; love as good comes as goes.

The delusion of the lover is made clear in their arrogance, and assumption that they will succeed elsewhere. This poem is relatively genderless – there is no reference to a female figure *per se*, it is only its categorisation within the 'schort epigrammis' and the accepted tradition of masculine voice that allow its relative suitability within this section. Were it to be removed from this section, it could be read as a simple complaint about a lost love, and the transient nature of desire; but in placing this within this section, Bannatyne has drawn a connection, and highlighted an accepted convention, between the faults of women and the temptation of love. The transience of love is paramount ('not I had it bot of lane') and the cruelty of the beloved is highlighted in 'All 3oure unkyndnes compt I not a kaik'. There is also an echo here of the courtliness associated with the noble pursuit of love, and the suffering therein. Again, the pointed curation of this short poem within the category of 'agains wemen' indicates a strong sense of the anti-female sentiment

[6] IV, p. 22 fol. 258a.

associated with the pursuit of love, alongside a subtle critique of the lover and their self-perception.

Poem 338 is not so subtle. The shortest of the collection, it reads as the voice of a frustrated lover, complaining in the face of the ways of women, and their 'wylis':

I luve and I Say not
I wald and I may not
Oscula si tibi det
Bewar with wemens wrinkis
Mony wylis hir vmbethinkis
Me te discipiet[7]

I love and I say not
I would and I may not
If I give you a kiss
Beware with women's tricks,
Many wiles they bring to mind
I am [disciplined or deceived][8]

On one reading, the classical refrain here adds a sense of sobriety to this verse, a solemnity which appears to impart a sense of truth to the sentiments therein; yet in another it can be seen as a rhetorical exercise or flourish on the part of the author. The ungrammatical

[7] IV, p. 22 fol. 258a.

[8] Structure retained in gloss to emulate the initial poetic intent. The Latin within this poem is ungrammatical (cf. 'me te') and makes little literal sense. If we read 'discipiet' as 'decipiet' this alters the translation to 'deception', as above. My thanks to Professors John M. McGavin and Bella Millet for these grammatical observations and suggestions.

nature of this verse renders any nuanced reading to be problematic in its deficiency and lack of accuracy. Outwith the macaronic refrain, the figure of woman takes on an almost mythic status here: her 'wrinkis' (tricks) resound as particularly effective or powerful, given the emphatic nature of this verse, and the 'wylis hir vmbethinkis' recalls the power of her memory, the ability to infiltrate and influence the mind of man through seduction ('I Say not …. I may not'). This epigram is followed by the legend of Jezebel as detailed in Poem 339. A pattern emerges insofar as Bannatyne will arrange a number of general themes or ideas, and strengthen them by punctuating their appearance with an authority, be it an established author's addition to the argument, or in this case, the canny use of a widely known exemplar.

'Ane of the warst þat evir was in erd' proclaims the opening line of Poem 339, 'was ge3abell as storyis makis mentioun' ('*One of the wost that ever was on earth […] was Jezebel, as the stories mention*'):

> For in the bybill 3e may baith see & heird
> Full mony haly poffeit[9] scho pote doun
> And wro[t] the pepill grit confusion
> Syne silly nabot for his wyne3ard scho slew
> 3it drank the doggis hir blude & bannis gnew (ll. 1-7)[10]
>
> *(For in the bible you may both see and hear about the many holy prophets she put down, and how she wrought great confusion for the people, since she slew foolish Naboth for his vineyard. Yet the dogs drank her blood and gnawed her bones.)*

[9] As noted in Ritchie, 'the Hunterian edition reads *proffeit* but notes the correct MS reading.' p. 23.

[10] IV, p. 23 fol. 258a.

A miniature narrative verse, this poem details the transgressions of Jezebel who wrought confusion on the people and manipulated the possession of Naboth's vineyard.[11] It concludes with a brief description of her punishment, the dogs drinking her blood and gnawing her bones. While no subjective moral judgement is passed within the text, bar the reference to Jezebel as 'warst', the factual summation of her narrative is a blunt testament to the perceived justice of the tale, and the acceptance of this as correct and accurate history. Joan Kelly writes about Christine reaching 'what has come down to us as the first analysis of the sexual bias of culture itself'[12] and the nature of history as a masculine narrative. Certainly these anecdotes, and the recurrent references to biblical and classical narratives, interact with the *querelle* insofar as they rely on this patriarchal conception of historical narratives. Crucially, as Utley points out, 'Jezebel was one of John Knox's favourite names for Mary Tudor'. Though Mary Tudor had been dead for ten years at this point, given the proliferation of Knox's own polemical writings, it is not unreasonable to infer a slur here against the current Queen, or at the very least, a renewed collocation of her name and reputation with verse on the subject of female morality.[13]

The remaining short verses, 340 and 341, are essentially straightforward exemplars of the 'impossibilia' topos, whereby the impossibility of woman's worth is established in

[11] Kings 21. 1-16. In the legend of Nabot's vineyard, Jezebel is subject to multiple punishments for her conspiracy against Naboth, including defenestration, wild dogs drinking her blood and eating her flesh. Her husband Ahab is also killed, but is preserved some diginity not afforded to his wife, as he dies in battle. My thanks to Peter Burke for his research into the Biblical sources of this tale.

[12] Kelly, p. 80.

[13] Utley, p. 223.

relation to other unattainable criteria. This idea is extended elsewhere in the Bannatyne, however the two poems here focus on the imagery of writing. Given the arguments of Christine surrounding the masculine domination of historical narrative, these images are particularly interesting. Poem 340 in particular utilises an image whereby 'all the men wer wryttaris þat evir tuik lyfe' (l. 6) thus eliminating the possibility of women's agency over their own narrative,[14] and solely employing men to account for the nature of womankind, even then in an 'impossible' context:

> Thoᵗ all þe wod vnder the hevin þat growis
> War crafty pennis convenient to wryte
> And all the sie vndir the lift that flowis
> War changeit in ynk and þat wer Infynyt
> And þe erd maist plesand paper quhyt
> All the men wer wryttaris þat evir tuik lyfe
> Cowld not wryt the fals dissaitfull dispyt
> And wicketness contenit in a wife (ll. 1-8)[15]
>
> *([Even if] all the wood that grows under heaven was turned into well-made pens suitable for writing, and all the sea that flows under the sky was changed into infinite ink, and all the earth changed into very white and pleasant paper, and all the men who ever took life were writers – [they] could not write the deceitful spite and wickedness which is contained in a wife.)*

This unquestioned domination of the written word and, in turn, history by men is inherently problematic, and one of the key paradigms with which feminist theory continually takes issue. Kelly wrote extensively about the domination of historical

[14] IV, p. 23 fol. 258b.

[15] Ibid.

narratives by the masculine experience, particularly in her essay 'The Social Relations of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History'.[16]

Poem 341 is very similar, imagining a world of infinite writing materials in which it would still be impossible to account for the failings of women – even were 'every man a perfyt scryb and guid'.[17] Once again the foul nature of women thwarts the capability of men to adequately fulfil their roles as scribes, educators, and 'good' men:

> Gif all the erth war perchmene scribable
> Maid to þe hand And all manner of wud
> Wer hewit / and proportionat pennis able
> All water ink In dame or in flude
> And every man a perfyt scryb and guid
> The cursitnes And dissait of wemen
> Cowld not be schawin be the mene of pen (ll. 1-7)
>
> *(If all the earth were writeable parchment, made for the hand, and all manner of wood was hewn into proportionate pens, [were] all water in dam or flood ink, and every man a good and perfect scribe, the cursedness and deceit of women could not be shown by the means of a pen.)*

Alone of the epigrams, poem 341 'gif all the erth war perchmene scribable' is a short poem with an attribution to Chaucer, yet it seems to be more of an imitation, or excerpt from a longer work, than a definitive addition to Chaucer's canon. It should be noted that Chaucer's work often dealt with *querelle* material: Carolyn Ives and David Parkinson have previously proposed that '[a] complex appropriation is taking place [within the Bannatyne

[16] Joan Kelly, 'The Social Relations of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History', in *Women, History and Theory*, pp. 1-19.

[17] IV, p. 23 fol. 258b.

MS], with a distinctively Scottish discourse "agains evill wemen" being grounded in the authority of a transformed, Scottified Chaucer'.[18] The relationship between Chaucer's work and the attitudes to women it illustrates is a multi-faceted area of study: there are arguments supporting the notion that Chaucer's work exposed the patriarchal traditions which Christine objected to, while the debates around misogyny in Chaucer's work continue to this day.[19] In this instance, 'positioning of Chaucer at the head of misogynistic discourse in Scotland'[20] is reflected strongly in the Bannatyne MS; while the number of established Chaucer poems within the collection is now minimal, the influence of his work on many of the poems is sorely felt.[21] As such, Chaucer's name and poetic reputation is easily inserted into the debate. It is interesting also to note the idea of men as 'perfyt scryb' given the nature of Bannatyne's own task – this can be read as a reflexive comment on the inherent instability in scribal culture and the pressure on the scribes themselves. Utley points out that '[the poem] is stanza 35 of […] *The Remedy of Love*, which [William] Thynne erroneously assigned to Chaucer'.[22] This continuation of an attribution error from the 1532 Thynne edition clearly shows the way in which these debates and contributions become interdependent: primary sources gain reputations, attributions, and provenances that may not reflect the reality of their creation but buoy along the narrative of their success.

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[18] Parkinson and Ives, p. 190.

[19] For a fuller picture of the discourse around Chaucer and gender, please see Alcuin Blamires *Chaucer, Ethics and Gender* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) and Carolyn Dinshaw (ed.) *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989)

[20] Parkinson and Ives, p. 190.

[21] An extended version of this research into Chaucer and the Bannatyne manuscript was given in my paper at the New Chaucer Society Congress 2018, Toronto.

[22] Utley, p. 157.

Calling back, potentially inadvertently, to the earlier reference to the work of Kennedy in relation to Mary, the final short poem 342 and its evisceration of a 'wicket wyfe'[23] again highlights the perceived malice from the mouths of women, and their inherent ability to wreak destruction on the world of men:

> The diuill is not to daly stryf
> Comparesone to a wicket wyfe
> A womannis malice Is so fell
> Exceiddis all the devillis in hell
> Thair wordis thair workis and thair Ill tungis
> Hes cawsit full mony brokin rungis (ll. 1-6)
>
> *(The devil is nothing in daily strife, compared to a wicked wife. A woman's malice is so vicious [that] it exceeds all devils in hell. Their words, their works and their ill tongues have caused many broken sticks [lit. a stick, staff or cudgel])*

Here, the poet compares the female capacity for destruction to breaking sticks. This image calls out to the fears behind such rhetoric whereby the female capability can thwart the upward progression of a man through injury to his virility, symbolised in the phallus or 'stick'. This sentiment echoes the fears percolating in the instability of Mary's court and the capacity of women, be it Mary or Elizabeth, to upset the social order.

As the verses get longer, the nature of their content expands from axioms and short anecdotes, to lengthier arguments. Poem 343, for example, is summarised by Utley as being, like 341, indebted to *The Remedy of Love* insofar as it contains 'stanzas 20-29 and 38'. This particular excerpt focusses on 'the counsels of Solomon [… a]nd the story of the lady who had three lovers to dinner and managed to make love to all of them', a

[23] IV, pp. 23–24 fol. 258b.

situation not dissimilar to the *Freiris of Berwik*.[24] The woman in question is depicted as sly and calculating: 'In dew sessone as scho all wayis espyid / every thing to execut conveniently' (ll. 50-51) ('*In fitting seasons, she looked at all means of carrying everything out well*').[25] The poem consists of eleven stanzas, each of which compounds the sense of 'the falsheid of woman In his dayis to consaif / The lippis of a strumpet bene sueitar than huny' (ll. 17-18) ('*the falsehood of woman, in his days to conceive - the lips of a strumpet are sweeter than honey*').[26] This strong evocation of the whore paradigm, and the tempting nature of female sexuality, leads to a concluding warning that when a woman is not one's wife one should 'Keip w^{t} hir at wyn no alteratioun / les that thyn hart fall by inclinatioun' (ll. 76-77) ('*Do not interact with her, lest that your heart fail by inclination*').[27] The narrator speaks from experience, 'No man can ansueir [*answer*] it better than I' (l. 65) in enquiring about which of the three men, if any, have retained their grace.[28] The narrator reveals that he was one of the men and bemoans that 'O tho^{t} full hairt grit is thy grevance' (l. 70) ('*O thoughtful heart, great is thy grievance*').[29] His foray into temptation has ended poorly and he speaks from the position of someone who has been victim of love's curse. Poems such as this, in which the narrative voice speaks with the assumed authority of experience, are particularly damaging to the pro-feminine side of the *querelle*. Not only must women contend against the

[24] Utley, p. 263. The *Freiris of Berwik* tells the tale of Alesone, a wicked wife, who prepares a sexual feast for her lover under the voyeuristic gaze of two friars, and is then interrupted by her husband. This poem features in the Bannatyne manuscript and will be returned to in Chapter Five.

[25] IV, p. 25 fol. 259a.

[26] IV, p. 24 fol. 259a.

[27] IV, p. 26 fol. 259b.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

accepted and inherently biased male accounts of history and mythology, they must also suffer at the hands of anecdotal evidence such as this, where an authoritative tone decries the behaviour of an entire sex. Though far from short, the tonal fit of this verse with the 'schort epigrammis' is evident.

Poems 344 and 345 can be read in their own right, but are understood with more depth in tandem with the other contributions of their authors to the miscellany. 'Bruþir be wyiß I reid ȝow now' (*'Brother be wise, I counsel you now'*, Poem 344) attributed to 'S[r] Iohne Moffett' is the second poem to be attributed to Moffett/Moffat, the first being 'The Wyf Of Auchtermuchty', which will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Moffat's supposed authorship of both poem 344, which catalogues classical examples of noble men and their fate (aptly summarised by Utley as 'Women destroy youth, strength, and wisdom'),[30] and 'The Wyf' is useful in establishing that one poet may entertain the rhetoric of both sides of the *querelle*. While 344 is quick to denigrate and warn against the wiles of women ('Obey and for ȝe bettir bow / Remembir quhatt ma cum behind', ll. 4-5, *'obey and for you own final good, remember what may come behind'*),[31] 'The Wyf' is a uniquely pro-feminine verse within the miscellany, whose provenance and importance shall be discussed later in this thesis.[32] There is a further parallel in the reading of poem 345, attributed to Weddirburne, whom Utley is happy to locate as also being the author of poem 302 'In prayis of wemen'. As ascribed by Tod Ritchie, Weddirburne is also the author of poem 367 'I think thir men Ar verry fals and vane'. Again, we see a situation whereby the reading of personal politics

[30] Utley, p. 117.

[31] IV, p. 26 fol. 259b. My thanks to Professor McGavin once more for his guidance in translation, suggesting bow to be read as a derivative of the French 'bout'.

[32] See Chapter Three, "'I sall be hussy gif I may" – Role Reversal in the Wyf of Auchtermuchty' pp. 146-154.

onto an author's literary output proves futile, given the way that their views can alter dependent on the genre in which they are operating, and their active participation in rhetorical games rather than political debates.

The concept of playful engagement with language and debate takes us to one of the most prolific names in the fourth section, Alexander Scott, and in particular draws attention to his love lyrics. Theo van Heijnsbergen writes about Scott's love corpus in his 1991 article, arguing for the presence of Scott's narrator as an enacter of poetic roles, rather than an embodiment of the post-Romantic idea of the poet. This is very useful when considering the *querelle* – if we view Scott in this way, studying his poems as van Heijnsbergen suggests, as 'spatial and cultural phenomena rather than as testimonies of a temporal or personal-emotional process',[33] we can argue strongly for his involvement in the continuation and mediation of the *querelle* within his work. As van Heijnsbergen asserts, many of the love lyrics within the manuscript seem to be 'written to evoke a reaction or elicit a debate'.[34] Certainly many of these poems deal with issues central to the question of love and women, and as van Heijnsbergen suggests many of the love lyrics seem to 'activate [as it were] the game of love through display of poetic craftsmanship rather than answering to author-centred interpretations [...]'.[35] To reframe this notion in light of the *querelle* could yield considerable results, particularly given Scott's propensity to subvert common tropes such as courtly love for 'shock effect'.[36] Two poems that come to prominence in this consideration are poems 275, ascribed to an anonymous author,

[33] Theo van Heijnsbergen, 'The Love Lyrics of Alexander Scott', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 26.1 (1991), 366–379 (p. 370).

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid, p. 372.

[36] Ibid, p. 373.

and poem 291, by Scott, entitled 'the answeir to the ballat of hairtis', written in response to 275. It is notable that the editor of *Ballatis of Luve*, John MacQueen, asserts that 275 'must have been addressed to Scott by a woman'.[37] The poem itself implores the addressed lover to take good care of her heart, as it is now his possession:

> Do with my hairt your hairtis sweit plesance,
> For is my hairt thrall your hairt untill.
> I haif no hairt contrair your hairtis will.[38]
>
> (*Do according to your heart's sweet pleasance, for is my heart is in thrall to your heart. I have no heart contrary to your heart's will)*

It is an undeniably sweet verse, one of naïveté and innocence, adhering fully to the concept of lovers as having hearts in concert with in each other, if not, in fact, exchanged hearts. The three short stanzas sing of a deep affection and a great joy from love. Scott's reply is rather more sober. Though it delights in the love of his 'faithfull hairt', Scott is firm in his belief of his heart's gravitas:'…it is ane hairt bayth firme and stabill…' (*'it is a heart both firm and stable'*),[39] yet nonetheless he is willing to engage in a dialogue with another lover's voice, lending some (if limited) credence to the institution of the pursuit of love and desire. This enactment of not only poetic roles but also of dialectic stances in the debate of love add a palpable sense of the *querelle* as a present and ongoing intellectual debate.

Returning to the 'epigrammis' section, the final poems before the next subsection, 'ballatis Aganis evill wemen', are two verses discussing the appearance and activity of

[37] MacQueen, *Ballatis of Luve*, p. lii.

[38] III, p. 294 fol. 228a.

[39] III, p. 315 fol. 236a.

ladies at court. The first of these is Dunbar's 'Thir ladies fair that makis repair' and the appearance of such an established name in this division is a tactic which can be seen to propagate the veracity of the prejudice that has come before it. To understand the importance of Dunbar as such an authority, it is important to consider the poet and his work more broadly, and this shall be explored in the next chapter. The concluding poem, however, is an anonymous verse that is thematically resonant with Dunbar's verse, yet stylistically different, if not inferior. Where Dunbar's verse relies on subtle inference and entendre, Poem 347 'The vse of court rich weill I knaw' (*'the use of court right well I know'*) is more blunt in its rendering of the female presence at court. They cuckold their husbands, 'the silly lairdis', (l. 3) (*'the silly lairds'*) and delve immediately into soliciting their bodies 'bot on thair luddis In nakit bed / they get grit skuddis In nakit bed' (l. 12) (*'but on their loins in bed, naked - they get great exercise in bed, naked'*).[40] By the end of the poem, the proverbial women have recklessly spent their husband's silver. This confluence of materialism and misogynist rhetoric will be explored further in the third chapter of this thesis, but in the current context of the *querelle* it serves as a literal and damning indictment of women's behaviour. While Dunbar's 'watermark' holds a stylistically tighter, and thematically stronger view of the female experience, poem 347 crudely lays bare the perception of wanton women in courtly society.

[40] IV, pp. 29–30 fol. 260b.

The Case Against 'fals vicius men'

The short epigrams are followed by a brief consideration of 'fals vicius men', outlined in a colophon which seems to repeat its meaning to emphasise the inclusion of not only 'vicius' men but specifically 'guid wemen'

> Follows ballatis of the prayiß
> Of wemen and to þe reproche of
> Vicius men
> The thrid part of luve to the
> Reproche of fals vicius men
> And prayiß of guid wemen.[41]
>
> *(Here follow ballads of the praise of women and to the reproach of vicious men, the third part of love to the reproach of false vicious men and the praise of good women)*

As the first poem of the 'thrid pairt' this verse, attributed to Mersar, is responsible for setting the tone of this section. Structured in four stanzas of eight lines, Mersar laments the seduction of women by treacherous men with the admonitory refrain 'sic perell lyis in paramoris' ('*such peril lies in paramours*'). The stereotypically female tropes of false speech and dangerous mouths are inverted and ascribed to a masculine sensibility: 'w^{t} tressone so intoxicait / ar mennis mowthis at all houris'(ll. 5-6) ('*men's mouths are so poisoned with treason at all hours*').[42] The cunning of lustful men and their 'subtell slicht' (l. 3) ('*subtle cunning*') is also mentioned in tones of warning.[43] The second stanza elaborates upon this

[41] IV, p. 48 fol. 268b.

[42] Ibid, fol. 269a.

[43] Ibid.

theme of mistrust, focussing on the inconstancy of men. Mersar mentions men willing to love 'wᵗout remeid' (l. 10) (*'without cure'*) and introduces the idea of their infatuation, 'as he wald sterfe in to þat steid' (l. 15) (*'as if he would die on the spot'*).[44] A turn takes place between the second and third stanzas, as Mersar looks to what becomes of love once it is reciprocated, 'fra scho his willis ȝold' (l. 21) (*'from the time she yields to his desires'*).[45] Hollow images of common tropes of love emerge, bidding 'adew' (l. 22) (*'adieu'*) to the summer flowers and denouncing all that once seemed gold as glass, Mersar indicates that the pursuant lover has begun to lose interest in his prey.[46]

The most pervasive image of the poem is introduced here at the beginning of stanza four, picking up on earlier references to speed – the male lover is personified as a vessel, or rather a sailor, who upon consummation of his passion 'turnis […] his sail annone' (l. 25) (*'turns his sail […] at once'*).[47] This image is strong for a number of reasons. The notion of vessels and ports is a deeply gendered image, replete with inherent sexual connotation. The man departing from the land to 'an uþir port' ('*another port'*) resonates as an image of abandonment and inconstancy.[48] There are Petrarchan echoes here, reminiscent of the imagery of the *Canzoniere* and Petrarch's voyage to the port of love. Moreover, nautical imagery and the bereft female figure, 'nevir so wo begone' (l. 27)[49] (*'never so woebegone'*) are also reminiscent of the tale of Dido and Aeneas. Aeneas' abandonment of Dido is largely ascribed to the will of the gods in the *Aeneid*, yet here the

[44] Both IV, p. 48 fol. 269a.

[45] IV, p. 49 fol. 269a.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

anonymous male lover gives no reason for his abandonment, enhancing a sense of the callous nature of his actions. A closing reference to 'fals luvaris and their resort' (l. 31) ('*false lovers and their resort*') provokes an incidental image of 'paramoris' as a place to which lovers venture, a place of peril whereby hearts are broken and inconstancy prevails.[50] This oblique parallel with Douglas' prologue is a crucial allusion, again highlighting the core message of 'leful love'.

The 'lettre of cupeid', being sixty-eight stanzas, takes up the majority of this subsection. Having discussed the importance and prominence of this text earlier, little remains to be said of the text other than its continued importance to the *querelle des femmes* as a mode of argument. The manipulation of the Hoccleve translation to a Scottish setting is likely an addition on Bannatyne's part and in this sense can be read as an attempt to highlight the relevance of such verse. The amended date of 1402 is retained by the scribe, as opposed to the 1399 date of Christine's original piece, therefore the specific provenance of this text as being Christine's may not have been recognised, but irrespective of this the concluding sentiments ring true for the weighty moral message contained therein:

> Than will I thus conclud and defyne
> We ȝow command our mynisteris echone
> That reddy ȝe be our haistis to inclyne
> That of theiß fals men our rebell fone
> ȝe do punysment and þat annone
> Woyd thame our court and baneiß theme for evir
> So þat thairin moir cum thay nevir (ll. 463-469)[51]

[50] IV, p. 49 fol. 269a.

[51] IV, p. 64 fol. 274b.

(Then will I thus conclude and determine, we command you our ministers, each one, that you be ready to attend to our commands, that you punish these false men, our foes, and immediately throw them out of our courth and banish them forever, so that therein they come never more.)

Also attributed to Chaucer, Poem 362 focusses on the narrator wishing great harm and injury to those who speak ill of women, aligned with imagery of the female figure as virtuous, angelic and holy. In a hyperbolic effusion of praise, the narrator ascribes all good things to women:

This is weill knawin and has bene or this
That wemen bene cauß of all gudeneß
Of knychtheid nurto[r] eschewing all maliß
Increß of wirschep and of all worthineß
Thairto courtaß meik and grund of fathfulneß
Glaid and myrry and trew in every wyß
That ony gentill heart can think or devyß (ll. 22-28)[52]

(*This is well known and has [always] been that women [are] cause of all goodness, nurturers of knighthood, eschewing all malice, increasing worship and worthiness; in addition, courteous, meek and the foundation of faithfulness; glad, merry and true in every way that any gentle heart can think or imagine.)*

Though a robust defence of women in terms of its length (twenty-five stanzas), Utley's summary of the poem as a whole articulates the repetitive and predictable nature of such defence poetry: 'men falsely defame women and deceive these gentle creatures, who have

[52] IV, p. 65 fol. 275a.

given us birth and nurture and inspiration, and one of whom was Christ's mother'.[53] This pithy summation ties up many of the thematic strands within the defence, strands which are echoed generally in other versions of this argument and specifically in the verse selected here in the manuscript. It seems that the poems most vociferous against women are often locations of linguistic and stylistic innovation, while those in defence lack their form and literary strength.

A number of stylistic features stand out within this verse in terms of participation in the rhetoric of debate and *querelle*. The consecration of the female body as a site of suffering and as a vessel for birth is a key image in the second and third stanzas, whereby 'we aucht first to think on quhat maner / Thay bring ws furth and quhat payne thay indure / first in our birth and syne fro ȝeir to ȝeir' (ll. 8-10) *('we ought first to think on what manner they bring us forth and what pain they endure, first in our birth and then from year to year')*.[54] This is followed by the narrator's exclamation that 'Allaiß how may we say on thame bot weill / Off quhome we wer fostred and yboir' (ll. 15-16) (*'Alas, how may we say anything except good things of them, those by whom we were fostered and borne'*),[55] a common refrain in the defence of women being their integral role in the creation of life (and, implicitly, men).[56] There is

[53] Utley, p. 107.

[54] IV, p. 65 fol. 275a.

[55] Ibid.

[56] There are an abundance of parallels to this in modern feminist discourse: see Elisabeth Antloger, 'Rape Culture: She's More Than Somebody's Daughter', *Affinity*, 2016 <http://affinitymagazine.us/2016/10/08/rape-culture-shes-more-than-somebodys-daughter/> [accessed 16 August 2018]; A. Lynn, 'She's Someone vs. Narcissistic Fatherhood', *Nerdy Feminist*, 2013 <http://www.nerdyfeminist.com/2013/08/shes-someone-vs-narcissistic-fatherhood.html> [accessed 16 August 2018]; '#155 Because She's Someone's

little true substance to this argument: if we were to follow this to a logical, Christian conclusion then women's frailty and moral instability is not negated but rather enforced, children being as they are born of original sin. In relation to the *querelle*, what is more interesting is the way in which this verse addresses the question of truth pertaining to the speech of men. In stanza five the narrator implores his audience

> And thoᵗ ony wald trust to ȝour vntrewᵗ
> and to ȝour fair wordis wald ocht assent
> in gud fayth me thinkis it wer grit rewᵗ
> that vþir wemen suld for thair gilt be schent. (ll. 29-32)[57]
>
> *(And though any would trust to your untruth, and assent to your fair words, in good faith it seems to me a great shame that other women should, for their guilt, be shamed)*

This sentiment, far more so than the argument of women-as-mothers, speaks to the spirit of Christine's concerns regarding the male domination of historical narrative: if we, as readers of both this poem and society as we understand it, defer only to the traditional views of male narrators, then we will not obtain a sense of the truth of the matter.

Where Poem 362 loses some power, however, is in the proliferation of the image of a woman as a holy, pure, and perfected object. Men are implored to recognise them as 'Innocent creatvris for to begyle' (l. 65) ('*innocent creatures for to beguile*'), 'ȝour hairtis quene' (l. 120) ('*your heart's queen*'), and 'gudly angelik creature[s]' (l. 140) ('*goodly/godly angelic*

Sister/Mother/Daughter/Wife.', *365 Reason To Be A Feminist*, 2014 <http://365reasonstobeafeminist.tumblr.com/post/87792323215/155-because-shes-someones> [accessed 16 August 2018].

[57] IV, p. 65 fol. 275a.

creatures').[58] This reliance upon the idea of woman as sacrosanct, incapable of sin and naive to a fault is inherently problematic. Considering the politically charged connotations of 'hairtis quene' (l. 120) and 'hevynnis quene' (l. 160) (*'heaven's queen'*),[59] it is apparent that the current queen, Mary, is not one of these 'harmles creaturis' (l. 128): she is a woman in power, exercising political and sexual agency in a way that is counterintuitive to such a moralistic reading of a woman's role.[60] The invitation made by the narrator for men to 'pleiß thame both by day and nycht' (l. 108) (*'please them both by day and night'*) is predicated upon an unattainable ideal.[61] Though this poem argues in defence of women, it works ultimately in defence of an illusory ideal that sets women up for failure. Though the worth and dignity of women is paramount in the narrator's imagery, it is a worth and dignity of unattainable religious proportions, drawn to inculcate reverence in their male counterparts that would otherwise prove elusive. The poem ends on an appeal to Christ to have all good women 'in hevin aboif among the angellis cleir' (l. 175) (*'in heaven above the angels clear'*),[62] again emphasising the impossibility of a 'good' woman's life as being anything other than saint-like.

Scott's poem 'Ladeis be war / þat plesand ar' (*'ladies that are pleasing, beware'*, poem 363) reads as a somewhat patronising warning to the fairer sex, the emphasis on 'plesand' (l. 1) immediately indicating a fault on the part of the women in appealing to 'menis appetyte' (l. 2) (*'men's appetite'*).[63] The verses are short and song-like in their simple rhyme

[58] IV, pp. 66–67 fols. 275b - 276b.

[59] IV, pp. 68–69 fols. 276a-b.

[60] IV, p. 68 fol. 276b.

[61] Ibid, fol. 276a.

[62] IV, p. 70 fol. 276b.

[63] Ibid.

scheme, and this sense of moral simplicity underpins the message that women are vulnerable and naive in a way that men are not. While of the five poems this poem comes closest to expanding upon the concept of 'evill men', there are issues with its content, both thematic and stylistic. The implication of women as stupid or vulnerable is far from empowering, and the overriding sense of a male voice offering advice to these women is uncomfortable. Traits traditionally associated with women, particularly in the verses we have examined in the Bannatyne thus far, are ascribed to men: 'thair hairtis ar sett W^{t} ficcelneß' (l. 17) (*'their hearts are set with fickleness'*) and their 'dowbilneß' (l. 19) (*'doubleness'*).[64] The capacity of men to 'begyle W^{t} mony wyle' (l. 15) (*'beguile with many wiles'*) is a key warning, with the cunning ways of men indicated by their capacity for thought 'thair mynd takkis nevir rest' (l. 16) (*'their mind never takes rest'*),[65] the emphasis of which seems to indicate that this is not the case for women. The promises of men are empty, states Scott, and he implores his audience 'tyne creddens / believing þame no mair' (ll. 23-24) (*'lose credulity - believe them no more'*).[66] Again the act of speech assumes pre-eminence, imploring consideration of the inherently biased nature of reported speech and history; however, the potentially pro-feminine message is mitigated by Scott's attitude towards women as being in need of saving by a male adviser.

Of note in Stewart's 'For to declare that he magnificens' (*'For to declare that high magnificence'*), aside from the deeply religious style, is the mention in line 9 of 'dottaris'.[67] This reference to old 'dotards' speaks out against misogynist literary tradition, emphasising the importance of rising above the enjoyment of denigration, as 'na wirthy'

[64] IV, p. 71 fol. 277a.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

(*no worthy person*) should do.[68] There is a further extended metaphor of writing, with the narrator stating that his 'barbir toung is vnworthy I wiß' (l. 5) (*'barbarous tongue is unworthy I know'*) to speak 'of femeneyne þe fame to fortefy' (l. 8) (*'to fortify the fame of femininity'*).[69] The idea of reputation and fame is a feature of much female-focused work of the late medieval period, such as Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* or his sustained references to virtuous women in *The House of Fame*. The refrain of 'femenyne the fame to fortefy' is pleasing to the eye and ear, and the call to arms of the poet's vision is compelling: in the second stanza he suggests 'to gaddir all sic bybillis bissely / and þe fyre mak þair locatioun' (ll. 14-15) (*'to gather all such bibles [of traditional misogynist writing] busily, put them in the fire*).[70] This image of a literal destruction of the status quo is powerful and indicates a recognition of the key facet of the *querelle* that accepted history is problematic, and sustains systems of bias and misogyny. Stewart's use of a variety of rhetorical modes is evident: stanza three looks at the idea of women as a balance or counterpoint to the 'malyce of men' (l. 22) (*'malice of men*'),[71] while stanza seven provides a list of the (rather simple) virtues of women. Stanza eight speaks directly to the nature of epigrams 340 and 341 in adopting the 'impossibilia' topos, of immeasurable paper and eternal ink being insufficient to 'edify / ffor to contene of ladeis the honoris / And loving þat þair fame dois fortefy' (ll. 61-63) (*'[insufficient to] improve, and contain the honours and loving that the reputation of women does fortify'*).[72] Despite some redeeming features, such as this inversion of typically misogynist tropes, there are unsurprisingly issues with the content of this lyric: it relies heavily upon

[68] IV, p. 71 fol. 277a.

[69] Both ibid.

[70] IV, p. 71 fol. 277a.

[71] IV, p. 72 fol. 277b.

[72] IV, p. 73 fol. 278a.

universalist religious imagery, such as 'Sen god hes grantit þame sic gudlineß / and formyit thame eftir sa fair fassioun' (ll. 33-34) ('*since god has granted them such goodliness/godliness, and formed them after so fair a fashion*'),[73] and the ready acceptance, once more, of women as infallible objects of dependence for the existence of men. Their virtues circle back to their usefulness to men: 'ladeis ar menis paradyiß erdly' (l. 53) ('*ladies are men's earthly paradise*').[74]

The ideas of reputation, religion, and advice to women conflate in Mersar's 'Thir billis ar brevit to birdis in speciall' ('*their letters are written to birds in special*'), which serves as 'a moralising address' to women.[75] The reputation of women is again paramount in its importance: 'haif mynd how gude is to haif a gude name / and than na cryme sall ȝour grit wirchep fyle' (ll. 15-16) ('*have mind how good it is to have a good name / and then no crime shall your great worship foul*').[76] Again the nature of men as beguiling and dangerous is emphasised, but for the first time in this selection of poems, the emphasis circles back to physical beauty and internal grace: 'scho þat is farest fra tyme hir fame be fyld / þair will no berne be bly^{t} of hir bewte' (ll. 38-39) ('*she that is fairest, from the time her fame is dirtied, there will be no man glad of her beauty*') and Mersar concludes 'Bewty but bonty is no^{t} wirth a prene' (l. 42) ('*beauty without goodness is not worth a pin*').[77] This is a sentiment that sits within a generalised feminist narrative, in terms of the worth of women as human beings rather than aesthetic objects. It sits slightly apart from the poems pertaining directly to the *querelle* in the attention it pays to the question of physical beauty, which is not typically a key element of the core debate. The theme of transience in beauty echoes Henryson's work

[73] IV, p. 72 fol. 277b.

[74] IV, p. 73 fol. 277b.

[75] Hughes and Ramson, p. 17.

[76] IV, p. 74 fol. 278a.

[77] IV, pp. 74–75 fol. 278b.

on *The Testament of Cresseid*, a text which concerns itself with the internal nature of redemption and purity of spirit. This is the verse that perhaps comes closest to the tenets of modern feminism in its brief recognition of the importance of one's moral behaviour, as opposed to outward appearance or beauty, yet it is somewhat lost amongst the more vituperative and clichéd tropes of its neighbours. Again, a strong link to modern feminist discourse emerges, considering the 'worth' of women based on their outward appearance: to this day, a woman's appearance is held accountable in cases of assault, with much scrutiny on the nature of their outfit as being revealing or demure.[78]

Dunbar's poem 'now of wemen this I say' will be discussed in the next chapter, but following it comes the penultimate poem of the 'vicius men' subsection, Weddirburne's 'I think thir men Ar verry fals and vane' (poem 367). Given its similarity to poem 302, both in terms of shared authorship and parallel content, it will be discussed as the final poem of this analysis. The actual conclusion of the section is Scott's 'ffra raige of ȝowt the rynk hes rune' (*'from rage of youth the battle has run*', poem 368). The imagery and theme of Scott's poem pertain to the human (primarily male) condition and the necessity of moderation and compassion in love. The nature of men is characterised as passionate and bestial:

> Ffor ȝowth and will are so consorß
> W^{t}owt þat wisdome mak devorß
> Thay rin lyk wyld vndantit horß
> But brydillis to and fro. (ll. 9-12)[79]

[78] See for example Bhuvanesh Awasthi, 'From Attire to Assault: Clothing, Objectification, and De-Humanization – A Possible Prelude to Sexual Violence?', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8 (2017) <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00338>.

[79] IV, p. 79 fol. 280a.

(For youth and will are such companions, unless wisdom makes divorce between them, they run to and fro like wild uncontrolled horses without bridles)

This image of unbridled passion is followed by an appeal for women as necessary to mediate this kind of spirit. 'That man but ressoun may be rusit / quha bene w^{t} bestly lust abusit' (ll. 30-31) ('*That man who is with beastly lust abused, may be roused without reason*').[80] Scott advises that 'ferme luve w^{t} prudens suld be vsit' (l. 25) ('*constant love with prudence should be used*'),[81] and that the respect and recognition of women is inherent in a truly honourable man 'becauß we cum of thame in deid / Thair personis suld be prysit' (ll. 43-44) ('*because we come of them indeed, their persons should be prized*').[82] Scott concludes his verse on a didactic note, judging that 'ladeis suld all thingis eschew / that ma thair honor smot' (ll. 51-52) ('*ladies should eschew all things that besmirch their honour*').[83] Before this conclusion, he also touches upon the argument of women as worthy in their role as maternal figures, providing a kind of moral stability and idealised existence in order that men be satisfied and moderate. Within this poem, the worth and dignity of women is only expressed in their relation to the rules and behaviour of men. While the moral failings of women are catalogued for entertainment, the inherent 'impossibility' of their virtuous behaviour precludes any kind of meaningful incursion into the *querelle,* beyond rhetorical exercise for figures such as Scott.

As for Weddirburne, further to the smattering of poems denigrating men and those few that praise love, there does exist within the fourth book 'the ballat of the prayis of

[80] IV, p. 80 fol. 280a.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid, fol. 280b.

[83] IV, p. 81 fol. 280b.

Wemen', situated in the first section, within the general songs of love rather than any gendered category. Where the poem does not condemn women in the same way that others might, it is still located as a text of love generally rather than an actively pro-feminine or rather, anti-masculine narrative. Dunnigan refers to this section of the collection as depicting 'the *figour* of Woman made exemplary by fixed conceptions of beauty, virtue and desire'.[84] The appropriation of masculine traits in the description of women is crucial in the view of idealised femininity in poem 302. What is particularly interesting about this verse is its similarity to and shared attribution with poem 367, 'I think thir men Ar verry fals and vane'. From the very first line, Weddirburne's poem offers an entertaining and conversational take on the question of 'vicius men'. In particular, he denigrates '[men] That wemenis hono^{r} degraidis or estait' (l. 2) (*'that degrade women's honour or estate'*).[85]

Considering Poem 367 in the first instance, Weddirburne traverses the well-worn path of 'ane woman born' (l. 13) and furthers a religious argument for the worth of women, citing Christ's appearance to 'holy wemen […] becauß of þair constans superlatyif' (l. 17) (*'holy women… because of their superlative constancy'*).[86] It was men, states the narrator, that 'did sell Iesus quihilk is o(r) heid / And als be men was crusifixt & deid' (ll. 20-21) (*'did sell Jesus, who was our lord, and was crucified by men and died'*).[87] Again, the religiosity of a 'good woman' is writ large: 'matheryis, virgenis and mony holy quene' are the focus of Weddirburne's praise (l. 33) (*'mothers, virgins and many holy queens'*).[88] He refers also to the

[84] Dunnigan, *Eros and Poetry*, p. 52.

[85] IV, p. 76 fol. 279a.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

[88] IV, p. 77 fol. 279a.

parable of spitting into the wind, in terms of 'That men þat sklanderis wemen to þair defame / That same sklander Redoundis to þair awin schame' (ll. 41-42) ('*the man that slanders women to their defamation, the same slander rebounds to their own shame*').[89] The subject of the hypocrisy of men is a large part of Weddirburne's verse, and features strongly as he goes on to catalogue his examples of dishonourable men, including but not limited to Nebuchadnezzar (incest), Caligula (cruelty), Annas ('that fenȝeit Ipocreit' [l. 71])[90] and Pope Julian (idolatry). Their crimes, he argues, are vast and yet 'howbeit sum wemen falt be cace / Be Ignorance Or thruch grit Libterie' (ll. 85-86) ('*although is it some women err through ignorance or through great liberty*').[91] His closing sentiment is that 'all men þat gevis to wemen evill commend / I pray to god þat thay mak ane ill end' (ll. 97-8) ('*all men that give evil judgements about women, I pray to god that they meet an ill end*'),[92] echoing the message of poem 362 'All tho þat list of wemen evill to speik' ('*All those that wish to speak ill of women*').

The 'ballat of the prayis of Wemen' begins with a reflection on a typical male attitude to women, condemning such men 'quhilk haldis wemen in abominatioun' (l. 2) ('*who hold women in abomination*'),[93] echoing the message of 367, and proceeds to assert an appreciation of women generally as complements to the male species exemplified in sentiments such as 'ane woman till ane man Is sop and seill' (l. 8)[94] ('*a woman to a man is a piece of goodness*') and by utilising examples from history and mythology to catalogue 'noble holy wemen

[89] IV, p. 77 fol. 279a.

[90] IV, p. 78 fol. 279b.

[91] IV, p. 79 fol. 279b.

[92] Ibid.

[93] III, p. 327 fol. 239b.

[94] Ibid.

þat hes bene' (l. 16) ('*noble holy women that have been*') in their own right.[95] These references, listed much in the vein of oft-emulated tradition, gather momentum until stanza twenty-three produces an anti-climactic statement of male objections to the virtue of women. This stanza then begins a discourse whereby the fates of men are thwarted by the deviousness of women, such as Samson and Delilah, Jason and Medea. Crucially, this objection is not upheld: Weddirburne devotes only two stanzas to the common accusations of ignorant men, and proceeds to eloquently refute their specific examples, (for Medea 'Iasone was the cause for certain' ['*Jason was the cause for certain'*, l. 179] and Delilah reacted only in response to Samson's 'lust maist vyle' ['*lust most vile'*, l. 191])[96] before concluding on a note of universal appreciation and aspirational desire, that the poet would gladly 'be all wemenis campione' (l. 232) (*'be all women's champion'*).[97] Though his catalogue of men is short, it is reinforced somewhat by the work he puts in to his later verse.

Interestingly, the term 'noble' indicates a term more associated with the masculine grammar of chivalry, perceptible also in the praise of Penthesilea:

> Quha was mair noble nor penthesillie
> That riche tryvmphand queen of Amasone
> To troy scho brocht **ane plesand chevallrie**
> Of fair ladies Armit frome ta to croun […] (ll. 22-25)[98]
>
> *(Who was more noble than Penthesilea, that rich triumphant queen of Amazon. She brought* ***a pleasant chivalry to Troy,*** *of fair ladies, armed from toe to crown.)*

[95] III, p. 327, fol. 240a.

[96] III, p. 333 fol. 241b.

[97] III, p. 334 fol. 242a.

[98] III, p. 328 fol. 240a.

Within this stanza, the narrator's description utilises a kind of tempered masculinity, in which femininity is a positive governing force, bringing a dignified and pleasing form of chivalry to the battlefield of Troy. Her story is followed by the brutal depiction of the revenge of Samarus upon Cyrus: she drowns him in blood, uttering her immortal words in the vernacular:

> […] gif thow thinkis it gud
> for of menis blud thow had evir ane grit thirst
> thairfor thow may drink now quhill þat thow burst (ll. 33-35)[99]
>
> *([…] if you think it is good, for you ever had a great thirst for men's blood, therefore you may now drink until you burst.)*

The narrator sees this brutality as evidence of Samarus' status as a noble woman, one who should be praised, and therefore strengthens the notion that in order to become empowered, women must ultimately adopt traits associated with successful men, in this warrior society defined by terms of chivalry and prowess in combat. While the message of the poem may be argued to be more pro-feminine, the writer is drawing extensively on a wealth of older representations, rooted heavily in chivalric discourse, considering the references to nobility and literal 'chevallrie'. Rather than a piece of advice to its readers, Weddirburne's text is more playful in both content and placement within the 'songis of luve', echoing the entertaining tone of verse 367. The intense classicism of these references does ally this text thematically with the concluding verse of the fourth section, Douglas' prologue to the fourth book of his *Eneados*, inspired by the narrative of Dido

[99] III, p. 328 fol. 240a.

and Aeneas, provides a crucial part of understanding the overall thematic emphasis of Bannatyne's arrangement.

Chapter Conclusion

On closer examination, it is clear that the short epigrams of the fourth section are curious things. They are named in such a way as to emphasise their perceived brevity and almost ad hoc nature, and yet within them are some of the most direct interactions with the terms of the *querelle*, and the most damning indictments of contemporary misogyny. This chapter has examined, in close detail, the engagement of these epigrams with the *querelle*, offering close readings of each poem in turn, and their literary enactment of the debate. It has further introduced the concept of the denigration of men as a substitute for actively pro-feminine verse, while also locating these poems as sites of stylistic innovation. The impossibility of a perfect woman, and the maternal defense of women as life-givers has been discussed, alongside the tropes of *impossibilia* and cataloguing.

The epigrams, and their curation, are in themselves a microcosm of the debate facilitated by Bannatyne. They encompass key elements of the *querelle* outlined by Christine: the use of catalogued names, the references to the classics and the emphatic assumption of accepted gender norms. Bannatyne does not overtly draw a conclusion to the debate, but his categorising is once again notable simply in terms of the quantity of work ascribed to each stance: twenty-three poems are posited against women, compared to ten regarding 'false vicious men'. If the sheer quantity of evidence was important to a young lawyer such as Bannatyne, then the case against women in the *querelle* takes a distinct turn when the epigrams are considered.

CHAPTER THREE ~ 'Vther Solatious Conceits' – Misogynist Comedy

Gender and Monstrosity

Refocusing a critical gaze on the broader context of late medieval misogyny as pertaining to the *querelle*, this chapter will discuss the relationship between comedy and anti-feminist rhetoric within the third section of the Bannatyne manuscript, entitled 'Ballettis Mirry, And Uther Solatius Consaittis, Set Furth Be Divers Ancient Poyettis'.[1] It will demonstrate that these 'merry' ballads and 'solatious' conceits exemplify the problem of what C. Marie Harker terms the 'ahistoric scandal of transgressive female sexuality'[2] in the way in which they uphold the inherently damaging patriarchal and societal structures that so disadvantage women. It is important also to note the difference between 'salacious' conceits – concerned with indecency - and 'solatious', meaning those which offer solace These 'solatious' conceits undermine and provoke the terms of the *querelle* in the inherent values they ascribe to women and their roles in society. The notion of political boundaries, be it those of class or gender, and their relationship to 'successful' comedy will be considered, and the constraints and expectations of comedy as a genre, both within the parameters of Bannatyne and in late medieval writing more generally, will be examined. A range of poems from this section will be discussed, some well-known, some critically

[1] *The Bannatyne Manuscript: Writtin in Tyme of Pest*, ed. by W. Tod Ritchie, Scottish Text Society, IV vols (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons Ltd., 1928), II, p. 258, fol. 97r.

[2] C. Marie Harker, 'Chrystis Kirk on the Grene and "Peblis to the Ploy": The Economy of Gender', in *Women and the Feminine in Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, ed. by Evelyn Newlyn and Sarah M. Dunnigan (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), pp. 31–46 (p. 33).

unexamined, and some extant here in unique copy.[3] They are tied together thematically by these texts' deployment of the female figure as a participant in, or more frequently as the victim of, comedic misfortune.

The comedy on display in the third section ranges tonally in scope from the absurd sexualised imagery of the boat in 'Ane Ballet vpon Margaret Fleming', to the carnivalesque sexuality of the wanton lovers in the poem 'In Somer'; from the abstract allegory of Dunbar's 'Wooing of the King' to the slapstick bodily humour of 'Hiry hary hubbilschow'. In terms of a variety of genres, the section is highly diverse, utilising many popular medieval forms and tropes. As ever, Bannatyne's editorial process provokes discussion here, and the broad array of genres adopted in this particular section suggest perhaps a more playful and experimental editorial presence, outwith the moral rigour of the other sections.

Of particular interest is poem 182, which is an excerpt from a play of unknown provenance, in which a monstrous female body is for a time the narrative focus. The way

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[3] Poems analysed, with identifying numbers in brackets, per Tod Ritchie edition:
'Chrystis Kirk on the Grene' (164);
'In secreit place this hindir nycht' (167);
'þe wowing of the king quhen he wes in dumfermeling' (180);
'Hiry hary hubbilschow' (182);
'The Wyf of Auchtermuchty' (183);
'Ane Ballet vpon Margaret Fleming' (186);
'Of wenche w^{t} child' (189);
'Ffals clatterand kensy kukald knaif' (204);
'In Somer' (206);
'I met my lady well arayit' (209);
'Now gossop I must neidis begon' (233);
'My mistres is in Musik passing skillful' (234).

in which the poet entwines anxieties about the female form, the patriarchal lineage of its subject, and a comedic sense of the exaggerated monstrous body, make it an apt introduction for this chapter. A fuller version of this particular text appears in the Asloan manuscript;[4] however neither witness offers any further information as to the broader context of the play itself. Though this is curious, what is pertinent to the discussion of the female figure is the magnificent monstrosity of the wife of 'Gog Magog', described in scatological detail by the narrator, whereby 'the Hevin reirdit quhen scho wald rift' (l. 43).[5] This poem will be returned to in due course; however, the juxtaposition of the physical and bawdy humour alongside the more satirical verse of class-based comment is a key example of the broad range of lyric for which Bannatyne is here operating as editor. The more mythological and abstract poems are further contrasted with the poems which consider specific women: the vicissitudes and pointed invective of 'Ballat vpon Margret Fleming' exemplify the *modus operandi* of misogynist propaganda, comparing the female figure with the possession of an unruly boat, to be steered and kept well by the sailor. This poem will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

It is not the case, therefore, that anti-feminist comedy is a category unto itself. Anti-feminist rhetoric and the preoccupation with the worth of women is woven into nearly every instance of comedic writing. In the Bannatyne manuscript, the fourth section codes its discussion of the *querelle* in terms of questions of morality, 'leful love', and the abstractions of courtly romance. The third section is altogether grittier, with the social pretence of politeness often stripped back to the bare minimum, the scathing satire ever close to the surface.

[4] NLS MS.16500 [Mf.Sec.MSS.516].

[5] II, p. 317 fol. 119a.

Yet the nature of the poems covered, in terms of their liminality in space and time in their own context, further creates the sense of the comedy section as an exploration of the key issues of the *querelle* which is less generically restrictive than its counterparts in the manuscript. The literal and social geography of the section is that of a generalised class-based Scotland, which is framed in pictures of both rural and urban life, illustrated for the urban elite, while the nature of the text as both late medieval and, to an extent, early modern, straddles two distinctive eras of literature.[6] Where the fourth section lyrics dwell in the arena of advice, theology and morality in terms of their exploration of love and desire, with dateable poems such as Douglas' 'Prologue' (c. 1513) and the work of Alexander Scott and William Dunbar, the poems of the third section seem to deal with events and amatory transactions characterised by a preoccupation with hearsay, secrecy, and common parlance.

A Musical Mistress

Perhaps the best example of this contrast comes in the poems which traverse the space between the third and fourth sections. As mentioned on page 90, the very beginning of the fourth section features a short, misogynistic poem which functions as a transition, moving the reader from the salacious concerns of the last poems in the earlier section and into the more sober concerns of the next section.

She hath such judgement both in tyme and mude

[6] For more on the distinctions between urban and rural communities, see Verweij (2016).

That for to play Wth hir wald do ȝow guid.
And q^{n} ye win hir heart both theres the spight
Yow cannot get hir for to play alone
Boy play yo^{r} pairt & she will play all night
And nixt day too or ellis it ten till one
And run devoue w^{t} yow in such sort
But never so far she will mak yow com short
Also she sent for me to come & play
Q^{lk} I did take for ane exceiding grace
Bot she so tyred me or I went away
I wished I had bein in some vther place
She loved the tune far better than I did
And still she keiped tyme for heart & bluid
I loue my mistres & I loue to play
So she will let me play wth intermeaso^{r}
Bot q^{n} she tyis me to it all the day
I hate and vgg hir greedie disposi^{o}ne
Let hir keep tyme as nature does requyre
And I will play as much as she'll desyre
Finis (ll. 1-30)[7]

She has such judgement in timing and mood, that it would do you good to play with her. And when you win her heart, there's the problem - you cannot get her to play alone. Boy, play your part and she will play all night, and next day too, or else ten till one, and rendezvous with you in such sort - but never so far that she will make you come short. So she sent for me to come and play, which I did take for an exceeding grace, but she so tired me before I went away. I wished I had been in some other place - she loved the tune far better than I did, and still she kept time for heart and blood. I love my mistress and I love to play, so she will let me play with intermissions, but when she ties me to it all day I hate and abhor her greedy disposition. Let her keep time, only as nature requires, and I will play as much as she'll desire.

The key thematic focus of the poem can be thus described: the nature of woman's sexuality as 'play', and its insatiability ('she will play all night') comparative to the male

[7] III, pp. 240–41, fol. 211a-b.

experience ('she so tyred me…I wished I had bein in some vther place') and the ideas of nature and 'keip[ing] tyme'. The female appetite is depicted as a 'greedie disposiº ne', which fosters resentment in the male lover, who does not reciprocate the enthusiasm ('she loved the tune far better than I did'). Setting aside the conventional symbolism of playing music as a parallel to lovemaking, what this poem shows is a version of heterosexual discourse where the female is unbounded sexually, and as such, is repugnant to the men around her. She is bestial in her appetite, against nature and out of 'tyme', and her demands upon the male lover are characterised as unreasonable and overwhelming.

Bannatyne has chosen to preface his moral recommendation to love 'god aboif all vder thing' with this account of female sexual desire, where the speaker will 'play as muche as she'll desyre': from the playful erotica of 'my mistres is in musik passing skilful' which culminates the comedy section, Bannatyne moves the imagery of musical mastery into a scenario of female monstrosity, where the man is prey to the voracious female appetite. In inverting the traditional imagery of 'my mistres', the addition of this verse pulls the focus from the comedic elements of libidinous behaviour into the question of vicious appetite. In following directly with the second colophon, Bannatyne secures this tonal shift and movement towards a further 'othering' of the female figure.

Just before this inclusion, however, comes 'My mistres is in Musik passing skillful', categorised as part of the third section. This is a poem which is recounted in later volumes of verse and is to an extent a staple of the late medieval and early modern canon. The two-stanza verse is comprises ten lines, in an *ababccdede* structure. The conflation of the grammar of music and musicianship with the arts of love is a sly innuendo, which allows for a great deal of playfulness with the imagery of the hands. Much like the eponymous

'mistres' this is a poem that is 'exceeding wilfull' (l.3) in its adaptation of music imagery.[8] The audacity of the female figure in addressing her own sexual appetite is sorely felt: her wilfulness is linked entirely to her refusal to play 'bot for hir awin delight' (l. 4) (*'except for her own delight'*).[9] The lusty description of her 'sueit delicious touch / Vpon the instrument qr on she playis' (ll. 7-8)[10] (*'sweet delicious touch upon the instrument she plays'*) is highly eroticised in the voyeuristic description of the (presumably male) narrator. The act of playing an instrument, an inanimate object, with the aim of creating music for enjoyment is a strong analogy to the way in which sexual interaction dictates humour. There is an implicit judgement in the attitude of the mistress towards such earthy pleasures: the poet remarks that '[she] never thinkis that she can play too much' (l. 9),[11] while common religious and moral edicts would certainly posit otherwise.

The imagery of the musician as 'play[ing] hir pairt at the first syt' (l. 2)[12] (*'playing her part at first sight'*) provokes a sense of the duty of the musician, the expected performance and ready response, in this case analogous to the sexuality of the mistress, so adored by her voyeur. There is a strong sense of repressed desire within this text, a latent sexuality which pervades the shortest of poems. The reference to 'hir pleaßor is' (l. 10)[13] (*'her pleasure(s)'*) is curious; while it does refer to her own sexual pleasure, there is also a sense in which her pleasures are those which she provides for those around her, adding a sense of obligation as well as a commercial ethos to the transaction. Whether the mistress is a

[8] III, p. 239, fol. 210b

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

lady of high moral standing or from the lower echelons of society inhabited by the narrator is hard to locate, but certainly the reference to musical ability implies a higher social standing.

Figuring 'The Economy of Gender'

In her work on 'The Economy of Gender', Harker examines two poems, 'Chrystis Kirk on the Grene' (appearing in the Bannatyne) and 'Peblis to the Ploy'. These two poems are juxtaposed by Harker as they are both based in the environment of a burgh market. Harker describes this locus as being 'a permeable site of both social climbing and social discipline',[14] an interpretation which gives a strong sense of the relative importance of these locations to social interactions in the late medieval period. Conflict within these spaces seems to stem, crucially, from difference; that is to say the distinctions between those from within the burgh community, and those from without. Harker argues that these two poems are related more deeply to misogyny than class, despite her initial readings of the text. A surface reading of the text may focus on the inherent class judgement of the *nouveau riche* or working class attempting to assimilate with the existing ruling class, but Harker's work rightly points out that the distaste expressed by the author is fundamentally catalysed by the female figure – '[w]ith satiric contempt, these poems seek to expel the outsider, conveniently configured as transgressively *feminine*.'.[15]

[14] Harker, p. 31.

[15] Ibid, p. 35.

On the surface, the poems deal with the conflicts of 'commoners' versus 'nobility', in *Peblis* by way of 'mock-heroic spectacle'[16] and in 'Chrystis', by way of 'mock-romance wooing and combat'.[17] Although both poems 'illustrate a wasteful and overarching array of common folk',[18] Harker believes these works to be inherently and pervasively gendered. This is a case, argues Harker, of deliberate displacement of anxieties from class structure to 'determinately feminine and, in particular, *sexual* misconduct of the *women* of the lower orders'.[19] The way in which class is inextricably bound to the female body is worth contemplation. So often are women seen to be aping the behaviour of their 'betters', be it men or members of the nobility, or indeed a combination of the two, that the comedic figure of the common woman takes on another layer of meaning. If social aspiration is inherently problematic and comedic, how can a woman ever triumph?

Certainly this is a useful model of reading for the Bannatyne; in a collection of such vast scope and variety of genre, the deflection of certain literal preoccupations onto metaphorical matters is inevitable, allowing the audience to recognise and respond to anxieties in their everyday lives. Yet what complicates these projections is the fact that while women may come to embody thematic anxieties of power, inversion, and threats to order, the reality – or the *literality* of the historic situation – contains a kernel of truth. The work of Ewan on 'Scottish Portias'[20] and of Dunnigan on Mary Queen of Scots,[21] are two examples which highlight the very real, pressing question of female representation in

[16] Harker, p. 32.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ewan (1992).

[21] Dunnigan, *Eros and Poetry*.

Bannatyne's era, on both a micro 'local' scale, and a macro 'national' concern. This has parallels with Harker's later argument regarding the distillation of broader anxieties into a local context.

Harker eloquently summarises the manner in which misogyny is too often ascribed a 'transhistoric essence, immutable, hence beyond dispute'.[22] Looking to Foucault to substantiate this idea, Harker describes how the return of the focus to the local and the smaller scale exemplifies the way in which misogyny works to 'serve' specific interests, 'rendering lived tensions through discursive proxies'.[23] Misogyny disguises 'the Real', she argues, and attempts to contain 'anxieties such as economic pressures and changing class relations'[24] in the process of cultural production. The fifteenth century saw 'the ahistoric scandal of transgressive female sexuality [serve] as a proxy for […] distinctly *historic* class hostilities of late-medieval Scottish urban life'.[25] Burghs are important sites of social performance, but they constrain entry to the upper echelons of society where possible. This space was threatened, vulnerable in its permeability due to a traditional non-walled construction,[26] and the fear of infiltration by 'the other' was a fear of a kind of moral pollution, a threat to the privilege that existed therein. (For more on the permeable boundaries of the town, see Chapter Five, and discussion of the 'Freiris of Berwik' from page 207.) Yet this infiltration and consumer interaction with the space was essential to the trade nature of the market, the heart of the burgh, and constituted a

[22] Harker, p. 33.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid, p. 34.

problematic paradox. For Bannatyne, a merchant based in Edinburgh,[27] one of the largest burgh spaces in sixteenth-century Scotland, these concerns would likely have lingered.

Van Heijnsbergen argues that the audience of the manuscript was one which developed over the prior century in ways that inform the production of the manuscript in which Bannatyne 'reveals traces of… cultural and social political developments'[28] whereby burgh consumers become patrons of literature which previously parodied their very existence. Following the death of James V (d. 1542), van Heijnsbergen argues, 'literature, too, faced a period of unsettlement'.[29] Ultimately, the changing role of the burgh audience led to the 'emergence of a new authorial voice out of medieval conventions of courtly literature'.[30] This is a crucial comment in relation to the Bannatyne manuscript, a perplexing collection in many ways, but perhaps most of all in its temporal and cultural liminality: it is a resplendent collection of medieval verse but its compilation and circulation veers ever closer to the categorisation of 'early modern'. This periodicity indicates not only a change of chronological categorisation, but also of a swing in the way in which content belies context: the way in which literature is consumed and the changing nature of those who consume it.

This correlates with much of the hypothesis of Harker's work on gendered economy. The nature of consumption, and in particular the female relationship with this material culture, is a hugely important strand of thematic interest in Bannatyne's *querelle* poetry, and van Heijnsbergen's scrutiny of this Dunbar poem draws to the surface certain

[27] For further information on Bannatyne's social circle in Edinburgh see van Heijnsbergen, 'Prosopographical Context' (2001).

[28] Theo van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention and Authorial Voice', p. 423.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

editorial decisions made by Bannatyne, which seem to serve the argument that there was a contemporary anti-urban sentiment. His use of 'townish' and which the OED defines as 'having the manners or habits of town dwellers; **worldly, sophisticated**', are integral to this argument, and van Heijnsbergen clearly explicates the nature of 'townish' as a modish adjective providing a direct distinction from 'courtly', and with it the implication of class suitability.[31]

Does all of this mean that, put simply, the female figure becomes a societal scapegoat, that women are, by and large, acting as 'straw men' for social anxieties? Jeffrey J. Cohen discusses pithily in *Monster Theory* 'the real violence these debasing representations enact, connecting monsterizing depiction with the phenomenon of the scapegoat'.[32] The potentiality to have been something else, and the willing refusal to conform through accepting existing limitations, precludes women from being taken seriously, to an extent, but not as explicitly as this. Unfortunately, the examples of lambasted and socially eviscerated female figures are plentiful, even now, but the problem is closely mirrored in the Bannatyne verse, which has a particular preoccupation with class. The performance of courtliness, the act of courtship, is a key indicator of class, and is a situation in which women remain an unattainable cipher, a catalyst for the action and

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[31] 'Townish, Adj.', *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, 2018) <www.oed.com/view/Entry/204063> [accessed 12 June 2018]. Perhaps the most well-known use of this terminology comes in Chaucer's Miller's Tale whereby Absolom woos Alison with gifts: 'and, for she was of town, he profred meede' (Riverside Chaucer, p. 70, l. 3380). This materiality relates closely to Harker's comments on women as material consumers and the value judgement therein.

[32] Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, 'Monster Culture (Seven Theses)', in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*, ed. by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 3–26 (p. 11).

betterment of men. Failed mimicry of this practice (as seen in 'The lairdis bed' and 'In somer', whereby passions are indulged in a grotesque and absurd manner) indicates a lack of education, misunderstanding of social cues and pretension, linked closely with women who transgress these rules and systems of communication. The Bannatyne manuscript provides clear examples of this, whereby thematic material overlaps, intertwines, and feeds itself in a perplexing web of masculine anxiety and misogyny. After all, what greater 'other' is there from a male perspective than women? 'From the earliest patristic writers to the later scholastics, Woman exists as a defining term, the differential by which Man is *not*, of the unreasoning, the bodily, the excessive'.[33]

By drawing parallels between the 'illicit permeation'[34] of the burgh and the transgression of class boundaries, Harker argues that, rather than commonality, the burgh is constructed by exclusion, with the market acting as a 'dangerous threshold'.[35] She uses the gendered term 'labile' to describe the perception of 'the plenitude of unrestrained female sexuality'[36] and remarks that the women of these poems 'figure the anxieties of threatened burghal privilege'.[37] I contest that, more broadly, women in these poems figure the anxieties of threatened male privilege and in this sense, crucially feed into the misogynist narrative. The market offers these women fleeting liminality, but only in respet of their ability to participate duplicitously as both consumers of material culture and 'retailers… of themselves'.[38] Like the poems discussed by Harker, these poems therefore

[33] Harker, pp. 32–33.

[34] Ibid, p. 34.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid, p. 35.

[38] Ibid.

'seek to expel the outsider, conveniently configured as transgressively *feminine*'.[39] This rings particularly true when considering poems such as *The Freiris of Berwik*, where the boundaries of the town serve to further highlight the illicit transgressions within.[40]

Here, Harker taps into two rich thematic veins: the liminality of the market as carnivalesque (in the Bakhtinian sense) and the idea of a threshold of difference, which further aligns with Cohen's work on the seven theses of the monster. The carnivalesque performativity of sexual practice is central to the comedy section, and the idea of female transgression into the bawdy, with monstrosity as something that dwells tantalisingly in the boundaries, is very apt for the study of the female figure in the Bannatyne and its political context. Cohen articulates his monster theory in a few multivalent ways that can be appropriated here: the 'gates of difference', tying into the metaphorical geography suggested by Harker, and the idea of the monster as 'category crisis'. In each of these, we find parallels with Harker's analysis of the female figure, in a way that further informs our understanding of Bannatyne's collection.

On the nature of the 'gates of difference', Cohen states that 'a political figure suddenly out of favour is transformed like an unwilling participant in a science experiment by the appointed historians of the replacement regime'.[41] This idea speaks to the plight of Mary Queen of Scots, who stands at the gate of religious, cultural, and sexual difference. The attacks on her erotic poetry are framed in such terms of gross sexuality, with their emotional content utilised as evidence of her inefficacy and failure. 'Boundaries between

[39] Harker, p. 35.

[40] For more on this poem, see Chapter Five, '"Townish Friars' and Hungry Women', pp. 212-217.

[41] Cohen, 'Monster Culture', p. 8.

personal and national bodies blur',[42] says Cohen, and this is certainly the case with Mary and the implications of her reign on social interaction, religion, and literary practice, whereby her overt Catholicism and refusal to be readily categorised in the eyes of the Scottish people created a pervasive sense of her otherness. This follows on from the notion of the monster as 'harbinger of category crisis' whereby 'the refusal to participate in the classificatory 'order of things''[43] as described by Cohen is a crucial point of reference for the transgressive female body. The 'order of things' as witnessed and established by Bannatyne in his editorial process is that of a patriarchal system of oppression. The use of the term 'contested cultural space'[44] as a name for the monster is further useful as the politics of the female body remain uncertain, with questions of property and ownership central to key feminist debate. Relating this back to Harker, the contested space literally becomes the marketplace, with property ownership and transaction at the heart of interactions: 'the necessary permeability of the burgh and its market is configured as the scandalous permeability and indeterminacy of the unruly female body'.[45]

Within this conceptual framework, a number of tropes occur, observable in the cross-section of verse examined. Firstly, there is the question of courtly behaviour, that is to say how it is manifested in this context, how it is then parodied and inverted, and how the use of euphemism enables this exchange of meaning. Secondly, the nature of location in both time and place: frequent references are made to 'secreit place' and consequently the behaviour of a voyeuristic observer, while the class boundaries are often writ large in their physical location (consider, for example, 'the lairdis bed'). This liminality is not

[42] Cohen, 'Monster Culture', p. 10.

[43] Ibid, p. 6.

[44] Ibid, p. 7.

[45] Harker, p. 43.

limited to geography, however, and the concept of the 'hindir nycht' as a location of illicit, impermanent behaviour, is hugely important to the construction of many of these narratives. A third trope is that of power relations, that is to say, the exchange of power as perceived through sexual relations: for example, within 'I met my lady well arayit', the way in which the consummation of sexual desire often leads to something of a *volte face* for the couple concerned. The final trope is that of physicality in relation to sex and women: the monstrosity of 'Hiry hary hubbilschow' and the codified animal behaviour of 'The wowing of the king' are two such examples, while the infantilisation of male desire is a key focus of 'In Secreit Place This Hindir Nycht'.[46]

Transgressive Sexuality

'In secreit place' is the first of these overtly sexual poems to appear in the collection. Within the Bannatyne this nine-stanza poem is attributed to a 'Clerk', but is also widely attributed to William Dunbar, this being corroborated by both the Reidpeth and Maitland Folio witnesses of this poem. Due to the attribution within the Bannatyne, and the thematic resonance of the poem with the analysis in this chapter, I have opted to discuss this poem separately from the Dunbar poems discussed in the previous chapter. The edition which appears in the Bannatyne is perhaps not the best witness due to its

[46] The concept of the 'hinder nicht' is in itself interesting. Bawcutt provides context to this terminology in her notes on 'In Secreit Place' stating the following definition: '…this hinder nycht. A formulaic phrase, like 'once upon a time', often used to begin a poem. It corresponds to [Old French] *lautrier* (characteristic of the *pastourelle*), and [Middle English] 'this endres night (day)' (Bawcutt, 1998, p. 344)

erroneous attribution to Clerk; however, the content and purpose of the poem remain consistent between versions, each stanza culminating with the piteous refrain '3e break my hairt my bony ane'. The situation described by the narrator is one which is overheard 'in secreit place' and is framed as a dialogue between a man and a woman. Initially, the man appears to be the underdog of this interaction: he is described as being unattractive, somewhat desperate, and keen for the ministrations of the woman:

> His bony berd wes kemd and croppit
> Bot all w^{t} kaill it wes bedroppit
> And he wes to mich Fluch and gukkit
> He clappit fast he kist he chukkit
> As w^{t} the galikis he were ourgane
> 3it be his feiris he wald haif fukkit
> 3e break my hairt my bony ane (ll. 8-14)[47]
>
> *(His bonny beard was kempt and cropped, but it was full of cabbage. He seemed to me foolish: he petted fast, he kissed, he fondled as though he were overcome with wantonness, yet by his demeanour he would have fucked, you break my heart my bony one.)*

The physical expression of his desire is central to the poem, with the narrator's focus being frequently drawn not only to the beauty of the woman in question but also his own arousal: '3our halß quhyt As quhalis bane / garß ryß on loft my quhillylillie' (ll. 33-4) ('*your throat as white as whale's bone, [it] raises my penis high to the sky*').[48] The woman's perfection (her perceived purity and whiteness) is projected here as being to blame for the male reaction – her mere existence 'gives rise' to the situation, framing the desirous male response as

[47] II, p. 275 fol. 103b.

[48] II, p. 276 fol. 104a.

being unavoidable and, to an extent, involuntary. While a sense of shame is not foremost, there is a sense of discomfort in the male reaction, as he is depicted as being overcome in the face of his desire.

This display of sexual arousal is further problematised as the pleading of the male lover begins to focus on his relationship with his mother and the women in his life. Referring to his infancy and to his 'wame […] of ȝour love so fow' (l. 18) ('*stomach […] of your love so full*'),[49] the male voice is emasculated, and to an extent infantilised in his pursuit of sexual conquest. In their verbal exchange, his beloved makes reference to his naivety as being 'W^{t} mvderis milk ȝit in ȝour michane' (l. 37) ('*with mother's milk yet in your belly?*').[50] This consistent and prolonged reference to youth and infancy adds an unsettling tone to a poem that is ostensibly focussed on the pursuit of carnal pleasure. The proliferation of infantilised language, a kind of medieval 'baby talk', adds to this strange juxtaposition, while nonsensical terms such as 'sweet possoddy' (l. 30) and 'slasy gawsy' (l. 39) sharing the page with innuendo and reference to 'fukki[ng]' adds to this absurdity.[51] The use of such infantilised language, creates a sense in which the lyrics become a pantomime of innocence and purity, juxtaposed curiously with the sexual congress they desire. The problematic locus of the maternal figure as an idealised woman, as can be seen in examples of Mariology discussed further in Chapter Two, further complicates this discourse of desire.

[49] II, p. 275 fol. 103b.

[50] II, p. 276 fol. 104a. Bawcutt glosses the word 'mychane' as suggesting 'a sense such as 'mouth' or 'belly''. *Dunbar*, p. 345.

[51] Ibid.

The conclusion of the text is a change to the status quo previously established: this is a trope which recurs throughout this section of the manuscript. 'Syne tha twa till ane play began / quhilk that thay call þe dirrydan' (l. 59-60) ('*Since the two began to play / that which they call highjinks*').[52] The poem does not end with the expected refrain of despair from the male voice: his desire satiated, it is the voice of the woman which lingers for the reader: 'q scho quhair will ȝe man / full leis me that graceless gane' (l. 62-3) ('*said she where will you man, very attractive to me is that ugly face*').[53] Prior to this, the poet depicts the male persuasion of the woman with 'ane appill ruby' (l. 57) ('*an apple ruby*', potentially referring to a symbolic apple or indeed a jewel) and the resulting gratitude, for her 'sweet cowhuby' (l. 58) ('*sweet wimp/weakling*').[54] His desire is his driving force and his *raison d'etre*. The narrative arc of this poem is thus hugely problematic from a feminist perspective: here we see a desperate male approach to coerce a woman into participating in sexual acts, after which he makes to leave, in a manner synonymous with medieval *pastourelle* narrative form.[55] The bestial undertones of cattle rearing and the parallels with maternal relationships further complicate this example of heterosexual desire and the politics of sex.

Perhaps, then, it is the case that the poem deliberately obfuscates and muddies the nature of the desire it depicts. Is this in itself a statement on the performativity of

[52] II, p. 277 fol. 104a.

[53] Ibid. With thanks to Professor McGavin for his guidance on the translation of 'leis me'.

[54] Both ibid.

[55] For further work on the *pastourelle* form in Middle Scots poetry, see Carissa M. Harris, *Obscene Pedagogies: Transgressive Talk and Sexual Education in Late Medieval Britain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018).

romantic love and the constructed boundaries of class and gender? In her notes in the poem's definitive edition, Priscilla Bawcutt immediately frames the poem as an 'erotic verse dialogue',[56] and points to other examples within the Bannatyne manuscript in particular. There are indeed elements of the *pastourelle* here. However, as Bawcutt points out, the speaker is 'no more than an unseen and amused observer', unlike the traditional shepherds of the genre.[57] Once more this draws attention to the recurrent theme of voyeurism and observed behaviour, the way in which secret places and action become encoded with the consummation and expression of desire. Bawcutt's reading of the poem suggests that the male figure is a lout who hides behind the language of courtly love, while the female is more 'self-assured'.[58] While undoubtedly there are elements of charlatanism to the male speaker, the pretension of courtliness which he adopts is more complex than simply misguided loutishness. His retraction and absence at the end of the poem speak to a more calculated coercion, and, though the female voice reads on one level to be more self-assured, there is a vulnerability within her character that is exploited in a way more congruent with a cynical predator. Theo van Heijnsbergen states that 'in secreit place' is depicted as an innovative poem, a 'departure from these earlier poems which much more self-evidently embraced medieval or pastoral conceptions of sexual love'[59] and certainly this uneasiness of definition is reflected in the conclusion of the text and the female plea to the 'graceless gane' (l. 42).[60]

[56] Dunbar, p. 343.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid, p. 344.

[59] Van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention', p. 426.

[60] II, p. 276, fol. 104a.

This poem suggests that women can and will bend to flattery, that they are to blame for the reactions of men, and that they are prone to the neediness and dependency on their lovers. Van Heijnsbergen remarks that

> [In secreit place] still suggests a self-confident courtly identity on the poet's part, the fact that this court poet actually selected such upstarts as butts for his satire signals the very existence of an increasingly prominent 'upwardly mobile' movement of those not initiated into the arts of courtly love.[61]

Though the conventions of courtly love are expounded and to an extent criticised as being merely behaviours – that is to say, anyone can adopt this code to their own nefarious means – women are once again the butt of the joke for Dunbar's narrator.

Another poem of identical provenance closely follows 'In Secreit Place'. 'þe wowing of the king quhen he wes in dumfermeling'[62] ('*the wooing of the king when he was in Dunfermline*') is securely attributed to Dunbar and also appears in both the Reidpeth and Maitland Folios. The ten stanza poem follows a similar structure to that of 'In Secreit Place', particularly in its use of refrain, in this case the narrator's remark 'and that me thoᵗ ane ferly case' (ll. 7, 14, 21, 35, 42, 49, 56, 63) ('*and that, I thought, was a strange case*').[63] While much critical scrutiny of this poem focusses on the identification of King James IV as the fox, and the problematic implications of this analogy in terms of identifying both the mistress (lamb) and rival (wolf), the way in which this poem speaks to a feminist reading

[61] Van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention', p. 426.

[62] II, p. 309, fol. 116a.

[63] II, pp. 309-311 fols. 116a-b.

of the third section is the way in which its status as a fable encodes ideas of gender and sexuality.

The tale told is highly euphemistic, with the 'lusty reid haird lowry' (l. 16) ('*lusty red haired fox*') taking possession of the 'silly lame' (l. 18) ('*silly lamb*'),[64] virginal white and 'ane morsell of delyte' (l. 23) ('*a morsel of delight*'),[65] and brutalising her sexually. His conquest of her is total, as the poet describes the pair hiding from the wolf '[the fox] in the silly lambis skin / he crap as far as he might win' (ll. 59-60) ('*[the fox] crept as far in as he could get in the silly lamb's skin*').[66] The nature of this dubious seduction toys with the notion of truth. The narrator of the poem is keen to assert his reliability, stating 'I will no lesingis put into verß / Lyk as thir Iangleris dois reherß' (ll. 43-44) ('*I won't put any lessons into verse, like as the prattlers do rehearse*');[67] however the fox lies openly to the lamb, and 'the silly thing trowd him allace' (l. 40) ('*the silly thing believed him, alas*') when he 'spak full fair tho[t] he wes falß' (l. 37) ('*spoke full fair though he was false*').[68] The deeply salacious encounter is one of coercion and deception, in which the female figure is sympathetic insofar as the narrator casts her in the role of lamb, sacrificial, innocent and naive, evoking a reader response not dissimilar to the animal fables collated later in the manuscript. The behaviour of the fox is complicated further when considered in the context of the King, as his actions are far from laudable. Whether we are supposed to admire the fox is unclear, and the added threat of the wolf intensifies this uncertainty. The figure of woman is once again the victim of this comedy of errors, her worth and dignity stripped away by

[64] II, p. 309, fol. 116a.

[65] II, p. 310, fol. 116b.

[66] II, p. 311, fol. 116b.

[67] II, p. 310 fol. 116b.

[68] Both ibid.

bestialising her into a 'silly' lamb, a term that is evasive in its meaning, but indicates a lacking on the woman's part. As referred to on page 38 the definition of 'silly' in relation to a lamb could suggest a more theological interpretation of a Christ-like figure, but here is inverted for ridicule. Like 'In Secreit Place', the bawdy nature of the humour borrows heavily from the fable format, with references to animals serving to further denigrate the behaviour of men and women as slave to their base desires.

Perhaps the most atypical description of woman within the Bannatyne, 'Hiry hary hubbilschow', delights in the bawdy and scatological illustration of the female body. In this case, the narrator is describing his 'grandser' (l. 25) ('*grandfather*'),[69] the legendary Gog Magog, in order to ascertain his pedigree as a noble (and latterly, well-endowed) man. Immediately the question of male primogeniture and inheritance comes to the forefront, with the narrative voice claiming lineage through this noble family tree. However, the way in which he boasts of his grandmother's status is intriguing. Rather than dwell on any conceptions of soft femininity, the speaker utilises the content of the poem from stanza 6 onwards to capture the image of a literal giantess, with an accordingly monstrous body. In *Of Giants*,[70] Cohen devotes a chapter to the nature of gendered gianthood. In 'Body, Woman, Monster', ideas are discussed which relate directly to the content and context of 'Hiry Hary Hubbilschow' – 'hubbilschow' itself is understood as meaning a confusion or uproar, adding to the sense of disruption.[71] As Cohen rightly states, 'the poetics of nation building is also a discourse of gender 'construction"[72] and the mechanism of this poem

[69] II, p. 316 fol. 119a.

[70] Ibid.

[71] http://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/hubbilschow. Accessed 13th September 2018.

[72] Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters and the Middle Ages* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 46.

serves to place the constructed monstrous female body at the heart of an origin myth, not unlike the Albina myth present in the Auchinleck manuscript, referenced by Cohen.[73] There is a sense in which this very myth is reframed within 'Hiry Hary Hubbilschow': Cohen talks about the transgressive gendered giant of Albina,[74] and the way in which her monstrous body is essential to the establishment of nationhood in Britain's history. Certainly, within the poem we are led to believe that the figure of the grandmother is at least as important as that of the patrilinear ancestors, if not more so. Cohen states that the maternal body is a problematic site of origin, rendered so in giantess narratives and the appropriation of sanctified femininity.[75] The inherent conflict between maternal and heroic bodies is aptly summarised by Cohen:

> [the] maternal body bears children, dies and vanishes; the heroic body, fantastically self-sufficient, can bear nations and be forever remembered in […] its colossal progeny.[76]

Here we see a female, maternal body but one which refuses to vanish and participates in the bearing of nations, literally remembered by her 'colossal' progeny. While Cohen's summary may lead us to accept the poem as a variation upon the Albina myth, it is important to consider also the presence of the reference to Gog Magog. Cohen also touches upon this myth as being perceived as integral to the foundational myth of Britain,

[73] Cohen, pp. 48–49.

[74] Ibid, p. 51.

[75] Ibid, p. 47.

[76] Ibid.

with Gog and his wife regularly referenced in Arthuriana.[77] The way in which 'Hiry Hary Hubbilschow' participates in a transcreation or amalgam of these myths is interesting, and places the Bannatyne as participating in a longer mythology of monstrous femininity.

Curiously, the tone in which this expansive female body is described is not necessarily negative: indeed, both the body and the bodily functions of the woman described become glorified and venerated statements of power. Though the poem is an excerpt from an unknown play which is rooted in the mythological, the description roots itself in lurid biological detail:

> Her heid wan heichar nor þe lift
> The Hevin reirdit quhen scho wald rift
> The laß was na thing sklendir
> Scho spat lochlomound w^{t} hir lippis
> Thunder and fyreflawcht flaw fra hir hippis
> Quhen scho was crabbit The sone thold clippis
> The feynd dost nocht offend hir (ll. 41-48)[78]

[77] Cohen, pp. 35–36.

[78] II, p. 317, ll. 41–48.

Consider also the description of Folly's wife in Ane Satire of the Thrie Estates, a play discussed further in Chapter Five, whereby Folly describes:

Scho riftit ruckit and maid sic stendis
scho ȝeild and ȝet at baith the endis
Till scho had cassin a cuppill of quartis
Syne all turnd till a rak of fartis
Scho blubbirt/bokkit and braikit still

(Her head was higher than the sky and the heavens roared when she would belch. The lass was no slender thing: she spat Loch Lomond with her lips, thunder and lightning flew from her hips. When she was ill-tempered, the sun would eclipse - the devil dared not offend her.)

Though a deeply hyperbolic description of bodily functions, the way in which the poet does not shy away from the actions of flatulence, defecation, urination and the flow of energy from the hips is a different invocation of femininity. Related in a much stronger sense to the mode of flyting and appropriation of the carnivalesque in the manner of *Rabelais*, the poem provides a stark contrast to others in the collection.[79] Where much of the other verse considered in this thesis deals with poems in which women's bodies are shrouded both literally and figuratively, the way in which power is asserted here through the body is a strong statement. It is, of course, notable that this is no 'mere' woman but rather a monster in and of herself, and it is clear that the admiration of this bodily

---

Hir Erß gaid evin lyk ane wind mill
scho puft and ȝiskit with sic riftis
Sic dry smell droggis fra hir scho schot
Quhill scho maid all the flure on flot
of hir hurdeis scho had na hawld
quhill scho had temid hir monyfawld (ll. 81-92, p. 152-3, fol. 183b)

(*She farted belched and made such leaps that she gave up and poured [out] at both her ends, til she had expelled a couple of quarts. All turned into a fusillade of farts: she blubbered, belched and broke [wind] still. Her arse went like a windmill - she puffed and expelled such farts, that such a dry smell was prepared from her shutters while she made all of the land her floor. Of her buttocks she had no control, while she emptied herself copiously.*)

[79] See Mikahil M. Bakhtin *Rabelais and his World* trans. by Helen Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

autonomy comes from its potential to secure power and status for the male narrator in his lineage: because he is born of the powerful Magog line, he is inherently worthy.

The female presence acting as a vessel is directly addressed in stanza 9, whereby the narrator describes how:

> Scho markit to þe land w^{t} mirth
> Scho pischit five quaihilis in þe firth
> That croppin war in hir geig for girth
> Walterand amang þe war (ll. 69-72)[80]
>
> *(She marked the land gaily, she pissed five whales into the Firth: they were hidden in her vulva for safety, wallowing amongst seaweed.)*

Parkinson states that 'With its seaweed and whales, the female body figures as grossly capacious and accessible, a vast leaky container of seawater'.[81] While the nautical motif will be expanded further in our discussion of another poem, 'Ballat vpon Margret Fleming', what is highlighted here is the nature of the female body and its associations with passage, harbour and in some cases, safety. The image of the five mighty whales curled into a vulva for safety, while inherently amusing, also speaks to the capacity of the female body for strength and power, as well as acting as an embodiment of a monstrous birthing. Though it is presented here as an oddity, an 'object of laughter, if not derision',[82]

[80] II, p. 318, ll. 69–72.

[81] David Parkinson, 'The Entry of Wealth in the Middle Scots "Crying of Ane Playe"', *Modern Philology*, 93 (1995), 23–36 (p. 32).

[82] Ibid.

the poem is invested in the way in which women are presented within the manuscript. I would argue that the dignity and worth of woman is here asserted, paradoxically through her characterisation as a giant, a figure often associated with 'exceptional [if male] virility'.[83] What is presented is a powerful paradox in and of itself: a maternal figure who embodies the imposing strength of the men around her, and in turn has asserted through her legacy, the power of the narrator. This in turn, associates the female body with eloquence, a paradox for a late medieval audience.

The poem itself ends less successfully for the possibility of any articulation of female power: the narrator asks his audience if any woman would be brave enough to be his wife:

> Now sen I am such quantetie
> Off gyanis cum as ȝe may sie
> Quhair willbe gottin a wyfe to me
> Off siclyk bread & hicht
> [….] trow ye ony heir beside
> Micht suffer me all nicht (ll. 121-128)[84]

> (*Now since I am such quantity, descended from giants as you may see. Where will a wife for me be found, of such breadth and height […] do you know any here beside that might suffer me all night?)*

The gloating virility expressed in this stanza is uncomfortable, both in terms of the implications for the female body 'suffering' the sexual conquest of the speaker, and the way in which women are framed as being inadequate for purpose, or unequal to his power.

[83] Parkinson, p. 30.

[84] II, p. 319, ll. 121–128.

This is discomfiting particularly when we, as readers, have been offered a striking characterisation of female agency and creative power within the very same poem. Again, the line between the matriarch and the romantic interest is drawn: the two cannot comfortably co-exist or be considered with the same reverence. Women may historically grant status realised through their male children but contemporaries are not allowed to match the man.

Woman as Vessel, Woman as Victim

There are three poems within the comedy section which deal with specific, named women. They are grouped together from folios 123a to 126a and address one Margaret Fleming, 'Crissell' (Grisel) Sandilands, and 'Jonet' (Janet) Reid. As Keely Fisher points out, these are all attributed to Robert Sempill and Bannatyne's inclusion of these poems and their lengthy titles 'suggest[s] that these texts have been copied from a printed pamphlet that was distinguished, primarily, on account of its bawdy content'.[85] Grisel Sandelis is depicted as a victim of circumstance, as Fisher summarises 'a case of exploitation of the innocent and the vulnerable […] by the corrupt and powerful kirk and burgh authorities […]'.[86] Fisher offers a similarly detailed account of the composition of 'Ionet Reid', summarising that the poem functions as 'a satire on costume in early modern Scotland'.[87] While all three poems are fascinating in their utilisation of female figures as

[85] Keely Fisher, *Comic Verse in Older Scots*, (Unpublished D.Phil thesis: Oxford, 1999) p. 171. My thanks to Dr Fisher for her generous access to this D.Phil thesis.

[86] Ibid, p. 173.

[87] Ibid, p. 210.

emblems, individuals, and focus points for contemporary politics, it is the depiction of Margaret Fleming that has the most to offer in terms of the perceived monstrosity of female sexuality.

'The ballat maid vpoun Margret fleming callit the flemyng bark In Edinburᵗ' contains an array of metaphors of nautical pursuit and male possession. The central parallel is drawn between the figure of Margaret Fleming and 'the flemyng bark', in this case, a small barge owned by the narrator. The purpose of the poem is ostensibly to outline the rules for successful maintenance of this vessel, and to offer advice to those reading the poem:

> I haif a littill fleming berge
> Off clenkett work bot scho is wicht
> Quhat pylett takis my schip in chairge
> Mon hald hir Clynlie trym & ticht
> Se that hir hatchis be handlit richt
> Wᵗ steirburd baburd luf & lie
> Scho will sale all the wintir nicht
> And nevir tak a talȝevie (ll. 1-8)[88]
>
> (*I have a little Fleming barge, made of riveted work but she is strong, What helmsman takes my ship in charge, [he] must hold her cleanly, trim and tight and see that he handles her hatches right, with starboard larboard love and lee, and she will sail all the winter night, never pitching over.)*

The poem insists on the appreciation of double entendre: there are repeated and sustained references to vessels and barges, and the nautical vocabulary relies implicitly on concepts

[88] II, p. 327, fol. 123a. Jack glosses 'talȝevie' as being 'to pitch over'. *Mercat Anthology*, p. 197.

of control, command, and release. The need for control is a recurring theme within the poem, thinly disguised in amiable instruction, in which the boat (woman) is something which men must seek to placate and thus control, allowing for smooth sailing. In relation to the idea of the 'stella maris', Poem 189 from the *Canzoniere* is the most oblique in its reference to sailing, as the poet's pursuit of Laura is characterised in the metaphor of a sailor. The poet refers to his 'ship laden with forgetfulness' (l. 1) which sails under the guidance of his master and foe. The poem describes a seemingly endless seascape of a 'wet, changeless wind of sighs' (l. 7), and the pathetic fallacy of the 'a rain of weeping, a mist of disdain' (l. 9) illuminates the emotional state of the poet.[89] The functionality of the

[89] Poem 189, *Petrarch's Lyric Poems: The Rime Sparse and Other Lyrics*, ed. by Robert M. Durling (Cambridge, Massachussets: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 334.

The original poem reads:

Passa la nave mia colma d'oblio
per aspro mare a mezza note il verno
enfra Scilla et Caribdi, et al governo
siede 'l signore anzi 'l nimico mio;

à ciascun remo un penser pronto et rio
che le tempest a 'l fin par ch' abbi a scherno;
la vela rompe un vento umido eterno
di sospir, di sperance et di desio;

pioggia di lagrimar, nebbia di sdegni
bagna et rallenta le già stanches arte
che son d'error con ignoranzia attorno.

Celansi I duo mei dolci usati segni,

sea voyage metaphor in Petrarchan imagery is one in which the successful reunion with his beloved is akin to safely returning to 'port' (l. 14).[90] There are varied readings of this: in terms of the visceral and ribald imagery of poem such as the 'Flemyng Bark' the idea of entering a port becomes analogous to the act of penetrative sexual conquest. Yet for Petrarch, the idea and symbolism of 'port' seems to reach higher. For Petrarch, the desired union with Laura will be an act of spiritual completion, and within this, a homecoming. The port which Petrarch's poet persona seeks so avidly is a state of being, the safe harbour of his love and devotion. As argued by Sturm-Maddox, there is a sense in which this comes with its own dual meaning, as we witness the change in the poet's perspective from 'concupiscence' of his earthly pursuit, to the 'caritas' of his spiritual awakening in light of Laura's death.[91]

Beyond the notion of the journey, the very personality and temperament of the vessel is made plain in language which requires little analysis to be read critically as

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morta fra l'onde è la ragion at l'arte
tal ch' I' 'ncominico a desperar del porto.

Durling's full translation reads:

'My ship laden with forgetfulness passes through a harsh sea, at midnight, in winter, between Scylla and Charybdis, and at the tiller sits my lord, rather my enemy;
Each oar is manned by a ready, cruel thought that seems to scorn the tempest and the end, a wet, changeless wind of sights, hopes, and desires, breaks the sail;
A rain of weeping, a mist of disdain wet and loosen the already weary ropes, made of error twisted up with ignorance.
My two usual sweet stars are hidden; dead among the waves are reason and skill; so that I begin to despair of the port.'

[90] ibid, l. 14.

[91] Sara Sturm-Maddox, *Petrarch's Laurels* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 8–9.

allegory: in particular, the preoccupation with the moral value of those who can travel on the boat is easily decoded as being a reference to Margaret's taste in men. 'Na pedderis pak scho will ressaif / althocht hir travell scho sowld tyne' (ll. 33-34)[92] (*'no pedlar's pack will she receive, although she should lose a voyage'*) reflects the narrator, musing over the quirks of his 'boat' in a patronising way: the implications of this lost voyage are that though Margaret desires sex, she would draw the line at a social inferior.[93] Despite his superior knowledge of what she 'sowld tyne', the barge is wilful and does as she pleases. In this case, her preferences are such that 'scho kareis nocht bot men & wyne / and bulȝoun to þe counȝe houß' (ll. 39-40) (*'she carries nothing but men, wine, and bullion to the counting house'*).[94] Her tendency is towards excess, which she will do readily and with ease; and this ties in with the class connotations of unruly female behaviour, as laid out by Harker in her work on female interaction at the marketplace. This excerpt is perhaps the most oblique reference to the salubrious character of Margaret. Implicit in some of the nautical description are innuendo and sexual euphemism. The narrator refers to the ships as being at risk of becoming tired out by a skilful mariner, and he dare not have her subject to 'merchandmen' (l. 41) (*'merchants'*),[95] which would decrease her value. This idea of damaged property or goods is returned to in the later poem 'I saw me thot this hinder nycht' (*'I thought I saw the other night'*), which reinforces the idea of women as property. The third stanza of the 'flemyng bark' is particularly notable in its imagery:

To calfit hir oft can do non ill

[92] II, p. 328, fol. 123b.

[93] My thanks to Professor McGavin for his advice on this interpretation.

[94] II, p. 328, fol. 123b. Note also the potential double entendre of 'counȝe' and 'cunyie'.

[95] Ibid.

And talloun quhair the flud mark flowis
Bot gif scho lekkis gett men of skill[96]
To stop hir hoilis laich in þe howis
Ffor falt of hemp Tak hary towis
W^{t} stane ballast w^{t}owttin vder
In moneleß nichtis It is na mowis
Except ane stowt man steir her ruder (ll. 17-24)[97]

(To caulk her often can do no harm, and [mark with] tallow where the flood mark flows. But if she leaks get men of skill to stop her holes leaking flap in the house. If there is a defect of hemp, take hairy tows with stone ballast, without other. In a moonless night it is no sport to steer her rudder, except for a stout man)

Three images in particular stand out here in this idea of the constant attention required for maintenance: those of the leaking holes of the ship; the 'hary towis' of the rope and the steering of 'her ruder'. Each of these is easily parsed as emblematic of a sexual interaction. The inconstancy and unreliability of a vessel with leaky holes is a fascinating image, denoting not only the failing of the boat but the failure, or rather spoiling, of the woman. While the holes themselves evoke uncomfortable images of the female body, the act of 'men of skill' stopping these holes is a violent one, forceful in its assertion of mastery and control. The 'hary towis' of the rope is evocative of the phallus, and once more of coercive control, and this is furthered by the image of a 'stowt man' steering the ship's direction by use of the rudder, which in this case could be emblematic of any aspect of the female form or genitalia subject to male control.

[96] In the printed edition, this reads as 'sklil' but is later corrected in Tod Ritchie's 'Errata', Vol. I, p. ix.

[97] II, p. 328, fol. 123a.

The exclamation 'our leddy' in the final stanza, line 59, is a distinctly Catholic idiom, which when we consider Alasdair MacDonald's argument that the manuscript was edited and redacted along confessional lines, is particularly curious.[98] This association with Catholicism could arguably be to slander further the name of Flemyng within the text, or to be read in a deliberately parodic context, evoking not only Catholic excess but furthermore the nautical imagery of Marian prayer, the *stella maris*. The vicissitudes of female sexuality are articulated here in a very didactic way, and the worth of women is completely linked to their utility and ability to be successfully commandeered by men. The image of the 'compas' to be steered by is telling (l. 52),[99] indicating the moral code by which the men must operate, though in this case the code appears to be the means to ensure the end of total dominance of the female figure. Moreover, the sheer volume of men attendant on the barge is indicative of a value judgement of Margaret's promiscuity and perhaps her social pretensions– 'scho will ressaif na landwart Iok' (l. 61),[100] alluding to a class-based prejudice. Her dignity is undermined entirely by this parody of her sexual morality and sexualised form.

Here is perhaps a useful juncture at which to comment more generally on this underlying awareness of Catholicism in relation to the comedic agenda of this particular section. The 'Introduction' to Cranstoun's collection of *Satirical Poems of the Reformation* gathers forty-eight poems. He summarises the subjects of this satire as being: Mary, Darnley, Regent Murray, William Maitland, William Kirkcaldy, Lennox, Mar, and Merton.

[98] MacDonald, 'A Marian Anthology'.

[99] II, p. 328, fol. 123b.

[100] II, p. 329, fol. 124a.

He notes that 'Catholic interest [is] meagrely represented' at this time, and describes the circulation of these satires by 'chapmen and pedlars' in the streets of cities.[101]

Of the forty-eight poems in *Satirical Poems*, twelve are by Robert Sempill. Sempill also contributes the aforementioned three poems to the Bannatyne, which can be framed in a new light given some of Cranstoun's bibliographic insight. The work Cranstoun provides on Sempill is considerable, given the paucity of historical documentation around this figure. It is with this absence in mind that we must exercise a degree of caution when approaching the 'facts' as Cranstoun describes them, however there are some points of interest to be had. Sempill is depicted as a 'bitter and uncompromising foe to Queen Mary'[102] and Cranstoun provides a useful biography, concurrent with the life of Mary Queen of Scots, which in turn can be utilised to forward arguments about the Bannatyne construction. Cranstoun further characterises Sempill as a 'vigorous supporter of the cause of the Reformation, [who] fought its battles with a willing and unsparing pen'.[103] This is particularly pertinent given his authorship of 'Flemyng Bark' and the reference to 'our leddy' therein. While there is limited use for the passionate proclamations of Cranstoun in analysing Sempill's popularity and politics versus his poetic ability, this context is useful in framing a tricky and misogynistic poem as an act of written violence against the queen. Keely Fisher takes Cranstoun's initial findings further with her research into the 'utterly partisan' Sempill.[104] In relation to the poem, Fisher offers a highly-detailed reading of the historical context, and states that 'in addition to her husband, 'the 4th Earl

[101] *Satirical Poems of the Time of the Reformation*, (Edinburgh: Scottish Text Society, 1889), p. x.

[102] Ibid. p. xxxi.

[103] Ibid, p. xxxiv.

[104] Fisher, p. 170.

Atholl […] a renowned Catholic noble, and a member of Mary's Privy Council […] Margaret was also '[…] a long-standing servant in Queen Mary's inner circle, with a younger sister who was the court belle, and a husband in the Privy Council, Margaret Fleming was on the most intimate of terms with the queen in the 1560s.'[105]

Even aside from the historical context of Mary's reign, sexual morality and the retribution for its transgression are an unsettling feature of 'followis of a wenche w^{t} child', a simple lyric within the Bannatyne, consisting of ten eight-line stanzas. Of unknown provenance, this poem is one of those in the manuscript to feature in Utley's *The Crooked Rib*; however Utley has little to add to the poem other than to comment on its unique appearance within the manuscript, categorising it as 'a humorous forsaken maiden's lament'.[106] As a verse, 'wenche w^{t} child' is a cruel poem: the eponymous wench is characterised as a terribly naive and very young maiden, who suffers horribly during her pregnancy (of which she is unaware), and speaks in retrospect as a warning to other women, concluding that

> Trew maidis þat ar //
> And w^{t} dew fair //
> ffrom mandraikis snair //
> Keep will thair littill finger (ll. 73-74)[107]
>
> (*Those who are true maids and fair with dew will keep their little finger away from the snare of the mandrake)*

[105] Fisher, p. 203. It is important to note also that Sempill was not averse to lampooning the zealot Protestant, as seen in 'Crissell Sandelis' and as analysed by Fisher, pp. 172-92.

[106] Utley, p. 119.

[107] II, p. 339, fol. 128a.

The composition of the poem as a song is crucial in establishing this unsettling tone, as the people around her gather to laugh and interfere in her predicament, offering unsolicited and cynical advice in a celebratory mode. The complaint of the 'wenche' is depicted as an anguished affair, embodying features typical of medieval complaint modes. The poem is a strong example of the complaint mode: as John Kerrigan states in relation to the nature of complaint as a genre

> Gender comes into question since, for long-sustained and socially ingrained reasons, 'female'-voiced poems that woo are rare, though common for masculine personae, while abandonment leaves (fictive and actual) women in a more grievously trapped circumstance than is true of their masculine equivalents.[108]

The abandonment of the complainant is crucial in the formation of this narrative: the poem is quite literally her tale of woe. Kerrigan's work on complaint is very apt for discussion of this poem as it touches upon some of the fundamental questions of female voice that are embodied in the nature of complaint. 'Rhetorically [complaint] tends to an elaboration which can seem, initially, alienating. Once attuned, the reader becomes aware of discourses capable of finely calibrated shifts of feeling and an impressive enlargement of effect':[109] the variety of feeling evoked by 'of wenche' is substantial. Though presented as a tale of comedy and amusing misfortune, the overtures of social discomfort and gender imbalance are palpable. Even the child-like nature of the complaint, rendered as the song of a naïve young girl, add a sense that although the mode is being utilised, it is being subverted to reveal something of its contemporary social context.

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[108] Kerrigan, John ed. *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and 'Female Complaint': A Critical Anthology*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 8.

[109] Ibid, p. 2.

The physical ordeal is euphemistically encoded as being a pain in 'hir little finger' which she attributes to the bite of a mandrake.[110] It is immediately apparent to those around her that she is pregnant, 'ffor all hir body swellid than / als big as ony pyk' (ll. 19-20) ('*as big as any pike-staff*'),[111] but the speaker remains in confused anguish. 'The space of fourtie weeks' (l. 60) (*forty weeks*)[112] passes and she gives birth to a little boy. Underpinning this is an encoding of class politics, whereby the sexual behaviour and punishment of a 'wenche' is treated as a comedic attraction for a presumably upper class audience with access to the manuscript.[113]

The list of remedies that precede this revelation, depicted in stanza 7, reads as a catalogue of medieval abortion and contraceptive practices: nettle tea, herbal pills, bleeding. Whether the 'wenche' is aware that this is what is happening is unclear, but it is entirely possible that those around her are aware of this and are coding their behaviour as

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[110] According to Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable (2004 ed.) 'The root of the mandrake or mandragora (*Mandragora officinarum*) often divides in two, presenting an approximate appearance of a man. In ancient times human figures were cut out of the root and wonderful virtues ascribed to them, such as the production of fecundity in women (Genesis 30:14-16).' (740)

[111] II, p. 337, fol. 127b.

[112] II, p. 338, fol. 128a.

[113] In terms of this audience, van Heijnsbergen has written at length on the extant 'memoriall buik' of George Bannatyne, but offers within his 2001 article a succinct summary of the four groups that would have comprised Bannatyne's immediate audience: 'leading merchants and craftsmen from Edinburgh' (p. 423); 'secular clergymen in collegiate churches'; 'crown servants or their wives' and finally, 'a large group of prominent local administrators' (p. 424). States the author: '…links between manuscript poets and audience indicates that the material contained in the BM [sic] presents an accurate reflection of the status, level and 'location' of contemporary vernacular literature…' (p. 425).

a 'remedy' to placate her. It is an indication of the youth of the 'wenche' here that such remedies are humoured and tested as plausible. She is described as being 'still in hir braid' (l. 31),[114] here interpreted as a young woman still wearing her hair in plaited pigtails, further enhancing the idea of her youth. There are further allusions to both the mandrake and 'this serpent so did thing her' (l. 37) ('*the serpent so did sting her*')[115] – both of these symbols are interchangeable for the penis, and the threat of danger in sexual relationships. The poem also refers almost reverently to the misfortune of the 'wenche' in having 'met w^{t} some stinger' (l. 13),[116] this term enhancing the potency of harm from the male anatomy and ensuing predicament.

The poem concludes with the voice of the 'wenche' who has now become 'ane singer' and sings reproachfully of the dangers of such behaviour as hers, addressing '3e maidis that w^{t} the ferß mandrak / dois chance bittin to be' (ll. 73-4) ('*you maidens that with the fierce mandrake, chance to be bitten*').[117] The sinister nature of men is elaborated upon in her warning to keep away 'ffrome mandraikis snair' (l. 79) ('*from mandrake's snare*'),[118] the language of hunting adding a sense of innocence to the plight of the 'wenche' and the culpability of men in entrapping women thus. The dignity of women is scarce in this poem: the 'wenche' is depicted as unknowing, wailing, and distressed, while the worth of women is undercut by the potent threat of men and 'mandrak'. The comedy within this poem relies on the ability of the audience to take joy in the plight of the 'wenche' and to find her humiliation and confusion amusing – this is, to utilise a concept which will be

[114] II, p. 337, fol. 127b.

[115] II, p. 338, fol. 127b.

[116] II, p. 337, fol. 127b.

[117] II, p. 339, fol. 128a.

[118] Ibid.

returned to, a clear case of 'punching down', and in this sense is a troubling and provocative piece of satire for the reader.[119]

While the community surrounding the 'wenche' is largely non-gendered, the idea of a specifically female community is touched upon in 'Ffals Clatterand Kensy Kukald Knaif' ('*False Idle Cockolded Knave*'), a longer form flyting directed at the denigration of a male figure, also featuring reference to the mandrake. The man depicted is rendered in animalistic language, allied with such mythical figures as the Devil and the 'mandrag mymmerkyn' (ll. 7-8) ('*mandrake dwarf*'),[120] as well as more mundane, earthbound creatures such as a 'fowl taid cairle' (l. 36) ('*foul toad churl*').[121] Intriguingly, part of the onslaught of criticism against this figure is his capacity to disappoint his wife, and in turn earn a reputation among the women's community: 'Amangis the wyffis it salbe wittin / Thow wes ane knakcatt in the way' ('*Amongst the wives it shall be known [that] you were a boy [i.e. no man] in the way*') (ll. 17-18).[122] This nod to female solidarity is striking as it emerges from a male-voiced critique of male behaviour, rather than it being a weakness on the part of women. The inability of this projected man to live up to his role as a husband is sorely felt:

> Thy wyif wount ane man scho gatt
> Of the Quhen þat thow wes weill brankit
> And scho gat bot ane cur knakcatt
> Ane fowll taid cairle all tailȝour schankit
> Ffor clayis þat thow mismaid and mankit

[119] See 'Bannatyne Punches Down' pp. 154-160.

[120] III, p. 23, fol. 140a.

[121] III, p. 24, fol. 140a.

[122] III, p. 23, fol. 140a.

Thow dar no^{t} dwell quhair thow wes born
ȝit eftirwart thow salbe thankit
Betuixt kirkcaldy and kingorne (ll. 33-40)[123]

(Your wife was lacking a man when she got you. She got nothing but a young pup, a foul toad churl, with the legs of a tailor. Because of your mismaking and mangling of clothes, you dare not dwell in your own area, but you'll be acceptable eventually berween Kirkcaldy and Kinghorn)

The localised reference to Fife and the extent to which the shame of this figure is depicted, estranged from his hometown and place of birth, all add to the sense that this emasculated charlatan is of such ill calibre that he has been entirely rejected by society. There is a further parallel in the complaining wives depicted in *Ane Satire of the Three Estates*. A somewhat abridged version of the play is present in the third section of the Bannatyne, and included in this (albeit large) selection is the interaction of the Cotter and his wife, and his prior conversation with Nuntius. Cotter states that 'we men that hes sick wickit wyvis / in grit languor we leid our lyvis, / ay dreiflain in diseiss' (ll. 37-9)[124] *('we men that have such wicked wives, we lead our lives in great langour, always living miserably in disease'*). Following this, the Wyfe enters and addresses her husband in terms highly reminiscent of 'Ffals Clatterand Kensy Kukald Knaif' whereby she says 'Quhair has thow bene, fals ladrone loune? / Doyttand and drinkand in the toun? / Quha gaif the leif to cum fra hame?' (ll.59-61)[125] *('Where have you been, false, lazy man? Slouching and drinking in the town? Who gave you permission to leave the house?'*). Within the text of the Satire, the figure of the wife as a bossy

[123] III, p. 24, fol. 140a.

[124] III, p. 88, fol. 164b.

[125] Ibid.

and impertinent woman is worlds apart from the abstracted female figures such as Dame Sensualitie, Chastitie, and Veritie. This will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

Returning to the content of 'Ffals Clatterand', the poem exists in a unique copy in the Bannatyne manuscript, completed in juxtaposition with the second half of the flyting which follows it. Considering the relative benevolence towards the female community, and the recognition that their opinion and communication have a tangible impact on the life of the man depicted, a tonal shift towards a female sympathy emerges. Certainly the comedy of the flyting in this instance is directed towards lampooning the male figure and his inability to satisfy his wife or behave in a socially appropriate way.

The euphemistic reference to 'wer brokin full mony ane gud ax schaft / ffor wrangus geir of vþair menis' (ll. 31-2) (*'many good axe shafts were broken because of the wrong gear of other men'*)[126] offers a potential parable for the dangers of adultery. Were we to read the 'ax schaft' as a visceral euphemism for the penis, the idea of the wrong or ill-suited 'gear' of other men being ruinous is an interesting one. This is then a remark upon the husband's infidelity, which again enhances the value placed on monogamy in women, and how this maintains their value. The image of the axe shaft is positioned as being 'on thy bak' (l. 30) (*'on your back'*)[127] which, while ostensibly referring to the strenuous physical act of chopping, could conceivably refer to the nature of sexual congress in allowing this illicit behaviour to occur. What is most interesting about this poem, in terms of the *querelle des femmes*, is the way in which women's opinions are given worth, and in this case, it is the male figure who is stripped of dignity in his day to day life, with lasting repercussions.

[126] III, p. 24, fol. 140a.

[127] Ibid.

Two other poems bear consideration in this context: 'Now gossop I must neidis begon' and 'My mistres is in Musik passing skillful'.[128] The latter has been discussed at the start of this chapter. However, like the 'Flemyng Bark', 'now gossop' locates itself in the arena of nautical metaphors: the narrator speaks instructively of what is to be done with his 'pretty pinnage' (l.2) ('*pretty scouting vessel [or small ship]*').[129] Whether the pinnage in question is his genitalia or his lover is not immediately apparent: 'pinnage' literally refers to a 'ship', which could be read as either his own penis or his female lover. The implications of moral behaviour and decorum are evident in a tongue-in-cheek way in this first stanza, with the impetus being 'look wele about yow lippen hir to none / But to your selfe and be ay streight beside' (ll. 3-4) ('*look well about you, trust her to none but yourself and be straight beside [her] always*').[130] The surrounding environment and social circle are not to be trusted: there is a sense in which the very setting of the poem has become 'leaky'. The poem goes on to talk about the danger of 'som rakleß roig' (l. 5)[131] ('*some reckless rogue*') who may ride the boat at anchor in the night, but implores the listener to stand strong, with foresail to the heavens 'boldlie bound for sle' (l. 11) ('*boldly bound for skill*').[132] This sense of protection and ownership continues as the poet advises how to handle the ship 'rather then ony vther enter in' (l. 15) ('*rather than any other enter in*').[133]

The fourth, and the longest, stanza deals with the warnings of what can happen in peril: should anything bow or break, they offer practical advice to 'cast lous the fuksheit

[128] III, pp. 238 – 239, fol. 210b.

[129] III, p. 238, fol. 210b.

[130] Ibid.

[131] III, p. 239, fol. 210b.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid.

the bonnet and the blind' (l. 18) ('*cast loose the foresail the cap and the spritsail*').[134] The evident obscenity of 'fuksheit' is striking here and the closing couplet of the poem is also particularly problematic as it states 'If she be laik it may be soon espied / the pompstaff and the maner hols will tryit' (ll. 24-5)[135] (*'If she is leaky, it may soon be seen: the pump and the manner of the hole will attest it'*). There are clearly immediate parallels with poems such as the 'Flemyng Bark', and the way in which the effective manipulation of the boat mirrors the prescribed treatment of the female figure in heteronormative relationships of the time, and with Parkinson's remarks on the 'leaky' female body.[136] The image, once again, of an unreliable or porous vessel as analogous to the problematic female body is troubling. To have the imagery of a boat used in this exclusively sexual double entendre is an interesting inversion of an image which would appeal to the arguments of the fourth section, and their desire to mitigate and curate 'leful love' and the pursuit of spiritual contentment.

This poem features alongside 'my mistres is in music passing skilful' and 'dantie & dortie'. 'Dantie & dortie' is a short, explicit verse:

> Dantie & dortie to all manis eyes
> I wiß I had bord thee dantie & dortie
> And given the fourtie betuixt the thighis
> Dantie & dortie to all manis eyes
>
> Whyt as the egg rid as the skarlet
> Sueet as the fegg whyt as the egg
> Lay over your legg tak in a varlet
> Whyt as the egg rid as the scarlet (ll. 1-8)[137]

[134] III, p. 239, fol. 210b.

[135] Ibid.

[136] David Parkinson, 'The Entry of Wealth in the Middle Scots "Crying of Ane Playe"'.

[137] III, p. 238, fol. 210b.

> *(Dainty and saucy to all men's eyes: I wish I had bored/pierced thee dainty and saucy, And given thee forty between the thighs, dainty and saucy to all men's eyes. [You are] white as the egg, red as the scarlet, sweet as the fig, white as the egg. Lay over your leg, take in a servant, white as the egg, red as the scarlet)*

There is not much to add to a discussion of 'dantie & dortie', which seems to punctuate the close of the third section as a reminder of the graphic nature of much of the section. It seems oddly placed next to 'now gosop' and 'my mistres', both of which are longer and substantially more crafted pieces. Curiously, all of these short verses are appended to the 'ballatis mirry' as something of an afterthought: they are placed directly after the excerpts from Lyndsay's *Ane Satyre of the Three Estates* and directly preceding the closing colophon of the section. Whether Bannatyne felt these were compelling additions or an afterthought is impossible to conclusively decide, however their inclusion is clearly conscious on his part: they were not lost as part of a larger mass. Both poems are explicit in different ways, and the overt sexuality of the short texts is a sharp contrast to the section they immediately precede, the 'ballatis of luve'. Furthermore Ritchie notes that these poems 'have been inserted by a later hand',[138] further emphasising the notion that their inclusion is distinctly purposeful.

The Comedy of Courtliness

Though short in comparison to some other poems within the Bannatyne, 'In Somer' has enjoyed more of an afterlife in literary criticism and anthologies than most other texts

[138] III, p. 238, fol. 210b, footnote.

within the collection. This is perhaps in large part due to the shocking nature of the poem, and the way in which it explicitly sets itself in opposition to the art of courtly love, through its enthusiasm for ribald humour and sexual content. It is structured in twelve stanzas of *rime couée*, and utilises a refrain. The refrain differs from stanza to stanza, and gives a more episodic, song-like feel to the poem:

> In somer quhen floris will smell
> As I fure our fair feildis and fell
> Allone I wanderit by ane well
> *on Weddnisday*
> I met a cleir vndir kell[139]
> a weilfaird may (ll. 1-5)[140]
>
> (*In summer, when flowers are fragrant,*
> *As I walked over fair fields and woods,*
> *Alone I wandered by a well,*
> *on Wednesday*
> *I met a fair lady wearing a caul [i.e. a hat or cap]*
> *An attractive maiden)*[141]

[139] DOST defines the term thus: 'kell, n. 1. A caul; a kind of ornamental hair-net or close-fitting netted cap, chiefly worn by women. When worn alone, recognised as a distinctive head-dress of young unmarried women. Also used as a rendering of Latin vitta, lit. a head-band or fillet.' http://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/kell_n_1. Accessed 9th August 2018.

[140] III, p. 26, fol. 141a. Emphasis my own.

[141] The verse form is retained in this gloss to emphasise the song-like quality of the poem.

As can be established from this opening stanza, the reader is introduced to the narrator in a typical *pastourelle* setting, walking through nature in solitary contemplation. He is distracted by the presence of 'a weilfard may' (ibid) ('*an attractive maiden*'), and the next stanza describes the physical appearance of this woman, wearing 'ane hatt vpon her heid' (l. 6)[142] ('*a hat upon her head*') and green trefoils. This description ties in closely with the traditions of the virginal female figure in nature. The narrator is smitten, describing her beaded jewellery and immaculate appearance, even referring to her wearing 'Ane Agnus dey w^{t} nobill nott' (l. 12) ('*an agnus dei with the marks of nobility*').[143] In tandem with this material symbol, the woman can be read as a lamb being led to the slaughter in the eyes of the poet. Much like the earlier reference to 'our leddy' in 'Margaret Flemyng' this is a particularly pointed turn of phrase given its Catholic connotations, and the potential confluence of such reference with the problematic figure of Mary Queen of Scots: this tonal dissonance within the overall Reformation morality of the manuscript is curious, and draws the attention of the reader to the seductive nature of the action which follows.

Claiming to desire only a kiss, the narrator says he 'halsit hir' (l. 17) ('*necked her*'),[144] his latent desire adding a sense of pressure upon this interaction. He is evidently infatuated and begins to coerce the woman into congress, claiming his 'luve…leill' (l. 18) ('*love… lawful*')[145] and legitimised desire for her. Taken in by his flattery, the woman deigns to kiss him, and this is her undoing: her desire unfurls in a comically quick turnaround, in which she is reduced to 'gruntill as a gryiß that is so meik' (l 27) ('*grunting as a submissive pig*').[146]

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[142] III, p. 26, fol. 141a.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid.

[146] III, p. 27, fol. 141a.

From here, the poem descends into lust – as she is entwined in his arms, she remarks that he tastes so sweet, 'itß lyk þat ȝe had eitin pyiß' ('*it is as though you have eaten pies'*, l. 29).[147] As they fall into a lusty embrace, she seems to descend into carnal abandon, complaining of her frustration: 'Allace, q scho ȝe gar me swett / ȝe wirk so slaw' (ll. 34-5) ('*Alas, said she, you make me sweat, you work so slowly'*).[148] The speed at which female desire is unleashed in this almost bestial fashion is alarming, and frames the male pursuant as the innocent party, having asked merely for a kiss, thus relinquishing responsibility for the sexual enthusiasm that follows. It is important to note that history favours the victor, and here we are arguably seeing a clear demonstration of a biased narrator.

By the eighth stanza, the woman is in a paroxysm of emotion, rueing the day in which she met this man: 'ȝit I feir I sall by full deir / ȝour sweit kissing' (l. 39) ('*Yet I fear I shall buy/pay for full dear / your sweet kissing'*).[149] Her integrity and innocence apparently willingly abandoned, she compels the narrator in stanza nine

> Quhen I was grathit in hir geir *do furt at ans*
> Scho said scho comptit me no^{t} a peir *do furt at ans*
> Sen ȝe haf wonnyn me on weir *do furt at ans*
> Thairw^{t} I schot be neth hir scheir
> Deip to þe stanis (ll. 40-44)[150]
>
> (*When I was prepared in her apparatus [get on with it] she said she didn't reckon me as worth a pear [do forth at once] since you have won me in war [get on with it]. Therewith I shot beneath her groin, deep to the stones)*

[147] III, p. 27, fol. 141a.

[148] Ibid.

[149] III, fol. 141b.

[150] Ibid.

This frenzied compulsion towards sexual intercourse *at once* is reflected in the urgency of the refrain, and the almost painful image of subsuming himself 'to the stanis' is a rough climax to this passage. Delighted with his work, the tenth stanza refrain is '3e wirk so weill' (l. 45)[151] ('*you work so well*') and the woman explicitly states that '3our courtly fukking garis me fling' (l. 47) ('*your courtly fucking makes me dance/kick out*').[152] This oblique reference to the method of seduction deployed by the narrator and in turn, the poet, gives rise to the notion that this is a self-aware poem which parodies the ludicrous nature of courtly love, or indeed the weakness of women in succumbing to its shallow pretences. It is, inherently, a rape narrative.

There is a discomfort to the conclusion of this poem, as with so many in this section of the Bannatyne, as we see the woman once again vulnerable and uncertain of her actions: 'als sone as we our deid had done *to 3ow I say* / scho reiß sone vp and askit hir schone *to 3ow I say'* (ll. 54-5) ('*as soon as we our deed had done, [to you I say] she rose soon up and asked for her shoes, [to you I say]*').[153] The narrator remarks that she seems as tired 'as scho had weschin a spone' ('*as if she had washed a spoon*'),[154] abruptly concluding the poem with a plaintive 'This aventur anis to me come / on weddinsday' (l. 58) ('*this adventure came to me on Wednesday*').[155] Again the nebulous nature of time and space in the frame of anecdotal gossip give this poem a sense of disconnection from reality, enhancing the difficulties posed by the unlikely machinations of courtly love in the real world. What 'In somer'

[151] III, p. 27 fol. 141b.

[152] Ibid.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid.

shows is a graphic description of a carnal encounter, in which the power is superficially renounced by the male narrator to unbound desirous female sexuality, yet the images of occupation, conquest, and coercion are also clear. As seen in the ninth stanza, there is a clear sense of this eventual subjugation as being a victory won by the narrator, with the woman as his complicit prize – since you have won me, she says, you must do this at once. His compliance with the rules of courting has won him the chance to assuage her sexual appetite. The power balance is uncertain here, with the woman's enthusiasm all at once shocking in its power, but undermined by the inherent bias of the narrator. Where the humour comes from, for the audience, is perhaps the speed at which the class pretension is abandoned and base desires take over, and the fact that satisfaction takes a long while.

One of the most important critical discussions of this poem comes from van Heijnsbergen's 2001 article on 'Literary Convention and Authorial Voice' within the Bannatyne manuscript.[156] Broadly speaking, van Heijnsbergen deals with the ways in which authorial voice is utilised in the Bannatyne lyrics, in order to subvert ideas of genre and, most importantly, the expectations of the audience. 'In Secreit Place' is aptly placed in the comedy section, if we subscribe to van Heijnsbergen's taxonomy of comedy, as it revolves around the use of satirical scapegoats, in this case, the characters who try, and fail, to emulate the courtly behaviour of their superiors.

This collocation of genre and audience reception as a locus for comedy is applied to 'In Somer', though van Heijnsbergen notes that this is a poem of 'finer tissue'[157] than its common partner, the 'Commonyng betuixt the master and the heure'. Though there

[156] Van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention'.

[157] Ibid, p. 429.

are similarities, as van Heijnsbergen argues, it is important to look at the relationship between 'In Somer' and 'In Secret Place' apart from the 'Commonyng', due to the locus of comedy in this chapter. In suggesting that 'In Somer' is more open-ended in its interpretation than, for example, the 'Commonyng', van Heijnsbergen offers a trenchant observation that part of this comes from the ridicule and shame which are directed towards the male speaker, not solely the female figure. The 'diversification of satire'[158] is related to many more sophisticated literary techniques, such as the mimesis of the *pastourelle* in the 'generically determined distance between poet and person throughout',[159] and the poem's implicit marginal warning against wishful thinking. This salvaging of ambiguity and the reliance of the poet on the audience to infer this subjectivity and resultant humour are testament to the skill of the author.

'In Somer' exemplifies a blending of medieval popular courtly genres, such as *chanson d'aventure* and the *pastourelle.* This blending mirrors the transition of lyric poetry from being a public and performed phenomenon, to a private and mimetic one. The dissemination of poems such as 'In Somer' through the Bannatyne manuscript typifies one of several channels through which literary text was handed down to later generations of readers as a formal work of art. This was an era in which the concept of individual, autonomous authorship and the notion of a literary text as a mimetic act became increasingly central concerns, and the sense of the 'self' as the locus of literary creativity was emergent.[160]

[158] Van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention,

[159] Ibid, p. 430.

[160] Ibid, p. 431.

Van Heijnsbergen points out that 'In Somer' takes the *pastourelle* tradition of 'democratic levelling'[161] and allows the poem to make fun of tradition as much as either of the individual participants in it, and a sense of this subtle, more sophisticated comedy is reflected in its position within the 'ballettis mirry'. The 'Commonyng', on the other hand, finds itself placed within the invective of the 'evill wemen' section. As van Heijnsbergen argues, what 'In Somer' offers is the 'implication… that underneath courtly moves and motives lie very basic sexual instincts'.[162]

The convoluted gender dynamics of courtship, and the hypocrisy of courtly behaviour, are further explored in 'I met my lady well arrayit'. The framing of this poem, again a unique copy, is very similar to that of the preceding verse as the narrator begins

> I met my lady well arrayit
> I halsit hir all vnaffreyit
> Scho wald no^{t} speik to me as than
> Scho blenkit on syd and sone scho sayit
> Quhois aw ȝone man (ll. 1-5)[163]
>
> (*I met my lady well arrayed, I greeted her all unafraid. She would not speak to me at that point – then she glanced to the side and soon she said 'Who on earth is that man?')*

Unlike 'In somer' the recalcitrance of the pursued female is continued throughout the poem, frustrating the efforts of the narrator. He is the one left despairing as he wonders 'Haif ȝe so sone foȝet my name / and all my service tynt bygane' (ll. 11-12) ('*Have you so*

[161] Van Heijnsbergen, 'Literary Convention, p. 431.

[162] Ibid., p. 432.

[163] III, p. 32, fol. 143a.

soon forgotten my name and all my past service?').[164] There is a strange narrative split in the poem, whereby the initial stanzas are framed as 'I' on the part of the narrator, yet later stanzas change to the third person, describing 'Quhen *he* had done' (l. 35) ('*when he had done*').[165] It is not immediately clear whether this is a case of a narrative recounted within the frame of the poem: there is no explicit reference to a 'quod' from either party and the shift does not resolve itself, with the final stanza framed as 'quhen he had lichtit doun…' (l. 36) ('*when he had dismounted*').[166] There is a potential reading where 'a strange man gane by the gait' ('*a strange man going by the gate?*') in line 16 could refer to an additional party or the woman's reminiscence of the narrator; however, this is unclear and makes for deliberately confusing reading.

Certainly (in broad strokes) the content of the poem plays out as the initial rejection of the narrator's affection by the woman. She plays hard to get, she criticises and ignores his pleas for attention and affection. Only as the man bids her farewell does she relent, with the apparent withdrawal of such affection being the catalyst for her change of heart 'be sweit sanct an / me think ȝe ar in poynt to soun / ȝe dow not man' (ll. 37-9) ('*by sweet saint, even if I think you are sharpened too soon, you do not have use, man*').[167] One line in particular stands out within this poem, in which the female voice states 'I man hald to as a woman' (l. 33) ('*I must [hold you or behave?] as a woman*').[168] Again, an ambivalence of meaning exists in this line: on the one hand, she could be stating that she holds **men** to her as a woman will, or that she may hold to his labour in the manner of a woman. Either

[164] III, p. 32, fol. 143a.

[165] III, p. 33, fol. 143b.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid.

[168] III, p. 33, fol. 143b.

reading denigrates female experience as being a calculating and unpredictable risk, yet the ambiguity of this sentiment mirrors much of the uncertainty of the poem itself.

The relationship of these power dynamics to the art of courtly love is one of inversion: the woman in this instance holds the power over the man's affections, and her refusal to acknowledge or identify him undermines his sense of self and his constructed identity. It is interesting that she appears most interested in the persistent nature of his affection: as soon as he removes himself from this failed seduction, he becomes a temptation to her and she remarks that he has moved too quickly in this instance. However, the dignity of women is strong, initially, in enacting this courting ritual, as in 'In Somer', the woman is reduced to an eager recipient of wandering male attention.

'I saw me thot this hindir nycht' comes directly after the conclusion of 'I met my lady' and it is in many ways a very apt conclusion to the section as a whole, in terms of this thesis. Framed in the ever nebulous stasis of the 'hindir nycht', this anonymous verse is deceptive in its immediate simplicity, touching upon themes of consent, gendered power dynamics, and a strong undercurrent of class politics. The courting is characterised here as one of taunting and dubious consent on the part of the 'madin bricht' (l. 2)[169] ('*bright maiden*') to the squire's advances. The description of the laird's bed can be read as analogous to the female body, in particular as a warning regarding what can happen when this body is 'towtit and outred' (l. 18) ('*dishevelled and done*'),[170] in a very similar way to the characterisation of the 'berge'. The nature of womanhood within this poem consists of the way in which women are infantilised, and in this sense denied dignity or indeed worth as anything other than a soiled artefact for men to use and abuse.

[169] III, p. 33, fol. 143b.

[170] III, p. 34, fol. 144a.

The anaphoric refrain of 'the lairdis bed' and in particular the iteration of 'durst not spill' ('*dare not spill*') upon it, brings a relentless sense of location, both geographic and political to the poem. The squire and maiden are placed within the most secret chamber of the aristocracy, the bedchamber, and are given access to the deeply personal space of the bed. On a practical level, this adds a sense of intimacy and intrusion to the poem, a focus once again on the voyeuristic position of the reader. On a thematic level, these lower class servile figures are observing and intruding into the upper echelons of society, and in turn, their strange performative behaviour of courtliness. The visceral imagery of their sexual intercourse is a direct contrast to this, and there is as strong sense that the squire fails to live up to the virility of the laird:

> Thair was na bowk to his breik
> His doingis wes not wirth a leik
> Ffy on him fowmart now he is fled
> And left the maidin swownyng seik
> And durst not spill the lairdis bed. (ll. 26-30)[171]
>
> (*There was no bulk to his trousers, his actions were not worth a leak Fie on him, the polecat, now he has fled and left the maiden swooning sick, [he] dared not spoil the laird's bed)*

While 'spill' can be read simply as to spoil the neatness of the bed, the implication of spill in terms of a sexual encounter is alluded to heavily within the poem, a factor which contributes strongly to a reading of the 'bed' as the female body. The recalcitrance of the squire is an interesting twist to the story, as we see his ostensible longing for a different

[171] III, p. 34, fol. 144a.

scenario – 'And I had yow in sum vþer place / that I micht speik & no thing spair' (ll. 16-17) ('*If only I had you in some other place so that I might speak and spare nothing*').[172] This can be read in a multitude of ways, one of which would be the reverse psychology that we have seen played out in the previous poems, whereby the denial of male affections can send a woman into a frenzy. Alternatively, we could understand that there is a sense in which the art of love is confined to the upper classes, and this squire and maiden are not privy to or worthy of its machinations because of their social standing. The image of the woman left swooning on the bed, while a flaccid and shamed squire leaves the room, is an intriguing conclusion to the poem, particularly given the ribald action that has been enacted previously. Is it the case, then, that class and status ultimately dictate the rules of successful virility and consummation?

'I sall be hussy gif I may' – Role Reversal in 'The Wyf of Auchtermuchty'

The 'Wyf of Auchtermuchty' is extant only in the Bannatyne manuscript and prints from the eighteenth century onwards.[173] The poem is an illuminating depiction of rural life in medieval Scotland attributed only to 'Moffat'. Though understated, the poem speaks to a

[172] III, p. 34, fol. 144a.

[173] For more detail on the poem see MacDonald, 'The Wife of Auchtermuchty and Her Dutch Cousin', in *Living in Posterity: Essays in Honour of Bart Westerweel*, ed. by Jan Frans van Dijkhuizen (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2004). It is important to note that while consideration will be paid to the *Ever Green* edition of this text, this is on the basis that no other copies of the poem are extant. In the case of poems such as 'Flemyng bark', which are also replicated in the *Ever Green*, they also have provenance in other manuscripts and therefore less emphasis is placed on the Ramsay edition.

pro-feminine narrative of medieval life, in which the balance of power between man and wife is negotiated through a contentious lived experience, forcing the male protagonist to recognise the extent of his wife's true power and strength. To draw the poem to this conclusion, that a woman has both worth and dignity in her role, is in keeping with the overall ethos of both this particular collection and the late medieval era more generally.

Within the poem, we are introduced to the husband first of all, 'quha weill could tippill owt a can' (l. 3)[174] ('*who could drink alcohol well out of a can*') and his subsequent misfortune on a day 'fowll for wind and rane' (l. 8) ('*foul with wind and rain*').[175] It is revealed that he looses his plough 'at landis end' (l. 9)[176] ('*at land's end*') and that it is evening by the time he can unhitch and then drive his oxen home. Greeted with the sight of his wife 'baith dry and clene / and sittand at ane fyre beikand bawld' ('*both dry and clean, and sitting at a fire basking boldly*') with soup in hand (ll. 12-13),[177] the anger of the bedraggled husband at this perceived difference in comfort level is palpable. In his consternation he proposes '[d]ame ȝe mon to þe pluch to morne / I salbe hussy gif I may' (ll. 19-20) ('*woman, you must go to the plough tomorrow - I shall be the housewife if I may*').[178] The housewife accepts this challenge and reminds the husband that he will 'rowll baith kavis & ky / and all the houses baith in and owt' (ll. 23-4) ('*rule both calves and cows, and all the houses both inside and out*'),[179] our first indication that the life of the wife is not as relaxed as we may first think. Though she concedes power to her husband gracefully to 'rowll' for the day, she is quick to remind

[174] II, p. 320, fol. 120b.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Ibid.

[177] Ibid.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Ibid.

him of her tasks: making bread, cleaning the fire, tending to the children, all with a reminder to keep an eye on their goslings, who are coveted by an itinerant hawk. The perception of the wife that her job is to 'rowll' the house is indicative of the reliance upon the matriarchal figures in a late medieval context, whilst playing into an established topos of medieval comic literature in its investigation of marriage as an institution.

Though the poem is a unique and understatedly pro-feminine verse within the collection, there is a caveat to this: in the fifth stanza, the reader learns that 'the wyf was vp rich lait at evin' (l. 33)[180] ('*the wife was up late at night*') making preparations for the housework the next day. She prepares the milk, leaving 'the gudman bot the bledoch bair' (l. 36)[181] ('*the goodman nothing but the buttermilk*') so that he may not succeed in his endeavour to make butter. The narrator also notes that the next day the wife is quick to produce her breakfast and pack a lunch 'alsmekle… as micht haif serd thame baith at nwne' (l. 40)[182] ('*as much… as might have served them both at noon*') indicating a distinct notion of forward planning and greed on her part. The terms of the bet are agreed, with a promise of 'ane gud new sark' (l. 43)[183] ('*a nice new shirt*') upon the husband's success. We observe the wife departing, her staff in hand, to tend the oxen. The narrator then focuses on the farcical trials and tribulations of the husband. Instantly, chaos ensues: the goslings are attacked, leaving only two, and the calves make their way to the cow, feeding greedily. The husband is frustrated, 'wt ane rung to red' (l. 58)[184] ('*with a stick to separate them*'), and is subsequently attacked by a cow who 'brodit his buttok quhill þat it bled' (l. 60) ('*pricked his buttocks til*

[180] II, p. 320, fol. 120b.

[181] II, p. 321, fol. 120b.

[182] Ibid.

[183] II, p. 321, fol. 121a.

[184] II, p. 322, fol. 121a.

they bled').[185] Returning home to start the spinning, the narrator remarks that the husband bows too near to the spinning loom, stating accurately 'this wark hes ill begynnyng' (l. 64) ('*this work has ill beginnings*').[186] The execution of violence on the male body is interesting, as despite its comic context, this is not something traditionally seen in texts concerned with the *querelle*.

The comical misfortune of the husband does not cease here. He turns 'to þe kyrn' (l. 65)[187] ('*to the churn*') and before long is sweating after an hour's fruitless work, in which he produces only a 'sorow crap of butter' (l. 68) ('*a pitiful quantity of butter*').[188] He is overcome with the difficulty of this task, and the small reward it yields. Before long, a greedy sow has come and drunk the remaining milk, and as the husband moves to retaliate 'cleikit vp ane crukit club' (l. 77)[189] ('*[he] seized his crooked club*') he manages to kill the two remaining goslings. Turning his attention to the charge of carrying kindling to the fire, the cow begins to low, and it is remarked that 'quhat evir he hard quhat evir he saw / that day he had na will to mow' (ll. 83-4) ('*whatever he heard or whatever he saw that day, he had no desire to joke*').[190] Hoping for an easier time with his children, the husband is dismayed to find they have soiled the bed 'bedirtin up to the Ene' (l. 88)[191] ('*dirty up to the eyes*') and as he tries to wash the sheets, they are swept away in the burn. This proves to be the last

[185] II, p. 322, fol. 121a.

[186] Ibid.

[187] Ibid.

[188] Ibid.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid.

[191] II, p. 323, fol. 121b.

straw, as 'vp he gat on ane know heid / on hir to cray on hir to schowt' (l. 97-8)[192] (*'up he got on the hill top, to call on her, to shout'*) and we see the wife blithely ignore this plea for help:

> scho hard him and scho hard him not
> bot stowtly steird the stottis abowt
> scho draif the day vnto þe nicht
> scho lowsit the plwch and syne come hame […] (ll. 99-102)[193]
>
> (*She heard him and she heard him not. But stoutly [she] steered the oxen around, she drove the day into the night. [Then] she loosed the plough and then came home)*

Where the husband is flustered, erratic, and utterly overwhelmed by his new role, and the assault on his body, we see the wife as a stoic and diligent figure, attending to her work 'stowtly' and (albeit, wilfully) without interruption.

When the wife returns home, 'scho fand all wrang that sowld bene richt' (l. 103) (*'she found wrong everything that should have been right'*).[194] This topsy-turvy description of the situation emphasises the utter devastation wrought on the household by the husband's husbandry. The nature of this inversion, and subversion of the norm relates well to Peter Burke's work on 'Carnival'. Yet where Burke talks at length about 'the reversal of relations between man and man',[195] this is clearly an example of a further inversion between man and woman, adding another level of gendered complexity to the power play.

The wife is met by a repentant and panicked husband who states:

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[192] II, p. 323, fol. 121b.

[193] Ibid.

[194] Ibid.

[195] Peter Burke, *Popular Culture In Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1994), p. 189.

[…] my office I forsaik
for all the dayis of my lyf
ffor I wald put ane hows to wraik
had I bene twenty dayis gudwyf […] (ll. 105-9)[196]
[…] my role I forsake

(I forsake my office for all the days of my life, I would put a house to wreck if I had been a housewife for twenty days […])

His humility is met with his wife's remark that he has truly broken the place well, saying she will never accept it in this state, 'fein fall the lyaris face'[197] (l. 111) ('*the liar's face falls*'). He threatens his wife with further violence, hoping to intimidate her into reclaiming her role, and in retaliation she obtains a stick. The husband then makes a swift departure to the door, apologising for his behaviour conclusively and extensively

[…] deme I sall hald my tung
for and we fecht I ill get the woir
[…] quhen I forsuk my plwche
I trow I bot fursuk my seill
And I will to my plwch agane
Ffor I and this howß will nevir do weill[…] (ll. 113-20)[198]

([…] I shall hold my tongue, for when we fight I come off worse […] when I forsook my plough, I truly forsook my happiness, and I wish to plough again, for I and this house will never do well[…])

[196] II, p. 323, fol. 121b.

[197] Ibid.

[198] II, p. 324, fol. 121b.

The reader is left to imagine the reaction of the wife to these words; however, it is clear that this is a rare example of a male voice admitting his fault and accepting the dominance or rather, superiority of the female figure. The iteration of the image of the held tongue is particularly interesting, as the repeated inference of the mouth as a mode of dangerous expression and entrapment in medieval literature is rarely applied to the male body. The action of holding one's tongue is one which carries the value of inhibiting one's base desires and is widely accepted to be a desirable trait in a woman. The husband sees his attempt to forsake his role as having been tantamount to forsaking his happiness: whether this is a barbed comment on the empty or rather soulless nature of the housewife's purview is uncertain; however, given his earlier 'grit schame' (l. 104) ('*great shame*'),[199] it is reasonable to accept that in this context the wife has triumphed over her husband.

It should be noted that the wife is also the participant for whom the value of the house is important – 'we haif ane deir ferme on o^{r} heid' (l. 30) ('*we have an expensive farm over our head*').[200] Perhaps, then, her trickery stems from concern for the mutual household, rather than any wily or malicious intent. In terms of the *querelle*, the inherent value of the female figure is here writ large, as the husband flounders in his role as the true 'ruler' of the household. While the housework itself may be construed as tedious or vapid and therefore 'beneath' the husband, it is the capacity of the wife to (successfully) fulfil and exceed two separate and definitive roles supporting the household that ultimately enhances her prowess as a powerful figure in her own right.

In *The Ever Green* and subsequent prints there are amendments to the third and fourth stanzas, as per the table on pages 168 to 169. Though the sentiment remains largely

[199] II, p. 323, fol. 121b.

[200] II, p. 321, fol. 120b.

the same there are some key differences: the Bannatyne version is more oblique in laying out the tasks that await the husband, while the *Ever Green* is more accusatory in its address of the wife, who 'sit(s) warm, nae Troubles ß**e**' (*'sits comfortably with no trouble'*), and in turn, the retort of the wife is somewhat more solemn. She answers to the authority of the husband with '**ß**en **3**e haif made the Law / then gyde all richt and do not break' ('*Since you have made the law, show everyone right and do not break [it]*'). Where the amendments come from is as yet uncertain; however, the differences are worth noting in enhancing the initial parity of the characters in the Bannatyne, a parity that is undermined in the later versions by more combative and accusatory language, as seen in the *Ever Green* edition, an excerpt of which is appended to this chapter.

An additional stanza also appears in the *Ever Green*, in which a chimney fire further impedes the husband

> The Leam up throu the Lum did flow
> The Sute tuke Fyre it flyed him than
> Sum Lumps did fall and burn his Pow
> I wat he was a dirty Man
> Zit he gat Water in a Pan
> Quherwith he flokend out the Fyre
> To ßoup the House he ßyne began,
> To had all richt was his Desyre…[201]
>
> (*The fire and smoke flowed up through the chimney. The soot took fire, it scared him, then some lumps fell and burned his head. I think that he was a dirty man, yet he got water in a pan, with which he smothered out the fire. He soon began to mop the house, to get everything sorted as was his desire.)*

[201] *The Ever Green, Being A Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600*, ed. by Allan Ramsay (Edinburgh: Thomas Ruddiman, 1724), I, v. x.

This additional stanza adds to the comedic image of the husband as a 'dirty Man' besmirched in soot, yet adds little else of note to the Bannatyne source. The desire to remedy his errors is more obliquely stated here and his metaphorical attempts at firefighting are tonally useful, in symbolising the perils of multi-tasking. Yet ultimately little is added to the investigation of the *querelle* representation in this instance.

Bannatyne 'Punches Down' – Theories of Comedy

If we accept that the *querelle des femmes* is consistently understood as being a fundamental question of the dignity and worth of women, with the debate taking place on both sides, pro *and* contra, so too can we recognise that the use of comedy all too frequently works to undo this and rob those depicted of any dignity and in turn, any worth. It does this in a number of ways examined in this chapter, never forgetting that alongside this inherent use of a societal scapegoat, there is also the question of rhetorical convention. Such essential critical works as *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended* by Alcuin Blamires and Francis Lee Utley's *The Crooked Rib* are testament to the pervasive and pronounced use of the debate around women as an exercise in rhetorical prowess for male authorship.[202] While the epistolary nature of the original debate offers an active rhetorical exchange of ideas, the way in which tropes and discussions of female worth recur in verse collections and miscellanies reflects a sense in which the debate has become not only stagnant, but shallow, in its incapacity to move forward and its tendency to roll out old prejudices, images, and content.

[202] Utley; Blamires.

Speaking about 'In secreit place this hindir nycht', a very central poem to this analysis, Ramson and Hughes argue for the centrality of the 'illusory' world of courtliness to this poem. In further discussing the courtly influence on this poem, they offer a useful discussion on the use of rhetoric at this time:

> A rhetoric requires both a defined situation in which it operates and established precedents, and in this case it is the court that provides the situation and a rich tradition of oral verse that supplies the precedents. The poet is a craftsman, probably also a skilled performer; he knows and can have confidence in the sophistication of his audience, and is to them a known and familiar figure who plays several roles, from public orator on ceremonial occasions to spiritual adviser in the meditative context to entertainer on festive or informal occasions. Each role has, of course, its own decorum and to a very large extent the poet's success depends on his observance of this – whether he accepts it and works within it, as Henryson does so immaculately in, say, *The Traitie of Orpheus King* or manipulates it, introducing extraneous elements, playing with poetic conventions and seeking shock effects, as the more flamboyant Dunbar prefers to do. [203]

Applying this to 'In secreit place', one can trace the way in which courtliness is a defined situation in which the rhetoric of the poem works to subvert expectations. While Ramson and Hughes focus on the necessity of such humour in life's travails, this reading of this poem argues that what the poem really shows is the perceived monstrosity of female sexuality as a locus for humour. The woman's lack of modesty and the presence of sexual agency are the butt of the joke for a contemporary sixteenth-century audience, and the hilarity perceived therein is misogynist. This is an endemic feature of the third section and a prime example of the way in which rhetoric perpetuates a sense of normalcy to such fundamental issues of gender.

[203] Hughes and Ramson, pp. 118–19.

Lindy West is not a medieval woman writing, nor is she a critic of the Stewart court. Rather, she is a contemporary figure who has engaged closely with recent discourse surrounding rape culture and the societal implications of 'rape jokes' in stand-up comedy and social media. In her 2016 memoir, *Shrill,* West writes the following, a display of deep-rooted anger and preoccupations that are harrowingly close to the culture which underpins medieval writing:

> Feminists don't single out rape jokes because rape is 'worse' than other crimes – we single them out because we live in a culture that actively strives to shrink the definition of sexual assault; that casts stalking behaviours as romance; blames victims for wearing the wrong clothes, walking through the wrong neighbourhood, or flirting with the wrong person; bends over backwards to excuse boys-will-be-boys misogyny; makes the emotional and social costs of reporting a rape prohibitively high; pretends that false accusations are a more dire problem than actual assaults; elects officials who tell rape victims that their sexual violation was 'God's plan'; and convicts in less than 5 [sic] per cent of rape cases that go to trial. Comedians regularly retort that no one complains when they joke about murder or other crimes in their acts, citing that as double standard. Well, fortunately, there is no cultural narrative casting doubt on the existence and prevalence of murder and pressuring people not to report it.[204]

What West's work shows us, amongst myriad other things, is that the discourse of comedy, particularly in relation to the female figure, is still contested to this day. Issues which plagued the women of medieval romance and satire, such as the ubiquity and, to an extent, the expectation of acts of sexual violence against them, are no less meaningful 600 years on. West writes further about the unbounded, nebulous space which comedy occupies; in which norms can be challenged, lines can be crossed, characters lampooned and in this realm of outrageousness, true expression may leak through. What is pertinent to the case of comedy and anti-feminist rhetoric is the adage she highlights about the power balance of successful comedy. It is widely accepted, as West illustrates, that

[204] Lindy West, *Shrill: Notes From A Loud Woman* (London: Quercus, 2016), p. 172.

successful comedy should 'punch up' – the vanquished may mock the victor, the peasant the lord, but to do so the other way round is where comedy fails:

> Punching up versus punching down isn't a mandate or a hard-and-fast rule or a universal taxonomy – I'm sure that any contrarian worth his salt could list exceptions all day – it's simply a reminder that systems of power are always relevant, a helpful thought exercise for people who have trouble grasping why 'bitch' is worse than 'asshole'.[205]

Of course, in this instance West is talking about the political minefield of rape culture and rape jokes. What we see in the Bannatyne third section is the equivalent of 'punching down', a process which can be defined as daring or subversive for a contemporary audience – in this case the material that may not have been deemed serious enough for the other sections: where giants and sexual deviance may be frowned upon in a section focussed on morality or theology, the broad umbrella of comedy works to house a myriad of miscellaneous tropes and situations that may otherwise struggle to be expressed in Bannatyne's categorisation. Here, however comedy works to castigate the individual, primarily the female individual, and denigrate their experience for the sake of amusement, which strongly suggests male readership and social audience. The power imbalance that is exploited for comedic effect is that between the female and male protagonists: granted, there are some exceptions such as *The Wyf of Auchtermuchty*, but it is fair to say that the central impulse of the section generally involves the scenario of powerful men poking fun at the weaker sex.

[205] West, p. 180.

Ramson and Hughes' analysis of the 'ballatis mirry' works with the idea of the comedy section as being crafted via the frame of 'consolatory' verse,[206] and they include a pithy summary of the vast range of the collection, whereby the poems are

> […] so numerous and so varied, ranging from light-hearted and inconsequential nonsense poems to poems deeply apprehensive of the human condition, from idle, in-group jokes to the most extravagant of grotesqueries, that the modern reader is inclined to abandon himself to unthinking laughter, as the action of *Was nevir in Scotland hard nor sene* does, in its own riotous and disordered momentum.[207]

Whereas my own theory of editing within the Bannatyne revolves around the idea of key poems as being indicative of underlying themes and Bannatyne's moral philosophy of curation, Ramson and Hughes offer a useful perspective on the perplexing inclusion of certain poems within the comedy section. When we use the framework of 'consolation', they argue for the idea of Bannatyne trying to preserve and present a 'broad perspective of divine comedy' amongst other motivating factors.[208] These patterns of consolation and Bannatyne's rendering of the Christian ideas of the comic, are exemplified at length in their discussion of the editing of Lyndsay's satire, a selection of which exists within this third section. This consistent and characteristic mix of serious admonitory verse and verses which immerse themselves in the illusory nature of humanity is what Bannatyne utilises to enforce 'the context in which man needs and should seek the indulgence of

[206] Hughes and Ramson, p. 103.

[207] Ibid, p. 103.

[208] Ibid, p. 104.

laughter'.[209] This chimes in particular with the perplexing inclusion of the *Lament for the Makars*, which is placed directly before Dunbar's *Off februar the fyftiene nycht*.

Gender and class become in many cases inextricably bound together in this section: the parallels and inversion of plebian and courtly culture combine to direct the derision and scorn of the reader towards both upper and lower classes, who try and fail to emulate the proper 'courtly' behaviour and inherent hypocrisy of such activity. A poem such as 'I met my lady well arrayit' and the 'courtly fukking' of 'In somer' critique the supposedly noble facade of courtly love, an abstract fascination in the later fourth section of the Bannatyne, by lowering the tone to consider explicit sexual conquest and perceived base desires. 'Of a wenche w^{t} child' articulates the stigma around extramarital sex and the plebeian class, depicted here as disenfranchised and beleaguered by a lack of knowledge and understanding of their situation. Even the upper echelons are not free from scrutiny, however, as Dunbar's 'Wowing of the King quhen he wes in dunfermling' describes the 'ferly cace' of the King's sexual adventures. It is interesting, though entirely unsurprising, that where women are vilified for such behaviour, the figure of the King is lauded and celebrated for his sexual proclivities. In 'I saw me thot this hindir nycht' the literal backdrop of the 'lairdis bed' provides commentary on the base nature of class behaviour, with the imagery of a high-class bed being sullied and trampled arguably corresponding directly to the stigma of a desecrated non-virginal female body.

[209] Hughes and Ramson, p. 108.

Chapter Conclusion

The 'ballatis mirry' comes across as a lyric selection which is simultaneously curated with absolute precision on the part of the editor, and yet elusive of definition in terms of overarching genre. The work of Ramson and Hughes, Van Heijnsbergen, Harker, and even West each, in a very different context, illuminate a different aspect of the collection. The consolatory nature of humour; the literary prowess exercised in the deployment of humour; the gendered economy of satire; and the inherent misogyny of humour each have a part to play in any close analysis of this collection of comedic lyrics. Yet for the overarching ideas of the *querelle des femmes*, perhaps the ultimate conclusion of this examination is that humour relies on the female figure for a comfortable, acceptable, and universally coded locus of comedy in sixteenth-century Scotland. Critical readings of the manuscript concur with this: where Ramson and Hughes and van Heijnsbergen overlap is in their perceived notion of a nation in flux, a courtly society of uncertainty and political unrest, which is mirrored in the verse. For Harker, this uncertainty is manifested in the nebulous market of the burgh, and for West, the taxonomy of humour relies on this system of victor and vanquished, of an inherently understood power balance. The nature of female sexuality remains a fail-safe for comedic writing, with tropes and forms familiar to a late medieval and early modern audience reproduced and, occasionally, subverted for their enjoyment.

For the dignity and worth of women, however, there is little to redeem the comedy section as a whole. Though *The Wyf of Auchtermuchty* provides something of a respite to the onslaught of misogyny, and the imagined female community of 'Ffals clatterand kensy kukald knaif' hints at a wider role for women, these remain the exception rather than the rule. Were we to read the comedy section strictly as a large contribution to the *querelle*, the

impression we are left with is of an indefatigable sexism, tireless in its capacity to recycle the tropes of a society in which women are inherently at a disadvantage.

Appendix

Bannatyne Manuscript (STS ed.) line 21 onwards	**The Ever Green (1874 ed.) line 21 onwards**
Husband q scho content am I	
To take þe pluche my day abowt	The seid-time it proves cauld and bad,
Sa ȝe will rowll baith kavis and ky	And ze fit warm, nae Troubles fe;
And all the houß baith in and owt	The Morn ze fall gae with the Lad
	And syne zeil ken what Drinker drie.
Bot sen that ȝe will husye skep ken	
First ȝe sall syft & syne sall kned	Gudeman, quod scho, content am I ,
And ay as ȝe gang but & ben	To tak the Plewch my Day about.
Luk that the bairnis dryt not the bed	Sae ye rule weil the Kaves and Ky,
ȝeis lay ane soft wisp to þe kill	And all the House baith in and out:
we haif ane deir ferme on o^{r} heid	And now sen ze haif made the Law,
And ay as ȝe gang furth & in	Then gyde all richt and do not break;
Keip weill the gaslingis fra the gled	They ficker raid that neir did faw,
	Therefor lat naithing be neglect.

CHAPTER FOUR ~ The Makar and the 'Ladeis Fair' – William Dunbar

Dunbar's Poetic Voice

One of the most valuable voices in the Scottish reception of the *querelle* can be found in the enigmatic and chameleonic narrative voice(s) of William Dunbar, something mirrored in Bannatyne's own philosophy of collation. David Parkinson talks about Bannatyne's collation of poems relating to women 'reappear[ing] across the full range of positions; it is as if the capacity is being ascribed to literature to articulate various positions without commitment to any one of them'.[1] The positions are summarised by Parkinson as '[f]ervent longing; vilification; idealisation; renunciation […]' which is something reflected not only throughout the manuscript but specifically within the work of Dunbar. Dunbar's work covers a vast spectrum of nuanced style and content: within the fourth section alone we see him tackle medieval beast fable ('The Merle and the Nychtingall'); the assertive nature of ladies at court ('Thir Ladeis Fair That Makis Repair'); the narrative deconstruction of *The Roman de la Rose* ('Sen that I am presoneir') and advice to the lover ('Be ȝe ane luvar'). Most importantly, 'The Golden Targe' can be seen to provide an in-depth and illuminating response to *The Roman de la Rose* in a thematic sense, in many ways much deeper than the more literal 'Sen that I am presoneir'. This chapter examines each of these poems in turn, paying particular attention to the critical work of William Calin, Anthony J. Hasler, and Joanne Norman in particular, in order to establish the close interplay and reflexive relationship between Dunbar's work and the *querelle des femmes*.

[1] Parkinson, 'A Lamentable Storie' (p. 153).

This chapter discusses the work of William Dunbar as a distinct collection excerpted from the Bannatyne manuscript. Dunbar's work pervades all sections of the manuscript, and the Bannatyne is a key witness to many Dunbar poems, in some cases being the sole witness. Given the critical attention paid to Dunbar's poetry, to include it in a chapter alongside anonymous verses would perhaps unfairly detract from the lesser-known work. Furthermore, the isolation of Dunbar's work into one chapter allows us to view the selection of poems as an entity in and of itself, a cross-section of Dunbar's poetic style and distinctive narrative voice. Joanne S. Norman makes a further argument in support of looking at Dunbar's work as part of the Bannatyne structure as opposed to viewing his *oeuvre* in isolation: '[w]hen individual poems are viewed as part of a particular genre of verse, they seem more ordinary and less problematic than when they are gathered together and isolated as part of a single author's work.'[2]

The 'extreme versatility'[3] of Dunbar's work is challenging when trying to discern a key thematic drive or moral coherence to his work. While it can be argued that the isolation of Dunbar's work in a single chapter is counterproductive in an overall study of the Bannatyne, I feel it is necessary within the context of the *querelle des femmes* to consider Dunbar's work as both apposite to, and separate from the anonymised verse within the manuscript. While its juxtaposition and collocation within the text is important to a thorough analysis, and will be commented upon, the fixed focus on Dunbar is vital for a number of reasons. The work of Dunbar provides the biggest link between the Bannatyne manuscript and the later Maitland Folio. As will be discussed briefly in the Conclusion to

[2] Joanne S Norman, 'William Dunbar: *Grand Rhétoriqueur*', *Bryght Lanternis*, 179–94 (p. 179).

[3] Ibid, p. 179.

this thesis, this strong relationship is indicative of a sustained preoccupation with the *querelle* in both collections. Following on from this, the utility of Dunbar as *auctoritas*, or as a key point on the moral compass of Bannatyne's collection, is best recognised through close reading and consideration of his verse contained within. Ultimately, this chapter will use the work of Dunbar to argue that the way in which Dunbar's poetry is deployed within the manuscript highlights his propensity towards verbal play, and within it, a perceptible satirisation of the *querelle*. The satirical framing of the *querelle* is an interesting counterpoint to the ostensibly more earnest verse of the fourth section. As earlier chapters have discussed, the participation of poets within the *querelle* is often performed as part of a rhetorical exercise or game, whereby their engagement with the debate is utilised as proof of their poetic prowess rather than any meaningful political engagement with the subject matter. Just as a poet may dabble with the genre of courtly romance, without devoting themselves to the life of a courtier or knight errant, so too might a poet engage with the question of women, without any real investment in the politics of the topic. Perhaps in refusing to address the politics of the *querelle*, Dunbar's engagement with the rhetorical gambit of the debate is in itself politicised.

What Norman highlights, and what has preoccupied many critics of Dunbar, is the dichotomy of his poetic voice. She describes thus: 'a poet who celebrates the life of the court in golden ceremonial terms and then turns around and describes the same setting with obscene scurrility'.[4] Anthony J. Hasler focusses on this apparent duplicity in his essay, 'William Dunbar: The Elusive Subject'[5], arguing that 'it is hardly surprising that much criticism of Dunbar has at bottom been an endeavour to recuperate the

[4] Norman, p. 179.

[5] Anthony J Hasler, 'William Dunbar: The Elusive Subject', *Bryght Lanternis*, 194–209.

contradictions and discontinuities perceived in the poetry.'[6] One of the most extensive pieces of scholarship in terms of a direct European influence in Dunbar's work, William Calin's monograph *The Lily and the Thistle* provides a wealth of information about potential French sources for Dunbar's poetry. Though Calin does not directly discuss the verse collated in the Bannatyne manuscript, he nevertheless makes a number of useful points in relation to the proposed impact of the *querelle des femmes* on Dunbar's work generally. Intriguingly Calin does not at any point refer to the *querelle* explicitly, yet there is much that can be extracted from Calin's remarks on Dunbar's source material, specifically the implicit indebtedness to Jean, which Calin rightly asserts is particularly prominent in verses such as 'The Golden Targe'. Calin argues that there is a wealth of previously unappreciated French inheritance in Dunbar's work, much of which can be extricated from texts which are integral to the *querelle*. Key points emerge from Calin's critique, specifically the ways in which Dunbar's debt to *The Roman de la Rose* can be extricated from his poetry, and the thematic relationship that exists between the two. Regrading Dunbar's affinity with Jean specifically, Calin posits that

> Dunbar found two essential elements in Jean de Meun. The first is the universe of the *Rose* – its phenomenology. Jean's is a world of disguise, hypocrisy, deceit, and manipulation, of falsity, treachery, and delusion, one in which masters dominate slaves and, again and again, reality proves to be illusion and illusion reality. The nastiness, the mean-spiritedness in Dunbar that offends some Anglicists is simply the world viewed from a less sentimental perspective on the Continent.[7]

This study does not aim to rehabilitate Dunbar into a cohesive critical *ouevre* with politics and opinions that are easily parsed through a close reading of any poem: to do so would be both foolish and impossible. Rather, in observing the work of Dunbar as being

[6] Hasler, p. 194.

[7] Calin, p. 111.

generically chameleonic, I hope to establish the ways in which the *querelle* both pervades a variety of genres, and provokes a range of responses. While elsewhere in the manuscript we may find more literal responses to the question of women's worth, and indeed we do so also in Dunbar ('now of wemen this I say', for example), in looking at a cross-section of Dunbar's verse, and the broad spectrum of genre, we can see within one poetic 'self' a vast array of responses, with the knowledge of the poet's established prowess allowing us to examine further beneath the surface and into the realms of satire, derision and parody.

The core of this thesis considers the connection of the works within the Bannatyne manuscript in a broader European context, utilising the *querelle* as a vehicle by which to understand this connection. It is worth considering Dunbar's work alongside the work of Joanne S. Norman and the possibilities of Hasler's analysis: both appear in the same 1989 essay collection and touch on key aspects of Dunbar's poetic identity. Indeed, Norman's analysis goes further in establishing not only a parallel but a distinct connection between Dunbar and the *grands rhétoriqueurs* of the fifteenth century. Norman states: 'just as the court of James IV imitated the style of the greater European courts, so Dunbar's experience may be considered analogous to that of the poets who served these courts'.[8] Though there is historiographical evidence of the presence of the *rhétoriqueurs* in contemporary Scottish circulation,[9] Norman asserts that the influence 'is to be found more in a general attitude of style rather than in specific quotations from individual texts'.[10] Similar circumstances surrounding the production of their court poetry add to this sense of cultural transfer, with the career of writers such as Jean Molinet mirroring

[8] Norman, p. 182.

[9] See Calin, *The Lily and the Thistle*.

[10] Norman, p. 182.

Dunbar's, 'particularly the travelling and years in obscurity after taking his degree'.[11] While the superficial similarities are pleasingly coincidental and offer a sense of Dunbar's place in the broader development of poetic art, the implications of this for his reception of the *querelle* are manifold. As Norman states '[i]t was in their work that Dunbar could find the continuation and extension of the concept of poetry as rhetoric'.[12]

> Two positions became possible for the writer in a world of transitions and contradictions. He could accept the surface of his world and express his acceptance by glorifying it and by using the traditional myths or symbols to invoke an ideal world of coherence and unity […] Some *grand rhétoriqueurs* opted for one or the other, but more, like Dunbar, seemed to move between the two poles of poetic expression.[13]

In the dream vision of 'The Golden Targe', we see Dunbar inhabit something of a liminal space between these two positions. In regards to the court environment in Europe at this time, Norman describes the purpose of performative spectacle as being 'to affirm the power and the glory of the ruling class'.[14] Louise Fradenburg's work *City, Marriage, Tournament* has much to say about the tournament phenomena in relation to women. Of specific interest is the following excerpt:

> Historians of the medieval tournament have often told the story of the tournament's increasing ritualization, artificiality, theatricality. The shift from violence to ritual, reality to representation, is linked with the growing importance of women – as spectators, as queens of beauty, as participants in disguisings – to tournament display. It is linked also with a changing relation between the court and the field of combat.[15]

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[11] Norman, p. 183.

[12] Ibid, p. 182.

[13] Ibid, p. 185.

[14] Ibid, p. 186.

[15] Fradenburg, p. 192.

This is certainly reflected in Norman's work – describing the famous tournament of 1507 the 'Turnament of the Black Knight and the Black Lady', Norman refers to 'the outmoded chivalry which had ceased to be a social reality but which retained its imaginative hold on the court'.[16] This concept of courtliness and outdated chivalric ideals was brought into sharper focus in Chapter Three, in relation to the comedic section of the Bannatyne; however it bears some relevance in regards to the nature of Dunbar's poetry in particular. In adopting this stance, as Norman states, Dunbar 'is not rejecting the social order so much as he is questioning the one-dimensional nature of its view of human life'.[17]

Both Norman and Hasler speak about the challenge of 'one-dimensional' thinking in relation to the thematic material of Dunbar's work. While Hasler's example is tied closely to 'The Golden Targe' in particular, looking at the transition of minstrels to court poets and the politics within this transition, Norman's broader portrait of Dunbar and his work looks to the greater questions of what it is to be an orator, or a poet, and the role of each in relation to the society they inhabit. One of the many informative conclusions drawn by Norman is that of the way in which 'Dunbar himself clearly associates poetry with rhetoric',[18] citing the specific instance of the conclusion of 'The Golden Targe' and its allusion to poets. This self-awareness on the part of Dunbar, his propensity to use his poetry to embody reflexiveness and cast a mirror upon the society in which he worked offers a fascinating relationship with the *querelle*, whereby Dunbar participates in its terms of debate as a chameleon, taking on nebulous views that seem to shift and change.

[16] Norman, p. 186.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid, p. 187.

The extent to which the writing of Dunbar bears re-reading and new analysis is exceptional. Though he was often linked to current fashions, as Norman states, there was 'irony implicit' in his ceremonial poems and the performed dissatisfaction in some of his verse to the King,[19] lamenting his lack of benefice, takes on a new meaning when considered as a smokescreen for genuine affect. While this can never be conclusively proved, and Dunbar cannot be retroactively described as being a strong (and highly precocious) feminist, what we can see in his skilful manipulation of genre is a reliably well-written set of poems pertaining to the *querelle* in a meaningful context. The aureate skill of Dunbar and his willingness to traverse genre elevate the *querelle* from a mere reference point, or as a model for amateur verse, to a dynamic and shifting question which can be approached in multifaceted and nuanced ways beyond a binary exchange of 'he said she said' dialectic.

Readings of the Poems

'The Golden Targe'

We now turn to one of Dunbar's most renowned and well-studied verses. 'The Golden Targe' describes a dream vision in which the narrator reflects upon his encounter 'In May in till a morrow myrthfullest' (l. 9)[20] (*'In May on a morning most mirthful'*). Against the

[19] Norman, p. 181.

[20] IV, p. 252 fol. 345a.

backdrop of a stunningly aureate *locus amoenus*, the narrator describes at length his encounter with a ship full of women

> […] agane þe orient sky
> And saill as blosome vpoun spray
> quihilk tendit to þe land full lustely
> [As falcoun swift desyrouse of hir pray] (ll. 50-54)[21]
>
> *([…] against the eastern sky, [I saw] a sail like blossom upon spray which came towards the land very powerfully, like a swift falcon desirous of her prey)*

From the boat emerges a catalogue of goddesses: Nature, Venus, Aurora, Flora, Juno, Apollo, Proserpina. By the thirteenth stanza, 'ane vþir court' (l. 109) (*'another court'*) is described in opposition to these women,[22] a masculine opposition, heralding the entry of Cupid, Mars, 'crabit saturne' (l. 114) (*'ill-natured Saturn'*) and many others.[23] The gendered dichotomy is placed amidst a colourful array of imagery and personification, the narrator watches them sing and dance, seemingly mirroring the process of courtship and seduction in heteronormative courtly culture. The narrator falls prey to a sudden fear in stanzas 15 and 16, as he realises he has been 'espyit' (l. 137) (*'seen'*) by Venus ('luvis queen', l. 136) (*'love's queen'*).[24] In a move which personifies the male experience of seduction as an assault, Venus sends her archers to arrest the narrator, and he is soon entrapped by the archers Beauty, Fair Having, Fyne Portrature, Pleasance, and Lusty Chere, all attributes of a desirable female figure. Yet in line 151, we see the triumphant entrance of 'ressoun w^{t}

[21] IV, pp. 253–54 fol. 345b. Line 54 is omitted from the manuscript, but is indicated in a footnote by Ritchie, and included in later edited editions such as Bawcutt (1998).

[22] IV, p. 255 fol. 346a.

[23] IV, p. 256 fol. 346b.

[24] Ibid.

scheild of gold so cleir… Defendit me þat nobil chevelleir' (*'Reason, with a shield of gold so clear […] defended me, that noble chevalier'*).[25] It is apparent immediately that Reason is allied with the masculine virtues and gods, being both noble and chivalrous, epithets almost exclusively allied with the male experience in late medieval romance.

Other personified, largely female attributes come to join the attack: Youth, Innocence, Dread, Abasement to name but a few, before the distinctly feminine 'ladeis full of reverence' (l. 162) (*'ladies full of reverence'*) accompanying 'sueit womanhede' (l. 160) (*'sweet womanhood'*).[26] This epitome of womanliness leads further attacks on the narrator who is continually protected by Reason who: 'bure þe targe w^{t} sic constance / Thair scherp assay mycht do to me no deirance / for all þair preiß and awfull ordinance' (l. 169-72) (*'[Reason] bore the shield with such constancy [that] their sharp assails might do no injury to me, for all their assault and ordinance'*).[27] Rallying her troops for a final assault, Venus opts to employ Presence, Fair Calyng, and Cherising 'for to compleit hir chairge' (l. 189) (*'for to complete her charge'*).[28] These attributes which can be associated with the enactment of love, the presence of the lover, the necessity and appeal of their mutual attraction and the cherishing of such a connection, appear alongside Homeliness (intimacy), and Beauty, all of which combine to indicate that the assault on the narrator is one closely allied with a gendered romantic encounter or seduction. Of particular note is Dunbar's description of Venus as 'scho þat was of dowbilnes the rute' (l. 184) (*'she that was of doubleness the root'*).[29] This concept of a duplicitous woman is inherent in many arguments pertaining to the

[25] IV, p. 257 fol. 346a.

[26] IV, p. 257 fol. 347a.

[27] Ibid.

[28] IV, p. 258 fol. 347a.

[29] Ibid.

querelle and the nature of femininity as fickle, transient, and inconstant (consider the *impossibilia* topos of the fourth section). The departure from the earlier descriptions of female figures in 'þat paradyß [c]ompleit' (l. 72) (*'that paradise complete'*) is stark,[30] and in itself reminiscent of the Fall of Eve from child of god to sinner and morally weak woman. In characterising Venus in this way, a fearful *volte face,* it can be argued that Dunbar's narrator seeks to show the true nature of woman, as he perceives it. Yet, knowing what we do about Dunbar and his prowess as a poet and role within the court, a case becomes apparent for Dunbar as parodist, highlighting the ridiculous paradoxes inherent in the denigration of women in verse traditions.

This hyperbolic bombardment is furthered by the direct assault on Reson by Presence, who obscures his vision 'kest ane powder in his ene' (l. 203) (*'cast a powder in his eyes'*) which turns Reson into a swooning, lovesick figure 'as drukkin man he all forwayit' (l. 204) (*'as [a] drunken man he went astray'*).[31] The narrator feels great fear at this point, seeing the power of Presence, and with it, the allegorical power of sexual immediacy to undermine human rationality, a key facet of the suspicion and derision of women in the late medieval period, often castigated as seductresses and tempting tricksters. Abandoned as a prisoner to Beauty, the narrator is 'woundit til þe deth full neir' (l. 208) (*'wounded to the death full near'*) and finds himself falling under the charms of his assailants.[32] His final deliverance, however, 'vnto havines' (l. 227) (*'unto heaviness'*) is interrupted,[33] this 'heaviness' being the long-term implications and sorrow of a secular love, so derided by moralists of the time. They are interrupted by the horn of Aeolus, as 'his bowgill blew' (l.

[30] IV, p. 254 fol. 346a.

[31] IV, p. 258 fol. 347b.

[32] IV, p. 259 fol. 347b.

[33] Ibid.

230) (‘*his bugle blew*’) and the vision soon disappears entirely: ‘thare wes bot wildirneß, / thair wes no moir bot birdis bonk & bruke’ (ll. 233-4) (‘*there was but wilderness: there was no more but birds, bank and brook*’).[34] The characters retreat to their ship and take sail, and the ‘reird it semit the rane bow brak’ (ll. 240-1) (‘*it seemed that the rainbow broke because of the noise*’).[35] Then, of course, the narrator is awakened, returned to the *locus amoenus*.

The poem ends with an appeal to its literary forebears: Chaucer is addressed, the narrator adopting the impossibility topos, convinced that Chaucer could not adequately describe ‘alls fer as Mayis morrow dois Midnycht’ (l. 261) (‘*as much as May’s morning does midnight*’).[36] ‘[M]orale goweir and lidgait laureat’ (l. 262) (‘*Moral Gower and Lydgate laureate*’) are challenged,[37] their ‘angelik mowth most mellifluat’ (l. 265) (‘*angelic mouth(s) most mellifluate*’), praising his predecessors in the hope that his book may too be regarded well.[38] The narrator implores his book, his ‘litill quair, be evir obedient, / Humyll / subiect / and semple of entent’ (ll. 271-2) (‘*little book, be ever obedient, humble, subject, and simple of intent*’),[39] and writes of rhetoric that there are none of ‘all hir lustie roisis redolent’ (l. 275) (‘*all her lusty roses fragrant*’) in his work.[40] Given the depth and extent of the dream vision, this ending is oddly sober, expressing a tone of despondency and fatigue with the artistic process of mimesis. There are alternative readings of this ending, that the conventional praise here is sincere and an attempt at honouring Chaucer through emulation – yet in

[34] IV, p. 259 fol. 347b

[35] IV, p. 260 fol. 347b.

[36] IV, p. 260 fol. 348a.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] IV, p. 261 fol. 348a.

[40] Ibid, fol. 348b.

this context, a more subversive reading is a crucial consideration.[41] Lois Ebin remarks that '[a]lthough his concluding praise of Chaucer, Gower and Lydgate appears to be conventional, it is loaded with echoes of stanzas 1-5 in a new context',[42] linking the formalities of praise with the subversive content of the poem, while Denton Fox states that ' […]Dunbar's poems are static, ending where they begin, but are made tightly unified by technical poetic devices'.[43] This critique of the style of Dunbar's work is useful but in terms of the question at hand, this reading focusses on the thematic implications of such an abrupt end, rendered as though to emphasise dissatisfaction. Though the frustration of the narrator is because of the problem of representing a perceived reality in language, if we consider the 'Targe' as a piece of *querelle* literature, we can freely wonder if the mimesis that is truly amiss is the capacity of literature to fairly represent the reality of women.

Hasler's 1989 article on 'William Dunbar: The Elusive Subject' takes as its basis the 'personification allegory' of 'The Golden Targe'.[44] Hasler focusses on the question of subjectivity within the poem, stating that it 'establishes connections between language and desire which do not permit such one-sided readings' as the simple 'overthrow of reason by a feminine appeal to the senses'.[45] This analysis is interwoven with criticism of *The Roman de la Rose*, and takes into account earlier criticism of Chaucer, such as Evelyn Birge

[41] With thanks to Professor John McGavin for his input on this matter.

[42] Lois A. Ebin, 'The Theme of Poetry in Dunbar's "Goldyn Targe"', *The Chaucer Review*, 7.2 (1972), 147–59 (p. 153).

[43] Denton Fox, 'Dunbar's Golden Targe', *ELH*, 26.3 (Sep. 1959), pp. 311-334 (p. 331).

[44] Hasler, p. 197.

[45] Ibid.

Vitz and her work on the distinctive personae present within *The Roman de la Rose*.[46] In discussing the *Roman*, Hasler turns to Birge Vitz's distinction of 'several distinct 'I's" between the Narrator, the Dreamer, and the Lover.[47] The relationship of these figures within time is the important, and distinguishing factor, between Dunbar's work and that of the *Roman*. Hasler summarises this by examining the way in which Dunbar compresses the narrative complexity into a dream narrative:

> [by line 3] an 'I' rapidly narrates the action it takes Guillaume de Lorris's dreamer 1610 lines to accomplish. Such insouciant abbreviation of a major poem already seems to stress that this 'I' is a poetic device, and in the dream itself it has a largely typical status, which is very much gender-based – 'man' as opposed to 'woman' – this allegorical mode of emphasising the typicality of the speaker's case.[48]

As Hasler argues, we as readers see the Lover of the *Roman* 'turned into a voyeur'.[49] This initially observational role sets Dunbar's narrator apart from the more immediate involvement of the Dreamer and more obviously reflexive account of the Narrator in the *Roman*.

The implications of this distance for the *querelle* are intriguing. It is reasonable to assume Dunbar's familiarity with his source text, given its prevalence and influence in both the 'The Golden Targe' and 'Sen that I am presoneir'. In relation to 'The Golden Targe' specifically, Calin states that

[46] Evelyn B. Vitz, 'The "I" of the Roman de La Rose', *Genre*, 6 (1973), 49–75.

[47] Hasler, p. 197.

[48] Ibid, p. 198.

[49] Ibid.

> [o]nly from Jean de Meun could Dunbar have gotten Venus and Cupid together in a situation allied to and supported by Nature, an army of fighting allegories, and the victory achieved by an archer who is Venus or a Venus-surrogate.[50]

Aside from implicit inheritance, the act of writing two separate poems is remarkable: while the 'Targe' deals with an onslaught of personified concepts, so too does 'Sen that I am', yet in more enthusiastically violent terms. The sexual element of the *querelle* is at its most visceral in 'Sen', yet in the 'Targe' the broader terms of the argument are abstracted and depicted: the overpowering nature, not of sexual temptation, but of *fin'amor*, of desire and longing and the art of a more cerebral, courtly seduction. Though both poems deal with an attack and a conflict, the terms are often opposite. Dunbar seems, in this sense, to be able to examine the separate parts of the *querelle* in a way that sets his work apart from some of the more pedestrian contributions to the debate. He is able to abstract sexual desire from the act of sexual intercourse, and depict both in a meaningful, yet separate artistic way, extending the practice of allegory into a distinguished poetic form. Hasler writes along these lines, remarking that the opening of this poem 'gives us not so much a text uttered by a body as an embodied text, no voice but rather writing reified'.[51] This sense of the central importance of the act of writing is reflected in the concluding verses of the poem, which express the narrator's displeasure and frustration at the inability of words to express what has become for him a vivid, impactful, and most importantly lived experience.

[50] Calin, p. 58.

[51] Hasler, p. 199.

Hasler refers back to the critical work of David Hult on the *Roman*, whereby 'allegory is a mode which renders the bounds of the body diffuse and unclear'.[52] By contrast, Hasler argues, 'in Dunbar's dream garden – itself basically contiguous with the waking one – matters are revered, with artificial objects depicted through images of nature, including the ship from which the goddesses disembark'.[53] Therefore, the garden of the *Roman*, in which the garden is nebulous and rhetorically protected, is abandoned in favour of one in which forces of nature become threatening. It is the emergence of sexuality that problematizes the plight of the narrator in the 'Targe': Hasler describes the attacking forces as 'embody[ing] the various stages of a woman's life as perceived by the insecure male'.[54] A 'static masque' is disrupted by the **presence** of a woman.[55] Though still a dream vision, it is therefore plausible that Dunbar is offering a fresh critique of the way allegory is embodied in the *Roman*. In his *locus amoenus*, in which peace is precarious and short-lived, he shows a reading of the *querelle* more akin to the contemporary political landscape of sexual politics.

The distinction of 'The Golden Targe' from *The Roman de la Rose* is a key facet of criticism of this particular Dunbar poem. The role and depiction of Reason within the two poems is highly indicative of this contradiction. William Calin offers a reading of *The Roman de la Rose* which he states 'will serve to refute the Robertsonian interpretation of the Targe'.[56] A 'Robertsonian' interpretation is broadly defined as a Christian reading of

[52] Hasler, p. 190.

[53] Ibid, p. 199.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Calin, *The Lily and the Thistle*, p. 58.

the poem in which the dream vision 'ought to be considered a nightmare'[57] due to the interception of Reson as the Narrator's saviour, rather than divine intervention. Calin presents a two-fold argument against this interpretation: firstly, that the depiction of Hevynesse, to whom the narrator is passed shortly before waking, is in fact a synonym for 'melancholia', which is 'often deemed to be a blessing, painful and blessed because it is endured in the cause of *fin'amor*'.[58] Further to this, Calin points out the precedent for a pre-emptive awakening of the dreamer in dream vision, which in texts such as *The Rose* encourage ambiguity rather than negativity.[59] Just as the narrator is abruptly awoken in 'The Golden Targe' so too does *The Roman de la Rose* conclude suddenly:

> In spite of Wealth, that villainous creature who showed no pity but refused me entry to the path she guarded (she paid no heed to the path by which I came here in secret haste); in spite of my mortal enemies who caused me so many setbacks; in spite particularly of Jealousy, weighed down by her garland of marigolds, who protects the roses from lovers (much good her guard is doing now!), before I left that place in which, had I my way, I would have remained to this day, I plucked with joy the flower from the fair and leafy rose-bush. And so I won my bright red rose. **Then it was day and I awoke**.[60]

This abrupt abbreviation of the narrator's story is jarring and provides a discomfiting return to the 'real world'. Another parallel between the two texts is Dunbar's inversion of the character of Reson. The way in which Dunbar depicts Reson within 'The Golden Targe' provides an interesting comparison with Jean's portrait. Calin articulates the key problem facing a contemporary interlocutor of Jean's verse and in turn of Dunbar:

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[57] Calin, *The Lily and the Thistle*, p. 58.

[58] Ibid, p. 58.

[59] Ibid, p. 59.

[60] de Meun and de Lorris, p. 335. Emphasis my own.

'it would be a mistake […] to assume that Reson speaks for Jean de Meun the author and that she is to be considered any more authoritative than the other allegorical discourses'.[61] Moreover, Calin shows that while Jean's Reson seeks to move the protagonist 'allegorically from *fin'amor* to reason', she is also a woman attempting to seduce a young boy; as Calin pithily puts it, 'she is a loser' and an inept teacher.[62] Engaging with the narrator, Jean's Reason is far from coy: 'If it please you, fix your thoughts on me. Am I not a beautiful and noble lady, fit to serve any worthy man, were he emperor of Rome? I would like to become your beloved[…]'.[63] Conversely Dunbar casts Reson as being male, 'correct[ing] any hint of sexual impropriety … turn[ing] Venus' assault on the narrator into a war of the sexes[…]': [64] 'Than come ressoun w^{t} scheild of gold so cleir;/ In plait of maill as mars armipotent / Defendit me þat noble chevelleir' (ll. 151-3) ('*Then came reason with shield of gold so clear, in plate of mail like Mars omnipotent, [he] defended me, that noble chevalier*').[65] Though he is equally incompetent, both literally and metaphorically blinded by the powder of Presence, Dunbar's characterisation initiates an aspect of gender debate into the text which is lacking from Jean's source material. Where Jean's work depicts a failing woman, Dunbar's recasts this role to a masculine Reson which implies a weakness in man.

Dunbar is an author who evidently has an extensive understanding of the French traditions in which debates such as the *querelle* are manifested, particularly given his overt familiarity with the catalyst text. In discussing *The Thrissil and the Rois*, Calin once again

[61] Calin, p. 59.

[62] Calin, p. 59.

[63] de Meun and de Lorris, p. 89.

[64] Calin, p. 60.

[65] IV, p. 257 fol. 346b.

draws informative parallels with *The Roman de la Rose*. Allying Dunbar's text with a series of French poems debating and praising flowers, Calin brings out the sexual imagery of Dunbar's poem. which is usually considered as a purely courtly and somewhat nationalist epithalamium. Again, Dunbar's interaction with the *Roman de la Rose* is implicit in the ways in which his verse interacts with its predecessor, utilising and further exploring its sexualised imagery to enhance his encomium.

'Sen þat I Am Presoneir'

As noted by a number of critics, 'Sen þat I am presoneir' is often overlooked as being an inferior imitation of the 'Targe' in many ways, particularly when considering the attribution of the poem.[66] This stylistic inferiority is reflected in the physical length of the poem: it is half the length of the 'Targe' with shorter stanzas, each of eight lines apiece to the nine of the 'Targe'. However, in relation to the *querelle des femmes* and the Bannatyne manuscript, the poem is of great interest. The poem is about the allegorical significance of love, and the abstracted physical experience of the lover. Dunbar utilises personifications of common medieval tropes in order to establish his narrative, and we see the Narrator encounter figures such as 'Sweit Having' and 'Fresche Bewte' as well as the virtuous 'Lawliness' and 'Fair Serwice'. Intriguingly, the latter part of Dunbar's poem is of a particularly violent tone, which furthers the question of imitation and parody in

[66] Tom Scott, *Dunbar: A Critical Exposition of the Poems* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1966); Josephine Bloomfield, 'A Test of Attribution: William Dunbar's "Bewty and the Presoneir"', *English Language Notes*, 30.4 (1993), 11–19.

terms of the author's relationship with the *Roman de la Rose* as a source text, particularly given the thematic and abstract correlation apparent in 'The Golden Targe'.

The poem consists of fourteen stanzas, each of eight lines. Each stanza concludes with the word 'presoneir', ensuring the concept of imprisonment is at the forefront of any reading.[67] The narrator opens the poem describing his imprisonment 'til hir that farest is and best' (l. 2) ('*to her that is fairest best*') and how he languishes 'in till hir bandoun' (l. 4) ('*within her will*').[68] His imprisonment was not forced, rather he was 'led furt' by her charms (l. 8).[69] 'Sweet Having' (behaviour) and 'Fresche Bewte' were the weapons which wounded him and enthralled him to the 'castell of pennance' (l. 12) ('*castle of penance*'),[70] in which he questioned their actions ('Is this 3our gouirnance / to take men for thair luking Heir?', *'is this your governance, to take men here for looking?',* ll. 13-14).[71] In the third stanza he describes being bound to the gate of which 'Strangenes' (aloofness) was a porter, where Strangenes must keep watch of the narrator and prevent his escape. There is some confusion in the next line, as Dunbar states '[q]uo Strangnes

[67] A key piece of critical work, Sarah Couper's 2005 paper on 'Allegory and Parody' draws another line of enquiry, comparing the use of such language and refrain as reminiscent of a Tudor carol, 'The knight knockett at the castell gate'. This potential source poem ultimately differs as it does not depict a siege. See Couper, 'Allegory and Parody in William Dunbar's "Sen that I am a presoneir"', *Scottish Studies Review*, 6. (2015) pp. 9-20.

[68] III, p. 249 fol. 214a.

[69] Ibid.

[70] III, p. 249 fol. 214a.

[71] Ibid.

vn to þe porteir' (l. 22) ('*said Strangeness unto the porter*').[72] From the gate, the narrator describes the 'deip dungeon' (l. 25) ('*deep dungeon*') in which he is ensconced, 'fetterit' (l. 26) ('*fettered*') without lock or chain.[73] The head guard is called 'Comparesone' and he regards the narrator with disdain, while the narrator remarks that he cannot complain, being one of many fellow lovers who have been imprisoned. 'Langour' is the watchman who never sleeps, keeping an eye on the narrator at all points, while 'Scorne' is placed in the hall, often shaking his 'babill' (l. 36) at the lover.[74] He asks the lover where he is gone, and who is he yonder that is setting up so near to them, for he is too plebian. 'Gud Houp' approaches the lover and advises that he and 'Lawliness' will send help with 'Fair Serwice' who begs for 'pety' (l. 48) ('*pity*') on the prisoner.[75] 'Petie' ('*pity*' once more) herself is then appealed to, and she remarks that she will appear to the prisoner while 'Thocht' advises that he would help could he only reach beyond the fortifications.

From stanza seven onwards comes the turn in both events and tone: 'than to battell thai war arreyit all' (l. 57) ('*then to battle they were all arrayed*'). 'Lust' brings a banner to the wall while 'Bissines' arranges a military engine to engage the defence alongside 'Skorne' and 'Comparesone'. The action continues with 'Comparesone' admitting defeat and offering to take the virtues to the prisoner following the fall of the tower. Edmund Reiss offers a succinct account of the following events

[72] III, p. 249 fol. 214a. In *The Poems of William Dunbar* Bawcutt reads this as the porter speaking to the narrator; however, there is some critical debate around this confusion, which will be returned to later in this chapter.

[73] Both ibid.

[74] III, p. 250 fol. 214a.

[75] Ibid.

> […] Strangenes is burned to death (75-6), Scorn has a skewer put through his nose, Comparison is buried alive, Langour leaps from the castle and breaks his neck, and Good Fame is drowned in a sack (81-7).[76]

With 'Gud Famis' gone, Lust rallies 'fals Invy' and 'Sklandir' to his aid ('*false Envy' and 'Slander*'), denouncing the prisoner, however 'Matremony, þat nobill king' (l. 97) ('*Matrimony, that noble king*') intercedes, and chases 'Sklander' to the west coast, where 'he and his linege [were] lost' (l. 101) ('*he and his lineage [were] lost*').[77] Thus, 'Matremony' establishes 'þe band of freindschip' (l. 103) between the prisoner and his love ('*the band of friendship*').[78] The closing stanza allows the heir of 'gud famiß' (l. 105) ('*good fame*') to come of age, confirming his inheritance in court alongside Beauty and the Prisoner, who are both redeemed.

The allegory is somewhat convoluted: once prey to love, the narrator becomes a prisoner in his desire for a woman's demeanour and appearance. He is further encumbered by the aloofness of his beloved, and in comparison loses a sense of individuality – that is to say, he becomes merely the lover. Love allows for, and indeed incites, the scorning of an individual. Thought has no place in the environment of love, yet a good reputation, lowliness, and compassion can lead to marriage which in turn redeems the establishment of love. It is still a prison, but it feeds into a late-medieval Scottish tradition outlined in the *Kingis Quair* of legitimised discourse through marriage. It is essential to note that this concept of 'reson' is completely different from that of the

[76] Edmund Reiss, *William Dunbar* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979), p. 104.

[77] Both III, p. 252 fol. 215a.

[78] Ibid.

noble knight in 'The Golden Targe', in that rather than a personification of the concept, the narrator concludes the poem thus

> Be that of eild wes gud famiß air
> And cumyne to continwatioun
> And to þe court maid his repair
> quhair matremony than woir þe crowne
> He gat ane confirmatioun
> All þat His modir aucht but weir
> And baid still As it wes resone
> With bewty And þe presoneir (ll. 105-112)[79]
>
> *(When the heir of Good Fame was older and he came for continuation to court, where Matrimony reigned, he was confirmed in all that his mother owned without opposition, and, as was reason, it remained with beauty and the prisoner)*[80]

As the poem is also known to readers as 'bewty and the presoneir', this concluding verse holds great significance. The use of 'resone' within this passage indicates the rationality of the conclusion – that the marriage and constancy of beauty and the prisoner is both reasonable and right. The utility of marriage in establishing a legitimised desire and satisfactory moral conclusion to a narrative love story is well documented in late medieval literature. Yet the visceral and violent narrative that leads to this superficially peaceful conclusion undercuts its claims.

[79] III, p. 252 fol. 215a.

[80] My thanks once again to Professor McGavin for his help in this translation.

The parallels with the *Rose* within the text are immediately apparent, as Couper summarises 'indebtedness to the tradition of Guillaume de Lorris' part […] in its courtly poses and use of personification'.[81] However Couper takes this indebtedness further and argues that the poem has 'deeper structural affinities with the complete *Roman de la Rose*'.[82] The *Rose* was also of a bipartite structure, with the shorter work of Guillaume de Loris later appended by the substantial and provocative additions of Jean. Though Dunbar's poem is structurally concise and divided equally, Couper argues that it is nonetheless the interaction between the disparate parts of the poem that truly reflects the essence of the *Rose*: 'the second half of [Dunbar's text], like de Meun's addition – and particularly, his erotic conclusion – reflects ironically on the first.'.[83] This is further substantiated by the change in perspective between the two sections: where the first seven stanzas are focalised via the prisoner, with use of the first person, the second seven stanzas are recounted in third person narrative, dissociated from the constructed selfhood of the first section. This could be a metatextual remark upon the sentiment expressed in stanza four, whereby the narrator observes that '[Comparesone] had fetterit mony affeir' (*'[comparison] had trapped many like me'*).[84] If the modernised aphorism is true, that comparison is the thief of joy, then Dunbar may be commenting on the perils of comparing poems, and the danger of eroding the joy of literature in the process. Given earlier assertions by Hasler and Norman, the argument for Dunbar as a skilful satirist of convention comes to the fore, with the ostentatious violence of the poem a stark contrast to his sombre conclusion.

[81] Couper, p. 10.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] III, p. 249 fol. 214a.

This element of reflection and metatextuality suggested by Couper's analysis is important in considering the relationship between Dunbar and the *querelle des femmes*. As discussed earlier in relation to the 'lettre of cupeid', Christine wrote on the use of obscene allegory to substantiate a case against women,[85] and the way in which Dunbar deploys such allegory in a violent and morally ambiguous siege episode is of great interest. The ambiguity of the poem is subject to varied criticism. Reiss states that 'the poem is marked by so much ambiguity and confusion of details that these complexities could hardly be other than purposeful'[86] and examines instances of literal ambiguity, such as the confusion of 'thai' in the third stanza (further examined by Bawcutt in her notes on the text) and the metaphorical ambiguity, that is to say the perpetual enslavement of the narrator even after the successful siege. This is in itself comment on the content of the text, with the term 'presoneir' 'the key refrain word of each stanza'.[87] Dunbar could be passing comment here on the very nature of secular love, and its impact upon the human condition – much like Douglas' image of men bridled and bound by their desire which is a conventional allusion to Aristotle being 'bridled' and enslaved by desire, Dunbar is utilising the trappings of allegory to establish the inevitability of such a state. Even in the freer realm of the vision, the walls of the prison remain. What Reiss is keen to rebut, and for good reason, is the notion that the confusion displayed in the narrative springs from a lack of interest or diligence on Dunbar's part. The dramatic shift in tone from allegory to battle is magnified by the brevity of the poem: as Reiss comments on the unusual aspects of the poem: 'Into the never never land of make believe comes real violence…instead of seeing

[85] See Introduction, 'The Woman Question': Defining the *Querelle des Femmes*', pp. 20-29.

[86] Reiss, p. 103.

[87] Ibid, p. 104.

the human by means of the allegorical, the allegorical appears in terms of the human.'.[88] This visceral personification is stylistically striking, and Dunbar's depiction of the siege is brutal. The inversion of depiction, whereby the allegorical and reality are intertwined, speaks back to the comments made by Hasler on the nature of the environment within 'The Golden Targe'. In deploying such tactics, Dunbar comments upon the content of his text, imbuing a distinct sense of irony and satire into his own meta-awareness of the irony of his writing.

In terms of the *querelle des femmes*, here we see Dunbar invoke not only a close allegiance to the source text, but also an understanding of the thematic divergence between the sections of the *Rose*. In parodying the visceral allegory of Jean's narrative, Dunbar engages with Christine's objection to 'obscene allegory',[89] arguably substantiating her case in his hypermasculine siege imagery, which is tonally fraught. The cacophony of imagery undermines the gravity of a siege scenario, and thus this satire can be seen to ridicule Jean's practice. Where Jean's text is one often consisting of colourful erotic imagery, Dunbar's vision is of a sustained onslaught of violent action. Christine writes in 'The God of Love's Letter' of the subtlety of Ovid, despite his misogynist subject matter and later exile, and draws an unfavourable comparison with Jean, of whom she questions 'how much effort and trickery is there in order to accomplish nothing more than the deception of a maid[…]?'.[90] Where Jean feebly attempts to disguise his sexual intentions

[88] Reiss, p. 104.

[89] Couper, p. 16.

[90] Christine, *The Selected Writings*, p. 22.

in florid narrative,[91] Dunbar's imagery of Bissines' 'grit gyn'[92] being brought to the wall behind Lust's banner is a much more brutalised image of sexual congress. If we accept Reiss' inversion of the process of allegory, it can be argued that Dunbar is appropriating Jean's writing and inflating it, thus parodying both its content and style. In so doing, he is arguably maintaining a stance which undermines Jean's argument, therefore taking a stance within the paradigm of the *querelle* in its appropriation of founding tropes.

Once more, the writing of Dunbar serves to elevate the terms of the *querelle* discourse above and beyond the stasis of epistolary exchange and repeated tropes. The work of 'The Golden Targe' and 'Sen þat I am presoneir' in particular show a great appreciation and understanding of both the modes and content of the *querelle.* Most importantly, the evolution of the *querelle* beyond the initial terms of Christine's first letter and initial argument, is made plain. In this sense, the *querelle* becomes real: it becomes art as well as debate, in a way that has been overlooked and underappreciated in other analyses of the both Dunbar's verse and that of the Bannatyne manuscript as a whole.

'Be ȝe ane luvar'

The extent to which the Bannatyne is structured around a sense of moral instruction is a key question, and poems which proffer advice to the reader are central to any such discussion. 'Be ȝe ane luvar' is an example of Dunbar adopting the advice mode, being a

[91] Consider passage 21689 onwards, whereby 'I thus mingled the seeds in such a way that it would have been hard to disentangle them, with the result that all the rose-bud swelled and expanded[…]' de Meun and de Lorris, p. 334.

[92] IV, p. 250 fol. 214b.

short and stylistically simple three-stanza poem. It is formed around discrete pieces of advice for a young (male) lover, the ethos of which seems to centre on the key ideas of successful self-governance: courteous speech and discretion. The poet opens the verse with a rhetorical question: 'Be ȝe ane luvar, Think ȝe no^{t} ȝe suld / Be weill adwysit in ȝour gouerning?'[93] and, assured of his reader's agreement with this sentiment, goes on to outline a number of vicious traps into which lovers can fall. Dunbar's use of a rhetorical question here is a direct invitation to engage with the subject matter – it feels as though one has happened upon the conversation *in media res*. The implication of 'do you not agree' is testament to the logical and socially acceptable terms of the advice which Dunbar is about to impart. As the narrator states, should the lover ignore this advice, 'it will on ȝow be tauld' (l. 3).[94] The guidance given by the narrator is all in the name of 'incressing' the lover's name – in this case, 'incressing' indicates a sense of earning an honourable reputation. This staunchly virtuous stance accredits Dunbar, or at least his poem, with a rigorous morality, in line with the sentiments expressed later in the manuscript by Gavin Douglas in his attitudes towards 'leful love'.[95] Alternatively, it can be read as a parody of such demands: much as the *impossibilia* topos highlights the unattainability of criteria, so too does the list of what one should and should not be highlight the multifarious ways in which one must adhere to a moral code in order to attain success. It is, in itself, an impossibility.

[93] III, p. 244 fol. 212b.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Gavin Douglas, 'Prologue IV', in *Virgil's Aeneid*, ed. by David F.C. Coldwell, IV vols. (Edinburgh: Scottish Text Society, 1957).

The traps outlined are varied: one should not be a miser ('a wreche nor skerche', *'a wretch nor parsimonious'* l. 5)[96] nor do anything amiss, in the doctrine of being 'rewlit ryᵗ' (l. 7) ('*ruled right*').[97] The second stanza focuses on the conditions that the narrator finds 'werst of all' (l. 9) ('*worst of all*'):[98] to be a liar, a tattler, or prattler is to be enthralled to the worst vices of all, and the narrator implores that one should 'be nocht of langage quhair ȝe suld be still' (l. 15) *('Be not of language where you should be still')*.[99] This focus on language is interesting for a number of reasons: as Bawcutt points out, the poem is indebted to a passage in the *The Roman de la Rose* whereby the god of Love demands similar decorum of the dreamer, thus allying this Dunbar poem with the *querelle* once more. The admonition to 'be nocht of langage' reads more like an admonition to woman than man. Though the poem is likely addressed to the male lover in its advocacy of a successful self-rule, this negotiation of the gendered act of superfluous speech is an interesting indicator of the *querelle*'s thematic material being negotiated – self-representation and successful examples thereof require elucidation, yet literature of the time denies women this opportunity to self-define. The 'wicket tung' (l. 17) ('*wicked tongue*') is returned to in the final stanza, with the narrator turning his attention to pride and slander – one should not see themselves as 'haif[ing] no peir' (l. 20) ('*having no peer*') nor should one preach of love, or slander another.[100] Avoiding these pitfalls will secure the lover his honour, in keeping with the

[96] III, p. 244 fol. 212b.

[97] Ibid.

[98] III, p. 245 fol. 212b.

[99] Ibid.

[100] All III, p. 245 fol. 212b.

refrain of the narrator that one should always 'be secreit trew incressing of ȝour name' (l. 16).[101]

The consistent reference to 'secreit' is interesting, chiming as it does with the use of 'secreit place' as a location for sexual congress and carnal action (see Chapter Four). To be both secret and true is something of a paradox: in concealing one's true self, through the suppression of speech, humble in behaviour and wise in your actions seems to run directly in opposition to the concept of a true self, and the expression of that.[102] The façade which the narrator projects for the readers is one which mirrors advice given to women in more ways than one: despite the masculine language of 'ianglar' (l. 11) ('*prattler*') there is an argument that the narrator's advice is more asexual than first conceived. Considering the feminine flaws of inconstancy, wicked speech and salacious behaviour, it is a curious piece of advice. Men are seen to inherently inhabit the superior modes of being, and are naturally attuned to such virtue: while it is not so strange that the narrator may wish to advise them as to the art of love, it is strange that the foibles they illustrate are ones not inherently masculine in their approach, and that the narrator feels the need to outline these so explicitly to a male audience.

Irrespective of its intended audience, this poem impacts upon an examination of the *querelle* in a number of ways. Though an indirect comment on the debate itself, the issues it addresses, such as appropriate discourse and governance of the will, ally with the predominant dialogue around the misogynistic arguments of the *querelle*: women become aligned with desire and therefore implicated in its impact upon the will of man – consider Douglas' catalogue of fallen victims of love in his 'Prologue'. This undercurrent of

[101] III, p. 245 fol. 212b.

[102] See van Heijnsbergen, 'Masks of Revelation'; 'The Love Lyrics of Alexander Scott'.

mistrust and suspicion feeds into the debate, and its inclusion within the Bannatyne manuscript can be read as indicative of a distinct attempt by Bannatyne to promote at least one side of the debate. Where the female voice figures is unclear, yet if we seek to distance ourselves from a 'one-dimensional' reading of this poem, we can see a case for the fluidity of the advice in its relation to gender.

'Now of wemen this I say'

'Now of wemen this I say' is, on the surface, the most oblique reference to the *querelle* in Dunbar's work, if not within the Bannatyne as a whole. It is structured as a literary defence of women, and argues the case for a pro-female viewpoint. However, the poem is lacking in a number of ways – so much so that Bawcutt seems reluctant to ascribe Dunbar's authorship to it, pointing out that 'the poem is in five-stress couplets, a metre not used elsewhere by Dunbar.".[103] While Bawcutt's assertion that the poem is 'repetitive and stylistically undistinguished' may ring true,[104] the attribution of such a verse to Dunbar lends it a *gravitas* which an anonymous author may not enjoy. By including this verse and attaching Dunbar's name and auctoritas to it, Bannatyne demonstrates an awareness of the *querelle* as an active and present force in literary discourse. Not only this, the inclusion of this verse also proffers a second side to the argument, whereby the numerous anti-misogynist anonymous voices of the collection are supported by an authoritative figure. Whether this counter-argument is of any merit is another question – it is a pious verse,

[103] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. Priscilla Bawcutt, 2 vols (Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1998), p. 373.

[104] Ibid.

focussed on the role of women in the perpetuation of Christian faith, however the merit of women in their own right is sorely neglected.

The core argument of Dunbar's defence is the notion that '[…] of wemen cumin all ar we' (l. 7) ('*we are all born of women*').[105] This argument is a crucial component of Christine de Pizan's argument in 'The God of Love's Letter' whereby she substantiates her pro-feminine viewpoint by remarking that ' […] every man should be well disposed toward women, who are the mothers of all of them, nor are they bitter or fickle toward their offspring, but rather soothing, sweet, and friendly.'[106] In Dunbar's poem, following this logic, the merit of women is further cemented by the story of Christ – 'sen scho hes borne him in hir halines' (l. 31) ('*since she has borne him in her holiness*').[107] Again, in this legitimised context, the dignity and worth of women is ostensibly far from threatened, echoing Christine. Earlier arguments in the poem have slightly less importance: for example, Dunbar mentions that women both create and provide for men, albeit in very basic terms, 'wᵗin þair breistis þair we boun to bed' (l. 14) ('*within their breasts there we prepare to go to bed*'), 'thay ar our verry nest of nvrissing' (l. 21) ('*they are our very nest of nourishing*').[108] As foundations of the successful procreation and continuation of the male line, women are revered. An image is drawn in the ninth line of this poem, whereby 'wo wirth þe fruct wald put þe tre to nocht' ('*may ill come to the fruit that would deny the tree*') and iterated again in line 23 where 'that fowl his nest he fylis / And for thy / Exylit he suld be of all gud cumpany' ('*the bird that fouls his [own] nest should*

[105] IV, p. 75 fol. 278b. See footnote 56 pp. 77-8, regarding contemporary feminist discourse.

[106] Christine, *The Selected Writings*, p. 18.

[107] IV, p. 76 fol. 278b.

[108] IV, p. 75 fol. 278b.

be exiled from good company').[109] As Bawcutt highlights, the latter is an image which ties into not only a proverb,[110] but also a term 'used by those wishing to rebut men's critcism of women'.[111] It is also utilised in the Letter of Cupid, which features in the same section: 'every wicht wot þat wit hes ressonable / that of a woman he discendit is / than is it schame of hir to speik a miß' (ll. 173-5).[112] (*'Every man that wit and reason knows he is descended of a woman, and it is then a shame for him to speak of her amiss'*).

This image is nonetheless problematic. While it determines the valuable nature of female influence in terms which perhaps hold sway with an overwhelmingly male audience, it nonetheless relegates the woman to a variation on property: they are a nest, a place of safety, a nourishing tree. The men are the active participants in their environment, the birds and the fruit which go forth into the wider world. In this sense, the argument for the worth of women also serves to denigrate their role. It reads as a compromise drawn between the genders which intimates importance but dictated by the terms of the male figure: a woman is important only in terms of her relationship to the man. This poem appears again in the Maitland Folio indicating a continued preoccupation with providing some kind of defence for women within the *querelle*, however its value as a piece of pro-feminist piece of literature is questionable. In terms of its authorship, if we accept Dunbar as the author of this piece, there is a framework for reading the piece as scathing or parodic. There is no satisfactory answer as to the attribution of this poem. It reads more

[109] III, p. 75 fol. 278b.

[110] 'A condemnation of a person who vilifies and harms his own family, country, etc. Cf. medieval L. *nidos commaculans inmundus habebitur ales*, the bird is unclean that soils its nest.' Jennifer Speake, 'It's an ILL Bird That Fouls Its Own Nest', 2015 <https://doi.org/10.1093/acref/9780198734901.013.1122>.

[111] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 373.

[112] III, p. 55, fol. 270b.

simplistically than much of Dunbar's verse, with a long one-stanza structure and a simple *aabb* rhyme scheme. Yet, it is tempting to ally this piece of defence with Dunbar, insofar as it exemplifies another mode of poetic participation in the *querelle*, and in this sense, another string to Dunbar's bow.

'No serviture'

Bawcutt summarises the tone of poem 369 as being one of 'detached, ironic amusement' very much in keeping with the ethos of Douglas' 'Prologue'. [113] This consonance is persuasive – even the lexis of Dunbar's verse echoes that of Douglas, lamenting the inconstancy of love and her endless duplicity

> …Quhilk is begun with inconstance
> And endis nocht but variance.
> Scho haldis with continwance
> No seruiture (ll. 4-7)[114]
>
> (*[…]Which is begun with inconstancy, and ends with nothing but variance. She holds no serviture with constancy.*)

The language of servitude and devotion is prevalent in this verse. Dunbar, depicting 'luve' as a female figure (again, like Douglas before him) talks about her failings in terms of legitimacy: she holds no servitude in constancy, and 'discretioun and considerance / Ar

[113] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 393.

[114] IV, p. 81 fol. 281a.

both out of hir gouirnance' (ll. 9-10) ('*discretion and consideration are both out of her governance*').[115] This incapacity for decent behaviour speaks back to the requisite decorum of a lover, indicating a sense that the woman is an unworthy subject of love, incapable of self-rule, a desirable quality referenced in 'Be ȝe ane luvar'. Dunbar further evokes another literary convention in his assertion that remaining faithful in love is 'als nyß an ordinance, / as quha wald bid ane deid man dance / In sepulture' (ll. 22-23) ('*as foolish a demand as to bid a dead man dance in the grave*').[116] This funereal *impossibilia* highlights the ludicrous idea that loyalty is possible in love. Within the *querelle* attention often turns to the idea of women's incapacity for constancy, and this sustained idea of variance is rife in the Bannatyne manuscript. It is worth noting that in his laudatory verse, 'Now of wemen this I say' Dunbar makes no mention of this elusive virtue of constancy, opting instead for images of maternal comfort. This notion of a false Janus-faced woman is central to the *querelle*: Christine sought to interrogate this idea, while male-focussed literature determined to render any counter argument, as Dunbar does, an impossibility.

The recognition of irony within this poem is in keeping with the idea that Dunbar satirizes elements of the rhetorical game involved in the *querelle*. The language and style of the verse is concise, with the rhythm and cadence of a religious admonition. The solemn and sombre tone gives an otherwise elusive verse a sense of gravity, which given the subject matter further conflates the humour therein. The final lines in particular indicate the dry wit of the narrator, with the dance of the dead man drawing together the (highly elevated) impossibilia topos and a trope of medieval literature to comedic effect. If it is

[115] IV, p. 81 fol. 281a.

[116] IV, p. 82 fol. 281a.

read as an instance of Dunbar participating in the *querelle*, it is one which parodies the unrealistic search for true virtue and morally satisfactory love.

Thir ladyis fair

Elizabeth Ewan discusses 'Thir ladyis fair' in her 1992 article 'Scottish Portias: Women in the Courts in Medieval Scottish Towns'. Ewan relates the matter of the poem to a social and political circumstance of fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Scotland, where women were showing '…themselves very capable of using the law to protect and advance their interests'.[117] While Dunbar's poem takes a distinctly satirical tone, citing the success of these ladies as taking place 'in quyet place …. W'in leß nor twa howris',[118] it nonetheless accepts the fact of the matter: women were a presence in Scottish courts of the time, albeit in a less salubrious context than the narrator of the poem intimates. In lowering the tone of this discourse to a sexual exchange, the narrator denigrates the agency of women, – who, as Ewan puts it, 'were capable of entering the primarily male world of the courts and of being effective advocates for their own cause'.[119] This is, of course, only one side of the *querelle* – alongside this observation of female behaviour, there is an intimation of empowerment and, moreover, a comment upon the cuckolding of men. Women's aptitude, while the subject of scrutiny and derision, serves also to compound the failure of men, in their incapacity to successfully navigate legal matters. The refraction of this

[117] Ewan, 'Scottish Portias'.

[118] IV, p. 31 fol. 260b.

[119] Ewan, p. 28.

corruption back onto the men to whom this poem is relevant is an incisive incursion by Dunbar into the *querelle,* and draws into focus the hypocrisy of male desires and values.[120]

Within the Bannatyne manuscript this poem is categorised in the 'schort epigrammis against wemen'. Its contribution to an overall sense of Dunbar's negotiation of the *querelle* is complex: while it feeds strongly on the visceral, sexualised imagery of women more akin to the Jean school of thought, it nonetheless accepts the presence of women in courts, as Ewan rightly observes. Though it is derogatory, it is derogatory based on a perceived reality, rather than in the abstract sense, and as mentioned above, holds a critical view of men. If reluctant acceptance of the *status quo* can be argued to be pro-feminine, then this poem stands, ironically, in defence of the women it denigrates. Again, it is hard not to personalise Dunbar's verse– the narrative voice of 'Thir ladyis fair' is unlikely to yield Dunbar's own opinion on the matter but certainly its inclusion in this section of the manuscript castigates further the case of educated and intellectually engaged women. Though the first reading of the text is one whereby the women are depicted as vicious and sexually promiscuous, a consideration of the author as the 'chameleon' we have established leads the reader to question whether he is as judgemental of the women as he first appears. His remarks regarding their methods mask a sense of reluctant admiration, given the variety of modes adopted by Dunbar thus far and the historical veracity of its setting. There is a further parallel to the poem 'Chrystis Kirk on the Grene' in terms of the depiction of women in public spaces, as participants in the court and marketplace. While this is discussed in further detail in Chapter Three, it bears relevance here when considering the inherent problem of women occupying a male space. It is to

[120] My thanks to Professor McGavin once more for his useful insight into this dichotomy.

be expected that those whose space is invaded are hostile to such interactions, and this insecurity may well underpin a large element of the defamation within verses such as this one.

The Merle and the Nychtingall

The fecund and triumphant opening stanza of 'The Merle and the Nychtingall' is wonderfully illustrative of Dunbar's poetic prowess. The Latinate language colours the poem in a vivid depiction of an early summer dawn, 'w^{t} cristall ene chasing þe cluddis sable' (l. 2) ('*with crystal eyes chasing the sable clouds*'),[121] in which the narrator happens upon a singing merle, '[v]pone a blissful brenche of lawry grene' (l. 6) ('*upon a blissful branch of green laurel*').[122] Though only a small sample of the poem as a whole, the Dunbarian nature of the text is powerfully asserted in his alliterative verse and rich imagery. The echoes of the *locus amoenus* of 'The Golden Targe' are overt, the poems both being set in May, at dawn, and under the canopy of nature and birdsong.

Bawcutt's comments on this poem are brief, and assert a thematic link to 'Poem 38' which holds true in its interest in the influence of youth on the experience of love. Bawcutt provides a rigorous bibliography of sources and parallels – as a debate poem, this verse owes a debt to a variety of medieval sources, such as Henryson's 'Ressoning betuix Age and Youth'. Furthermore, as a beast fable, specifically avian, it is thus indebted to poems such as Holland's *Buke of the Howlat* and Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*. In terms of

[121] IV, p. 87 fol. 283a.

[122] Ibid.

the *querelle*, the poem's debate form is an interesting parallel, though it does not deal directly with the question of women *per se*. The two voices are gendered female: though they are birds, and thus removed from a directly human standpoint, it is interesting to consider the narrator's observation of a female discussion. Again, the poem recurs in the Maitland Folio, enhancing a sense of its relevance as a poem of feminine interest, given Marie Maitland's involvement in the manuscript, which will be returned to briefly in the Conclusion. Relevant to the Bannatyne, however, is the apparent indebtedness of this poem to Gavin Douglas' 'Fourth Prologue' which is woven seamlessly into stanzas 11 and 12, and the ethos of which permeates the subject matter of the poem: what is a 'leful' love, if not a religious devotion to God?

The narrator of the poem is quick to observe the beauty of the verse sung by the birds, the nightingale with 'suggurit notis new' (l. 13) ('*sugared notes new*') and the merle singing 'a sang of lufe w^{t} voce ry^{t} comfortable' (l. 4) ('*a song of love with voice right comfortable*').[123] What the narrator overhears is a debate between the birds as to the value of love in a moral context: while the merle argues that love enhances one's life, with the repeated refrain 'a lusty lyfe in luves seruice bene' (l. 8 etc.) ('*it is a good life in love's service*'), the nightingale counters that 'all luve is lost bot vpone God allone' ('*all love is lost but that which is only directed to God*') (l. 16 etc). As Bawcutt points out, Dunbar has here inverted the traditions of a medieval aviary – the nightingale usually represents love, but here is seen speaking on behalf of the spiritual side to the argument. The merle, alternatively, is often used to symbolise Spring but here speaks to the beauty of secular love. In doing this Dunbar invigorates the debate with a sense of change, of the unexpected. The refrain of 'luves service' harkens back to *The Kingis Quair* and the juxtaposition of this literary

[123] Both IV, p. 87 fol. 283a.

authority alongside literary innovation reinforces the idea of Dunbar as a poet of great skill. The narrator is clearly taken by both speakers, each voice seeming clear and beautiful, and each bird physically impressive. This adoption of the debate genre again adds to the wealth of evidence of Dunbar as a chameleon of genre and rhetoric.

There are three key questions in the merle's rhetoric: should people spend their youth in worshipful holiness, thus breeding hypocrisy in later life? If God did not intend for women to be loved, why did he 'put… so grit bewte / in ladies w^{t} sic womanly having' ('*put […] such great beauty in ladies with such feminine behaviour*') (ll. 49-50)?[124] Lastly, is love not virtuous, given that we are encouraged to love our neighbours, none sweeter than ladies? The nightingale addresses each point in turn: God is 'most trew & steidfast paramour' (l. 47) ('*most true and steadfast paramour*');[125] the beauty of women is in fact a reflection of his own majesty; and finally, that carnal love can blind a man from the true virtue of 'lufe þat is perfyt' (l. 79) ('*love that is perfect*'),[126] namely that of God. The birds then indulge in a summative refrain: the merle lists the empowering features of love, ennobling lesser men to greater heights; while the nightingale focusses on the opposite, the emasculating and 'fals' elements of love. From this turn at the end of stanza twelve, we see a reformed merle, 'myn errour I confeß / This frustir luve all is bot vanite' (ll. 97-8) ('*my error I confess: this ineffective love is nothing but vanity*'), who asserts that 'blind ignorance me gaif such hardiness' (l. 99) ('*blind ignorance gave me such hardiness*').[127] Her devotion to God is confirmed and the birds sing together before flying away, 'our the bewis schene / singing of lufe amang the levis small' (ll. 113-4) ('*over the beautiful boughs, singing of love amongst the small*

[124] IV, p. 88 fol. 283b.

[125] Ibid.

[126] IV, p. 89 fol. 284a.

[127] All IV, p. 90 fol. 284a.

leaves').[128] The narrator reflects upon their message and ends on the refrain of the nightingale – 'all lufe is lost, bot vpone god allone' (l. 120) ('*all love is lost but that which is only directed to God*').[129]

The merle's staunch defence of love, and its ability to empower and ennoble, is particularly interesting. The lexis and structure of the eleventh stanza is greatly reminiscent of Douglas' 'Fourth Prologue' and his laudatory remarks on love preceding his detailed descriptions of the devastation wrought upon figures such as David, Aristotle, and Samson. This dichotomy is split between the two figures of the merle and nychtingall, with the *moralitas* of the tale firmly rooted in Douglas' ultimate conclusion, that the only 'leful' love one can nurture is that of God. In terms of the *querelle*, the implications of this poem and its position within the manuscript are manifold: again, Dunbar is utilised as an authoritative voice which seems to summarise or elucidate the overarching message regarding love and, by implication, women. The way in which the text speaks to the concluding poem by Douglas is important in establishing this sense of a moral refrain within the manuscript section as a whole. Dunbar's engagement with and contribution to these debates is clearly valued by Bannatyne in his inclusion of these poems, perhaps as a watermark of approval from a more established poetic voice.

'Betuixt youth and age'

'Now cumis aige quhair ȝewth hes bene' ('*now comes ages where youth has been*') is a verse preoccupied with the impact of age on the physical act of love. Bawcutt's consideration

[128] IV, p. 91 fol. 284b.

[129] Ibid.

of it alongside 'The Merle and the Nychtingall' is not arbitrary – aside from their similar subject matter, they also appear directly alongside one another in the Bannatyne manuscript.[130] 'Now cumis age' is preoccupied with the delineation of love, between 'trew' ('*true*') and 'fenȝit' ('*feigned*') – 'trew' relating to the love of God for us, and 'fenȝit' relating to the temporal, secular love derided by Douglas and Dunbar in other poems. Though less outwardly negative towards love, adopting a more rueful and nostalgic tone, 'Now cumis age' nonetheless subscribes to the overriding message of religious love as the most acceptable form. Dunbar's prowess is further asserted here – just as he merged the forms of beast fable and debate poem in 'The Merle and the Nychtingall', here he adapts an amalgamation of a lengthened carol form, and the fashionable 'old man's farewell to love'.[131] Once again, a new genre and style frame his contribution to the question of love, and with it, the *querelle*.

The poem is divided into fifteen stanzas, and within these stanzas, three smaller sections of five stanzas apiece. The first section looks to the physical decay of love in the narrator's life; the second to the comparison of his youth and age and finally, the third looking to the present and what he has obtained from his experience. The physiology of love is at the heart of this poem, from Dunbar's subtle allusion to his own impotence, whereby 'culit is dame venus brand' (l. 3) ('*cooled is Dame Venus' brand*'),[132] to the refrain of 'trew luve rysis fro the Splene' (l. 2 etc.) ('*true love rises from the spleen*'),[133] a common trope of medieval beliefs surrounding the body and emotion. The loss of Venus' fire is a recurring idea and seems to have offered the narrator the opportunity to look beyond the

[130] See *The Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. Bawcutt, pp. 340, 368.

[131] Ibid, p. 368.

[132] IV, p. 91 fol. 284b.

[133] Ibid.

trappings of secular, physical love and towards the purity of religious devotion. Though it can be argued that this is a matter in which the narrator has little choice, his devotion to religious love is well-articulated in the following stanzas. He describes vividly the transformation of his relationship to love: from 'dreid' (l. 31) ('*dread*') to 'confort' (l. 32) ('*comfort*'),[134] from meagre recompense to a rich reward, from discomfort and coldness to a sense of assurance, and from jealousy to security, the narrator's replacement of love's trials is clear. Given the preoccupation of the merle and nightingale with the physical beauty and appeal of women, the narrator remarks from his enlightened state that 'now I sett no^{t} by a bene / hir bewty nor hir twa fair Ene' (ll. 57-8) ('*now I don't rate at a bean her beauty nor her two fair eyes*'),[135] opting instead to look beyond the physicality of love and towards religious fulfilment.

The final stanzas address the circumstances of the lover now:

> I haif a luve farar of face
> quhome in no denger may haif place
> quhilk will me guerdoun gif and grace,
> And mercy ay quhen I me mene. (ll. 61-4)[136]
>
> (*I have a love fairer of face, in whom there is no haughtiness, who will give me rewards and grace, and mercy always when I lament.)*

This laudatory tribute to God's love is continued to the poem's conclusion, delivered from the seat of experience and active comparison between a 'lusty lyfe' and a devotional

[134] IV, p. 92 fol. 285a.

[135] IV, p. 93 fol. 285a.

[136] Ibid.

one. Ultimately, 'Now cumis age' provides a more restrained view of physical love, opting instead to focus on the power and goodness of religious devotion. In physically removing the option of desire from his narrator, thus leading to these reverent thoughts, the narrator explicates that secular love is driven by physicality and has very little to do with any higher element. In terms of the *querelle*, what we see here is a poet who is engaging with broader questions of desire, through mastery of genre, which further links the issues of love and the feminine with a suspicion of immorality or 'feynit' (*'feigned'*) emotion. While 'The Golden Targe' was argued by Hasler to contain the ages of women, from 'Youth' and 'Innocence' to 'Mylde Chere' and 'Sobirnes', in abstracted personifications, 'Youth and Age' depicts a much more naturalistic contemplation of mortality, human experience, and the emergence and endurance of religious love.

Chapter Conclusion

The work of Dunbar is a crucial component of the Bannatyne manuscript as a whole, but especially within the fourth section. Much of his established canon is present in the text (with some notable exceptions, see Chapter Five), and his presence provides a connective tissue throughout the categorisation and editorial cartography of Bannatyne. What the work of Hasler, Calin, and Norman encourage is the consideration of Dunbar outwith the 'one-dimensional'. This encouragement to look beyond the obvious interpretations of Dunbar's work and seek further meaning in terms of metatextuality and satirical comment is crucial. In relation to the *querelle* this involves critical engagement with what is unsaid in Dunbar's work, the implied content and contexts that hide beneath the narrator's voice. In 'The Golden Targe' and 'Sen that I am presoneir', a hyperbolic and

ostentatious interpretation of *The Roman de la Rose* is the focus of this scrutiny: where Dunbar sends up the subject matter is through his enthusiastic adoption of obsolescent tropes, and his manipulation of outmoded imagery in order to substantiate the thematic matter of the poems; that is to say the threat posed by women. 'Be ȝe ane luvar' and 'Now of wemen this I say' read as rather more tepid interjections into the debate: the former is an example of an advice poem, the audience of which is unclear, while the latter provides a defence of women that lacks the resonance and depth of later Dunbar works. Both establish a sense that though Dunbar may participate in many facets of a debate, he may not always apply the same amount of rigour and literary enthusiasm to each task. Within this, we can read a sense in which certain modes of expression had become tired, and the considerable extent to which Dunbar's work reinvigorates older debate through its inversion and interrogation of tropes.

'Quha will behald of luve the chance' mourns the impossibility of love, and its combination of tone, imagery, and style serve further to parody the way in which contemporary literature focuses on the nature of love in such stringent terms. The courtly landscape of 'Thir ladies fair' shows Dunbar reflecting the trends of his time, as Norman points out, adopting 'an 'official' view of reality that stresses convention, traditional values and hierarchical structures',[137] thus castigating women, and placing them into the roles of immoral and problematic figures, challenging the established order in their behaviour. 'The Merle and the Nychtingall' articulate a more conservative and traditional form of debate, but they are not removed from Dunbar's subversive eye, with tropes challenged and altered to add a sense of fresh perspective. Last of all, 'Betuixt youth and age' considers the possibility of love when physical desire has waned, drawing the sense of the

[137] Norman, pg. 184.

cycle of love throughout man's life to an end. When we consider the *querelle* as a question of women, and women as a crucial component of the medieval discussion of love, the poems of Dunbar serve to illuminate and substantiate the debate in a way that elevates the discussion within the Bannatyne. While the precise reasons for Bannatyne's inclusion of specific material will remain forever elusive, the inclusion of these particular Dunbar texts indicates an understanding of Dunbar's work as a whole and an awareness of his prowess. The inclusion of each element of his stylistic *oeuvre* lends itself to the idea that Bannatyne is provoking discussion of the *querelle* and encouraging participation within the anthology, allowing the debate to move forward into a new, early modern context.

CHAPTER FIVE ~ Discourse Through Dialogue: Fabliaux, Farce and The Idea of the Feminine

'Misogyny is […] virtually synonymous with the works grouped under the rubric of "*les genres du réalisme bourgeois*": the comic tale or fabliau (including Middle English and Italian versions); the animal fable (*Roman de Renart*); the comic theatre or farce.'[1]

Context of the 'Miscellaneous' Verse – Omissions and Oddities

While earlier chapters have focussed on Bannatyne's thematic grouping of poems, concentrating on the locus of love and comedy, and on the representation of Dunbar's work, this chapter deals with farce and performance, in a broad sense. The *querelle* here takes the form of an underlying theme, a preoccupation that underpins the action in each text. *The Freiris of Berwik* features in the fifth section of the Bannatyne manuscript and is perhaps the finest example of the *fabliau* tradition in vernacular Scots. Henryson's 'Garmont of Good Ladeis' is allocated to the fourth section, but in keeping with R. Howard Bloch's work on medieval misogyny, will be considered in its context as a fable. Two dialogues, 'Jok and Jinny' and 'The commonyng', are extracted from their location in the third and fourth sections respectively, to be considered in tandem as examples of the effectiveness in dialogue as a form, facilitating the discussion of attitudes to women. Finally, selections from Sir David Lyndsay's *Ane Satire of the Thrie Estaitis* will be analysed.

[1] R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 8.

The concept of speech acts in terms of an active debate is important to this chapter, and perhaps most controversially, 'The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo' will be studied, in terms of its bold and provocative content and its conspicuous absence from the Bannatyne – centred of course around the imposing dialogue between the women. A staple text in any study of late medieval Scottish antifeminism, rare though these studies be, this text is integral to the argument of this thesis, and its absence from the Bannatyne manuscript, this thesis suggests, indicates an editorial concern with the popular reception of the figure of the Wedo, in light of Mary's reign and the oncoming Reformation.

The thematic context of this discussion draws strongly from the work of Bloch on the invention of romantic love, and its relationship to the concept of medieval misogyny. As discussed at length in earlier chapters, the conception of love and desire is inherently problematic, expressed by Bloch when he states that

> Put in its simplest terms, the *sine qua non* of desire – that is, of a woman's being loved – is that she be perfect. Yet the condition of her perfection is that she be self-sufficient, self-contained, complete – or that, being desired, she herself should not desire.[2]

The capacity of a woman to desire is a focal point in each of the poems discussed in this section: from the lusty appetite of Alesone in the 'Freiris' and the abundant sexuality of the Wedo, to the humbler ambitions of Jinny or Makyne, each woman is inevitably depicted as imperfect, falling prey to her desire. In relation to the use of tropes and stereotypes to advance misogynist agendas, we turn to Bloch's description of the problematic woman, or the 'riotous' woman:

[2] Bloch, p. 147.

> The riotousness of woman, in the medieval thinking of the question, linked to that of speech, indeed, seems to be a condition of poetry itself. And if the reproach against the wife is that she is a bundle of verbal abuse (*contenz, riotes, reprouches, requestes, plaintes*), such annoyances make her at least the fellow traveller of the poet. Because of the inadequacies of language that she is imagined to embody, she is in some fundamental sense always already placed in the role of a deceiver, trickster, jongleur.[3]

We see this 'riotous' woman depicted in two contrasting ways in the 'Freiris of Berwik' and 'The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo'. The role of a trickster is particularly fundamental to our understanding of Alesone, the female protagonist of the 'Freiris'. The way in which her riotous behaviour indicates the deceptiveness of her character finds a linguistic foil in the verbal admissions of Dunbar's Wedo, whose autobiographical tales shared with her younger female friends offer a comprehensive view of her intensely exuberant character. These 'fellow travellers' of the poet move away from the generalised *impossibilia* of women in the myriad verse of the love section, and into the realm of individual characterisation deployed to draw those problematic generalisations into viciously specific, and fictive, accounts of female behaviour. These examples show that this particular Scottish interpretation of a 'trickster' is something of a transgressive woman, whose transgressions are made plain through the fear of the unbounded female, be it sexual or physical. In both of these poems this figure is ultimately confined and constrained by the situation in which we encounter them. This is particularly potent in its comparison to the women depicted in the Bannatyne love lyrics, where women are relegated to the subjects of desire, moral turpitude, and existential crisis for the male narrators.

[3] Bloch, p. 20.

'Townish' Friars and Hungry Women

The 'Freiris of Berwik' was previously attributed to Dunbar, an 'indirect confirmation of its quality'.[4] The poem has provenance in the Bannatyne manuscript and is placed within the fifth section, that of fables, presumably due to its close association with the genre of fabliau. William Calin has recently asserted that this is in fact the only extant Scottish example of this genre.[5] Now reassessed as being of unknown authorship, the problematic attribution of this text is a key reason for the relative lack of secondary criticism available regarding the 'Freiris' as the text has become removed from the Dunbar canon. The poem itself depicts a female figure who is frustrated, both in the consummation of her desire and in her attempts to use her own agency. Alesone's character is in many ways a direct borrowing from the fabliau tropes: she is a sly wife, a cuckolder who is manipulating the men around her for her own gain, 'scho wes sumthing dynk and dengerous' (l. 55).[6] Within the poem we see the multiple moral transgressions of Alesone, as she opens her home to two woebegone friars, who soon realise her lover (another friar) is also present, hidden in the house.

As the friars observe her adulterous behavior and incorrigible appetite as she prepares a feast, a sense of Alesone's wanton nature is made clear. The conflation of physical appetite and sexual appetite is a key theme in the poem. This conflation of physical and sexual appetite is summarized by Evelyn Newlyn as 'the multivalent "feast",

[4] Jack and Rozendaal, p. 152.

[5] See Calin, 'The Freiris of Berwik' in *The Lily and the Thistle* pp. 157-166.

[6] IV, p. 263 fol. 249a.

which conveys in the poem both sexual and gustatory connotations'.[7] The narrator describes Alesone's sexual impulse in graphic terms, heightened by the first use of the word 'cunt' in Scottish literature. A vivid image of corporeal sexuality is drawn as Alison prepares both herself and the capon, for the satiation of appetite both sexual and physical.

> Scho pullit hir cunt and gaif hit buffetis tway
> Upoun the cheikis, syne till it cowd scho say,
> "Ye sowld be blyth and glaid at my requeist:
> Thir mullis of youris ar callit to ane feist." (ll. 139-142)[8]
>
> (*She pulled on her cunt, and smacked her two buttocks upon the cheeks, until she could say "You should be blithe and glad at my request: the lips of your labia are called to a feast"*)

Alesone is forced to hide her lover and her sumptuous feast at the arrival of the friars. The recurring idea of concealment as a key part of trickery stretches beyond the hidden sexual congress of the text and is depicted literally, with her lover and her feast concealed beneath a 'troich', symbolic of base desire, and further reinforced in terms of setting with images of restriction and walls. This use of architectural imagery alludes also to the imagery of female sexuality in the vein of the *Roman de la Rose*, where the act of sexual intercourse is encoded in siege imagery and castle walls. The intensely private nature of Alesone's masturbation is highlighted by the voyeuristic behavior of the friars, hidden away in the house. The idea of secrecy and seclusion recurs throughout the poem, which is set in the walled town of Berwick. The two friars who appear at Alesone's door are

[7] Newlyn, 'Political Dimensions of Desire and Sexuality in the Bannatyne Manuscript', p. 87.

[8] IV, p. 265 fol. 350a.

physically trapped inside the city walls for the evening and seek shelter. This claustrophobic sense of necessity exacerbates the undercurrents of sexual transgression and illicit behaviour, working within a limited spatial environment. As remarked upon by many critics, the urban setting is awash with the imagery of 'yettis' and 'portcules'.

On a thematic level, the relationship between fabliaux and the *querelle* is best understood in the terms outlined by Bloch, relating to the overriding narrative moral of the genre: that men, no matter how great, can always be tricked by a woman, so great is her capacity to deceive:

> […] the assumption is, of course, that woman is the equivalent of the deception of which language is capable, a prejudice so deeply rooted in the medieval discourse on gender that it often passes unnoticed. The morals tacked on to the end of many fabliaux, and even the *Fables* of Marie de France, attest to the naturalised, almost reflexive status of the topos, which is also written all over the *Quinze joies de marriage* and well as the *Roman de la Rose*.[9]

It is a notable departure from the source material that Alesone's deception is ultimately thwarted. Where the characteristics of a trickster flourish in the young friar Robert, who reveals Alesone's deception with his manipulation and quick thinking, Alesone's own trickery does not prevail. There is a direct contrast with a male trickster who is opportunistic, reliant on illusion, and just as 'hett of blude' (l. 41),[10] but ultimately more successful. In constructing the tale in this way, the poet has undercut the capacity of women to succeed, and in so doing, has removed agency further from the female figure. The notion of Robert as a hero of the piece, or someone to whom Alesone should be

[9] Bloch, p. 21.

[10] IV, p. 262, fol. 349a.

grateful is particularly problematic: we are left with uncomfortable implications of a debt between Robert and Alesone.

There is an unpalatable sense of male solidarity for a female reader, and the patriarchal order is ultimately reinforced. Again, Newlyn's work is very useful in reinforcing this reading, as she talks at length about the nature of 'rebellious sexual property' and the restoration of 'sexual services to [Alesone's] husband, where a patriarchal society insists they belong'.[11] Symone, Alesone's good-natured husband, is the true victim of the cuckolding. His naivety and inability to please his wife sexually are punished against this backdrop of thorny wit. The redundant nature of Symone's role and his inadequacy are outlined plainly in terms of the food Alesone shares with him: her wayward appetite is mirrored in her remark to her husband that 'Heir is no meit that ganand is for yow.' (l. 248) ('*here is no meat that is fit for you*').[12] This would be particularly galling for Symone, given Alesone's loose morals and generosity with her body and food.

The way in which the *Freiris* contributes to the wider question of antifeminist thought and debate within the Bannatyne is in its devotion to embellishing the trope of the flawed or fallen woman. Bloch writes extensively on the problematic paradigm of virginity, as a kind of virtuous aspiration, and the corresponding impossibility of purity in a female figure. What the *Freris* offers is a situation whereby no attempt at purity or moral superiority is even made. Alesone's behaviour disregards any aspect of the moderate, virtuous model of female behavior that is posited as admirable and expected in this period. As Bloch states 'to the extent that virginity is conceived as a quietitude of the senses, an

[11] Newlyn, p. 87.

[12] IV, p. 268 fol. 351a.

escape from desire, it itself becomes a source of desire…',[13] and accordingly the way in which Alesone enacts her desirous appetite and wilful deception is indicative of the complete opposite of virginity, that is to say a submission entirely to desire. The desire for purity is in itself a paradox, as the act of desire negates purity. The location of this poem within the fables section of the Bannatyne is logical insofar as it is structured around the fabliaux tradition.

Bloch analyses the enactment of fabliau values and tropes in another medieval poem, *La Rencontre du roi d'Angleterre et du jongleur d'Ely*: here, the author (a 'crafty jongleur') outlines a system of examples 'so general and compelling and so full of reason that one cannot fail to agree'.[14] In so doing, Bloch states that

> Jean de Meun's vision of women as overdetermined is thus complicated by the fabliau's positioning of the problem of overdetermination in terms of subjective vision and, more precisely, of the prejudicial subjectivity of all speech acts where relations between the genders are concerned.[15]

This idea of overdetermination, in this case focalized by the character of Alesone, who seems to embody each and every maligned vice possible in a woman, is a key point in the representation of the *querelle* within the Bannatyne. Much like the jongleur of *La Rencontre*, Bloch asserts that there is 'no innocent place of speech' in gender debate.[16] This paradox, and impossibility of expression for poets, is on full display throughout the manuscript – from the over-generalised *impossibilia* of the fourth section, the inventory of classical and

[13] Bloch, p. 108.

[14] Ibid, p. 18.

[15] Ibid, p. 19.

[16] Ibid.

Biblical exempla in the antifeminist love lyrics, to the gendered terms of *Chrystis Kirk* and the *Satire*, shows the wide range of ways in which language can be weaponized in the debate about women. What the fable-like terms of the 'Freiris' offer are a further subversion of the cuckolder, the trickster, the wife – they allow for the triumph of the male figure of Robert, himself no angel, but his victory is tantamount to the assertion that despite what Bloch interprets as the main message of fabliaux, women are not always successful in their enterprise. Perhaps this is the reason for Bannatyne's inclusion of this particular example of fabliaux – the moral conservatism of the poem's overarching message.

'Though Latin It Be Nane' – Dunbar's Wedo

> And of thir fair wlonkes tua weddit war with lordis,
> Ane was ane wedow, iwis, wantoun of laitis.
> And as thai talk at the tabill of mony taill sindry,
> Thay wauchtit at the wicht wyne and waris out wourdis,
> And syn thai spak more spedelie and sparit no matiris. (ll. 36-40)[17]
>
> *(And of these fair beautiful women, two wedded were to lords, one was a widow, I think, wanton in manners. And as they talked at the table of many different tales they drank at the strong wine, drew out their words [by drinking] and then they spoke more quickly, and spared no matters.*)

One woman who characterizes her life in terms of great success is the famously ebullient and lusty Wedo of Dunbar's poem 'The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo', which depicts a woman empowered by her trickery, giving us context and motivation for

[17] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 42.

her successes. The 'Tretis' utilises similar tropes and thematic material to the 'Freiris' but in a very different way. Both borrow heavily from French traditions, the 'Freiris' as a fabliau, and the 'Tretis' as a version of the *chanson mal mariée*, turned into a 'debate form'.[18] Put bluntly, the greatest difference is that the 'Tretis' ends in a more successful outcome for the eponymous women.

Where the 'Freiris' takes place in an urban setting, the 'Tretis' is set in the *locus amoenus* of nature, midsummer revelry and colourful foliage reminiscent of a dream vision. Both poems involve feasts: yet while the food is concealed and intertwined with deception in the 'Freiris', in the *Tretis* the food is set out on the table and wine consumed enthusiastically. The narrator is, like the character of Robert, a voyeuristic witness but, unlike the 'Freiris', he remains detached from the situation, never intervening in what he sees. While the 'Freiris' develops a thematic preoccupation with what is hidden and concealed, the 'Tretis' lays bare the principles of trickery and unravels the mystery of the female agenda, unwittingly overheard by a man. The perceived transgression and monstrosity here is expressed by the aghast narrator who frames his narrative with a question as to the viability of any of these women as a wife.

> 3e auditoris most honorable that eris has gevin
> Onto this uncouth aventur quhilk airly me happinnit,
> Of thir thre wanton wiffis that I haif writtin heir,
> Quhilk wald 3e waill to 3our wif gif 3e suld wed one? (ll. 527-530)[19]

[18] *The Mercat Anthology of Early Scottish Literature 1375-1707*, ed. by R.D.S. Jack and P.A.T. Rozendaal (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1997), p. 136.

[19] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 55.

> *(You listeners most honourable, that have given ear to this uncouth adventure which happened to me earlier: of these three wanton wives that I have written here, which would you want to be your wife, if you should wed one?)*

The concept of marriage is pivotal in each poem – R. D. S. Jack summarises the agenda of the 'Tretis' when he states that 'the poem satirizes husbands through statement and wives through enactment'.[20] The changing attitudes to marriage from the late medieval period to the Renaissance, and the impact of this on women, is discussed at length by Bloch in his monograph. Generally speaking, however, the conception of marriage underwent a change: where marriage was previously a political and economic act of convenience, to wit the enactment of courtly love easily legitimized the discourse of adultery and sexual love, the Renaissance saw a shift towards the close association of love and marriage that pervades to this day. Bloch states that 'the hygiene that governs our erotic imagination right down to the choice of whom we love, or the physical positions we use to express it – did not exist in Judaic, Germanic, Arabic, or Hispanic tradition, in classical Greece or Rome, or in the early Middle Ages. Romantic love as we know it did not come into being until what is sometimes called the renaissance of the twelfth century.'. Given the later Renaissance in Scotland, it is fair to say that this shift would be mirrored in the late-medieval early modern period and its attitude to marriage.[21] While the 'Freiris' focusses on the comeuppance of Alesone and her deceitful behavior, in keeping with the values of monogamy and heteronormative marriage conventions, the 'Tretis' exhibits an awareness of the tropes of male behaviour alongside the descriptions of the Wedo's behavior over the years, and in the observations of her companions. Bloch's analysis of the quietly progressive nature of courtly love, is mirrored in the dialogue between the

[20] Jack and Rozendaal, p. 136.

[21] Bloch, p. 9.

women. Jack writes in his introduction to the 'Tretis' regarding the 'economic arrangement' of medieval marriage and the absence of husbands: 'The code of courtly love, whose freedoms the wives covet and whose conventions the widow skilfully manipulates, offered a mode of behavior to fill that gap. Passionate, idealized, secret, and adulterous, it transferred sovereignty from man to woman'[22]

The poem is structured around the three women and their tales of their lives and their own experience. Much like the Wedo, the two wives are tricksters, albeit in a much less directed way: they conceal their true feelings and play a longer game, without the explicit aim of material gain, leaning instead towards learned behaviour and societal expectations, with any gain as a consequential 'perk'. The widow embodies these qualities also but is keenly aware of her own pleasure and her own gain in each scenario that she lays out: she is an opportunist and expert manipulator as she reveals.

> I semyt sober and sueit and sempill without fraud,
> Bot I couth sexty dissaif that suttillar wer haldin.
> Unto my lesson ȝe lyth and leir at me wit,
> Gif yov nought list be forleit with losingeris untrew […] (ll. 255-258)[23]
>
> *(I could deceive sixty people who were considered more clever [than I]. Listen to my lesson and get some practical knowledge from me, if you don't want to be abandoned because of vile liars.)*[24]

[22] Jack and Rozendaal, p. 136.

[23] Dunbar, p. 47.

[24] My thanks once more to Professor McGavin for his translation guidance.

The idea of deliberate deception versus willfully misguided perception underpins the dialogue between the women and the message from the Widow is one of active agency, in which the women should control their own destiny and desire through their trickery. The importance of language to her methodology and ability to deceive is a crucial enactment of the very anxieties highlighted by Bloch in relation to late medieval discourse about femininity: the nebulous and unreliable nature of women, and in turn, language.

The anxieties of men would not be lessened by observing the stories told by the three women. Each tells of a relationship, in the case of the Widow, relationships (plural), in which the men were cuckolded, impotent in some way, failed examples of masculinity. In a period where much poetry is devoted to the failings of women, the catalogue of male insufficiency described by Dunbar in this poem is impressive. The first wife speaks of 'ane wallidrag, ane worme, an auld wobat carle' (l. 89) ('*a miserable creature, a worm, an old hairy caterpillar man*'), a sexually impotent and physically repugnant man, who showers her with 'the luf blenkis of that bogill fra his blerde ene' (l. 111) ('*the love gleams of that bogle from his blurred eyes*').[25] She is shrewd in her marriage, however, stating that 'his purse pays richely in recompense efter' (l. 136) ('*his purse pays richly in recompense after*').[26] The women laugh together at this pathetic caricature of a man, and the sisterhood between the women is apparent in the address 'my sweit sisteris deir!' (l. 145) ('*my sweet sisters dear!*').[27] The candid nature of the conversation, facilitated by the anonymous voyeur, turns now to the second wife, who describes her own plight. While he is perhaps more attractive than the first husband, 'curtly of his clething and kemmyng of his haris' (l. 182) ('*courtly of clothing and*

[25] Both *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 43.

[26] Ibid, p. 44.

[27] Ibid.

kempt of hair'),[28] this is misleading. 'He had the glemyng of gold and wes bot glase fundin' (l. 202) ('*he had the gleam of gold but was found to be just glass*') states the second wife,[29] and his sexual impotence and small penis the subject of frustration and scrutiny. The explicit nature of the conversation, and the delight taken in the sharing of such travails is potentially a horrifying concept for a male contemporary, and this imagined conference of women is oddly empowering, despite Jack's rightful observation that the women here are being satirized through their actions.

The Wedo speaks last, describing her romantic history: '[T]wa husbands haif I had; thai held me baith deir / Thought I dispytit thaim agane, thai spyt it na thing' (l. 270-1) ('*Two husbands have I had; they both held me dearly, though I hated them in response, they noticed nothing*').[30] Describing her first husband, the Wedo remarks upon his disgusting physical appearance, his 'cruke bak and […] his kewt noddill' (l. 275) ('*his crooked back and his shorn head*'),[31] and describes earnestly her adulterous relationship with 'lufsummar leid [her] lust for to slokyn' (l. 283) ('*handsome man [her] lust to extinguish*') .[32] The abusive nature of her relationship with her husband and his 'wichtnes of handis' (l. 295) ('*strength of hands*') seems to legitimize her taking a lover, 'at certane tymes and in sicir places' (l. 285) ('*at certain times and in secure places*').[33] The second husband was 'a merchand, myghti of gudis' (l. 296) ('*a merchant, with power in goods*'), but despite this wealth, their relationship is strained due to their differing social strata, 'we na fallowis wer in frendschip or blud' (l. 298) ('*we were no*

[28] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 45.

[29] Ibid, p. 46.

[30] Ibid, p. 48.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Both ibid.

fellows in friendship or blood').[34] The cynicism of the Wedo shines through, as she remarks that 'endit wes my innocence with my ald husband' (l. 304) ('*my innocence ended with my old husband*'),[35] and their relationship ends some lines later, with the Wedo's inheritance of a vast fortune. She concludes by telling the women of her many lovers, 'thoght I haif cair vnder cloke the cleir day quhill nyght, / ȝit haif I solace vnder serk quhill the sone ryse' (ll. 470-1) ('*though I have care under the cloak day until night, yet I have solace under the shirt til the sun rises*').[36] Though she appears to all as a mourning widow, she takes her pleasure where she can, be it by her 'secrete servand, rycht sovir of his toung' (466) ('*secret servant, right safe of his tongue*') or the myriad men described in the last lines of her monologue.

The way in which her enactment of societal expectations allows the Widow's true nature to remain incognito is crucial. In performing her mourning in an 'appropriate' manner, she can continue her illicit affairs: consider the Widow's description of her attire and behavior.

> I sith without sair hert or seiknes in body,
> According to my sable weid I mon haif sad maneris,
> Or thai will se all the suth – for certis we wemen,
> We set us all for the syght to syle men of treuth.
> We dule for na evill deid, sa it be derne haldin. (ll. 446-450)[37]
>
> (*I sigh without sore heart or sickness in body, but according to my sable dress I must have sad manners, or they will see the whole truth – for certainly we women, we set ourselves to blind men to the truth, we do not mourn for evil deeds, as long as it is kept secret.*)

[34] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 49.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid, p. 53.

[37] Ibid.

Trickery is underpinned throughout the poem by the discussion of appearance: 'we set us all for the syght to syle men of treuth' (l. 449) is an axiom recognizable to many women, even now. The desire to present an image of a particular virtuosity or affectation of emotion is both integral to the process of trickery and the adherence to expectations of femininity. The women in turn express their dismay that material objects and men did not live up to their expectations. Consider the remarks of the second wife whereby

> I wend I josit a gem and I haif geit gottin;
> He had the glemyng of gold and wes bot glase fundin.
> Thought men be ferse, wele I fynd (fra falȝe ther curage)
> Thar is bot eldnyng and anger ther hertis within. (ll. 200-204)[38]
>
> (*I thought I possessed a gem but I have gotten jet: he gleamed like gold, but was found to be but glass. Though men are fierce, I certainly find that from time to time their courage declines, there is nothing left but jealousy and anger within their hearts.*)

It is interesting to note that the second wife is happy here to generalize men as angry and envious, a surprising twist on the conventions of generalization in misogyny.

The material covetousness of women is peppered throughout the poem.[39] Clothes are resplendent with meaning and obligation as the women describe the fine red robes which their loathed husbands have 'rewarded' them with; the manners of each woman are controlled to portray a certain idea of themselves: the first wife describes

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[38] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 46.

[39] For more on misogyny and materiality, see Chapter Three, 'Figuring "The Economy of Gender"' (pp. 97-105) and later in this chapter, 'Idealised Women – "The Garmont of Guid Ladeis"' (pp. 237-240).

I have condition[40] of a curche, of kersp allther fynest,
A govn of engranyt claight right gaily furrit,
A ring with a ryall stane or other riche iowell,
Or rest of his rousty raid, thoght he wer rede wod. (ll. 138-141)[41]

(I have a handkerchief/cap, of the finest kersey, a gown of deep-dyed cloth and woven [fabric] gaily lined with fur, a ring with a royal stone or other rich jewel, or he could forget about getting his oats even if he went completely nuts.)

These goods are described as almost a 'down payment' on her services. This is corroborated further by her remark on the 'recompense' she receives from her husband. Though their critiques of their husbands are in many ways justified, the focus of the women on their own intelligence, their own manipulation and the material gain of their situation are perhaps what Jack refers to in his assertion of women self-incriminating through action.

Kelly wrote on the capacity of women to question and interrogate the masculine trajectory of history and classical narratives, and the perceived authority of Latin.[42] She may well have taken solace in the concluding sentiments of the Wedo, which reject the classical proscriptions of her contemporaries:

I am so mercifull in mynd and menys all wichtis,
My sely saull sal be saif quhen Sabot all jugis.
Ladyis, leir thir lessonis and be no lassis fundin.

[40] Read as a 'pre-condition' by Jack and Rozendaal, p. 140.

[41] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 44.

[42] Kelly, 'Did Women Have A Renaissance?'

This is the legeand of my lif, *thought Latyne it be nane.* (ll. 501-504)[43]

> *(I am so merciful in mind and have pity on all creatures, my silly soul shall be saved when the Sabbath judges all. Ladies learn these lessons, and do not be little girls. This is the legend of my life, though Latin it is not.*)

The refusal of the Wedo to adhere to the traditional ideas of women and marriage is exceptional. Whether she acts as a useful representation of female desire and agency or is as a manifestation of the fears of the narrator, and in turn, men, is debatable. It can be argued that the narrator shows a degree of admiration towards the 'eloquent' Wedo (l. 505) with 'her soverane teaching' (l. 507) in his representation of her speech and action, in which he seems to be in her thrall entirely.[44] Her representation of her life as being far from 'Latyne' is particularly endearing, given the reliance of misogyny on the classical texts so abhorred by Christine in her work.

Yet, there is no place for the 'Tretis' in the Bannatyne manuscript. In a collection of over 400 disparate pieces of text, with a substantial devotion to the work of Dunbar, the 'Tretis' is not to be found. Given the methodical and systematic approach of Bannatyne, and his evidently encyclopedic knowledge of contemporary poetry, this absence is even more striking. One can also consider the fact that the poem does appear in the Maitland Folio, which is published less than twenty years after the Bannatyne, mirroring much of its content on a smaller scale. As this thesis has argued consistently, particularly in relation to Mary Queen of Scots, the texts absent from the Bannatyne are as meaningful as those included. The lacunae we can observe with the knowledge of

[43] *The Poems of William Dunbar*, p. 54.

[44] Both ibid.

Dunbar's full canon indicate a reluctance or hesitance on the part of the editor to approach certain topics. Given the historical backdrop of Mary's reign, as discussed earlier in this thesis, it is unsurprising that the story of a bold and brazen widow, on her third marriage, would not have a place in polite society or a miscellany for circulation in certain coteries. The undertones of skullduggery, and the implications of homicide within the poem, would serve to further enhance this sense of the poem as risqué or perhaps too relevant. The joy with which the widow and her companions talk about their social engineering, manipulation, and seduction, though entertaining, would have been alarming to a city seeped in Reformation sentiment, awakening to the fear of monstrous women.[45] While the 'Freiris' applies equal scrutiny to the religious establishment, and the hypocrisy of the church, the sole victims of the 'Tretis' are the unwitting men, who embody a vast spectrum of masculinity, from youth to age, joined by their complicity in falling for the deception of the widow. In this sense, the 'Tretis' provides a more satisfying and traditional fabliau ending than the 'Freiris': the defeat of Alesone goes against what is expected of the genre and is therefore included in the collection. The 'Tretis', adhering to the convention of successful female deception of men, is excluded. The allusions it holds for the weakness of men are potent, and for these reasons, it is important to consider the 'Tretis' as a notable omission from Bannatyne's opus.

[45] John Knox, The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women', ed. by Edward Arber, *English Scholar's Library*, 2 (London, 1878), II, Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9660/9660-h/9660-h.htm> [accessed 10 July 2013]; Melanie Hansen, 'The Word and the Throne: John Knox's The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women', in *Voicing Women: Gender and Sexuality in Writing 1500-1700*, ed. by Kate Chedzgoy, Suzanne Trill, and Melanie Hansen, 2nd edn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), pp. 11–24.

The poems are alike in many ways, in their approach to female sexuality as a real and vital force, unlike the removal of sexuality in other texts, in their parallels of feast and appetite and their use of a male gaze in establishing narration. Yet even within this they differ vastly, and in ways that can inform us of the constraints and problems with medieval Scottish society: Alesone's lust is suppressed, the Wedo is subject to a scrutiny under the male gaze that seems to emphasise the alien nature and monstrosity of the female figure. Women defy easy categorisation in the Bannatyne manuscript, and though men within their poems and their narration may try and make a taxonomy suitable to their patriarchal agenda, the threat of female agency and manipulation is writ large in these seemingly light-hearted literary works, and their omission.

Gendered Dialogues and Sexual Negotiation

Three poems within the Bannatyne are grouped together here as they are all structured as dialogues between a man and a woman: 'Jok and Jinny' deals with the process of betrothal and dowry; 'Robene and Makyne' an attempted seduction, and 'The Commonyng' an interaction between a sex worker and a male customer. [46] Each has something to

[46] In light of recent feminist discourse around the terminology of 'prostitute', I have opted to utilise the term 'sex worker'. Though ostensibly anachronistic in a medieval context, this term is a work of linguistic activism by Carol Leigh in her work 'Inventing Sex Work' in Jill Nagle's 1997 edited collection *Whores and Other Feminists*. States Leigh: '[…] as a poet and a wordsmith, I was intrigued by the potential of linguistic activism to bring women out of anonymity and proudly write our new herstory.' (p. 266) In keeping with the ethos of Leigh, Kelly, and many other feminist pioneers, I adhere to their view of a history that does not stigmatise women as sex workers. Therefore, because of the pejorative nature of the term 'prostitute', I will utilise the term 'sex worker'.

contribute to the question of the *querelle* as a trope within the manuscript, particularly if viewed in tandem with Bloch's work on misogyny and the paradox of virtue. The latter poems in particular offer certain inversions of gender roles, and poetic convention, which lend themselves to wider questions regarding the depiction of heteronormative interactions within the context of the Bannatyne and the *querelle*.

'Jok and Jinny'

'Jok and Jinny' is at its heart a jovial poem, preoccupied with double entendre and the practicalities of a marriage in late medieval Scotland, and located in the third section of the manuscript. The narrator appears to be Jinny's father, as they address Jok directly with Jinny referred to in familial terms 'ȝe come to wow our Iynny Iok' (l. 7) (*'you've come to woo our Jinny, Jok'*).[47] It would be unusual indeed to have this poem narrated by a mother, and by line 11 we are introduced to Jinny's mother in the third person; 'Than spak hir modir and said agane / my bairne hes tocher gud annwch to ge ȝow' (ll. 11-2) (*'Then spoke her mother and said again, my child has dowry good enough to give you'*).[48] Despite the mother's earnest entreaty regarding the dowry, Jinny is playful, 'Te he q Iynny keik keik I se ȝow / Muder ȝon man makis ȝow a mok' (l. 13-4) (*'tee hee said Jenny, peek peek I see you! Mother that man makes a joke of you*') – the father interjects, demanding to know Jok's intent, which is once again explained as 'I come to wow ȝour Iynny' (l. 16) (*'I come to woo young Jinny'*).[49] The next two stanzas are devoted to a litany of belongings identified in the dowry, from livestock

[47] III, p. 15 fol. 137b.

[48] III, p. 16 fol. 137b.

[49] Ibid.

('ane guß ane gryce ane cok ane hen / ane calf ane hog ane futebird sawin [etc.]' ll.18-9) (*'a goose, a pig, a cock, a hen, a calf, a hog, a small piece of land sown'*) to household utensils and farming equipment. Jinny's worth is determined at this point in a purely material way by her mother, and is interrupted only when Jok 'cryd ane feist and slew ane cok / and maid a brydell vp alland' (ll. 38-9) (*'cried a feast! and slew a cock, and made up the bridal on shore'*) proclaiming that he has married Jinny.[50]

The attention is now drawn to Jok's own inventory of belongings, which he recites as though to prove his disinterest in a material dowry: 'it is weill kend I haif annwch' (l. 44) (*'it is well known that I have enough'*).[51] His recitation draws on a similar kind of index to Jinny's dowry, but with comical twists: he has a plough without oxen, a pepper poke made of a paddle and 'twa lusty lippis to lik ane laiddill' (l. 55) (*'two lusty lips to lick a ladle'*).[52] Here the poem takes a more euphemistic turn, with Jok describing his 'brechame and twa brochis fyne' (l. 57) (*'horse collar and two spindles fine'*) alluding to his penis.[53] The singsong refrain of 'to gang to giddir Iynny & Iok' (ll. 48, 56, 64, 72) (*'to go together, Jinny and Jock'*) illuminates Jok's delight as he asks of Jinny's family 'call ȝe no^{t} that ane jolye menȝe?' (l. 63) (*'call you not that a happy household?'*).[54] The poem ends with Jinny and Jok together, as the logical conclusion of the piece. In female terms the innuendo of the poem is palpable, and sexual desire seems to underpin the transactional nature of the betrothal. Given our earlier consideration of the changing attitude to marriage, from a political and economic transaction to a commitment of love and devotion in the modern sense, 'Jok and Jinny'

[50] III, p. 16 fol. 137b.

[51] III, p. 17 fol. 137b.

[52] III, p. 17 fol. 138a.

[53] Ibid.

[54] All III, pp. 16–17 fol. 137b - 138a.

seems to undermine the late medieval sensibility of land and property in marriage, and instead look towards the sexual and carnal nature of relationships. In so doing, it harks to an earlier time in which women were perhaps more sexually liberated, per Bloch's remarks on courtliness,[55] yet shows the disjunction between the mediation of a passionate relationship and an economic transaction. The material worth of goods becomes irrelevant as Jok and Jinny speak in terms of their desire for one another. Though the literal worth of women is here expressed in a very oblique way, the values of marriage are under scrutiny in a surprisingly modern way.

'The Commonyng betwixt the master and the heure'

Located in the fourth section of the Bannatyne, and subdivided into the section 'agains evil wemen', the social standing of sex workers is made plain from the outset of this poem. While the master is perhaps a gentleman or respected figure, the 'heure' is by association cast as an evil woman. The title of the poem promises a 'commonyng' which offers some hope as to the relative gender equality within the text; however, as is the case with other poems in Bannatyne's collection, the geographical setting of the poem is suitably telling. This is not to mention the pejorative use of the term 'heure', which castigates the woman's position in the transaction with its implicit moral judgement. 'The Commonyng' is, unlike 'Jok and Jinny' or 'Robene and Makyne', an inherently urban poem, with frequent references to the 'toun' and 'court', and the perils of a transient community of which the 'heure' is ostensibly a part. The poem describes the infatuation of the male narrator with a female sex worker who is in the area 'sen the court come to þe toun' (l. 8) ('*since the court*

[55] Bloch, Chapter Six 'The Love Lyric and the Paradox of Perfection', pp. 143-165.

has come to the town').[56] His devotion and obsession are made plain in the descriptions of his behaviour and dialogue – 'my hairt with ȝow sall ay remane' (l. 14) ('*my heart with you shall always remain*').[57] The object of his affection is depicted as being aloof, uninterested in his affections. Her side of the dialogue is inscribed in curt responses such as 'at this tyme ȝe ma not be eisit' (l. 20) ('*at this time you may not be relieved*').[58] His imploring goes on, desperate to consummate his passion: 'can ȝe not fynd na time or place / quhair I may quitly lay ȝow doun?' (ll. 22-3) ('*can you not find a time nor place where I may quietly lay you down?*') to which she responds 'Na not quhill court be of the toun' (l. 24) ('*No, not while court is in the town.*')[59]

He begs for an explanation, claiming that were the positions of power reversed 'and I was king / I wald evir ȝow plesour do / and daly reddy þairunto' (ll. 26-8) ('*If I were king I would always do your pleasure, and prepare to do so daily*') – an easy claim to make in abstract terms.[60] The sex worker sends him away, 'ga glaik ȝow loun' (l. 31) ('*go play you rascal*') and thwarts his attempts at seduction once more.[61] Stanza five contains an echo of 'In secreit place' with the exhortation 'ȝe brek my hairt my bony ane' (l. 34) ('*you break my heart, my pretty one*') which in turn misleadingly implicates the woman as the one with power in this transaction. By the seventh stanza, the negotiations have progressed and the narrator is told 'ȝe salbe servit for a croun / howbeit the court be in the toun' (ll. 55-6)

[56] IV, p. 38 fol. 246a.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Both IV, p. 38 fol. 264b.

[60] Ibid.

[61] IV, p. 39 fol. 264b.

('*you shall be serviced for a crown, even though the court is in town*').[62] The use of the verb 'servit' underlines the transactional nature of this congress, and makes plain the role of the woman as a provider of service. From this point, the narrator's interest dissipates – he 'ouirdraif fra day to day / to spy quen court sowld gone away' (ll. 58-9) ('*[he] let time pass from day to day to see when court should go away*').[63] His affection is soon transferred to another, 'ane bonyar ane' (l. 60) ('*a prettier one*') and when he meets his previous partner, he notices that she is 'weill plestert vp in the glengoir' (l. 62) ('*riddled with venereal disease*'), long before the court has left the town.[64] The implication is perhaps that the behaviour of this woman in her role as a sex worker has justified her plight and subsequent illness, while the master has escaped to a worthier partner.

Van Heijnsbergen's 1993 article[65] argues that 'The Commonyng betuixt the mester and the heure' exploits the notion than 'underneath courtly moves and motives lie very basic sexual instincts' and in turn parody these models for their audience.[66] Comparing it to 'In Somer' (discussed in Chapter Three) he notes that where 'In Somer' moves towards a 'democratic levelling',[67] its good nature mediated by its inclusion in the 'ballatis miry' and its willingness to criticise the narrator; the narrative confusion of the anonymous 'Commonyng' seems cemented in its seriousness by its inclusion in the fourth section. Evelyn Newlyn's work is referred to by van Heijnsbergen in relation to her sustained

[62] Both IV, p. 39 fol. 264a.

[63] IV, p. 39 fol. 265a.

[64] Both IV, pp. 39–40 fol. 265a.

[65] Van Heijnsbergen 'Literary Convention'.

[66] Ibid, p. 432.

[67] Ibid, p. 431.

critique of the 'Commonyng' as a satire,[68] a context which only serves to wrongfully legitimise these patriarchal attitudes towards women. What both van Heijnsbergen and Newlyn touch upon is the relevance of structure in framing our understanding of the poems, whether it be intentional or not on the part of the compiler. In framing this dialogue in the section of 'evil wemen', Bannatyne puts forth the way in which sexuality is used to seduce and deceive men.

'Robene and Makyne'

One of Henryson's shorter poems, 'Robene and Makyne' illustrates the courting of a man by a woman. Lois Ebin points out in her 1980 article on Dunbar's bawdy that, within the poem, Henryson inverts the gender roles we see in works such as 'In secreit place', with Makyne, the woman, cast as the enthusiastic pursuant lover.[69] Robene is a humble shepherd, quiet and uncertain of this seduction: 'na thing of lufe I knaw / But keipis my scheip vndir ȝone wid' (ll. 10-11) ('*no thing of love [do] I know, other than keeping my sheep under that wood*').[70] His discomfort with Makyne's advances are made plain as he admits his lack of knowledge in love, 'I waiᵗ not quhat is luve' (l. 26) ('*I know not what is love*').[71] Makyne's statements are of the duration of her love – 'I haif the lovit lowd and still / thir ȝeiris two or thre' (ll. 5-6)[72] ('*I have loved you constantly, for two or three years*') - – and her persistence in

[68] Bloch, p. 147; Newlyn, 'The Political Dimensions of Desire and Sexuality in Poems of the Bannatyne Manuscript'; IV, p. 39 fol. 265a.

[69] Lois Ebin, 'Dunbar's Bawdy', *The Chaucer Review*, 14.3 (1980), 278–86.

[70] IV, p. 309 fol. 365a.

[71] IV, p. 309 fol. 365a.

[72] Ibid.

her pursuit of Robin is the driving force behind the poem. By stanza five, Makyne has opened up the gambit of sexual bargaining, 'and thow sall haif my hairt all haill / eik and my madinheid' (ll. 35-6) ('*and thou shall have my whole heart in addition to my virginity*').[73] This is to little effect, and in stanza eight, Robene insists that 'Makyne, sum vþer man begyle / ffor hamewart I will fair' (ll. 63-4) ('*Makyne, some other man beguile, for I wish to go homeward*).[74] As Makyne gives up in despair, so too does Robene experience a change of heart. '[H]e fallowir hir fast thair till assail / and till hir tuke gude keip' (ll. 79-80) ('*he followed her fast to assail her and took notice of her*').[75] Makyne is unconvinced by his new attitude, and queries his trustworthiness – 'the man that will no^{t} quhen he may / sall haif no^{t} quhen he wald' (ll. 91-2) ('*the man that will not when he may, shall have not when he would*').[76] Robene highlights their seclusion in nature, that no-one will interrupt them, but Makyne's heartbreak is too much for her to bear, 'for of my pane thow maid it play /and all in vane I spend / as thow hes done sa sall I say / Mvrne on I think to mend' (ll. 109-112) ('*for you made play of my pain and all in vain I spent – as thou has done, so shall I, mourn on; I intend*').[77] She leaves Robene mourning on the hillside, and goes home 'blyth annewche'[78] (*cheerful enough*).

The placement of this poem in the fable section is intriguing. Robene and Makyne are both human rather than animal, yet there is a distinct moral to their story. Parsing that moral is more of a challenge than for the typical fable, with the messages of male pursuit and female recalcitrance subverted by the reversed gender roles. In terms of antifeminist

[73] IV, p. 309 fol. 365b.

[74] IV, p. 310 fol. 365b.

[75] IV, p. 311 fol. 366a.

[76] Ibid.

[77] IV, p. 312 fol. 366a.

[78] IV, p. 312 fol. 366b.

sentiment, perhaps the constant nature of Makyne's interest in Robene is her failing, given his oscillating interest and lack of integrity. In turn, Robene's inability to commit to Makyne is an inversion of the unrealiability trope, whereby the male suitor is here depicted as the one behaving poorly. Where 'In secreit place' finds its place in a sexualised and courtly setting, 'Robene and Makyne' takes place in a pastoral setting, removed from overt class politics and the urban environment, and such inversion is therefore highlighted further.

Intriguingly, Robene and Makyne seem to meet as equals. The image of the humble shepherd is almost biblical, and the way in which Robene is depicted as innocent, unknowing of love, allies closely with the incipient idealised Renaissance notion of virtue and the corresponding shedding of sexuality.[79] Yet the turn to the story seems to undermine this once more – Robene gives in to his baser instincts and goes on to pursue Makyne passionately, yet she undergoes a change of heart that removes her from the plight of physical love and feeling cheerful at the despondency of her suitor. The relationship to the genre of *pastourelle* is worth consideration at this juncture: 'Robene and Makyne' seems to read as a desexualised incarnation of this genre, with the emotional core of the poem lying in the unattainability of their relationship, in a callback to courtly manners or even a platonic idea of heteronormative relations. Their love is one of ideals, of dreams of love and devotion that exist only within their minds – it is a chaste performance of a deeply eroticised genre. There is no threat to innocence, or of violation, within Robene and Makyne, doubtless due in part to the reversal of gender roles – in such a poem, a pursuant woman seems to offer far less of an immediate threat than a determined man. Indeed the sadness felt by both, but towards the end primarily by

[79] See Bloch, Chapter Six 'The Love Lyric and the Paradox of Perfection' pp. 143-164.

Robene, seems to be of a melancholy of the soul, and a sense of lost opportunity. Though Robene's enthusiasm can be read as sexual, his earlier ignorance of Makyne's offer of her virginity to pledge her troth is telling, and seems to go against such an interpretation.

Idealised Women ~ 'The Garmont of Guid Ladies'

In his chapter 'The Poetics of Virginity', Bloch describes an Arthurian French poem, "*Du mantel mautaillié*", in which a knight 'arrives at King Arthur's court bringing an adventure and carrying a magic coat designed to fit only the woman who has been faithful to her husband or lover […]'.[80] Henryson's poem 'the garmont of guid ladeis' borrows from this school of thought, describing in detail the coat he would make his lover 'wald [she] lufe me best' (1) ('*if she would love me best*'). Located near the beginning of the ballads of love, the poem evades explicit antifeminist categorisation, in terms of the Bannatyne subsections, and stands somewhat solitary within the collection. There is a later imitative poem, which is not unusual given the popularity of this format, but it does not seem to reach the poetic strength of Henryson's verse.[81] Parkinson writes extensively on the poem in his 2011 article 'Henryson's Matter of Style: "The Garmont of Guid Ladeis"' and in relation to the location of the text within the Bannatyne, comments that

> In the Bannatyne Manuscript, the sole witness, *The Garmont of Gud Ladeis* is included among the 'songis of luve' [...] It is preceded by [...] 'Sen that I am a presoneir'. Following *The Garmont* in the Bannatyne Manuscript is a Scots version of 'Was not good King Solomon' [...] The sequence suggests that the scribe, George Bannatyne, already read *The*

[80] Bloch, p. 95.

[81] See III p. 295 fol. 228b.

Garmont literally as a poem of courtship and responded to its prosodic simplicity and lexical plainness.[82]

The courtship described within the poem is one of desired control, or coercion through bribery: the narrator of the poem wishes to create a perfect outfit or 'garmont' for his beloved, but only 'wald my gude lady lufe me best' (l. 1) ('*if my good lady love me best [and behave as I would like her to do]*').[83] From the outset, the reward of clothing, the material recognition and indication of her worth, is contingent on perceived good behaviour and fulfilment of her role. Items of clothing are ascribed a symbolic moral value: 'off he Honour suld be Hir Hud' (l. 5) ('*of high honour should be her hood*'), 'Hir sark suld be Hir body nixt / Of chestetie so quhyt' (ll. 9-10) ('*her shirt should be next to her body, [made] of chastity so white*') while her 'kirtill suld be of clene constance' (l. 13) ('*[her] tunic should be of clean constancy*').[84] Thus it continues, remarking upon 'gudlineß' (l. 17) ('*godliness*'), 'benignitie' (l. 21) ('*benignity*'), 'fair having' (l. 25) ('*good behaviour*'), 'esperance' (l. 29) ('*hope*'), the preventative 'sickerness / In syne þat scho no^{t} slyd' (l. 33-4) ('*[her shoes would be] of stability so that she would not slide into sin*').[85] Should she wear this garment, states the narrator: 'I durst swear by my seill / that scho woir nevir grene nor gray /that set hir half so weill' (38-40) ('*I do swear by my soul that she never wore a green or gray that suited her half so well*').[86] For the narrator, no clothing could befit his lover so well as the appearance and enactment of virtue. Bloch's analysis of "*Du mantel*" states that within the Arthurian poem 'the tailoring

[82] David Parkinson, 'Henryson's Matter of Style: The Garmont of Gud Ladeis', *The Review of English Studies*, 62.256 (2011), 520–37 (pp. 521–22).

[83] III, p. 252 fol. 215a.

[84] All IV, pp. 252-3 fol. 215a-b.

[85] All IV, p. 253 fols. 215a, 215b.

[86] IV, p. 254 fol. 215b.

of the coat is assimilated to a certain monotonous misogynistic tailoring of the tale'.[87] In this case of the *Garmont*, the nature of misogyny in shaping the behaviour and appearance of a woman is uncomfortably present – the implication that the woman 'wirk eftir [his] will' (l. 2)[88] ('*work to [his] will*') is a damning indictment of the contemporary role of women as subjugated to the men around them, and the manner in which this idealised female figure is crafted sits uneasily with the concept of female autonomy.

The material nature of the outfit is also telling. If we consider Harker's earlier comments on the economy of gender, the linking of behaviour and reward with material goods for the female figure is hugely cynical. While the women of the 'Tretis' use this to their advantage, we are given no such insight into the anonymous 'guid ladeis' of Henryson's poem. While elements of the imagined wardrobe are framed as being for the benefit of the lady, for example, sleeves of Esperance 'to keip Hir fra despair' (l. 30) ('*to keep her from despair*'),[89] the subtext of each adornment is control and manipulation by the male figure. In discussing the unobtainable goal of virginity in the medieval context, Bloch writes that

> […] if chastity implies transcendence of the corporeal, and if the corporeal is inextricably linked to the feminine, then the fathers' insistent exhortations to feminine chastity can only be seen as a self-contradictory urging of the feminine to be something that it isn't. To urge a woman to chastity is to urge her in some profound sense to deny her femininity, since to transcend the body is to escape all which is gendered feminine.[90]

What is interesting in relation to the 'Garmont' is that the notion of chastity and transcendence is in this instance linked very closely to clothing. The preoccupation of the

[87] Bloch, p. 95.

[88] III, p. 252 fol. 215a.

[89] III, p. 253 fol. 215b.

[90] Bloch, p. 106.

narrator with the appearance of virtue seems to speak to the importance of appearances over reality: though the body beneath may be flawed and prone to misadventure, the uniform or shell which contains it will work to facilitate the exertion of male control;, as Bloch puts it the 'self-contradictory urging of the feminine to be something that it isn't'.[91] To link the poem to courtship in the way that Bannatyne's placement indicates is troubling, given the way in which the poem allows an act of courtship to inscribe a huge amount of male influence and control.

The propensity of women to fail, and the threat of their fallibility, is remarked upon further by Parkinson, who notes that, stylistically '[r]epeating the equation *suld be* also raises the risk of strain or even breakage; clothes, and specifically women's clothes, readily stand for trends at variance with stable, well-ordered values'.[92] The repetition of the modal 'suld be' also adds a sense of threat – should the woman not uphold her end of the bargain, or in any way embarrass the narrator's vision, there will be consequences. A woman should be impervious to sin, to sickness, to despair, and in creating this array for her, the man should be loved well. Once again, the paradox of perfection cuts through what Parkinson refers to as the 'high spiritual signification' of the poem.[93]

Dramatic Dialogue ~ *Ane Satire of the Three Estates*

While much of the Bannatyne material is lyric poetry, there exists a substantial and significant exception. At the end of the third section come the Cupar Banns, and a

[91] Bloch, p. 106.

[92] Parkinson, p. 525.

[93] Ibid, p. 520.

collection of excerpts from Sir David Lyndsay's 'Ane Satire of the Thrie Estaitis'. At the time of compiling the manuscript, the most recent performance of the play would have been the 1554 Greenside performance in Edinburgh. While, at the age of 9, Bannatyne may have seen this production himself, it is only select comedic interludes that are included in the Bannatyne. The excerpts themselves are ascribed to have been 'maid in cowpar of ffyffe' ('*made in Cupar of Fife*'),[94] thus indicating the 1552 Cupar performance.[95]

In relation to the *querelle*, the 'Satire' bears great fruit in its depiction of marriage and gender roles. The way in which women are inscribed as cuckolding wives and unsympathetic, domineering figures is largely comedic in tone, but the content of Lyndsay's description is as relevant to the question of inherent misogyny and women's worth as any poem in the collection. A number of interludes are important in the context of this current study: the Cotter and his wife; Bessy and the old man; the introduction of Sensualitie and her interaction with Wantones, Hamelines, and Danger and, latterly, the King. The very first excerpt within the Lyndsay selection is the interaction between the Cotter and his wife, in which familiar tropes of late medieval writing are introduced: there is an element of flyting in the dispute between the couple, and a sense of slapstick to the violence enacted between them, with the husband the victim: 'Heir sall the wife ding the carle and he sall cry goddis mercy' ('*Here shall the wife hit the man and he shall cry for god's mercy*').[96]

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[94] IV, p. 87 fol. 164a.

[95] Donna Heddle, 'Sir David Lindsay', *The Literary Encyclopaedia*, 2007 <https://www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=2744> [accessed 3 July 2018].

[96] III, p. 92 fol. 165b.

The reversal of gendered violence, in that the male is the recipient of punishment, echoes the 'Wyf of Auchtermuchty' in many ways. Indeed, the dialogue and negotiation of power between the wife and husband is paralleled in this interlude: the husband wishes to change the status quo, to attend the play and to socialise, 'Wald god I had þat liberty / that I micht part as well as ȝe', (ll. 43-44) ('*Would god that I had liberty that I might leave as well as you*'),[97] while his wife soon administers a stern and intimidating display of power in preventing this. This boldness is embodied prior to her entrance, by the ominous discussion between the Cotter and Nuntius, the Cotter stating that 'I hafe ane quick divill to my wife / that haldis me evir in sturt and stryfe' (ll. 31-32) ('*I have a living devil for a wife that holds me ever in trouble and strife*').[98] The wife enters the scene in a bombastic fashion, interrogating the husband with 'Quhair hes thow bene fals ladrone loun / Dottyand and drinkand in the toun / Quha gaif the leif to cum fra hame' (ll. 59-61) ('*Where have you been you false base man? Who gave you permission to come from home?*').[99] The Cotter explains that an invitation has been extended to see the play, 'þat yone man the play proclaimit' (l. 65) ('*that that man the play proclaimed*'),[100] and his wife is quick to assert that he shall not be attending. 'Na I sall cum thairto sickerly / and thow salt byd at hame & keip the ky' (ll. 69-70) ('*No, I shall go there certainly, and you shall stay at home and keep the cattle*'),[101] she proclaims, in another distinct echo of the household arbitration of the 'Wyf of Auchtermuchty'. She is quick to dole out further tasks when challenged, demanding that

[97] III, p. 88 fol. 164b.

[98] Ibid.

[99] III, p. 50 fol. 164b.

[100] III, p. 90 fol. 165a.

[101] Ibid.

her husband 'milk the ky / and mvk the byre or I cum hame' (ll. 82-83) ('*milk the cows, and muck out the byre before I come home*').[102]

Thus far, the role of a wife, as depicted by Lyndsay, adheres to the tropes of a scold, a brittle example of femininity in which no desire is palpable and a sense of emasculation pervades. This fear of what becomes of married women (and, accordingly, men) is played to comedic effect, yet the misogynist undertones are evident: removed from a courtly or poetic framework, the 'realistic' depiction of women in Lyndsay's augmented reality is a satire in itself, which perpetuates the more vicious arguments of the *querelle* in demeaning women and asserting their unsuitability to agency or power. The emasculation of the husband through violence, though comedic, is a clear expression of the anxiety felt by men regarding the institution of marriage and their role within it. Outwith the roles of courtly seduction or romantic pursuit, the power of women as wives is articulated as being dangerous and worrisome.

Mere moments after the departure of the Cotter and his wife, a contrasting scenario is played out by Bessy and the 'auld man', and Bessy's many suitors – 'the courteouer' ('*courtier*'), 'marchand' ('*merchant*'), 'clerk', and 'fule' ('*fool*'). While the Cotter's wife seems to embody a kind of dreary domesticity, there is a vivacity to Bessy that is reminiscent of both Alesone and the Wedo in both her conduct and language. Bessy is led into the scene, dancing with her older husband: 'Here sall the auld man cum In leidand / his wyfe in ane dance' ('*here shall the old man come in, leading / his wife in a dance*').[103] He goes on to beseech her thus:

[102] III, p. 91 fol. 165a.

[103] III, s.d. preceding l. 142, p. 94 fol. 166a.

Bessy my hairt I mon ly doun and sleip
And in myne arme Se quietly thow creip
Bessy my hairt first lat me lok thy cunt
Syne lat me keip the key as I was wount (ll. 142-145)[104]

(*Bessy my heart, I must lie down and sleep and in my arms so quietly you creep, Bessy my heart, first let me lock your cunt and let me keep the key as I am used to doing.)*

Having asserted this dominance and ownership over his wife, both by leading her in the dance and physically restricting access to her body, the husband proceeds to fall asleep with the key under his head. Herein enter the suitors, each hoping to obtain access to Bessy's genitalia. The merchant brags of his riches to 'gif me licence To luge into 3our chalmer' (l. 153) ('*gives me license to encamp in your chamber*'); the clerk offers a box of gold to shut the locks of her 'quomam' ('*pudendum*)',[105] and the fool offers his penis 'swa lang as this may steir or stand / It sall be ay at 3our command' (ll. 162-163) ('*so long as this may move or stand, it shall be always at your command*').[106] She is tempted by this carnal offer, so the fool is successful in obtaining the key and Bessy invites him to 'lat ws ga play our fill' (l. 175) ('*let us go and play our fill*').[107] They retire to 'sum quyet place' ('*some quiet place*'),[108] reminiscent of the satirical courtly settings of poems such as 'In secreit place', and a short dialogue between the Clerk and 'ffynlaw of the fute band' ('*Finelaw of the foot band*') ensues. Within moments, however, the stage directions indicate that 'Heir Sall the gudman walkin

[104] III, p. 94 fol. 166a.

[105] Presumably a misreading of 'quoniam', *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (Scottish Language Dictionaries Ltd., 2004) <http://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/quoniam> [accessed 7 March 2018].

[106] III, p. 95 fol. 166a.

[107] III, p. 96 fol. 166b.

[108] Ibid.

and cry ffor bessy' (*'here shall the good man waken and cry for Bessy'*),[109] and his lamentation begins

> My bony bessy quhair art thow now
> My wyf is fallen on sleip I trow
> quhair art thow bessy My awin sweit thing
> My hony My hairt My dayis darling
> Is thair na man that saw my beß
> I trow scho be gane to the meß
> Bessy my hairt heiris thow not me
> My joy cry peip quhairevir thow be
> Allace for evir now I am fey
> For of hir cunt I tynt the key
> Scho may call me ane Iuffland Iok
> Or I swyve I mon brek the lok (ll. 208-219)[110]
>
> (*My pretty Bessy, where are you now? My wife has fallen asleep I believe. Where art thou Bessy, my own sweet thing, my honey, my heart, my darling of days? Is there no man that saw my Bess? I believe she has gone to mass – Bessy, my heart, can't you hear me? My joy, cry out peep wherever you are. Alas I am now forever fated, for of her cunt I've lost the key. She may call me an uncouth Jock, before I copulate I must break the lock*)

Bessy replies with haste and tricks the old man further, not unlike the tactics of the Wedo or Alesone. Indeed, she utilises clothing to enact this trickery, telling her husband 'My hairt evin sewand 3ow ane sark / Of holland claith baith quhyt and tewch / Lat pruve gif it be wuid annewch' (ll. 223-225) (*'My heart, I was just sewing you a shirt of Dutch cloth, white and tough. Let prove if it be wild enough'*).[111] The shirt is placed over the old man's head, and

[109] III, s.d. preceding l. 208, p. 97 fol. 167a.

[110] III, pp. 97–98 fol. 167a.

[111] III, p. 98 fol. 167a.

the fool once again takes possession of the key. The old man is ridiculed further, stating his love for and belief in his wife as she encourages him to believe the key is still in place. Satisfied with her response, the old man remains blissfully unaware of the deception, stating 'I trow thair be no man in fyffe / That evir had sa gude ane wyfe' (ll. 235-236) (*'I believe there is no man in Fife that ever had so good a wife'*).[112]

The interlude concludes in a twist of metatextuality with Nuntius advertising the play itself, and its duration, advising women that

> And ȝe ladyis that hes Na skant of leddir
> Or ȝe cum thair faill nocht to teme ȝour bleddir
> I dreid or we haif half done our wark
> That sum of ȝow sall make ane richt wait sark. (ll. 274-277)[113]
>
> (*And you ladies that have no lack of leather, before you come there make sure to empty your bladder: I worry that before we have done half our work, that some of you shall make a rich wet shirt.)*

Though a comedic aside in many ways, the reference once again to the body of a woman as fallible, leaky, or weakened, is a strike of misogyny that underpins much of the salvos within the interludes included in the text.

While the Cotter and his wife exemplify a tired domesticity, and the anxieties of marriage as an institution for emasculation with the full awareness of the husband, Bessy and her husband appear to highlight another topos of anxiety: that of the vibrant, sexual young woman and the deluded older man. Such behaviour is described in vivid detail by

[112] III, p. 99 fol. 167b.

[113] III, p. 100 fol. 168a.

the Wedo in Dunbar's poem and Bessy's temptation and seduction by the fool is reminiscent of tropes of courtly love and the appeal of innocence and 'true' feeling. The deception of the older man is enabled by a material artefact: the gift of a shirt, the material embodiment of wealth and desirable security for a married couple, is utilised to blind him to the truth of the situation. Once again, women are associated with clothes as a method of deception and poor moral behaviour. While the clothes are not worn by the female figure, they are utilised in the same manner, that is to say, to deceive the male lover.

There is one further interaction to consider in this context, and that is the conversation between Chaistetie, the Soutar, the Tailor, and their wives. As Chaistetie seeks lodging for the night, she encounters the Soutar and the Tailor, who are keen to offer their hospitality: '[…] dwell with ws till it be Iune / We sall mend baith 3our hoiß and schone / And plenely tak 3our pairt' (ll. 605-607) ('*[…] dwell with us til it is June. We shall mend both your stockings and shoes, and openly take your part*').[114] The tailor's daughter Jenny enters the scene, and when asked by her mother, is quick to state that her father 'Mary drinkand with a lusty laiddy / ane fair 3ung maidin cled in quhyt' (ll. 623-624) ('*[is] by Mary drinking with a lusty lady, a fair young maiden clad in white*').[115] The Soutar's wife asks a similar question and is told the same – that the men are drinking heavily with this female companion. A farce ensues, whereby the women intervene violently in the scene, chasing Chaistetie away and assaulting their husbands, 'heir thay sall ding thair gudmen' ('*here shall they all hit their hubands*').[116] The scene concludes with the wives' celebration of their victory in ridding themselves of this virtue, and head across the river and into town, the soutar's

[114] III, p. 124 fol. 175b.

[115] III, p. 125 fol. 175b.

[116] III, p. 128 fol. 176a.

wife 'clais abone [their] waist' ('*clothes above [their] waists*')[117] the irony of this bold behaviour is probably not lost on the audience.

Beyond these interactions, focussed primarily on the dynamics of marriage, there is a further comment to be made upon the interaction of Lyndsay's work with the *querelle*: that is the characterisation of Dame Sensualitie. Introduced just as Solace speaks of 'gif lichery be syn' ('*if lechery be a sin*'),[118] the stage directions advise that 'Heir sal entir dame sensualitie with hir madynnis / Hamelines and Denger' ('*here shall enter Dame Sensuality with her maidens Homeliness and Haughtiness*').[119] The joining of sensuality with these attributes of danger and homeliness is intriguing: it implies facets of sensual attraction, the appeal of homeliness in appearance and the peril of a tease. The triad seems to offer a multi-layered view of female attractiveness, which though taken with the outward sexual attraction, is suggestive about the capacity of women to deceive behind homely appearances. The confidence and self-expression of Sensualitie's introduction is remarkable in its directness:

> O luvaris walk behald the fyrie speir
> behald the natural dochter of venus
> behald luvaris this lusty lady cleir
> The fresche fontane of knichtis amorus
> Quhat thay desire in laitis delitius
> Or quha wald mak to venus observance
> In my mirthfull chalmer mellodiouß
> Thair sall thay fynd all pastyme and pleasance (ll. 271-278)[120]

[117] III, p. 129 fol. 176b.

[118] III, p. 110 fol. 171b.

[119] III, p. 110, s.d. preceding l. 271, fol. 171b.

[120] III, p. 110 fol. 171b.

> *(O lovers awaken, behold the fiery spear, behold the natural daughter of Venus. Behold lovers, this lusty lady clear, the fresh fountain of amorous knights [and] what they desire in beautiful appearance. Or who would make observance to Venus in my mirthful chamber melodious, there they shall find all pastime and pleasance)*

The reference to courtliness of 'knichtis amorus' is interesting, particularly given the earlier references to the courtier in the seduction of Bessy. Lyndsay's play is famously a comment on the political state of Scotland during the sixteenth century, and his irreverent references to courtliness in these comedic interludes add to the notions expressed when analysing the third section of the manuscript that the rhetoric and tradition of courtly love was also a subject of satire and derision.[121] This ties in with Bloch's argument regarding the nature of courtly love as being an environment for women's agency and (albeit limited) independence. If these freeing terms are now the subject of satire, so too then are the more liberated positions for women, and their enactment in society.

Sensualitie's introduction is ripe with innuendo, and the relation of her 'mirthfull chalmer mellodiouß' to the vagina is a far from subtle symbol. Her physical attractiveness is a large part of her appeal to the senses, as she invites the audience to 'behald' her 'gay Intyre' (l. 279) ('*behold […] her gay attire*'), her neck 'luffsum and lilly quhite' (l. 280) ('*lovely and lily white*'), her 'visage flammand as the fyre' ('*face, flaming as fire*'), (l. 281) and her 'papis of portratour perfyte' (l. 282) ('*breasts of perfect sculpture*').[122] She boasts of having given pleasure to all the kings of Christendom and 'specialy vnto the court of rome' (l. 286 ('*especially to the court of Rome*'),[123] and invites her companions to come with her 'to dame

[121] See Chapter Three, 'The Comedy of Courtliness' pp. 135-146.

[122] All III, p. 111 fol. 171b.

[123] III, p. 111 fol. 171b.

venus latt ws go sing ane sang' (l. 294) ('*let us go and sing a song to Dame Venus*').[124] Her sexuality is her currency in her interactions with other characters, such as Wantones and the King. Her flirtation with Wantones is instantaneous: she asks 'Quha king is that quhilk hes sa gay ane boy' (l. 419) ('*What king is this that has so gay a boy*').[125] As Wantones requests her presence for the King, to cure his sickness with a kiss, Sensualitie is quick to acquiesce 'And I to venus makis ane faythfull band / That in his Armes I think to ly all nicht' (ll. 441-442) ('*And I to Venus make a faithful bond / that in his arms I think to lie all night*').[126] It is of course, the King's sleeping in her arms that allows further permeation of the court by vices and further weakens the estates. She is quick to pander to his ego:

> O potent prince of pulchritude preclair
> God cupido preserve ȝour celsitude
> And dame venus mot keep ȝour corß fra cair
> As I wald scho did keip my awin hairt blude (ll. 533-535)[127]
>
> (*O potent prince of beauty pre-eminent and clear. God Cupid preserve your majesty and Dame Venus must keep your body from suffering, as I wish her to preserve my own heart's blood*)

and this deference is effective in seducing the King further, with Sensualitie sent straight to his chamber. In later scenes, Dilligence and Chaistetie struggle to awaken the King and grab his attention, with Sensualitie remarking pithily of Chaistetie that 'scho and I ma not byd in a place' (l. 157) ('*so that I may not stay in one place*').[128] This is an allegorical comment

[124] III, p. 111 fol. 171b.

[125] III, p. 116 fol. 173a.

[126] III, p. 117 fol. 173b.

[127] III, p. 121 fol. 174b.

[128] III, p. 188 fol. 194b.

on the nature of sensual attraction in overcoming the virtue of chastity, and is a common thread in arguments regarding the inherent vice of women and their desirable bodies. Sensualitie threatens to eject Chaistetie on the King's orders, should he so desire, and the enamoured King sends Chaistetie to the stocks, alongside Verete. The interlude concludes with this ominous imprisonment, and the King under the rule of his desire. Of course, the conclusion is the liberation of the ladies and virtue itself in later scenes, however the instinctive move of the text towards depicting the salacious nature of women's deception is potent in its misogyny. The inconstancy and porous nature of the female body is further emphasised in Diligence's monologue, which follows this interaction, whereby he appeals

> And ȝe ladies þat list to pische
> Lift vp ȝour tail steill in a dische
> And gife ȝour quhislecaw* cry quihiche *[anus]**
> Stop in ane wisp of stray
> Latt not ȝour bleddir birst I pray ȝow […] (ll. 25-29)[129]
>
> *(And you ladies that wish to urinate, lift up your train, position a dish. And if your anus cries 'how high' stop it with a handful of straw [but] let not your bladder burst, I beg you…)*

Though both men and women are subject to this bawdy and visceral humour, the lowering of women to seductresses and bodily function relates to sentiment expressed by Bloch. He states that '…[a]s Methodius proves methodically, there can be no chastity merely of the sexual organs […] there can be no control of the rest of the body that does

[129] III, p. 191 fols. 195a-b.

not imply chastity.'.[130] What Lyndsay's depiction of women shows, repeatedly, is a lack of control of excess, a weakness of the body in its faculties and a looseness of morals, which carry implications for the powerful men around them.

Chapter Conclusion

In observing these 'miscellaneous' poems, and Lyndsay's work on the 'Satire', it is important to consider that while no poem within the Bannatyne necessarily sets out to be a misogynist manifesto or call to arms for the subjugation of women, that does not negate the antifeminist impact of the manuscript collection. Bloch summarises the issue of misogyny in the medieval period aptly when he says that '[…] the effect of a speech act such that woman is the subject of the sentence and the predicate a more general term, that effect which dwells in the zone where the use of words produces the most basic elements of thought – and thought authorizes action, is to make of woman an essence, which, as essence, is eliminated from the world historical stage.'.[131] The speech acts anthologised within the Bannatyne are wide-ranging: from the act of Dunbar or Henryson committing a poem to paper, from the conceptualising of the anonymous narrators of the verses, to the dialogues recorded in the verses, the process of poetic creation and the editorial judgement of Bannatyne is evident at every turn 'where the use of words produces the most basic elements of thought – and thought authorizes action'.[132]

[130] Bloch, pp. 97–98.

[131] Ibid, p. 5.

[132] Ibid, p. 5.

This chapter has considered the *querelle* as a debate which helps to account for much of what is odd about - and omitted from - the Bannatyne anthology. It has examined the tropes of riotous women and their appetites in a variety of medieval forms such as the fabliau. In examining the omission of Dunbar's 'Wedo' from the manuscript, a case has been made regarding Bannatyne's scrupulous and, at times, cynical approach to editing. I have argued that the transactional focus of the later poems, both in terms of dialogue and material goods, can be seen as a locus for anti-feminist sentiment, while Lyndsay's *Satire*, and its focus on the fallibility of women's bodies and their enacted behaviour, serves to further the case for seeing the *querelle* as an argument which lived and breathed in late medieval Scottish literature.

CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to prove that the Bannatyne manuscript is a miscellany which not only deals with the implicit questions of the *querelle des femmes,* but also offers unique insight into the reception and understanding of this debate in Scotland in the late sixteenth century. In so doing, it aimed to address a multitude of questions, outlined in the Introduction. It has sought to establish a sense of the antifeminist implications of the Bannatyne, both as a material artefact, and as an exemplar of editorial convention. It has established not only the importance of the *querelle des femmes* in late medieval Scottish verse, but also that the inverse is true: that Scottish poetry continues and elevates the medieval *querelle* throughout the sixteenth century.

The ground-breaking work of Joan Kelly has been utilised to show the myriad ways in which Scottish literary culture adapted and furthered the terms of the *querelle des femmes*, and how the encroaching boundaries of the Renaissance are mirrored in the poetic treatment of women within the collection. In the specifically Scottish context, the work of Evelyn Newlyn and Sarah Dunnigan in establishing a place for feminist study in the Middle Scots canon has been expanded upon and seen to flourish into new avenues of previously overlooked poetry and criticism, from 1568 to the present day. Dunnigan's thematic conceptualising of a *querelle de Marie* has been invaluable in establishing an historicist context for the opaque and often elusive editorial logic of George Bannatyne, and is added to by the work of this thesis in establishing a sense of the conflation of Mary and women in relation to the desired state of virginity and the perils of widowhood. The changing roles of women and the anxiety about female rulers in the movement to Reformation are explicated in this study, achieving a new sense of the context in which

Bannatyne's collection was originally received. This study also adds to the work of Alasdair A. MacDonald and Theo van Heijnsbergen's meticulous studies of the court environment and political backdrop of the manuscript, moving these avenues of enquiry into the realm of feminist studies, considering the impact of Reformation politics on not just the manuscript contents, but on the public reception of women, both specific (Mary) and general.

On a practical level, this thesis has examined a number of poems which have been overlooked in prior study: while the STS edition of 1928 was comprehensive, subsequent critical attention has been solely focussed on poems of known provenance and authorship. This work furthers the incipient argument offered by Dunnigan in her 2002 monograph for the importance of the shorter anonymous verse included in the fourth section, and moreover adds to this a close consideration of a broad array of material from the third section of the manuscript. In the interests of focussing research on the *querelle*, it was necessary to remove, where possible, the complexities of theological arguments, and look towards the secular realm and the tensions therein. While the selection of material has focussed on the third, fourth, and fifth sections, in the interests of a concise thesis, I hope to return to the matter of the first and second sections as part of a larger postdoctoral project digitising the manuscript as a whole.

In no small measure, this research has made plain the far-reaching parallels between the late medieval culture of misogyny and the questions that have preoccupied twenty-first century feminist theory and practice. The inherent understanding of women only in their roles relative to men (as daughters, wives, sisters) pervades both the 1568 anthology and modern day rape apologists. The way in which we characterise and understand victimhood, from appropriate behaviour to the politics of a woman's

appearance, are not just topical for Bannatyne's audience – they resonate with the struggles of women today. The divisions and prejudices relating directly to women as material consumers and the class politics of femininity are ubiquitous in our consumer-led technological era; and the modern conceptions of marriage as a transaction of love as opposed to a property arrangement are endemic. Drawing these parallels is not a hollow exercise in spotting shallow similarities: rather it illuminates how much there is yet to learn and change in terms of the popular perception of feminism, and how the past can provide a looking-glass to our current situation, offering a chance for objective insight lacking from our immediate environment.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment of the Bannatyne manuscript is the literal lack of the female voice, both in terms of female participation in the collation of the manuscript, female authorship, and resonant female voices ventriloquised within the text. Yet one does not have far to look ahead in order to find some redress for this: the 1586 Maitland Quarto, while a much slimmer volume, maintains a close connection to the material collated within the Bannatyne. The compiling and dissemination of this text are closely linked to the figure of Marie Maitland, daughter of Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington, and her influence on the manuscript provides a fascinating paradigm for analysis. She is understood to have served as both scribe and possible author,[1] and, given the commonality of texts between the Bannatyne and Maitland collections, there is an argument for the Maitland's formulation as being a viable response to the Bannatyne. Not only are the disparate texts placed in dialogue, the collections themselves become a dialectic exchange of priorities in categorisation and thematic concern. If the Bannatyne is a text which struggles with its Reformation context, the Maitland is remarkably more

[1] Newlyn, 'A Methodology for Reading Against the Culture'.

self-assured, and revels in its later context, freed somewhat from the spectre of Mary. With the publication of Joanna Martin's Scottish Text Society edition of the Maitland Quarto in 2016, the time is ripe for further investigation into the feminist implications of this collection, both in tandem with the Bannatyne and in its own right.

Where once the question of women within the Bannatyne manuscript was ascribed the status of an unsurprising and droll adherence to the expected terms of medieval misogyny, this study has illuminated a more complex relationship to both misogyny and women within the text. It has shown that within the parameters of antifeminism lie contradictions, such as the status of women in medieval Scottish courts; subtleties, like the subversion of gender roles in romance; and surprises, such as the consideration of Christine de Pizan in 'the lettre of cupeid'. Bloch states that the inherent generalisation of misogyny is precisely why the discourse of misogyny seems so repetitive, is so culturally constant, and seems to lack an internal history. Its purpose – to remove individual women from the realm of events – depends upon the transformation of woman into a general category, which, internally at least, appears never to change'[2]

What this study has shown, furthering Bloch's assertion, is that the Bannatyne was collated at a time of changing attitudes to women, percolated through the scrutiny of Mary's reign – this leads to a juxtaposition of huge generalisations, *impossibilia*, satire, and yet also allows space for subversion which is in and of itself indicative of the tensions that exist. Misogynist it may ultimately be, but that is not to say that it is therefore uninformative, offensive, or not worthy of study. This thesis has proved the opposite to be true.

[2] Bloch, p. 5.

Looking to the future, the field of medieval feminist studies is opening up in new and exciting directions, under the helm of the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship; while attention to overlooked Scottish texts has recently moved onto questions of accessibility for readers and students. Recent scholarship by Carissa Harris, Emily Wingfield, and Rachel Moss highlights the growing interest in gender roles in the medieval period,[3] while the recent publication of Sebastiaan Verweij's *Court Culture* has shed new light on the development of coterie manuscript culture and proposes a broader involvement for lay people.[4]

Audre Lorde states that 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house'[5] – if the tool of the master is language, then this thesis has established a frame of research whereby the depleting agency of women is reframed in the context of language and poetry. It has suggested that questions initially posed by Christine de Pizan remain piquant and pointed for sixteenth century Scotland, and that they endure to this day. While women's roles grow subordinate to the men around them in Bannatyne's era, there is a flash of delight in seeing the ways in which this is contested, argued, and expressed in such a varied collection. The relevance of a fourteenth century epistolary debate, the

[3] See for example Emily Wingfield, *The Trojan Legend in Medieval Scottish Literature* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2014); Rachel E. Moss, '"And much more I am soryat for my good knyghts": Fainting, Homosociality, and Elite Male Culture in Middle English Romance' in *Historical Reflections/Reflexions Historiques* 42.1, March 2016, pp. 101-113; 'Ready to Disport with You: Homosocial Culture amongst the Wool Merchants of Fifteenth-century Calais' in *History Workshop Journal*, Volume 86, 1 October 2018, pp. 1–21; Harris *Obscene Pedagogies*.

[4] Verweij, 2016.

[5] Audre Lorde, *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House* (London: Penguin Modern, 2017) p. 19.

querelle, may seem to be a stretch, but as we proceed in our twenty-first century lives preoccupied with the behaviour and transgressions of women, it is ever pertinent to examine the roots of this fascination and, in an inversion of the *querelle*, to interrogate the worth and relevance of this misogyny at every level.

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