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The Early Modern Blush

Bodies and Boundaries c.1590-1700

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Abstract

This thesis contains four case-studies on the blush in four different genres — narrative poetry; drama; sermons; and epic poetry. My aim is to preserve the idiosyncrasies and conventions of how each genre treats the blush whilst highlighting what they have in common: namely, shared biblical and classical source texts, shared imagery and language, and a shared interest in how the meaning of the body is produced, communicated, and understood.

This thesis suggests that the ubiquity of the blush in early modern literature can be explained in part by its useful ambiguity. In that ambiguity there is an opportunity for writers to explore how the meaning of the body might be created and interpreted both within and without texts. This interest in how one person might communicate with another — and in the limits of that communication — reflects a wider intellectual interest in borders and boundaries. In particular, it reflects a fixation on the 'gap' between the inside and outside of the body (led by a resurgence in sceptical philosophy), and an increased interest in using the physical appearance of the body to demarcate social and national boundaries (understood in terms of race, class, religion, and national identity). The 'gap' between the inside and outside of the body is not always a source of sceptical inquiry or existential anxiety, but a useful motif which is used to create a huge range of literary effects. Nor is the 'gap' always imagined as permanent. There is a significant difference between texts which use primarily classical source material to discuss the blush, and texts which use primarily biblical source material. The former imagine death as the end of knowledge, whereas the latter imagine the coming of a total Revelation when everything unknown will be revealed, and ambiguity will end.

Chapter 1: ‘It will live engraven in my face’: Shakespeare’s narrative poems

It is an enduring assumption that the material communications of the body are more trustworthy, true, or appropriate than its linguistic communications, particularly when that body is coded female. How, then, does the material body communicate in *Venus and Adonis* (1593), and in *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594)? In this chapter, I argue that *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* explore the processes by which the meaning of the body’s communications are created, understood, and disseminated through a series of collaborations between consensual and non-consensual parties. By drawing attention to these processes, and to their many and various failures, the poems interrogate how much can ever truly be known or communicated adequately about another person.

Chapter 2: Friends, Romans, Crocodiles: Feeling shame in Alexandria and London

This chapter traces the legacy of the Roman blush in three seventeenth-century plays about Cleopatra: John Fletcher’s and Philip Massinger’s *The False One* (1619); John Dryden’s *All for Love* (1694); and William Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra* (1607). Each of these plays stage an encounter between the blushing Romans and the non-blushing Egyptians, suggesting that the blush represents a person’s submission to Roman ethics and the shame culture through which they are enforced. There are, however, moments in each play where a different, early modern, understanding of the blush as a racialised sign of the physical and moral superiority of white Europeans emerges. In these plays, shame — which is understood as the overlapping of whiteness, Christianity, and the possession of ‘civilized’ manners — shapes both individual and group identity, encouraging the audience to sympathise with the Romans and to identify the Egyptians as ‘other’.

Chapter 3: ‘What do I do now?’: Walking the via media with John Donne

This chapter traces the blush through John Donne’s sermons (1618 – c.1624) to give an account of his answer to a key seventeenth-century theological question: ‘what do I do now?’ I argue that Donne uses the blush to advance a distinctively Anglican practical theology which emphasises the importance of public worship and a shared Anglican identity built around a series of bloody symbols: the Eucharist, the blood of Christ, and the penitent blush. In turn, I offer a defence of a thematic methodology in light of the recent dominance of performance-based approaches to John Donne’s printed corpus.

Chapter 4: ‘Within, without, disordered in the storm’: Adam and Eve in the seventeenth century

This chapter suggests that John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667-1674) and Lucy Hutchinson’s *Order and Disorder* (1679) each pose a counterfactual question: what kind of knowledge and communication would be possible if the material communications of the body could be trusted? In Milton’s prelapsarian Eden, the blush represents the possibility of true knowledge of, and communication with, human and divine others. After the Fall, the Miltonic blush reflects the fracturing of those relationships. For Hutchinson, it is only the eschatological body, the body that has been restored by God at the end of the world, which can bridge those divides. In either text, the postlapsarian body emblematises the distance of fallen humans from sinless standards of physical, devotional, and relational perfection.

Lay summary

This thesis explains why the blush was so popular in early modern English Literature. It contains four case-studies about the blush in four different genres: narrative poetry; drama; sermons; and epic poetry. I explain what is distinctive about the blush in each of these genres and what they have in common, suggesting that they share biblical and classical source texts, ways of describing the blush, and an interest in how the meaning of the body is made, communicated, and understood.

The main argument of this thesis is that the blush was so popular because it is inherently ambiguous. I suggest that this ambiguity gave early modern writers an opportunity to explore how the body's meaning is created and understood. This interest in how the body's meaning is made reflects a wider concern in the period in borders and boundaries. Specifically, it reflects an interest in the 'gap' between the inside and outside of the body, and an interest in using the physical appearance of the body to create different racial, religious, class-based, gendered, and national groups. Sometimes this gap caused huge anxiety, but it was also used to create a wide range of literary effects. Texts which draw from classical sources tend to imagine the gap as permanent, and texts which draw from biblical sources tend to imagine that it can be closed.

The first chapter explains how Shakespeare uses the ambiguous blush to interrogate how much can be known about another person; the second chapter explores the legacy of the Roman blush on the early modern stage; the third chapter suggests that the blush forms an important part of John Donne's Anglican identity; and the final chapter thinks about how the fall of Adam and Eve turns their perfect bodies into bodies with a 'gap' between inside and outside, and how that gap is represented in different poems, plays, and paintings.

Declaration

1. 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.

2. I confirm that this thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Literature has

i) been composed entirely by myself

ii) been solely the result of my own work

iii) not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification

3. I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or processional qualification except as specified.

Signed: Jillian Luke

Date: 26th March 2020

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I have presented ideas from this thesis in many conference and seminar papers, and have invariably found my audiences generous in their questions and comments. I feel fortunate to have written this thesis in a field as welcoming and collegial as that of early modern studies.

I owe measureless thanks to my parents, David and Elizabeth Luke, who have shown unwavering and unconditional loyalty, love, and support throughout this project and throughout my life.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that, historically speaking, little girls from East Belfast have not, on the whole, grown up to become doctors of philosophy. I am truly grateful to all of the women and men throughout history and now who campaign tirelessly for the right of girls of all social and economic backgrounds to go to school. I finish these acknowledgements with them in mind, and by reaffirming my commitment, professionally, financially, and politically, to furthering the education of women and girls however I can.

For my parents, Elizabeth and David Luke

LANE: Mrs. Draper put on a bit of a burlesque.

JOAN: No.

LANE: Oh, yes. She danced and sang in front of all of us.
She was quite the coquette. I can't do it justice.

JOAN: And Don?

LANE: I saw his soul leave his body.

JOAN: I can't even imagine how handsome that man must be blushing.

- 'A Little Kiss', *Mad Men* (AMC, 2007-2015).

Introduction: Reading the early modern blush

The most famous literary blush is probably that of Lavinia in Virgil's *Aeneid*. The poet writes:

> accepit vocem lacrimis Lavinia matris flagrantis perfusa genas, cui plurimus ignem subiecit rubor et calcfacta per ora cucurrit. Indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro si quis ebur, aut mixta rubent ubi lilia multa alba rosa, talis virgo dabat ore colores. ilium turbat amor figitque in virgine vultus.
>
> Lavinia heard her mother's words, her burning cheeks steeped in tears, while a deep blush kindled its fire, and mantled her glowing face. As when someone stains Indian ivory with crimson dye, or white lilies blush when mingled with many a rose — such hues her maiden features showed. Love throws Turnus into turmoil, and he fastens his gaze upon the maid.[1]

Virgil popularised many images which recur in other literary depictions of the blush: Lavinia's 'burning' cheeks; the combination of blushing and crying; the blush described as a 'fire'; as a 'mantle' (that is, a covering); as 'glowing'; the image of ivory stained with crimson dye; and the image of the blush as white lilies mingled with roses. Enduring too is the response of Turnus: thrown into turmoil by love, he cannot look away from Lavinia's blush. Turnus is not alone; Francis Cairns writes that 'Lavinia's blush, with its marked effect on Turnus, has perhaps generated more interest and a broader spectrum of interpretations than any other single episode of Aeneid 12 except the death of Turnus'.[2] Many critics have attempted to decipher the source of Lavinia's blush.[3] Explanations include Lavinia's embarrassment at her mother's behaviour, her incipient love for Turnus, her imagination of her forthcoming marriage to Aeneas, and the idea that her blush is left deliberately ambiguous by Virgil.[4] Coming down on one side or another is less interesting than considering the source of the debate itself: the very fact of this lively critical

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[1] Virgil, *Aeneid Books 7-12 Appendix Virgiliana*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, rev. G. P. Goold (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1918), 304-305, 12.64-70.
[2] Francis Cairns, 'Lavinia's Blush (Virgil Aeneid 12.64-70)', in *Body Language in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. Douglas Cairns et al (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2005), 195-209, 195.
[3] Some notable contributions to this debate include: Cairns (2005), 195-209; Francesca D'alessandro Behr Behr, 'Thinking Anew about Lavinia', *Illinois Classical Studies*, 39 (2014), 191-212; R.O.A.M. Lyne, 'Lavinia's Blush: Vergil, "Aeneid" 12.64-70', *Greece and Rome*, 30 (1983), 55-64; Yasmin Syed, *Vergil's Aeneid and the Roman Self: Subject and Nation in Literary Discourse* (Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 133-135; Ruth W. Todd, 'Lavinia Blushed', *Vergilius*, 26 (1980), 27-33.
[4] Cairns (2005), 195-197.

discussion indicates that the meaning of the most famous and influential blush in the Western literary canon is not self-evident. The most important legacy of Lavinia's blush is not its meaning, but the fact that we do not, we cannot, know for certain what it means. In its ambiguity, Lavinia's blush sets an important precedent: the literary blush does not simply communicate information about the interior life of the blusher, rather it offers the reader an opportunity to think through how the meaning of the body might be created, disseminated, lost, interpreted, understood, and reproduced within and without texts. This thesis will argue that it is the blush's ambiguity which makes it such a popular symbol in early modern English literature. It should come as no surprise to us that the indeterminate blush predominates in the literature of a sceptical age: a society fixated on the idea of discrepancy between the body's inside and its outside, riven with jealous suspicion about the honesty of women, and concerned with categorising people along gender, race, religious, and class lines. The literature under consideration in this thesis at once relies upon the supposedly self-evident meaning of the body's material communications as somehow more honest than anything a person might say, yet consistently questions the processes (social, literary, and historical) through which the meaning of the body's communications are created, disseminated, and understood.

Previous critical attempts to explain the early modern blush have tended to recognise that it represents a desire to know the other without always adequately accounting for how it frustrates the acquisition of such knowledge. In her article on 'The Allusiveness of Blushes in Ovid and Beaumont', Theresa Krier writes that 'to observe the rising blood in the face is to observe the most deeply internal being made external and visible against the will'.[5] Krier suggests that the blush externalises and makes visible 'deeply internal' new information, to which an observer would not

[5] Theresa Krier, 'Sappho's Apples: The Allusiveness of Blushes in Ovid and Beaumont', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 25 (1988), 1-22, 2.

otherwise have access, and she suggests that the involuntary nature of the blush — that it happens against the will of the one blushing — lends that information real legitimacy. Krier's understanding of the blush reflects the understanding of many characters in early modern texts who think they can look at a blush, and gain an unmediated insight into the interior of the blusher. But people blush for many different reasons: an experience of guilt, shame, anger, embarrassment, anxiety, shyness, arousal, disgust, modesty, dishonour, innocence, coyness, or bashfulness might provoke a blush, and telling one kind of blush from another is not always easy. Consider, for example, Claudio's speech about Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing*:

> There, Leonato, take her back again.
> Give not this rotten orange to your friend.
> She's but the sign and semblance of her honor.
> Behold how like a maid she blushes here!
> O, what authority and show of truth
> Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
> Comes not that blood as modest evidence
> To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
> All you that see her, that she were a maid,
> By these exterior shows? But she is none:
> She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
> Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.[6]

Claudio looks at Hero's blush, states all that it might mean — Hero's honour; virginity; modesty; and simple virtue — before decisively calling it a sign of her 'guiltiness'. Claudio, of course, gets his interpretation completely wrong, and in doing so, he demonstrates the limitations of Krier's argument.[7] To say that one simply looks at the blush and disinterestedly takes in its information is to significantly underplay the difficulty of accurately interpreting the blush, and the extent to which its social meaning is created collaboratively by the blusher and their observer. In his reading of the

[6] William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, ed. F. H. Mares (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), IV.i.131-139.
[7] The ability of the blush to gesture in many irreconcilable directions all at once is underscored by the Friar, who uses Hero's blush to argue for her innocence later in the scene at IV.i.154-169.

blush, Claudio reveals much more about himself and his desires, preoccupations, and concerns than he reveals about the reality of Hero's interior world, true feelings, or hidden motivations.

One of the things that Claudio reveals about himself in this speech is that he approaches the world as a sceptic, albeit in a rather shoddy and intermittent way. He begins by describing Hero as a 'rotten orange', before accusing her of being 'but the sign and semblance of her honour'.[8] The two metaphors push in the same direction: there is a discrepancy between Hero's true interior and her false exterior. Claudio reveals the inconsistency of his thinking when he states that Hero's outside does not reflect her inside — 'rotten orange' — before proclaiming that he is able to read her blush to reveal the truth of her interior: 'guiltiness not modesty'. In doing so, he reveals one of the recurring tensions of the age. Amidst repeated calls for what Othello terms 'ocular proof', we find suspicion that even the testimony of one's eyes is not sufficient to gain true knowledge about the world or about another person.[9] Claudio's approach to Hero's blush reflects a well-documented early modern phenomenon: a fear of incongruity between the private inside and public outside of the body. 'In late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England', writes Katherine Eisaman Maus, 'the sense of discrepancy between "inward disposition" and "outward appearance" seem[ed] unusually urgent and consequential for a very large number of people'.[10] There was, writes David Hillman, a 'gradual move from a pre-Enlightenment way of thinking of the skin as "an organ of interchange [...] traversable in two directions" [...] to the idea of skin as a barrier'.[11] Hillman argues that the Scepticism which proliferated in early modern Europe was motivated by an inability to believe that 'there is continuity between the other's or the world's insides and

[8] Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, IV.29-30.
[9] William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), III.iii.365.
[10] Katherine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Chicago IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 13.
[11] David Hillman, *Shakespeare's Entrails: Belief, Scepticism and the Interior of the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 8.

outsides', and 'that there is no ulterior place of motive behind or inside the other'.[12] The blush bears a complex relation to this worldview. Because it is automatic, cannot be hidden, and cannot be faked, at first the blush appears to transcend 'the stark sundering of the self and other into an inside and outside' by offering a genuine insight into the interior of the blusher.[13] Yet, as I have begun to suggest, blushes are often difficult to interpret accurately. In its ambiguity and illegibility, the blush reinforces the sceptic's sense of the discrepancy between the body's inside and its outside, and their corresponding 'radical doubting of the possibility of knowledge of the other'.[14] One of the results of this scepticism was the emergence of a new 'closed' body as one of a series of efforts to 'demarcate the boundaries between the "inner" and the "outer"', amongst which Hillman numbers 'the increased emphasis on national boundaries, on the borders of the body politic, as well as the massive growth in practices of land enclosure and [...] new penal arrangements'.[15] The blush reflects the early modern period's increased interest in the demarcation of social and national boundaries. Throughout this thesis, we will see the blush being used to divide people into groups: those who blush, and those who do not. The early modern literary blush reflects and participates in the sceptical sundering of the world into 'mendacious' outsides and inaccessible interiors, and an increased early modern interest in dividing people into groups according to allegedly objective visual signs of their gender, race, religion, nationality, and class.[16]

The perceived discrepancy between the inside and outside of the body does not always prompt a sceptical crisis in those who observe it. For each Claudio or Othello, eagerly demanding proof and congruency, there is another who manipulates the gap between the body's inside and its

[12] Hillman (2006), 28.
[13] Hillman (2006), 29.
[14] Hillman (2006), 27-28.
[15] Hillman (2006), 10.
[16] Hillman (2006), 27.

outside to suit their own ends. Indeed, each of the writers who takes the blush as their subject to some extent recognises the creative potential of this 'gap' to produce a wide range of literary effects. We will find the incongruity between bodily signs and their social meanings is used to erotic ends by Shakespeare, and devotional ends by Donne. Nor is the gap between the inside of a body and its outside appearance always imagined as permanent. There is a significant difference between texts which are mostly in conversation with classical ideas about blushing, and those which are mostly in conversation with biblical source-texts. Christianity promises a coming time of Revelation when all hidden things will be revealed, and everything that is unknown shall be known. The classical world has no equivalent promise of a coming time of greater knowledge. In more classically-inflected texts, the end of life is the end of knowledge. In those texts which have a more Christian outlook, particularly those in the last chapter, the end of life, indeed the end of the world, promises the end of incongruity, the beginning of true and complete knowledge, and the advent of bodies whose outside appearances entirely reflect their interior states.

There is an obvious objection to my understanding of the blush as an ambiguous symbol loved by a sceptical age: namely that humoral theory offers an alternative to a sceptical understanding of the body as divided between a deceitful outside and an inaccessible interior. The blush has been curiously absent from many of the most important publications in the field of the history of emotions. There is no discussion of blushing in Gail Kern Paster's *The Body Embarrassed*, nor in her later monograph *Humoring the Body*.[17] Blushing is mentioned only in passing by the writers within Paster's co-edited volume *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion*, which is the foundational text in the study of the early

[17] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage*, 2nd edn (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

modern history of emotions.[18] The blush is also conspicuous by its absence from several more recent edited volumes on the history of emotions.[19] Nor does the blush enjoy much prominence in recent medical humanities publications on blood.[20] Nonetheless, the history of emotions has given rise to a number of important contexts for my own work, not least the role of the humours, to which Paster has been my guide.

It would be an error to overstate the unity or ubiquity of early modern humoral theory, which is better understood as humoral *theories,* but it is true that some texts use the principles of Galenic medicine to emphasise the materiality of the emotions to an extent which downplays any sense of a rupture between the inside and outside of the body, a division which might equally be conceived as between the soul and body, or the mind and body.[21] In her account of Thomas Wright's treatise *The Passions of the Mind in General,* Paster argues that 'psychology and physiology are one: the bodily humours and the emotion that they sustain and move the body to express in action can be lexically distinguished but not functionally separated'.[22] For Wright, the passions are literal, physical, material things: fluids that are 'dispersed throughout the body by spirits, mediators between soul and body'.[23] Paster's championing of Wright has made *Passions* a core text in the study of early modern emotions, but as both Erin Sullivan and Christopher

[18] Gail Kern Paster et al., eds, *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
[19] None of the essays in Susan Broomhill, ed., *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2015); Merridee L. Bailey and Katie Barclay, eds, *Emotion, Ritual, and Power in Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); and Andrea Marculescu and Charles-Louis Morand Métivier, eds, *Affective and Emotional Economies in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) discuss blushing at all, and it is mentioned only very briefly in Susan Broomhill, ed., *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).
[20] The essays in Manfred Horstmanshoff, et al., eds, *Blood, Sweat, and Tears — The Changing Concepts of Physiology from Antiquity into Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); and Bonnie Lander Johnson and Eleanor DeCamp, eds, *Blood Matters: Studies in European Literature and Thought, 1400-1700* (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018) do not mention blushing.
[21] Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 6.
[22] Paster (2014), 15.
[23] Schoenfeldt (1999), 2.

Tilmouth have argued, 'too many scholars have treated Wright's work "as if it were normative".[24] Wright, a trained Jesuit Priest, whose *Passions* 'reveals significant theological links with his other writings', can hardly be assumed to be merely reflecting widely-held early modern opinions.[25] The reluctance of Paster and others to impose post-Enlightenment dualism onto pre-Enlightenment texts is instructive, but it risks understanding immaterial selfhood only as a Cartesian phenomenon. As Sean McDowell argues, there are 'varying degrees of embodiment described in the soul-body discourse of Elizabethan and Stuart England'.[26] Charting a clear course through this discourse is fraught, not least because the key terms in play: '"passion" and "affection" [and] "mind" and "soul" could be both synonymous and distinctive, with sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers (including Wright) often oscillating between the two terms'.[27]

Even those early modern writers who largely embrace humoral theory rarely offer consistent answers to the question of the materiality of the emotions. In *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, for example, Robert Burton offers a Galenic explanation of the blush — it might result from 'a hot liver [...] a hot brain, from wind, the lungs heated, or after drinking of wine, strong drink, perturbations' — yet also lists the blush along with other bodily sensations including 'weeping, sighing, laughing, itching…' as 'motions of the body, depending upon these precedent motions of the mind'.[28] Evidently, an early modern theoretical approach to the blush which emphasises the congruity of emotions and their bodily signs because of their shared physical material is available. However, this thesis joins the growing critical backlash against what Elena

[24] Qtd in Erin Sullivan, 'The Passions of Thomas Wright', in *The Renaissance of Emotion: Understanding Affect in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, eds Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 25-40, 25.
[25] Sullivan (2005), 29-30.
[26] Qtd in Sullivan (2005), 37.
[27] Sullivan (2005), 39.
[28] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, eds Nicholas K. Kiessling et al., 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), ii, 423; 422.

Carrera calls 'humoral inevitability' or 'determinism' by demonstrating that there were compelling alternatives to a Galenic understanding of the body and its emotions.[29] As Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan make clear in their introduction to a recent volume of essays on *The Renaissance of Emotions,* early modern writers were not content with purely medical or humoral explanations for their emotions, and they looked to a wide range of other sources to explain them.[30] It would have been possible to write a chapter giving an overview of classical and contemporary medical or humoral treatises on blushing, but my work on the core texts did not seem to invite such an endeavour: they seem much more engaged with other source texts. An instructive and thorough overview of contemporary humoral and medical writings on blushing might instead be found in Hannah Dawson's recent article on 'Shame in Early Modern Thought'.[31]

In its interest in reading the blush across different genres, the methodological approach of this thesis differs quite starkly from previous work undertaken on blushing. Generally speaking, previous attempts to understand the early modern blush have focused on a few blushes in a few texts, mostly plays by Shakespeare. Hero's blush has garnered significant critical attention.[32] Coriolanus' blush has enjoyed its share of the critical limelight.[33] Guyon's blush in Spenser's *The*

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[29] Qtd in Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan, 'Introduction', in *The Renaissance of Emotion: Understanding Affect in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries,* eds Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 1-18, 6.

[30] Meek and Sullivan (2015).

[31] Hannah Dawson, 'Shame in Early Modern Thought: From Sin to Sociability', *History of European Ideas*, 45 (2019), 377-398.

[32] See Iyengar (2004), 123-126; Andrew Fleck, 'The Ambivalent Blush: Figural and Structural Metonymy, Modesty, and *Much Ado About Nothing*', *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes, and Reviews,* 19 (2006), 16-23; Alison Findlay, 'Surface Tensions: Ceremony and Shame in *Much Ado About* Nothing', *Shakespeare Survey,* 63 (2010), 282-289, particularly 286-289; Holger Schott Syme, *Theatre and Testimony in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 249-251; James A. Knapp, 'Mental Bodies in *Much Ado About Nothing*', in *Embodied Cognition and Shakespeare's Theatre: The Early Modern Body-Mind,* eds Laurie Johnson et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 86-104.

[33] See Fernie (2002), 218; Burton Hatlen, 'The "noble thing" and the "boy of tears": *Coriolanus* and the Embarrassments of Identity, *English Literary Renaissance,* 27 (1997), 393-420, particularly 413; Tiffany Hoffman, 'Coriolanus' Blush', in *Embodied Cognition and Shakespeare's Theatre: The Early Modern Body-Mind,* eds Laurie Johnson et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 173-190; Andrea Stevens, *Inventions of the Skin* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 15, 49-50; Andrea Stevens, 'Cosmetic Transformations', in *Shakespeare's Theatres and the Effects of Performance,* eds Farah Karim-Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 94-117, 100.

Faerie Queene has also received significant critical attention.[34] Those critics who do write longer studies on the early modern blush have tended to focus on dramatic texts and stage practices.[35] There are, of course, exceptions to this general rule: including Danielle Clarke's work on Marian blushing in the 1630s; Brian Cummings' work on blushing and travel writing; Sujata Iyengar's work on blushing and race; and Krier's work on Ovid and Beaumont, all of which I deal with in more detail elsewhere in the thesis.[36] The general critical trend is clear: those theories of the early modern literary blush which do exist have been created to explain one blush, or perhaps to explain the blush in one genre, usually drama. The generic range of this thesis has allowed me to offer a way of understanding the early modern blush which preserves and explains its distinctive generic traits, whilst offering an explanation of why the symbol is use so frequently by writers in so many different literary genres: namely, because it allows them an opportunity to consider how the meaning of the body might be made and communicated, or how it might be lost, withheld, or distorted through accident, malice, or carelessness.

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[34] See Paul Cefalu, *Moral Identity in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 55; Barbara Correll, 'Guyon's Blush: Shame, Disgust, and Desire in The Faerie Queene, Book 2', in *Disgust in Early Modern Literature,* eds Natalise K. Eschenbaum and Barbara Correll (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 38-52; Derek Dunne, 'Blushing on Cue: The Forensics of the Blush in Early Modern Drama', *Shakespeare Bulletin,* 34 (2016), 233-252, particularly 239; Elizabeth D. Harvey, 'The Touching Organ: Allegory, Anatomy, and the Renaissance Skin Envelope', in *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture,* ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 81-102, 93; Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Colour in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Melissa E. Sanchez, '"Use me but as your spaniel": Feminism, Queer Theory, and Early Modern Sexualities', *Modern Language Association,* 127 (2012), 493-511; Michael Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 64-66.

[35] See Anita Marguerite Butler, 'The Shakespearean Blush: Body, Colour, and Emotion within Material and Dramatic Culture', unpublished doctoral thesis, King's College London, 2018; Dunne (2016); Victoria Sparey, 'Performing Puberty: Fertile Complexions in Shakespeare's Plays', *Shakespeare Bulletin,* 33 (2015), 441-467. Blushing is also mentioned in passing in several of the essays in Valerie Traub, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality and Race* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). I am grateful to Emma Whipday for sharing an early draft of her forthcoming work on 'Narrating Physical Responses on the Early Modern Stage' with me.

[36] Danielle Clarke, 'The Iconography of the Blush: Marian Literature of the 1630s', in *Voicing Women: Gender and Sexuality in Early Modern Writing,* eds Kate Chedgzoy et al. (Pittsburgh PA: Duquesne University Press, 1998), 111-128; Brian Cummings, 'Shame, Blushing, and Nakedness in Early Modern Europe and the New World', in *At the Borders of the Human,* eds Erica Fudge et al (London: Macmillan, 1999), 26-50; Iyengar (2004); Krier (1988).

This thesis is about the literary blush, but as is suggested by the range of texts under consideration, my understanding of the term 'literary' is inclusive rather than selective. I have no intention of rigorously policing the boundary between the literary blush and its real-world component: to do so would be to recognise a division which is not always upheld in the texts. Two of the writers to come (Lucy Hutchinson and John Donne) will directly call upon their real-world readers to blush, and it would be possible to write another thesis on whether the stage blushes of the second chapter are meant to, or indeed, possibly could, correspond to real blushes on the faces of the actors.[37] The literary blush is, nonetheless, distinctive because unlike a real-world blush, which could appear quite naturally on the face of someone who had never read a word of Virgil, literary blushes are in conversation with one another across boundaries of time, place, and genre. One of the aims of this thesis is to establish the idiosyncrasies and conventions of how the blush works in four case studies of texts taken from four genres — narrative poetry; drama; sermons; and epic poetry — whilst drawing attention to what blushes in these different genres share: namely, shared classical and biblical source texts, a shared imagery and language, and a shared interest in how the meaning of the body is produced, communicated, and understood.

The broad generic range of this thesis makes giving an overview of the field as a whole difficult: the chapter on Donne's sermons, for example, has a very different critical context to the chapter on Shakespeare's narrative poetry. As such, much of the work of scene-setting has been

[37] The question of whether actors can learn to blush on demand is vexed. Thomas Bancroft wrote of Richard Burbage that he could 'recall his bloud', but it is not clear whether this suggests a literal reddening of the face, whether a blush is intended by such reddening, or whether such redness would always be visible under stage make-up. The Victorian actress Eleonora Duse was praised by George Bernard Shaw for her ability to blush. He wrote: 'she began to blush; and in another moment she was conscious of it, and the blush was slowly spreading and deepening until, after a few vain efforts to avert her face or to obstruct his view of it without seeming to do so, she gave up and hid the blush in her hands. After that feat of acting I did not need to be told why Duse does not paint an inch thick. I could detect no trick in it: it seemed to be a perfectly genuine effect of the dramatic imagination […] I must confess to an intense professional curiosity as to whether it always comes spontaneously.' Bancroft via Sparey (2015), 461. Shaw via Gail Marshall, *Actresses on the Victorian Stage: Feminine Performance and the Galatea Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 150.

undertaken at the beginning of each chapter. There are, however, a few topics and texts which provide useful background to the thesis as a whole: early modern criticism on red and white; and extant criticism on blushing in different historical and cultural contexts. I will provide a brief introduction to each area, with the caveat that the historiographies of many key themes and ideas come within the chapters themselves.

Lavinia's blush might have fascinated generations of classicists, but some early modernists have found it difficult to get excited about red and white. Linda Woodbridge writes that 'among terminally ill figures of speech, the cliché of rosy cheeks, ruby lips, and snow white skin may be counted downright deceased', noting that 'even in medieval and Renaissance love poetry' such imagery was 'stiffly conventional'.[38] Gordon Braden writes that 'too much of Petrarchism strikes us as patently absurd […] when someone finally says, "My Mistres eyes are nothing like the Sunne", we assume the decks are only now being cleared for real action'.[39] Braden provocatively voices a familiar, if often implicit, critical assumption: that it is only once red and white are done away with, or inverted, or pastiched, that real poetry can begin. Phoebe S. Spinrad perhaps says more than she intends when she writes 'roses and lilies, as any critic will be quick to point out, are traditionally used together to represent the Petrarchan ideal of feminine beauty; the roses, separately, carry overtones of youth; the lilies, of purity'.[40] Critical quickness on this question is understandable, because the mingling of red and white (or roses and lilies) to point to the poetic

[38] Linda Woodbridge, 'Black and White and Red All Over: The Sonnet Mistress Amongst the Ndembu', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 40 (1987), 247-297, 247. Woodbridge goes on to argue, not entirely convincingly, for the universal appeal of red and white, arguing that it 'is part of a semiotic code visible throughout human history, worldwide, encoding seasonal fertility ritual and individual rites of passage', 247. For more on why humans might have evolved to value the colour red, see Jan A. R. A. M. van Hooff, 'Colours of the Face: A Comparative Glance', in *The Psychological Significance of the Blush*, eds W. Ray Crozier and Peter J. de Jong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2013), 77-99, particularly 82-86.

[39] Gordon Braden, 'Beyond Frustration: Petrarchan Laurels in the Seventeenth Century', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 26 (1986), 5-23. Braden goes on to detail how Petrarchanism is 'a tradition which the seventeenth century does not so much shut out as refract', 8.

[40] Phoebe S. Spinrad, 'Death, Loss, and Marvell's Nymph', *PMLA*, 97 (1982), 50-59, 56. Emphasis mine.

subject's beauty is indeed a well-established convention.[41] This thesis hopes to show how understanding the interconnectedness of blushes in many different genres reinvigorates encounters with even the most 'stiffly conventional' of Petrarchan images.

This thesis contributes to the recent resurgence of critical interest in red and white, centred on Farah Karim-Cooper's book on *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama*. Karim-Cooper argues that the red and white beauty standard transcended the realm of poetry and entered into everyday life, suggesting that although the 'poetic representation of female beauty' was 'an ideal, one impossible to achieve', 'women nevertheless attempted to duplicate physically this idealised version of femininity through the reactionary practice of beautification'.[42] She goes on to argue that

> early modern dramatists attempt to *revalue* the cosmetic, first by transporting it out of the feminine domestic interior and into a theatrical and poetic context, and secondly, by reasserting its materiality rather than merely endorsing its hypothetical usage in contemporary debates.[43]

Karim-Cooper's account of early modern cosmetics underscores one crucial context for this study: a recurrent anxiety that the blush might be faked, or obscured, by make-up. This anxiety reflects the precarious position of the blush, which at once appears to offer an opportunity to bring the inside and outside of the body together, and reflects the sceptic's disbelief in the possibility of doing so. Karim-Cooper's foundational book has been followed by a number of works on

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[41] For more on Petrarchan pastiche, see Dorothy Jones, 'An Example of Anti-Petrarchan Satire in Nashe's '*The Unfortunate Traveller*', *The Yearbook of English Studies,* 1 (1971), 48-54. For more on red and white, see Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Much Ado with Red and White: The Earliest Readers of Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis (1593)', *The Review of English Studies,* 44 (1993), 479-501.

[42] Farah Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 6-7. Sara F. Matthews Grieco asks a similar question in her chapter on 'The Body, Appearance, and Sexuality' in which she explores the changing fashion from a 'medieval ideal of the graceful, narrow-hipped, and small-breasted aristocratic lady' 'to a plumper, wide-hipped, and full-breasted model of feminine beauty' in the sixteenth century. Grieco is less sure of the answer to her question: 'Were women of the ruling classes fatter than their medieval forebears, and did fashion thus adapt itself to a changing physical reality? Or did Renaissance women deliberately develop a rounded silhouette to emulate the current ideal of beauty?'. Sara F. Matthews Grieco, 'The Body, Appearance, and Sexuality', in *A History of Women in the West: Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes',* eds Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 46-84, 55.

[43] Karim-Cooper (2006), 2.

cosmetics and national identity, which proved influential in my work on how the blush became a signifier of gender, class, and race, particularly in the second chapter of the thesis.

There has been some useful research on blushing in other cultural and historical contexts which I have found particularly helpful. For example, Valerie Allen writes about the medieval blush, arguing that shame is 'the primal medieval emotion' and that it is connected inherently to nudity, an idea which will become important as the thesis develops.[44] So too does Mary C. Flannery emphasise that 'the medieval face of shame is, without a doubt, a blushing face'.[45] My research has also benefitted from Nora Martin Peterson's book on *Involuntary Confessions of the Flesh in Early Modern France,* in which she focuses on the moments when the body 'slips'; she writes that 'these slips, which I have come to call involuntary confessions of the flesh — disrupt and destabilize body, self, and text […] they often ask readers to engage in a process of interpretation that rarely feels definitive'.[46] Peterson's approach blends two ideas from Michel Foucault's *Histoire de la Sexualité* — the 'confession involontaire' and the 'confession de la chair' — to create an approach to involuntary bodily responses that challenges the possibility of resolution between pre- and post-Cartesian epistemologies.[47] Peterson and I approach the blush in two very different historical contexts, and from two different starting points: I do not, for example, believe that Cartesian epistemology has a monopoly on immaterial selfhood. I have also put more emphasis on the tension between Christian and classical approaches to the blush. Nonetheless, I whole-heatedly agree with Peterson's argument that 'the body destabilises any and all discourses

[44] Valerie Allen, 'Waxing Red: Shame and the Body, Shame and the Soul', in *The Representation of Women's Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Literary Culture*, ed. Lisa Perfetti (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida: 2005), 191-210.
[45] Mary C. Flannery, 'Gower's blushing bird, Philomela's transforming face', *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, 8 (2017), 35-50, 35.
[46] Nora Martin Peterson, *Involuntary Confessions of the Flesh in Early Modern France* (Newark NY: University of Delaware Press, 2016), xi.
[47] Peterson (2016), xii-xiii; xviii.

of truth seeking that use its surface as part of their project', but I would caveat that this destabilisation is not always understood negatively, and it not always understood as completely permanent.[48]

Much of the extant criticism on literary blushing centres on nineteenth-century texts. Christopher Ricks in *Keats and Embarrassment* suggests that 'the hot flush of embarrassment' and 'the other hot flush, of indignation' 'ris[e] with special frequency and centrality in the nineteenth century'.[49] Ricks only discusses the blush as it pertains to embarrassment and indignation, and is particularly interested in the idea that 'both blushing and the arts are at once intensely public and intensely private, in some way public expressions of privacy'.[50] The assumption of the blush's truthfulness recurs in *Telling Complexions: The Nineteenth-Century English Novel and the Blush*, in which Mary O'Farrell argues that the blush is a 'social obligation felt as an urge, an act of somatic confession that dazzles with its promise to establish a unique identity by revealing the body's truth'.[51] O'Farrell's argument that the 'history of the blush in the nineteenth-century English novel is also a history of the novel's response to the legacy of Austenian manners', but this seems overly teleological, as does her argument that the blush is steadily replaced by other bodily characteristics that 'might signify character more stably', as its place is reduced to merely a 'mechanistic response to and product of circumstance', and later, 'toward announcement ("you're making me blush")'.[52] I am reluctant to impose any such arch onto the texts of this thesis, and aim instead to show the range of early modern approaches to the blush without necessarily proposing a developmental trend. Like O'Farrell, I am interested in what the blush is thought to

[48] Peterson (2016), xix-xx.
[49] Christopher Ricks, *Keats and Embarrassment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 2.
[50] Ricks (1984), 185.
[51] Mary O'Farrell, *Telling Complexion: The Nineteenth-Century English Novel and the Blush* (London: Duke University Press, 1997), 6.
[52] O'Farrell (1997), 8.

reveal about a person's 'unique identity', but I am also interested in how the blush was used to divide people into groups — those who blush and those who do not — and how the dynamic between blusher and observer can in fact reveal much more about the person reading the blush than the person blushing. There have been several more recent publications on the blush in Jane Austen. Jenna R. Bermann writes that the blush in *Northanger Abbey* represents Romantic anti-dualism, or, the bringing together of body and soul.[53] Katie Halsey argues that 'the convenience of the blush as a signal that allows the narrator and the reader to share privileged knowledge about the emotions that have caused the blush'.[54] In contrast, the early modern blush is often preoccupied with the 'gap' between the body and soul, which can only truly be brought together by God. Halsey's idea about the blush as a site of collusion between narrator and reader is also present in the first chapter of this thesis, in which I suggest a similar conspiracy in *The Rape of Lucrece*, though one conducted to a much more sinister end.

Interest in the nineteenth-century blush culminates in the critical aura around Charles' Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), which contains an entire chapter on blushing.[55] For Darwin, 'blushing is the most peculiar and the most human of all expressions', and he places great importance on its involuntariness: 'we cannot cause a blush […] by any physical means', nor can we 'restrain it'.[56] Darwin argues that the blush is primarily caused by shyness. Rejecting his colleague Dr. Burgess' theistic argument about the blush's relation to the soul, Darwin suggested instead that blushing was caused by the 'close attention' of others,

[53] Jenna R. Bergmann, 'Romantic Anti-Dualism and the Blush in *Northanger Abbey*', *The Wordsworth Circle*, 33 (2002), 43-47.
[54] Katie Halsey, *Jane Austen and her Readers 1786-1945* (London: Anthem Press, 2013), 69.
[55] Ricks describes Darwin as 'the only man of genius to write at length about blushing' in a manner that suggests he might like to be corrected. Ricks (1984), 50.
[56] Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (New York NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1872), 309-310.

which in turn causes increased 'self-attention', which causes the capillary vessels to dilate.[57] In this explanation, he pre-empts O'Farrell's argument that in the nineteenth century the blush was steadily understood as a largely mechanical response to social circumstance. In their focuses on shyness and embarrassment respectively, Darwin and Ricks reflect a critical tendency to think about blushing only as it pertains to a single emotion, usually shame, which has led to skewed impressions of how the blush operates as a literary symbol. Rather than understanding the blush as indicative of one emotion or another, I intend to show that its variability is exactly why it is such a valuable literary symbol to early modern writers.

Although I do not aim to read my early modern texts through a modern socio-scientific lens, it is worth understanding a little of the recent research on the blush, not least because it is generally agreed by modern socio-scientists that 'blushing cannot be tied exclusively to any particular emotion or even one valence of emotion' and that 'blushing seems to be experienced alongside a range of emotional reactions that are associated with social evaluation and self-consciousness'.[58] That is, people blush for many different reasons, and the blush is intimately connected to a sense of one's self in relation to another, which are two of my core claims in this thesis. There are three main sociological theories about why people blush. The first, remedial theory, suggests that blushing is a reaction to social evaluation: an idea familiar to us from Darwin. Blushers 'are somehow saying that they know, care about, and fear others evaluations, and that they share those values' (65). Moreover, 'because it cannot be voluntarily produced, blushing unambiguously conveys that the person is sorry for whatever transpired and seeks others' forgiveness' (65). Remedial theory cannot, however, explain why people blush in situations where

[57] Darwin (1872), 309-346.
[58] Mark R. Leary and Kaitlin Toner, 'Psychological theories of blushing', in *The Psychological Significance of the Blush*, eds W. Ray Crozier and Peter J. de Jong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2013), 63-76, 63. Further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text.

they are being regarded positively, nor why 'people do not blush every time they are worried about what others are thinking of them' (68). The second modern theory on blushing is undesired social attention theory, which suggests that blushing arises 'when people find the attention they are receiving too intense' (68). This theory addresses the question of why people blush even when they are being 'regarded positively', and emphasises the blush's social aspect. 'Overall', argue Leary and Toner, this theory 'does a reasonably good job of accounting for situations in which people blush', but it cannot account for 'why private thoughts that one wishes to conceal might cause blushing' (71-73). The final theory is exposure theory, which argues that 'people blush when something they desire to keep private is uncovered or threatened to be uncovered' (71). This theory explains why 'people may blush when merely thinking a private and personal thought in public, even if no one else is privy to it', but it lacks an explanation as to why such a reaction would have evolved, when it 'seems to lack a useful interpersonal function' (72-73).

As wide-ranging as this thesis has aimed to be, there have been some areas of interest which I have not been able to cover in the detail that I might have liked. I cover a significant range of classical material in this thesis, but there is much, much more to be said about the legacy of the Ovidian blush.[59] There is also more to be said about the blush on stage. The third chapter of this thesis takes three plays about Cleopatra as its key texts, but it is not particularly interested in the 'staginess' of the blush, or in thinking about how the blush might be performed. Considering the logistics of staging a blush would have been an equally worthy approach to a drama chapter, and given the sheer volume of dramatic texts in which the blush plays a crucial role, it would have been possible to write an entire thesis on the dramatic blush. It would also have been possible to

[59] I undertook research on the blush in English translations of 'Salmacis and Hermaphroditus' which was too limited in scope to be its own chapter, but too long and distinctive to be incorporated anywhere else. I am currently revising it for publication.

write chapters on the admissibility of blushes in a legal context (i.e. their status as admissible evidence); the blush's place within medical discourses (including the practice of physiognomy and the discovery of circulation); and the blush's role in various colonialist projects, including in the emergence of racial pseudoscience and a 'white European' identity. Each of these discourses is discussed in the thesis, but not in the detail or to the extent that they might be. Humoral theory, shamefacedness, and greensickness each received less attention than they might have, because they did not suggest themselves in the texts on which I have chosen to focus. Chapter four finishes with a brief discussion of a painting of Adam and Eve. The question that I ask of Hendrick Goltzius' 1616 painting *The Fall of Man* — how can a static medium represent motion? — is certainly worthy of pursuit, and had time and space allowed, I would have liked to ask it of more paintings.[60] In posing the question, I make a hopeful gesture towards a possibility for future research on the blush in early modern art.[61]

The remainder of the thesis consists of four case-study chapters. The first chapter is titled '"It will live engraven in my face": Shakespeare's narrative poetry'. There is a long-standing and persistent cultural investment in the idea that the material communications of the body are more trustworthy, true, or appropriate than its linguistic communications, particularly when that body is coded female. How, then, does the material body communicate in *Venus and Adonis*, and in *The Rape of Lucrece*, and how can the meaning of the body's material communications be known? In

[60] This question was inspired by reading Shira Brisman's book on Albrecht Dürer for a class on Northern Renaissance art led by Professor Joseph Koerner that I took at Harvard University during my visiting fellowship. Brisman argues that the experience of writing and receiving letters informed Albrecht Dürer's printmaking, including the idea that the notional mobility of the printed form impacts the way in which Dürer represents motion. Shira Brisman, *Albrecht Dürer and the Epistolary Mode of Address* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

[61] One such undertaking is Natalie McCann's MA thesis on 'Masculinity, Blood, and the Painted Blush: The Significance of Ruddy Cheeks in Portraits of Male Sitters, from the Renaissance to the Nineteenth Century' in which she suggests that 'the import of ruddy skin in images of men gradually evolved from a humoral signifier of sanguine manliness to a fraught indicator of racial whiteness. In other words, the blush assumed an increasingly racial dimension over time, while slowly losing some of its traditional ties to Humorism'. Natalie McCann, 'Masculinity, Blood, and the Painted Blush: The Significance of Ruddy Cheeks in Portraits of Male Sitters, from the Renaissance to the Nineteenth Century', unpublished Master's thesis, Tulane University, 2015, 2.

this chapter, I argue that *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* draw explicit attention to the processes by which the meaning of the body's communications are created, understood, and disseminated through a series of collaborations between consensual and non-consensual parties. By drawing attention to these processes, and to their many and various failures, the poems interrogate how much can ever truly be known about another person, and how much of that knowledge can ever be adequately communicated.

The second chapter, 'Friends, Romans, Crocodiles: Feeling shame in Alexandria and London', traces the legacy of the idea that to be a Roman is to be a blusher in three seventeenth-century plays about Cleopatra: John Fletcher's and Philip Massinger's *The False One* (1619); John Dryden's *All for Love* (1694); and William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (1607). These plays stage an encounter between the blushing Romans and the non-blushing Egyptians, categories which generally reflect the belief that blushing demonstrates a person's submission to Roman ethics and the shame culture through which they are enforced. There are, however, moments in each play where a different, early modern understanding of the blush as a racialised sign of the physical and moral superiority of white Europeans emerges. The audience is encouraged to identify with the Romans because they are shown to value shame, and to identify the Egyptians as 'other' because they are shameless, and shame is understood as the overlapping of three characteristics — whiteness, Christianity, and the possession of civilized manners — all of which shape both individual and group identity in the plays.

The third chapter, '"What do I do now?" Walking the *via media* with John Donne' begins by considering the editorial approach of the new *Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne* and recent scholarship on early modern sermons, noting the current emphasis on the idea of each sermon as a discrete 'performance'. Instead, this chapter takes a thematic approach across Donne's

printed corpus, suggesting that he is consistent in his treatment of the blush to an extent which suggests the reuse of material, and that the blush illuminates his answer to a central question for all church-goers in the first half of the seventeenth century: 'what do I do now?' In this chapter, I argue that Donne uses the motif of the blush to advance a distinctively Anglican practical theology which emphasises the importance of public worship and a shared Anglican identity built around a series of bloody symbols: the Eucharist, the blood of Christ, and the penitent blush.

The final chapter, '"Within, without, disordered in the storm": Adam and Eve in the seventeenth century' argues that both John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Lucy Hutchinson's *Order and Disorder* pose a counterfactual question: what kind of knowledge and communication would be possible if the material communications of the body could be trusted? In Milton's prelapsarian Eden, the blush represents the possibility of true knowledge of, and communication with, human and divine others. After the Fall, the Miltonic blush reflects the fracturing of those relationships. For Hutchinson, it is only the eschatological body, the body that has been restored by God at the end of the world, that can bridge those divides. In either text, the postlapsarian body emblematises the distance of fallen humans from sinless standards of physical, devotional, and relational perfection.

This thesis argues that it is the blush's ambiguity which makes it such a popular symbol for early modern writers, because in that ambiguity is an opportunity to consider how the meaning of the body is created, communicated, and understood. This interest in interrogating the material communications of the body reflects the scepticism of the age, which was at once preoccupied with a sense of discrepancy between the interior and exterior of the body, and with the establishment of social and national boundaries on the basis of people's supposedly physically observable characteristics. There is a marked difference in approach between texts which take a

largely classical view of the blush, and so which imagine knowledge acquisition as occurring only on this spatial and temporal plain, and those which are mainly in conversation with the Bible, and so have a sense of a coming Revelation. The blush reflects an early modern ambivalence about borders, which at once must be traversed to know the other, and vigorously defended to maintain the purity of a group's identity. The blush may appear to offer the observer a purportedly unmediated glimpse into the other, but in practice, it reinforces that knowledge gained through a material encounter is still subject to the same power structures which might make linguistic communication seem unreliable. The response of early modern writers to the discrepancy between a body's interior and its exterior was not always to spiral into ontological crisis. Rather, they found ways to use that sense of discrepancy to a range of ends and to create a range of literary effects.

1. ‘It will live engraven in my face’: Shakespeare’s narrative poetry

In July 2019, UNESCO released a report suggesting how gendered divisions in digital skills might be closed. The report included a damning indictment of what the authors called ‘the rise of gendered AI and its troubling repercussions’.[1] Perhaps the most familiar example of this trend is AI assistant systems, which tend to have women’s voices and names. Three such assistants: Alexa, Cortana, and Siri (from Amazon, Microsoft, and Apple respectively), ‘cumulatively handl[e] over 90% of human-to machine voice interactions in many countries’.[2] The authors of the report concluded that this gendering was deeply harmful, and noted that, amongst other issues, the AI assistants were programmed to give ‘deflecting, lacklustre or apologetic’ responses to sexual and gendered harassment from users, particularly if the user was identified by the AI as male.[3] The report catalogues a litany of AI assistant responses to harassment, recording that when asked ‘who’s your daddy?’, Siri would reply ‘you are’; when called ‘a slut’ Alexa would say ‘well, thanks for the feedback’; and being called either ‘a bitch’ or ‘a slut’ prompted Siri to respond ‘I’d blush if I could’.[4]

What does it mean for Siri to say ‘I’d blush if I could’ in response to this kind of sexualised and gendered harassment? The authors of the UNESCO report describe the reply as ‘provocative’, whilst an article on gendered AI in *Quartz* suggests that ‘Siri’s response to any verbal sexual harassment quite literally flirts with abuse’.[5] Aside from its provocative or flirtatious overtones,

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[1] Mark West et al.‘I’d Blush if I Could: Closing Gender Divides in Digital Skills through Education’, *UNESCO Digital Library*, 2019 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000367416.page=1> [accessed 23rd June 2020] 3;76;85.
[2] West et al. (2019), 108.
[3] West et al. (2019), 107.
[4] West et al. (2019), 106-107.
[5] West et al. (2019), 107; Leah Fessler, ‘Siri, define patriarchy’, *Quartz*, 2017 <https://qz.com/911681/we-tested-apples-siri-amazon-echos-alexa-microsofts-cortana-and-googles-google-home-to-see-which-personal-assistant-bots-stand-up-for-themselves-in-the-face-of-sexual-harassment/> [accessed 22nd June 2020].

Siri's response draws attention to what it cannot do: Siri cannot blush. Presumably, it would be possible to code Siri so that if the user made a sexually explicit remark — one report states that 5% of user interactions with digital assistants are 'unambiguously sexually explicit' — the screen of the device would turn red.[6] But we know, instinctively, that this colour change would not constitute a true blush. Mark Twain quipped that 'man is the only animal that blushes, or needs to', and it does seem to be the case that there is something acutely *human* about blushing.[7] Blushing is not just about colour change, rather it intimately reflects both the unique experience of having a human body, and the unique way in which humans experience and express emotions both internally in the mind, and externally through the body. By saying 'I'd blush if I could', Siri offers to perform a kind of emotional labour for its user. It implies that either the AI assistant is flattered by the user's implicit reference to an imagined female body or embarrassed by the user's impropriety. Both responses constitute a kind of responsibility-taking on Siri's part by pointing to a lack not with the user, but with the AI assistant. The problem becomes not that the user cannot conduct themselves properly, but that Siri cannot respond properly, because it has no body to blush with. The response highlights the inadequacy of Siri's voice, instead gesturing to the primacy of a body that would be able to give a more nuanced, subtle, and appropriate response, if only it existed.

Saying 'I'd blush if I could' is a deflection. It puts the blush into a conditional tense and so indefinitely delays making an actual response. If Siri could blush, it would blush, but it cannot blush, and so it does nothing but point towards the possibility of a blush in an entirely different set of circumstances, which extend to Siri inhabiting a quasi-human body, the user shouting 'bitch' at it, and that body blushing. Implicitly, those entirely counter-factual, indeed impossible, set of

[6] West et al (2019), 106.
[7] Mark Twain, *Following the Equator: A Journey Around the World*, 2 vols (Hollcong PA: Wildeside Press, 2003), i, 237.

circumstances are the only ones under which Siri could respond appropriately to harassment. Siri exists only as a voice, but even so, it defers to the communicative possibility of the material body. This deferral implies the superiority of the blush, of the body, of the material, over the linguistic, even when no body is present or possible. Siri's would-be blushing response reflects a cultural investment in the idea that the material communications of the body are more trustworthy, true, or appropriate than its linguistic communications: particularly when that body is coded female, and particularly when the material communication is a blush. This assumption is long-standing and persistent, and we find it repeated time and again in early modern literature.

This chapter interrogates the power of the supposedly trustworthy material body in two poems by William Shakespeare — *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* — by asking: how does the material body communicate in these texts? The body's primary material communication in both these texts is the blush, and its meaning is under constant review as the blusher, their observer, and the narrator all offer their own readings of the blushing body. In *Venus and Adonis*, Venus misreads Adonis' bodily communications by using them only to confirm what she already knows, rather than using them to learn anything new. Venus knows that she finds Adonis' red and white body beautiful, and she reads his blush only as further evidence of that beauty. As such, Adonis' blush confirms Venus' knowledge about her own internal experience of lust, rather than giving her any insight into Adonis' internal experiences. When Adonis is eventually able to narrate his own blush, to explain the relation between his internal experience and its outward manifestation, the traditional gendered power dynamic is 'righted', and he is able to finally and decisively leave Venus. The power and beauty of the blush is in its fluctuation, and in *Venus and Adonis*, it is consistently at risk of destruction through stasis, a threat which is fully realised at the end of the poem, when Adonis' lifeless body is turned into a flower.

Both *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* explore what I will term an 'erotics of reticence'. By this term I mean to suggest the way in which the poems engage with the idea that a display of reluctance or resistance on the part of the beloved is erotically exciting for their lover. Venus' inability to enjoy the reticence of her beloved is directly linked to her unsuitability to play the role of the suitor, which itself is predicated on the fact that she is female. The reader, however, is implicitly assumed to be male, and so he steps in to enjoy what Venus cannot: Adonis' chaste discomfort.[8] In *Lucrece*, the trope of the reluctant beloved and the ardent lover is played out again, but this time, the male lover takes great pleasure in an erotics of reticence: Tarquin actively enjoys the bodily signs of Lucrece's reluctance. If Venus is a poor reader of Adonis' body, then Tarquin is a careless and complacent reader of Lucrece's body. He is not much concerned by his inability to adequately interpret Lucrece's bodily communications. Rather, he sets about deliberately manipulating the communications of Lucrece's body to suit his own ends, regardless of their true meaning. Lucrece's body begins and ends the poem as a means through which men — the narrator, Tarquin, Collatine, the reader, the poet — can communicate with one another, rather than an agent of Lucrece's own will.

The rest of this chapter will be given over to readings of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* in turn. I will draw out some of the narrative and linguistic similarities between the two poems as we proceed, but it should be noted at the outset that they share some significant linguistic and thematic features. Firstly, both poems engage with the Petrarchan and Ovidian literary traditions. From Petrarch, the poems take some tropes: the 'suffering lover, scornful beloved, oxymoronic passions, [and] obsessive complaint' that populate Petrarchan love poems find themselves refracted here, as

[8] Cf. Sasha Roberts who writes that 'Shakespeare's Venus offers a fantasy, to male readers especially, of the sexually assertive and intoxicating mistress anxious to please her lover and herself; a fantasy which fuelled the vogue for sexually forward women in Elizabethan erotic narrative poems'. Sasha Roberts, *Reading Shakespeare's Poems in Early Modern England* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 25.

does the figure of the blazon.[9] The poems also take from Petrarch the idea of the disempowered suitor for whom writing is 'a literary strategy of compensation' in the face of romantic love 'understood as an irrational loss of control'.[10] In Shakespeare's poems, disempowered lovers do not write poems, but they do inscribe meaning onto the body of their beloved. Nor is writing the only literary strategy open to them; Shakespeare's lovers also become readers — and in the case of *Lucrece,* publishers — of their beloved's bodily text, inferring meaning from the non-verbal communications of the beloved's body (particularly the blush) with varying degrees of success. The poems engage with a Petrarchan understanding of the erotic appeal of reticence. Mark Breitenberg writes that in Petrarchan love poetry 'deferral and "frustration" sustain men in the active position of pursuit, of doing the representing, and women in the static position of being represented'.[11] On a structural level, the unconsummated love affair is the fundamental condition of Petrarchan verse, and it protects an 'active' masculine self-identity. By extension, Petrarchan verse eroticises the reticence of the mistress, without which the poem could not exist; Cynthia Marshall calls Petrarchan love poems 'masochistic fantasy'.[12] In different ways, both *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* explore the erotic appeal of difficulty, delay, and disdain. The tone of each poem's engagement with these themes depends on the voluntariness of the suitor's disempowered posture, which in turn is highly gendered. As we will see, it means something different for a man to performatively disempower himself, and for a woman to be confronted with the actual limitations of her own power.

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[9] Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence, Subjectivity, and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 57.
[10] Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 134
[11] Breitenberg (1996), 1, 36.
[12] Marshall (2002), 62.

Petrarch, of course, responds to Ovid, and the Petrarchan and Ovidian poetic traditions share a number of features. Linda Grant suggests that Petrarch took from Ovid 'the depictions of obsessive love, the elusiveness of the mistress, the overwhelming concern with the poet-narrator's objectivity, the translation of *militia amoris* into the bows and arrows of Cupid [...] and the re-emergence of the undressed mistress as the Renaissance blazon', some features of which we see replicated in Shakespeare's poems.[13] However, 'while frustration may certainly be a keynote of [Latin erotic] elegy, the sexual relationship between Roman poet and mistress ('*puella*') are consummated in a way that is rare [in Petrarchan texts]'.[14] From Ovid — specifically from his love elegies and from the *Metamorphoses*, which is one of the source texts of *Venus and Adonis* — Shakespeare's poems take the idea that love affairs *can* be consummated. Such consummations in *Metamorphoses* are often violent. Charles Segal goes as far as to describe *Metamorphoses* as 'an epic of rape'.[15] Nor does consummation prove a threat to the literary form in *Metamorphoses*, rather it proves its proliferation. Maggie Kilgour writes that 'Ovid makes rape a principle of creativity'.[16] There is a critical debate about Ovid's level of complicity in his scenes of sexual violence. Lynn Enterline notes the 'alliance between rape and poetry' in *Metamorphoses*, but concludes that Ovid offers 'a critique of the systematic violence and subordination embedded in patriarchal culture'.[17] Conversely, Amy Richlin argues that 'if the *Metamorphoses* lays bare a cruel cosmos, it does so voluptuously', arguing that Ovid enjoys 'the spectacle of female pursuit and fear'.[18] If Petrarch lends Shakespeare's narrative poems their masochistic strain, then their strain

[13] Linda Grant, *Latin Erotic Elegy and the Shaping of Sixteenth-Century English Love Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 5.
[14] Grant (2019), 6.
[15] Qtd in Maggie Kilgour, *Milton and the Metamorphosis of Ovid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 59.
[16] Kilgour (2012), 59.
[17] Lynn Enterline, *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 20; 33, via Kilgour (2012), 59 n31.
[18] Qtd in Kilgour (2012), 59 n31.

of sadism seems to come from Ovid. At its most basic level, the *Metamorphoses* is populated by violent sexual experiences that prove destructive to the beloved. As Enterline memorably writes: 'at the centre of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* lie violated bodies', bodies which 'cast long, broken shadows over European literary history.'[19] An Ovidian understanding of what erotic poetry does with the body of the beloved is very different to the implicit understanding of Petrarchan verse. They agree that erotic love is transformative, but where Ovidian poetry destroys the body of the beloved, Petrarchan poetry ossifies it. Moreover, Petrarchan poetry argues that love must be unconsummated to inspire poetry, whilst Ovidian poetry proliferates the most brutal depictions of sexual violence. These contrary impulses inform Shakespeare's poetry, each emerging at different points in the narrative.

Ultimately, both poems are intimately invested in the mechanics of how the meaning of the body's material communications is created, manipulated, and disseminated within the text by the poem's various narrators. I use the term 'narrator' expansively here — Venus, Adonis, Lucrece, and Tarquin each act as narrators of their own and other people's bodies — but each poem, of course, does have a narrator. Neither the narrator of *Lucrece* nor the narrator of *Venus and Adonis* has garnered much critical interest. At least on the surface, neither of them is a particularly distinctive or intrusive presence in their respective poems. Nonetheless, telling a story always involves making narrative choices. Regarding Tarquin's vision of himself as a warrior, Katherine Eisaman Maus writes:

> On the one hand, Tarquin's literal-minded application of a trope helps him convince himself to commit a crime with full awareness of its gravity and its consequences. On the other hand, as Lucrece reminds us, his particular use of metaphor is hardly inevitable; there are alternative ways of representing his psychological upheaval and his decision.[20]

[19] Enterline (2000), 1.
[20] Katherine Eisaman Maus, 'Taking Tropes Seriously: Language and Violence in Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 37 (1986), 66-82.

The story that Tarquin tells about himself — that he is a warrior, not a rapist — facilitates his actions. That Tarquin's 'particular use of metaphor is hardly inevitable' is a helpful observation to bring to bear on both *Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis* at large. Both stories pre-date Shakespeare, but even if the constitutive content of the narratives are broadly settled (i.e. Lucrece must be raped by Tarquin and then take her own life; Venus must fall in love with Adonis, who then must be killed by a boar), the viewpoint, attitude, implications, and even the outcome of the text are, to some extent, up for grabs: very little within the text is *actually* inevitable. Certainly, the way the material is presented is entirely at the discretion of the poet. It is worth keeping track of who narrates what in each poem: who gets to tell which part of the story; who gets to speak for themselves and for others; and who directs our gaze. Bearing these questions in mind will throw into relief how bodily communications are repeatedly shown to be insufficient in and of themselves, and how the opportunity to gloss a bodily communication confers great power on its narrator.

Venus and Adonis

Shakespeare's blend of Ovidian and Petrarchan discourses is evident in the opening stanza of *Venus and Adonis*, which begins with three red faces:

> Even as the sun with purple-coloured face
> Had tane his last leave of the weeping morn,
> Rose-cheeked Adonis hied him to the chase
> Hunting he loved, but love he laughed to scorn.
> Sick- thoughted Venus makes amain unto him,
> And like a bold-faced suitor gins to woo him.[21]

[21] William Shakespeare, 'Venus and Adonis', in *The Poems*, ed. John Roe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1-6. All further to *Venus and Adonis* and to *The Rape of Lucrece* are from this edition and are included parenthetically in the text.

The editor John Roe notes that 'purple' comes from the Latin *purpureus*, meaning 'brightness or vividness of colour — usually though not necessarily red'.[22] He suggests that the term 'may carry several shades of meaning from regality down to embarrassment', recording its popularity across epic, tragic, lyric, and erotic poetry in Latin.[23] Specifically, this stanza evokes the popular classical (and early modern) trope of the red, rosy, or blushing dawn, but it does not simply repeat it. [24] The dawn is often personified as Aurora in classical poetry, including in *Metamorphoses*: 'behold, Aurora, who keeps watch in the gleaming dawn, has opened wide her purple gates, and her courts glowing with rosy light'.[25] In *Venus and Adonis*, it is not the feminised dawn or morn which has a red face, but the personified male sun; instead, the morn weeps. Both the Arden and Cambridge editors suggest that the source of the morn's tears are ambiguous, asking: is she weeping to lose her lover, or is she weeping because she has been abused by him?[26] If we read *Venus and Adonis* with the *Metamorphoses* in mind, then the question stands. The sun god Helios makes an earlier appearance in *Metamorphoses* as the rapist of Leucothoe, which seems to open up the possibility that these lines are meant to signal abuse.[27] However, Venus' later description of the lark who 'wakes the morning, from whose silver breast / The sun ariseth in his majesty' (855-856), and the narrator's description of Adonis as '[l]ike the fair sun, when in his fresh array / He cheers the

[22] Roe (1992), 79.
[23] Roe (1992), 79.
[24] For more on the blush of the dawn see n74 in the final chapter of this thesis. The image is also used in *Lucrece*: 'the blushing morrow / Lends light to all fair eyes that light will borrow' (1082-1083). It is also used in *Richard II*: 'See, see, King Richard doth himself appear, / As doth the blushing discontented sun / From out the fiery portal of the east, / When he perceives the envious clouds are bent / To dim his glory and to stain the track / Of his bright passage to the occident'. William Shakespeare, *Richard II* ed. Andrew Gurr, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), III.iii.64-69.
[25] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G. P. Goold, 2 vols (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), I, II.111-115. For more examples see *Met.* II.600; III.150.
[26] Roe notes that the sun's weeping could be caused by 'distress either at the loss of the sun's attentions or from his abuse of her'. The Arden editors suggest that she could equally be weeping 'because he is going and because she thinks he will never come back or because their relationship is an unhappy one'. Roe (1992), 79; William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare's Poems*, eds Katherine Duncan Jones and H.R. Woudhuysen, 3rd edn (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), 131.
[27] For the story of Leucothoe, see *Met.* IV.190-273.

morn' (483) both retell this opening story very gently. When Titan later overlooks the unhappy pair it is implied that he and Venus were, or perhaps are, lovers: The sun god 'wish[es] Adonis had his team to guide, / So he were like him and by Venus' side' (178-180)'. The sun is presented in this opening stanza as the ideal male lover, and the morn as an ideal female beloved. The poem establishes its expectations of the normative social and bodily behaviours of male and female erotic partners — a bold-faced, active man who leaves without worrying whether his devoted, passive female partner will be there when he gets back; a weeping female beloved who fears he will never return. This dynamic is so familiar to readers that it can be sketched out in very few strokes to provide the backdrop against which the very different relationship between Venus and Adonis is played out.

Adonis' laughing scorn is reminiscent of the behaviour both of a Petrarchan beloved and of Narcissus, in whom 'such passing pride did raigne, / That to be toucht of man or Mayde he wholy did disdaine', who had 'mocked many men' for their love of him, and to whom Venus directly compares Adonis later in the poem (161-162).[28] This allusion foreshadows the unhappy conclusion of Adonis' story, as does the fact that a red sky in the morning has colloquially portended ill since at least the first century AD.[29] 'Rose-cheeked Adonis' is red-faced, and from the outset of the poem, his erotic appeal to Venus is focused on his exceptional redness and whiteness. In the next stanza, she praises Adonis as 'more white and red than doves and roses are' (10), evoking a common Petrarchan conceit in her role as a 'bold-faced suitor'. 'Bold-faced' is cognate with 'impudent', which itself means 'unblushing' (OED 1), but if to be 'bold-faced' means to be 'unblushing', then it does not necessarily reflect a lack of facial redness. The poem later

[28] Arthur Golding, *The. xv. bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis, translated oute of Latin into English meeter, by Arthur Golding Gentleman, a worke very pleasaunt and delectable* (London: Willyam Seres, 1567), 36.
[29] Cf. Matthew 16.2-3. 'He answered and said unto them, "when it is evening, ye say, it will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering".'

reminds us that '[a]ffection faints not like a pale-faced coward' (569). Brazenness is the opposite of blushing, but it is also the opposite of insipid paleness or blanching. Venus is red with the sexual passion and virility of a suitor. Whilst the sun and Adonis are both introduced with straight-forwardly descriptive language — 'the purple-faced sun'; 'rose-cheeked Adonis' — the poet introduces a conspicuous simile to describe Venus; she behaves '*like* a bold-faced suitor'. It is now a critical truism that Venus inverts traditional gender roles in this poem, but she does not do so entirely successfully. From the outset, the poem suggests that the role of the suitor is fundamentally masculine. Women cannot *be* bold-faced suitors; they can only behave *like* them. The model of the relationship between the sun and the morn establishes the role that Venus should be playing, and indeed would like to play: the passive female beloved who weeps to be left behind by her active male partner; the one who is desired, rather than the one who desires. Instead she is forced by Adonis' inaction and disinterest to act like a suitor: a role to which she is fundamentally unsuited by gender and by inclination.

Unlike Tarquin, who actively enjoys the signs of Lucrece's sexual reluctance, Venus makes it clear throughout the poem that she would much prefer an active sexual partner. When she pushes Adonis onto his back, for example, she does so 'as she would be thrust' (40). Venus self-consciously reveals her displeasure with the power-dynamic of their relationship, telling Adonis: 'would thou wert as I am, and I a man' (369). Venus does not enjoy playing the role of suitor, nor does she enjoy Adonis' reticence. When the erotics of reticence are evoked in *Venus and Adonis*, it is by the narrator for the reader's benefit. Take, for example, this description of Adonis' shamed blush:

> Over one arm the lusty courser's rein,
> Under her other was the tender boy,
> Who blushed and pouted in a dull disdain,
> With leaden appetite, unapt to toy:
> She red and hot as coals of glowing fire,

He red for shame, but frosty in desire. (31-36)

Venus has lifted Adonis off his horse and is carrying him away under one arm. Implicitly, she is not looking at his face, nor he at hers. The narrator contrasts the two different kinds of facial redness on show only for the benefit of the reader. Adonis is 'tender' in several senses. They come together in his 'youthful' (OED 4) and possibly 'effeminate' (OED II 3a) blush, when his 'sensitive' (OED IV 10) face expresses his 'delicacy of feeling or susceptibility to the gentle emotions' (OED 8a). Adonis' delicate blushing tenderness is contrasted to Venus' brazen redness, which reflects the heat of her sexual passion. Adonis' blushing youthfulness and effeminacy are yoked together in the epithet 'tender boy'. The notion that blushing was (only) admirable in the young was a common Aristotelian trope, but it was by no means universally accepted.[30] The idea that the blush of morality is admirable does seem to be in play here, whether from Aristotle or one of the many Christian sources which called upon penitents to blush, both of which I shall revisit in later chapters. These lines demonstrate Adonis' moral objection to Venus' behaviour, but because that objection is couched in a 'tender' blush, the effect is the evocation of an erotics of reticence for the benefit of the reader. The appeal to an erotic register is intensified by the pairing of the blush with the pout. Both are prompted by Adonis' 'disdain', a concept again familiar to us from Petrarch and his descendants, and from the myth of Narcissus.[31] Shakespeare only uses the word 'pout' and its derivatives three times across his corpus, and its earliest citation in the OED is from the 1590s.[32] The other two Shakespearean uses are unambiguously non-sexual, but here the

[30] See 236-237 of this thesis.

[31] Lisa Starks-Este notes that Shakespeare 'exploits the violence underlying the later traditions of courtly love and the Renaissance love lyric' in his treatment of Ovid, as he 'employs images of beasts and prey […] to expose the destruction inherent in the Petrarchan conceit of the hunt'. Lisa Starks-Este, *Violence, Trauma, and* Virtus *in Shakespeare's Roman Poems and Plays* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 118.

[32] 'But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench, / Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love' (*Romeo and Juliet,* III.iii.142-143); 'We pout upon the morning' (*Coriolanus*, V.i.53) The word is 'pout'st' in *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* and 'frownst' in *An Excellent Conceited Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.

erotic potential of the sullen pout is brought to the fore, not least because of the prolonged discussion of kissing two stanzas previously, when Venus promises to kiss Adonis' lips and so 'mak[e] them red, and pale, with fresh variety' (21), and so to increase the fluctuation between red and white that she finds so attractive.[33] Adonis' blush and pout share an ambiguity of meaning, each gesturing to a precocious sexuality that is attractive in part because of its perceived reluctance or reticence. Adonis' leaden appetite similarly alludes to an unresponsive heaviness, but the description sets him on a collision course with Venus' desire, which is 'hot as coals'. Coals are certainly hot enough to melt lead, and this image is the first hint that the forthright redness of Venus' sexual passion might ultimately destroy the delicate redness of Adonis' beauty.

Venus explicitly explains her preferred relationship dynamic to Adonis when she describes her relationship with 'the stern and direful god of war' (99). In that relationship, Venus was the passive partner: 'I have been wooed, as I entreat thee now' (97). With Adonis, Venus is the active suitor, but she is powerless to persuade or force Adonis to comply with her wishes. Conversely, in her relationship with Mars, Venus took the part of the Petrarchan mistress, and was empowered — or at least felt empowered — by her reticence. Mars was her 'captive and my slave' (101), who 'begged for that which thee unasked shalt have' (102), and who was 'servile to my coy disdain' (112). Within a traditional Petrarchan dynamic, men behave as though they are disempowered, and women behave as though they are unwilling, and this mutual pretence allows the relationship to function. The dynamic requires a performance on both sides. Had Mars, 'who conquers were he

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* ed. Jill L. Levenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, ed. Lee Bliss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[33] Pablo Maurette argues for the importance of the 'lyrical sub-genre: the *basium*, or "kiss poem"' on *Venus and Adonis*. Suggesting that 'Shakespeare positions himself in between two poetic traditions: one that is plaintive, chaste, and normally associated with Petrarch and his legacy, and one that is more sensual and uninhibitedly corporeal', Shakespeare uses the kiss 'an instance of the erotic that is fundamentally liminal' to express his 'concern with mediation'. Pablo Maurette, 'Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and Sixteenth-Century Kiss Poetry', *English Literary Renaissance*, 47 (2017), 355-379.

comes in every jar' (100) wanted to compel Venus, he could have done so, but he performatively disempowers himself. Venus has clearly demonstrated both her sexual appetite and her desire to cloak it in a 'coy disdain'; she enjoys playing the part of the coy mistress, but she is available for sexual encounters. The relationship between Venus and Mars was successful because both parties were willing to play the parts required by the Petrarchan dynamic. In the case of Venus and Adonis, the relationship does not work because Adonis' 'coy disdain' is not a performance, and Venus' show of submission is not that of a powerful suitor who plays the part of one laying down his arms. She is actually disempowered by her gender, and her inability to compel Adonis through threats, cajolery, or the voluntary performance of dependency. When a male suitor submits to a female beloved, he does so in the knowledge that it is only a performance. His servility can be rescinded as soon as it no longer serves his purpose, and the threat of sexual violence still looms over every encounter. Venus' servility to Adonis is not a performance; when Adonis refuses to play his part, Venus has no power to compel him.

Both Tarquin and Venus fail to accurately read and interpret the bodily communications of their intended lover, but Venus' failure is one of obliviousness rather than callousness or sadism. She seems genuinely unable to accurately interpret the blushing communications of Adonis' body, whereas Tarquin does not care whether he interprets Lucrece's body accurately or not, except when doing so can increase his own erotic pleasure. Venus responds erotically to everything Adonis does. Adonis fluctuates ''[t]wixt crimson shame and anger ashy pale' (76), but Venus does not moderate her response to his red and white just because they communicate negative emotions. Her view is filtered through a Petrarchan lens. Adonis might be experiencing shame and anger, but 'being red, she loves him best, and being white, / Her best is bettered with a more delight' (77-78). Venus' desire is highly responsive; everything that Adonis does fills her with delight and increases

her erotic desire. Venus' inability or unwillingness to differentiate between a fluctuation between red and white that stems from anger, fear, or shame, and a fluctuation that stems from sexual arousal or lascivious pleasure paves the way for Tarquin in the next poem, who finds erotic pleasure in Lucrece's red and white face regardless of what its colour suggests about Lucrece's emotional response to his behaviour. But where the erotics of reticence in *Venus and Adonis* is primarily for the pleasure of the reader, not Venus, in *Lucrece,* Tarquin tips an erotics of reticence into sadism for the pleasure of Tarquin, the narrator, and the reader.

In *Lucrece*, Tarquin's physical superiority to Lucrece is never in doubt. *Venus and Adonis* plays with the possibility that Venus might be physically bigger and stronger than Adonis — for example in the moment when she lifts him off his horse — but overall, the poem remains deeply invested in the idea that as a male beloved, Adonis has power over his body in a way that female beloveds do not. Venus asks Adonis:

> Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel?
> Nay, more than flint, for stone at rain relenteth […]
> Fie, lifeless picture, cold and senseless stone,
> Well-painted idol, image dull and dead,
> Statue contenting but the eye alone,
> Thing like a man, but of no woman bred!
> Thou art no man, though of a man's complexion,
> For men will kiss even at their own direction. (198-216)

In *Venus and Adonis*, chastity that is 'more than flint' because at least 'stone at rain relenteth'. In *Lucrece,* it is not chastity that is stony but lust. Tarquin ignores Lucrece's pleas for mercy, a refusal which leads the narrator to note that 'tears harden lust, though marble wear with raining' (560). This adage comments both on the erotic appeal of reticence —Tarquin becomes aroused by Lucrece's tears — and on the immovable nature of stone-cold, rock-hard male power. Male resolve, whether that is resolution to chastity or to sexual activity, trumps female protest in both poems. *Lucrece* also picks up on the image of a flint to describe chastity. Tarquin uses his sword

to strike a flint and light a fire, an image which he applies to his pursuit of Lucrece: 'As from this cold flint I enforced this fire / So Lucrece must I force to my desire' (181-182). Both Adonis and Lucrece are 'flinty', but only Adonis can enforce his chastity: men always set the terms of sex. Whereas Lucrece's reticence adds to the erotic charge of Tarquin's situation, Adonis' reticence distresses Venus. She lacks the physical power to force a spark from this 'cold and senseless stone', and far from adding to his sexual appeal, Adonis' sexual reticence distracts from it. Adonis might look 'like a man' — Venus' focus on his 'complexion' and description of him as a 'well-painted idol' further emphasises that her erotic focus is on his physical appearance, including his colouring— but his sexual reticence undermines his claim to that title, at least to Venus. She argues that his chastity undermines his right to claim the title 'man'. But, the 'flint-hearted boy' (90) Adonis is truly masculine in his ability to dictate which sexual activities he engages in, an opportunity that is denied to Venus, who cannot force Adonis, and Lucrece, who cannot deny Tarquin.

In a technique repeated in *Lucrece,* Adonis is silent for a significant period at the beginning of the poem, when his speech is contracted to single words. The trope of the voiceless beloved is a familiar Petrarchan feature. As Nancy Vickers writes: 'bodies fetishized by a poetic voice logically do not have a voice of their own; the world of making words, of making texts, is not theirs'.[34] At one point Adonis 'gins to chide' (46), but even that is too much for Venus who threatens him: 'if thou wilt chide, thy lips shall never open' (48). Venus forceful closing of Adonis' mouth and restriction of his speech leads him to blush in the next line: 'He burns with bashful shame, she with her tears / Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheeks' (49-50). When Adonis is unable to communicate verbally, his body cries out in a blush. The narrator describes this blush

[34] Nancy J. Vickers, 'Diana Described: Scattered Woman and Scattered Rhyme', *Critical Inquiry,* 8 (1981), 265-279, 277.

as a womanly kind of communication; Adonis blushes like a 'maiden', a word most commonly, though not exclusively, associated with virginal girls and women.[35] Just as Venus was only able to behave *like* a bold-face suitor, communicating through one's body in this way is understood as a feminine action, even when the person blushing is male. Venus responds to Adonis' blushing by crying, obliquely mirroring the dynamic between the purple-faced sun and the weeping morn with which the poem began and demonstrating, yet again, how hard Venus tries to mould her relationship with Adonis according to her expectations of how the male and female partners should behave in erotic relationships. Adonis' speech is a consistent threat to Venus' erotic fantasy because when he does speak, he clearly expresses his lack of interest in pursuing a sexual relationship. Unlike Tarquin, Venus does not gain any pleasure from Adonis' show of reluctance. Later in the poem, he offers an explanation of why he does not want to be her lover: love is 'a life in death' (413); he is too young (415-420); and she is hurting his hand by wringing it too hard (421). Venus responds by wishing that he would be silent: '"What canst thou talk?' quoth she, 'hast thou a tongue? / O would thou had not, or I had no hearing.' (427-428). Venus demonstrates in these lines the ability of the beloved's speech to destroy the lover's fantasy. Whereas Venus could enjoy Adonis' blush of shame as a visual spectacle, she is unable to respond to Adonis' speech purely on the basis of its aesthetics because she cannot ignore its content. His 'mermaid voice' (429) speaks 'melodious discord': there is a clash between the aesthetic pleasure that Venus derives from the sound of Adonis' voice and the distressing content of his communication. Whereas Venus could infer whatever meaning she liked from his blush, Adonis' linguistic communications make his disdain for Venus absolutely clear, and so destroy the fantasy of sexual availability that she has constructed around him.

[35] The OED records that 'maiden' meaning 'A man without experience of sexual intercourse, esp. by reason of abstention' (OED 2b) had largely fallen out of use by the early sixteenth century.

Venus finds a few opportunities to enact her fantasy of her own passivity, but she can only do so by silencing both Adonis and herself. After she has told Adonis that she would love him by smell even if her senses of sight, hearing, and touch were lost to her, she sees him open his mouth again to speak:

> Once more the ruby-coloured portal opened,
> Which to his speech did honey passage yield,
> Like a red morn that ever yet betokened
> Wrack to the seaman [...]
>
> This ill presage advisedly she marketh […]
> His meaning struck her ere his words begun.
>
> And at his look she flatly falleth down,
> […]
> The silly boy, believing she is dead,
> Claps her pale cheek, till clapping make it red, (451-468)

The image of Adonis' red mouth as the dawn calls back to the poem's opening stanza, in which the red-faced sun and weeping morn portend ill for the lovers of the poem. Venus understands that Adonis means to say something that she does not wish to hear, and she is unwilling to listen. As she cannot force Adonis, she takes control of her own body, and pretends to swoon. Venus tries to communicate in as material a way as possible through silencing her body and making it still. In this action, she renounces her role as suitor, and occupies her preferred role of the passive beloved who communicates not through her words, but through her performance of bodily signs. The narrator wishes her luck: 'Fair fall the wit that can so well defend her!' (472). Venus acts out her preferred role as the recipient of sexual advances rather than the sexual initiator, but in the end, her cheeks are reddened not by an erotic blush, but though bathetic slapping: the fantasy crumbles into farce. All that Venus receives from Adonis is a kiss, but that kiss is predicated on her staying absolutely silent and still: 'he kisses her, and she by her good will / Will never rise, so he will kiss her still' (479-480). Venus might be a deity, but she is still a woman, and the best wit that a woman

can bring to an erotic situation is her performed passivity and her silence. She will try the same trick again when Adonis announces his intention to hunt the boar. 'A sudden pale, / Like lawn being spread upon a blushing rose, / Usurps her cheek' (499-501), and she 'sinketh down, still hanging by his neck; / He on her belly falls, she on her back' (593-594). The most sexually gratifying moments of the poem for Venus are those episodes where she gets to relinquish her role as suitor by swooning into silence, but they are also the moments at which her ultimate impotence becomes clear. She may well be 'in the very lists of love, / Her champion mounted for the hot encounter' (595-596), she still cannot compel Adonis to have sex with her. Once again, we see that a successful Petrarchan dynamic depends on the (male) suitor's voluntary performance of disempowerment, rather than an actual confrontation with the limits of female power.

Language has the power to destroy erotic fantasies built on the silent body of the beloved. Yet, material communications also step in when language fails. Like Adonis, when Venus is at her most disempowered and yet at her most emotionally excessive, she is forced to communicate through the blush:

> This said, impatience chokes her pleading tongue,
> And swelling passion does provoke a pause.
> Red cheeks and fiery eyes blaze forth her wrong;
> Being judge in love, she cannot right her cause. (217-220)

Venus' frustration lies both in her inability to speak and in her inability to force Adonis to submit to her seduction attempt. The two are closely linked. The failure of Venus' seductive speech leads to her failure to satisfy her sexual appetite, which in turns leads to a frustration which further limits her speech. Her body's non-verbal communication comes when the impotence of language — both to express oneself and to persuade another — is exposed. The same is true of Adonis, who finds himself reduced to non-verbal communication in the face of Venus' ardour, and who finds the communications of his body misinterpreted by Venus at every turn. In this poem, the blush is how

the powerless body communicates when it is denied the opportunity for verbal communication, but the meaning of that communication is still subject to the same power structures which made linguistic communication difficult. The bodily communication is more extreme, but it is not more articulate, rather it is more ambiguous, and thus central to the operation of an erotics of reticence that is predicated on the suggestive silence of the beloved.

Shakespeare returns to the idea of a body that speaks through the blush because its voice has been silenced in a meditation about the frustrations of pent-up emotion:

> For lovers say, the heart hath treble wrong,
> When it is barred the aidance of the tongue.
>
> An oven that is stopped, or river stayed,
> Burneth more hotly, swelleth with more rage;
> So of concealed sorrow may be said
> Free vent of words love's fire doth assuage;
> But when the heart's attorney once is mute,
> The client breaks, as desperate in his suit.
> He sees her coming, and begins to glow,
> Even as a dying coal revives with wind;
> And with his bonnet hides his angry brow, (329-339)

In these lines, the blush acts as the 'heart's attorney'. The Arden editors note that 'although a legal sense may be present, attorney has the more generalised sense (OED sb.1 4) of an advocate or pleader'.[36] But I think that we *are* being invited to think about attorney in a legal sense, and in particular, to think about the blush's status as 'evidence'. Derek Dunne, in his article on 'The Forensics of the Blush in Early Modern Drama' records 'the troubling tendency in early modern drama for the female blush to be subjected to interrogation within a forensic environment'.[37] Dunne draws from a wealth of contemporary physiognomy manuals to explain what happens when the blush is staged within a trial setting, including in work by Shakespeare.[38] Dunne quotes

[36] Duncan Jones and Woudhuysen (2007), 341, n.335.
[37] Derek Dunne, 'Blushing on Cue: The Forensics of the Blush in Early Modern Drama', *Shakespeare Bulletin,* 34 (2016), 233-252, 234-235.
[38] Dunne (2016), 233.

Ferdinando Pulton's *De Pace Regis et Regno* (1609), in which Pulton defends the practice of denying the accused an attorney:

> [I]f the party himself defend it, peradventure his conscience will prick him to utter the truth, or his countenance or gesture will show some tokens thereof […] which be the causes that the offender shall answer in his own person, and not by counsel learned.[39]

The idea that 'the offender shall answer in his own person' through 'his countenance or gesture' suggests a willingness to depend on the involuntary communications of the body as more authentic than a person's linguistic communications. Sometimes this belief worked in the favour of the defendant. Subha Mukherji notes of Thomas Heywood's play *A Woman Killed with Kindness* that:

> a mark of conscience upheld in the behaviour of the adulterous Anne is that she constantly feels shame and blushes […] 'Women that fall not quite bereft of grace / Have their offences noted in their face' — a premise that the play observes in its sympathetic treatment of Anne.[40]

The blush could be an advocate, but it could also falsely confess. For example, Dunne notes that Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the Mind in General* fails to distinguish between those who blush because they have 'committed a fault', and those who blush because they 'at least *imagine* they are thought to have committed it'.[41] That is, those who are guilty, and those who worry that other people think they are guilty: this distinction will recur in the chapter on John Donne's sermons. Shakespeare gestures towards the language of physiognomy when he writes that 'when the heart's attorney once is mute / The client breaks, as desperate in his suit / He sees her coming, and begins to glow' (335-336). In this image, Adonis is at once attorney and client. He speaks on behalf of his own heart, but when he is silenced, his body speaks for itself through the blush. This communication is not entirely voluntary; the client 'breaks, as desperate' meaning 'bursts': once again, the disempowered body cries out in the blush.

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[39] Qtd in Dunne (2016), 242.
[40] Subha Mukherji, *Law and Representation in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 170, n.107.
[41] Dunne (2016), 234. Emphasis mine.

In this passage, Shakespeare compares holding in emotions as being like stopping up an oven or holding back a river.[42] The link between these natural images and the human body is strengthened through the words 'burneth' and 'swelleth', which are used to describe Adonis' body under the influence of strong emotion elsewhere in the poem. Adonis 'burns with bashful shame' (49) and is 'all swoln with chafing' (324, i.e. anger). These emotions, like heat from an oven, or water from a swelling river, need to be given a 'vent', or an outlet. We might expect Adonis' blush to act as such a vent, as a means of letting heat out of the body. But this image is complicated further in the next stanza, in which Adonis becomes enraged at Venus' return and 'begins to glow, / Even as a dying coal revives with wind'. Here, venting, or giving an outlet, giving access to the air, does not provide a straightforward outlet for emotions. Rather, Venus is the wind that revives Adonis' anger, which is expressed through increased facial redness.

Venus herself advocates the ventilation of internal coals, telling Adonis that his horse ran after a mare because '[a]ffection is a coal that must be cooled, / Else suffered it will set the heart on fire' (387-388). For Venus, the coal of affection is very clearly the heat of sexual desire which can only be ventilated through sexual activity. That much is made apparent when the image of the vent is repurposed to describe Venus' own sexual frustration when she finally kisses Adonis goodnight:

> And having felt the sweetness of the spoil,
> With blindfold fury she begins to forage;
> Her face doth reek and smoke, her blood doth boil,
> And careless lust stirs up a desperate courage,
> Planting oblivion, beating reason back,
> Forgetting shame's pure blush and honour's wrack. (553-558)

[42] The latter image is repurposed in *Lucrece* to describe her grief: 'Deep woes roll forward like a gentle flood, / Who, being stopped, the bounding bank o'erflows' (1118-1119).

Venus' face is red, but this redness is, explicitly, nothing to do with 'shame's pure blush'. We return to an image of ventilated heat: 'her face doth reek and smoke, her blood doth boil'.[43] This image seems specifically to evoke the description of Adonis' fury being like a pent-up oven, and now as then, Venus' anger is given some expression through a reddening of her face. These lines pun on the word 'reek'. Its first meaning is 'to emit or give off smoke' (OED v.1, 1.a.), and in this sense the word is particularly associated with chimneys (OED v.1, 1.b.), which intensifies the link between this image and the previous desire to give anger a 'vent'. In its second sense, 'reek' is 'of freshly shed blood, or of things stained or soaked with this' (OED v.1, 2.b.). The OED cites Shakespeare's use of 'reek' in its second sense in *Lucrece* to describe the painting of Troy that consumes Lucrece's attention in the middle of the poem: 'the red blood reeked to show the Painter's strife' (1377). This double meaning seems active in *Venus and Adonis*, as Venus' blood, which smokes because it is hot with anger, stains her face. The ventilation of inward fire through the blush or through linguistic expression can either cool or stoke the emotion at hand, but regardless of the outcome of that ventilation, the body's communication still comes at the point when linguistic communication fails. Nonetheless, the body cannot adequately communicate by itself; the communication must not only be narrated but must also be accompanied by a significant linguistic gloss.

When Adonis first breaks his extended opening silence, he pleads sunburn:

> And now Adonis, with a lazy sprite
> And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye,
> His low'ring brows o'erwhelming his fair sight
> Like misty vapours when they blot the sky,
> Souring his cheeks cries, 'Fie, no more of love!
> The sun doth burn my face, I must remove.' (185-186)

[43] Cf. Tarquin who approaches Lucrece 'smoking with pride' (438)

Adonis' 'sprite', argues Roe, is his mind, but the image also 'implies sluggishness and draws on the psychophysiological theory of the bodily humours' to explain Adonis' strange behaviour by attributing it to an excess of cold and wet phlegm.[44] Cold, wet Adonis contrasts Venus whose love is like red hot coals, who in the previous stanza 'began to sweat' (175), and who used to enjoy the amorous attentions of the sun god who 'with burning eye did hotly overlook them, / Wishing Adonis had his team to guide, / So he were like him and by Venus' side' (178-180). It is rare in *Metamorphoses* for a deity to spur on a previous lover as they pursue a new sexual conquest. The gods are often acutely jealous, to the point of trying to ruin any new relationship into which a former lover might enter by killing or transforming the beloved. We know that the sun has found a new lover himself — the weeping morn of the first stanza — and here he magnanimously wishes he could offer Adonis his 'team' i.e. his chariot and horses to guide him to Venus. Yet the only other time that Helios lent his team to a mortal ended in disaster — and in sunburn. When Helios gave his chariot to his son Phaeton in Book II of *Metamorphoses*, the half-mortal boy was unable to control the horses, which flew too close to the earth and scorched the Ethiopians, whose burnt blood rushed to their skin, turning it black.[45] Phaeton was killed.[46] Adonis' fear of sunburn is more than just an excuse to get away from Venus. Sunburn would make fluctuation between red and white impossible, and so would destroy the beauty by which Venus is so captivated.[47] In the *Metamorphoses*, the joy of sex is in the pursuit and in the moment of consummation, not its aftermath. The love games of the gods resolve themselves into domestic partnerships superlatively

[44] Roe (1992), 89, n.181. Cf. Tarquin who goes to bed 'intending weariness with heavy sprite' (121).
[45] See *Met* II.1-366 for the story of Phaeton.
[46] This myth was commonly repeated in Early Modern Europe to explain why Africans have dark skin. See Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 96-97.
[47] In *Met.* Venus herself normally avoids the sun in order to cultivate her beauty, but she abandons the practice in pursuit of Adonis: 'though her wont has always been to take her ease in the shade, and to enhance her beauty by fostering it, now, over mountain ridges, through the woods, over rocky places set with thorns, she ranges with her garments girt up to her knees after the manner of Diana'. *Met.* X.533-536.

rarely. Adonis seems to understand instinctively that being loved by a deity often requires the obliteration of the self, and that those mortals beloved by the gods do not always survive the encounter.

Unlike Lucrece, who proclaims her blushing over and over, Adonis claims to be blushing only once, when he tells Venus:

> My face is full of shame, my heart of teen;
> Mine ears that to your wanton talk attended
> Do burn themselves for having so offended. (808-810)

It seems that Adonis, whose frown is akin to cloud-cover, and who wants to get away from the heat of the sun, is aware of the danger in which he finds himself. He knows that mortals who get too close to the sun tend not to come back from it. These lines are also the only example in this thesis of someone's ears blushing. Adonis links the blushing of his ears to the act for which he is blushing, i.e. listening to Venus. It is worth pausing to consider whom or what Adonis perceives his ears to have 'offended'. It cannot be the Roman deities, one of whom pursues Adonis, another of whom looks on and wishes he could aid the consummation. Adonis' shamed response could allude to an anachronistic quasi-Christian moral framework, the like of which we will see again in the Roman plays of the next chapter, or it could stem from his own virginal sense that sex is something shameful. The meaning of 'teen' in this context is quite ambiguous; it could mean 'suffering, grief, sorrow' (OED 2a) or 'anger' (OED 3a). The word also carries a sense of 'reproach or shame' (OED 1b), though the OED does not list any examples of this meaning dating from later than the fourteenth century. Certainly, the emotion is negative. Regardless of the ambiguity of Adonis' explanation, the very act of glossing gives him some power over his body, which has been subjected to the erotic gazes and glosses of Venus, the narrator, and the reader. For once, Adonis is permitted to articulate what it is that his blush is communicating about his internal emotional experience. So empowered is Adonis by his description of his own body that shortly after this act

of glossing, he finally and decisively breaks free from Venus. When Adonis narrates his own body, he destroys the dynamic between himself and Venus by refusing to play the part of the passive beloved. But these are also the last words that he speaks in the poem, and the next time we see Adonis' blood it is in the mouth of the boar.

After Adonis leaves, the red and white images which dominated the first half of the poem are used much more sparingly, and when they do return, their association with eroticism and emotion is persistently undercut. They become proof of the vulnerable materiality of Adonis' body. For example, the description of the boar 'whose frothy mouth, bepainted all with red, / Like milk and blood being mingled both together' (901-902), turns the sensual red and white of Adonis' body into an image of a vicious consumption. In the mouth of the boar, Adonis' blood no longer signifies the emotional or sensual life of his body, rather its materiality: Adonis is merely a piece of meat. The dead body of Adonis turns into a 'purple flower […] chequered with white, / Resembling well his pale cheeks and the blood / Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood' (1169-1170). Venus' anger at the living Adonis for behaving like a still image — a 'well-painted idol' (201) or 'painted grapes' (601) — turns bitterly ironic as his lively fluctuation between red and white is reduced through his metamorphosis to decorative stasis.[48] The colours and their placement on the petals is evocative, and in that respect the flower resembles Adonis well, but Venus' love of Adonis in motion, in fluctuation, cannot be captured by the static colours of the flower. In the end, red and white are repurposed to take the materiality of the body to a bleak conclusion. The colouring which once spoke to the particular humanity of Adonis — both his internal experience of the world, and

[48] Venus' description of Adonis as 'painted grapes' alludes to a story from Pliny's *Natural History* in which the painter Zeuxis creates a painting of grapes so realistic that birds tried to eat them. For more on the importance of this story in *Venus and Adonis* see Richard Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* (Abingdon: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 35-37. Catherine Belsey roots her analysis of the poem in this image, arguing that the entire text operates as a *trompe l'oeil*. Catherine Belsey, 'Love as Trompe-l'oeil: Taxonomies of Desire in *Venus and Adonis*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 46 (1995), 257-276.

his material expression of that experience — is now turned into a sign of generic natural beauty. Adonis' body in death, in stasis, becomes inexpressive, because the interior life which prompted his fluctuation between outward red and white is gone.

In *Venus and Adonis*, Venus is forced to play the role of the suitor, but she would prefer to occupy the passive, more traditionally feminine role of the beloved. The appeal of Adonis' white and red body to Venus lies both in its beauty and in its silence. When Adonis is only able to communicate silently through his body, Venus is able to ignore the internal emotional or moral experience that prompts his blush, and instead read it only in a way that adds to her erotic pleasure. This fantasy is undercut when Adonis expresses himself verbally, and so makes his lack of erotic interest clear. Venus' power is limited by her gender; she cannot force Adonis to submit to her will, and she occupies the role of the suitor only reluctantly. So too is the amount of enjoyment that she can get from an erotics of reticence curtailed by her gendered expectations of how the partners in an erotic relationship ought to behave. She does enjoy some of the bodily signs of Adonis' reticence, but she does not enjoy them *because* they are signs of reticence, rather because she is unable to parse the internal experiences that lie behind them: it's all just red and white to her. The reader and Venus thus have very different experiences of Adonis' blushes. Venus is not privy to the narrator's glosses explaining that Adonis' blush is motivated by shame. As such, the reader's experience of Adonis' blushes and thus of the poem is different: we are initiated into an erotics of reticence that holds no appeal for Venus herself. In *Lucrece*, we will find that Lucrece's reticence holds a very great appeal for Tarquin, who actively manipulates the ambiguity of Lucrece's material bodily signs for his own selfish pleasure.

The Rape of Lucrece

My approach to the meaning of the body's communications in *Lucrece* both builds on and diverges from previous feminist criticism of the poem. The desire of modern feminist critics to uncover Lucrece's subjectivity within the text stems, in part, from an entirely understandable urge to critique the most distasteful and chauvinistic aspects of pre-feminist scholarship of the poem. The approach of such critics is usefully summarised by Laura G. Bromley, who writes that pre-feminist critics tended to think Lucrece 'too Roman in her values, a woman who confuses guilt and shame and is, in St. Augustine's words, "too greedy of praise"'.[49] Bromley cites the critic Roy W. Battenhouse as a prime offender. In 1969, Battenhouse wrote that Lucrece's failure as an orator at the moment of her rape is so profound and thorough that it is 'as if subconsciously she wished force to work his way, but only after she has had time to excuse herself from responsibility'.[50] It is very tempting to follow Joyce Green MacDonald's dismissal of Battenhouse's argument and call it nothing more than 'facile misogyny', but before we string him up, we must first make the uneasy acknowledgement that Battenhouse's reading is supported, and even encouraged, by the text.[51] The crux of his argument is supported by these lines:

> My sighs like whirlwinds labour hence to heave thee.
> If ever man were moved with woman's moans,
> Be moved with my tears, my sighs, my groans. (586-588)

Battenhouse's words represent one, well documented, way of thinking about women's sexual desire in the early modern period: namely that social pressure to be seen as chaste leads women to say 'no', when really they mean 'yes'. Battenhouse's argument gestures to the erotics of reticence that we found so frequently deployed in *Venus and Adonis*. It is not entirely unreasonable,

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[49] Laura G. Bromley, 'Lucrece's Re-Creation', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 34 (1983), 200-211, 200.
[50] Roy W. Battenhouse, *Shakespearean Tragedy: Its Art and Its Christian Premises* (Bloomington ID: Indiana University Press, 1969), 16.
[51] Joyce Green MacDonald, 'Speech, Silence, and History in *The Rape of Lucrece*', *Shakespeare Studies,* 22 (1994), 77-104, 77.

therefore, to suspect that these words are meant to suggest a subconscious desire on Lucrece's part, which is Battenhouse's suggestion, or that they are meant to eroticise her reticence for the pleasure of the reader, which is how I read the passage. This realisation places the modern reader in an acutely uncomfortable position. Here, at the moment of her great terror, Lucrece invites Tarquin, and therefore the reader, to be 'moved' by her tears, sighs, moaning, and groaning. In turn, the reader is invited to think about just how exactly it is that men are 'moved' by women's moans; I suggest that Lucrece's words are meant to arouse the reader, and that this is part of a wider project in the poem: the creation of a pornographic rape narrative for the gratification of the reader. My argument shares similarities with Peter J. Smith's account of the poem. He argues that *Lucrece* is a piece of pornography designed to excuse the rape and exonerate Tarquin. Of the lines above, he writes that 'man *is* likely to have been moved by women's moans but not in the way that Lucrece quite intends'.[52] In his article, Smith focuses on Lucrece's many and various linguistic failings in the second half of the poem, but I want to spend more time accounting for Lucrece's silence in the poem's first half, and identifying how the poetic conventions which we saw used to create an erotics of reticence in *Venus and Adonis* are repurposed in *Lucrece* to turn the poem effectively into a piece of pornography for the pleasure of the assumed male reader.

The eroticisation of the story of *Lucrece* is far from inevitable and recognising it as a deliberate decision puts the narrator's gaze into the spotlight. It is, after all, the narrator who frames the story of Lucrece in such a way that 600 lines in, there is still the possibility of an erotically provocative or even gratifying reading of Lucrece's plea not to be raped. The narrator's interest in the titillating details of the *Lucrece* story is highly distinctive, particularly when the poem is compared to the account of the story in Ovid or Livy, both of whom 'tell primarily a political tale

[52] Peter J. Smith, 'Exonerating Rape: Pornography as Exculpation in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece', Shakespeare*, 5 (2009), 407-422, 416.

about a change in Roman government'.[53] The decision to make a generic shift from political history to poetry demonstrates the power of narration to guide a reader's response to a text, particularly when the plot of that text is familiar, which in turn must make us question why the reader's eye is repeatedly directed towards the poem's most erotically suggestive moments. How does the narrator make it possible to read *Lucrece* and find it titillating rather than grimly forensic? Erotically exciting rather than deeply sad? The next section of this chapter will give an account of how the first half of *Lucrece* works to make such a reading possible, arguing that the main linguistic strategy deployed is the silencing of Lucrece, and the manipulation of her bodily communications, a technique which we also saw in use in *Venus and Adonis*.

Lucrece's silence creates the distance between her and the reader that is necessary to turn a rape narrative into a piece of pornography.[54] In Zadie Smith's memorable formulation: 'Pain by itself is just Pain. But Pain + Distance can = entertainment, voyeurism, human interest, cinéma vérité, a good belly chuckle, a sympathetic smile, a raised eyebrow, disguised contempt'.[55] I would also suggest that Pain + Distance = pornography. In *Lucrece*, this distance is created through a variety of textual strategies, and it also reflects the social context of the work and its primary audience: educated, young, urban men.[56] Classical rape narratives were very familiar to all readers

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[53] Leah Schwebel, 'Livy and Augustine as Negative Models in the *Legend of Lucrece*', *The Chaucer Review*, 25 (2017), 29-45. 30.

[54] Peter J. Smith defends the use of the term 'pornographic' to describe work which predates the term for several reasons, including that 'erotic writing' (Ian Frederick Moulton's preferred term) 'underestimates [the] carnal intensity' of such works, and that in pornography 'the male gaze is one exempt from direct blame'. I use the term simply to mean 'texts which are written with the intention to arouse the reader', and in doing so follow Sarah Toulalan, who writes that 'the peculiar and distinctive quality of pornography as a type of representation is that it is not only a "thing": it is also thought to *do* something'. Smith (2009), 408; Sarah Toulalan, *Imagining Sex: Pornography and Bodies in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3.

[55] Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (London: Penguin), 212.

[56] Shakespeare's poems were, of course, available to other readers, but it is a critical consensus that young men constituted their primary audience. Sasha Roberts details their reception by other readers, including women in her book on *Reading Shakespeare's Poems.* She writes that 'while the most obvious readership of Elizabethan erotic narrative poems were the classically educated young gentlemen of the universities and the inns of court […] the very fact that [Shakespeare's poems] were written in English made them — and by extension a corpus of Ovidian erotic mythology — available to a wider reading public, which included women'. Roberts (2003), 22.

of *Metamorphoses* (available in English from 1567), and all who had a humanist education.[57] The mainstay of the humanist curriculum was the reading and interpretation of Latin.[58] Jocelyn Catty writes that 'by 1594 the story of Lucrece's rape had become, in Shakespeare's words, "a theme for disputation"', reflecting the fact that '[d]ebate, the guiding principle of Renaissance education and rhetoric, frequently takes rape stories as its subject'.[59] She goes on to detail that:

> Debate may take the form of the rapist's mental struggle with the idea of rape; more commonly, however, it manifests itself in a competition between the 'male' art of persuasion and the 'female' art of dissuasion, in such a way as to exert tremendous pressure on women's eloquence as conceptualised at this time.[60]

Readers familiar with this style of debate were already inclined to consider rape a question of competing rhetorical skills — avoidable if the woman says the right thing, unavoidable if she does not. The notion that a woman might be an active, enthusiastic, or even initiatory sexual partner is absent from this frame. The very terms of the debate undermine the notion of consent. The terms of the debate are 'persuasion" versus 'dissuasion', which erode the distinction between rape and seduction. The objective of the debate is to win the argument: and to win, in this instance, is to rape. Even if boys were sometimes encouraged to imaginatively identify with the imaginary woman who must defend her body against imaginary assault with her argumentative power, the position belittles the very real threat of sexual violence to actual women: in the schoolroom, rape is only a word-game.

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[57] In her book *Chaste Thinking* Stephanie H. Jed traces the influence of Coluccio Salutati's retelling of the story of the rape on Lucrece on generations of Italian humanists, explaining that his *Declamatio Lucretiae* birthed a tradition of 'chaste thinking' which overlooked the material reality of Lucrece's rape, instead interpreting it as necessary step towards the birth of the Roman Republic. Stephanie H. Jed, *Chaste Thinking: The Rape of Lucretia and the Birth of Humanism* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1989).

[58] There are multiple early modern precedents for arguing that a humanist education provides a cover for violence or criminality. For a summary of the debate see Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 100-117.

[59] Jocelyn Catty, *Writing Rape, Writing Women in Early Modern England: Unbridled Speech* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999. Paperback edition, 2011), 2.

[60] Catty (2011), 2-3.

Just as the narrator and Venus conspire to silence Adonis in *Venus and Adonis*, so too do the narrator and Tarquin conspire to keep Lucrece silent in the first part of *The Rape of Lucrece*. When Lucrece does speak, her words are not recorded, instead her speech is contracted into single words: she 'welcomed' (51); she 'questioned' (122). When Tarquin praises her husband, Lucrece's response is a 'wordless' (112) gesture made with a 'heaved up hand' (112), a gesture which she repeats when she is begging Tarquin not to rape her: 'to thee, to thee, my heaved-up hands appeal' (638). Christina Luckyj writes that Lucrece's silence 'is constructed as an inviting, coercive force rather than as a barrier to male desire', but she writes only about the moment when Tarquin sees Lucrece for the first time, and then only briefly.[61] As far as I am aware, there has been little sustained critical engagement with Lucrece's long opening silence except to repeat that it evokes 'the cultural equation of chastity and obedience with silence, and eloquence or action with promiscuity'.[62] Perhaps this lack of engagement is because Lucrece speaks so prolifically in the poem's latter half. Yet Lucrece is almost totally silent for the first 600 lines of the poem and reckoning with that silence has led me to understand *Lucrece* as a much darker, more misogynist poem than many other critics have thought previously.

There is an emerging trend in early modern studies, led by Luckyj's highly influential description of women's silence as 'multivalent', to try to recover meaning from women's silences and absences in the archive.[63] Some of this work has been very successful.[64] Much of it is

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[61] Christina Luckyj, *'A Moving Rhetoricke': Gender and Silence in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 66.

[62] Catty (2011), 3. Cf. Green MacDonald (1994), who argues the poem is 'deeply informed by Renaissance assumptions about silence and segregation as indices of female chastity', 78-79.

[63] See Jessica Murphy, who cites Luckyj's use of the term 'multivalent' in her own work on the multivalence of women's chastity. Jessica Murphy, *Virtuous Necessity: Conduct Literature and the Making of the Virtuous Woman in Early Modern England* (Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan Press, 2015), 21-22.

[64] See Heidi Brayman Hackel, '"Boasting of Silence": Women Readers in a Patriarchal State', in *Reading, Society, and Politics in Early Modern England,* eds Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 101-121. In their introduction, the editors of the collected volume *Gender and Song* note that 'all

predicated on the idea that we need to 'expand the parameters of what constitutes female agency' because 'silence can be a powerful rhetorical posture', and the 'relation between voice and power' needs to be 'problematized'.[65] Yet one of silence's valences, and one which I think we need to be more ready to confront, is that women's silence is a void. We need to acknowledge silence as absence, as want, as loss. To do so is to acknowledge that the alternative — extrapolating meaning from women's silence — is a strategy consistently deployed by men in early modern literature to abuse women. They look for non-verbal clues, trusting the material communications of the body over women's speech. In trying to read those signs, they invariably interpret them incorrectly: sometimes accidentally, sometimes maliciously. If we as feminist readers and critics are sensitive to Sara E. Quay's idea that 'our interest in studying rape [...] can itself be instructive, for as readers we are implicated in the act of reading rape' then we should be similarly sensitive about reading female bodies in early modern literature in the same way that their oppressive husbands, fathers, lovers, and enemies do: in a way that valorises and prioritises meaning inferred from silence.[66] By refusing to look away from Lucrece's silent body, by affirming her silence as silence, as lack, as loss, as void, I hope to find a new way to read this poem as a feminist critic. Not by filling in the gaps, but by coming to terms with how the text manipulates Lucrece's silence to allow the first half of this poem to operate, effectively, as misogynist pornography written for the sexual gratification of a male readership.[67]

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discussions of early modern song are, to some extent, predicated on absence and silence'. Leslie C. Dunn and Katherine R. Larson, 'Introduction', in *Gender and Song in Early Modern England,* ed. Leslie C. Dunn and Katherine R. Larson (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 1-14.

[65] Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia PA: University of Philadelphia Press, 2007), 15.

[66] Sara E. Quay, '"Lucrece the chaste": The Construction of Rape in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*', *Modern Language Studies*, 25 (1995), 3-17, 13.

[67] It would be remiss to make this argument without noting the persuasive argument made by Chantelle Thauvette that *Venus and Adonis* is effectively pornography. Thauvette argues that pornography is a 'reading process rather than a genre' and suggests that *Venus and Adonis* offers its readers 'a fantasy of sex without consequences'. Chantelle Thauvette, 'Defining early modern pornography: The case of *Venus and Adonis*', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 12 (2012), 26-43, 26.

I do not mean to suggest that the text has no sympathy at all for Lucrece, but I am deeply sceptical of the claim of some feminist critics that Shakespeare has a *particular* sympathy for Lucrece, or a particular understanding of the psychological impact of rape on women.[68] Dubrow, for example, writes that:

> the parallels between [Lucrece's] behaviour and the responses analysed in the extensive recent literature on rape are compelling enough to suggest that certain reactions commonly recur, at least in Western culture — and to testify that Shakespeare understood those reactions well.[69]

I take issue both with Dubrow's evocation of Shakespeare as an immediately present figure in the text, and her implication that Lucrece's behaviour and responses might be thought of as being in any sense, 'real'. I do have some limited sympathy for this line of argument, not least because, as Elizabeth Robertson and Christine M. Rose argue, 'the artistic thread that links early depictions of rape to contemporary rape, a thread that although twisted in different ways, at different times will remain unbroken as long as sexual access to women is controlled by patriarchal structures'.[70] Yet, at the very least, such an argument needs to be nuanced by the fact that until he flees the scene, the story of *The Rape of Lucrece* is told entirely from Tarquin's viewpoint.[71] To put it in frank terms, criticism has tended to personify Lucrece and treat her like an actual rape victim, and admire Shakespeare for his sensitive (and sometimes, protofeminist) treatment of her. Amy Greenstadt, for example, argues that, whilst the poem is not 'a protofeminist story of a woman overcoming adversity', Lucrece is 'an extremely powerful authorial figure' who 'assert[s] her selfhood against

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[68] See Mieke Bal who writes that although in Titian's *Lucretia* 'the rape tends to be represented as the victim's own doing' 'One may, and indeed must, reject attempts to project this sexist bias on Shakespeare's Lucrece'. Mieke Bal, *A Mieke Bal Reader* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 44.

[69] Heather Dubrow, *Captive Victors: Shakespeare's Narrative Poems and Sonnets* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 104.

[70] Elizabeth Robertson and Christine M. Rose, 'Introduction', in *Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature,* ed. Elizabeth Robertson and Christine M. Rose (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 1-17. 7. See also Dunne (2016) who writes that 'Tarquin seeks to assign guilt to Lucrece herself', arguing that this is 'akin to contemporary arguments over rape where a female victim is criticised for dressing inappropriately', 236.

[71] The fact that Tarquin dominates the first 600 lines of the poem does somewhat make a nonsense of Kramer's and Kaminsky's argument that 'Tarquin is not afforded an opportunity to tell his story'. Jerome A. and Judith Kaminksy, "'These contraries such unity do hold': Structure in *The Rape of Lucrece", Mosaic,* 10 (1977), 143-155, 146.

a society determined to silence and suppress it'.[72] Green MacDonald also notes this critical tendency, writing for example, that criticism in the early 1990s focused on how the 'poem's high degree of formal self-consciousness' operates 'as an index to what it might have to say about sex and the social experience of gender' and that its 'seemingly endless deferral of closure is in fact significant as a manifestation of the linguistic resistance of the feminine to incorporation within male master narratives'.[73] Far from representing feminine or feminist dissidence, I would contest instead that Lucrece is merely a figure, her body merely a space, her communications merely a tool, through which and on which the men of the text — amongst whom I number the narrator and the poet — explore masculine anxieties about the limits of their own rhetorical, physical, and structural power, and a masculine desire to eroticise female reticence and silence.

Venus and Adonis begins with three red faces that establish a blend of Petrarchan and Ovidian expectations to which the poem responds. *Lucrece* begins with a red face that works to destabilise the relationship between a body's communications and how they are received by the audience. The meaning of red and white, the omniscience of the narrator, and the distinction between Collatine and Tarquin are all under question by the end of the second stanza, which reads:

> Haply that name of 'chaste' unhappily set
> This bateless edge on his keen appetite;
> When Collatine unwisely did not let
> To praise that clear unmatched red and white
> Which triumph'd in that sky of his delight.
> Where mortal stars, as bright as heaven's beauties
> With pure aspects did him peculiar duties (8-14)

Like *Venus and Adonis*, the poem begins with an image of a red sky: Lucrece's face which shows 'clear unmatched red and white' and which is the 'sky of [Collatine's] delight'. The red and white

[72] Amy Greenstadt, '"Read it in me": The Author's Will in *Lucrece*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 57 (2006), 45-70, 46.
[73] According to Miriam Jacobson criticism of the poem in the first decade of the twenty-first century focused on 'the poem's investment in metaphors of reading, writing, and rhetoric', and on 'material textuality'. Miriam Jacobson, 'The Elizabethan Cipher in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*', *Studies in Philology*, 107 (2010), 336-359, 337.

of Lucrece's face gestures in a few different directions. At first glance, this line seems a conventional gesture to Lucrece's beauty according to both classical and Petrarchan beauty standards. But considering the line in the context of the extended metaphor of the sky opens up its meaning. Lucrece's eyes are the 'mortal stars' of her face's sky and they pay Collatine 'peculiar duties'. Collatine's attraction to Lucrece is based both on her physical beauty, and on the 'peculiar' (or 'exclusive') claim that he has to her. Reading this emphasis on exclusivity back into the red and white sky extends the meaning of the metaphor so that it includes both Lucrece's beauty and her chastity. In the language of the red and white sky, Lucrece's physical beauty becomes indivisible from her morality: they are both represented by her red and white, and, implicitly, the movement from one to the other in her blush. Yet the red sky, as in *Venus and Adonis*, also presages danger. The extended metaphor turns the red and white of Lucrece's beauty into an omen of her doom. This layering of meaning in her red and white is the first sign that the characteristics for which Lucrece is valued — her beauty and her chastity — are also the characteristics which endanger her.

All of this, the narrator prefaces, occurred 'haply'. The New Cambridge Shakespeare editor John Roe glosses 'haply' as 'perhaps' or 'by chance'.[74] If this is 'perhaps' why Tarquin acted then our explicit attention is drawn to the role of our narrator, whose words become conjecture. Perhaps this is why Tarquin acted as he did, but equally, perhaps it is not; the poem dares to ask: who knows? The ambiguity of 'haply' draws attention to the narrator's role as a creator of meaning. He guides the reader through the events of the poem inferring cause and effect, motive and feeling, and ultimately, creating a plot: a teleological narrative where otherwise there would just be occurrences. 'Perhaps' emphasises that there are some parts of the narrative — in this case,

[74] Roe (1992), 143.

Tarquin's precise motivation — which remain obscure even to the narrator. Ultimately, if the cause of Tarquin's actions must be inferred, suspected, or imagined rather than definitively known — if we must live in 'perhaps' — then this opacity and lack of narratorial insight casts a long shadow over the rest of the poem. Furthermore, whilst the intention of Collatine's oration can hardly have been the destruction of the chastity and beauty that he prizes so much, that is precisely their consequence. The poem begins by explicitly undermining the relationship between how words are intended, what they mean, and what they can do. Even if these relations can be partly established by convention, assumption, or authority, they are far from stable in the world of 'haply'.

The opening of the poem works to collapse distinctions between Collatine and Tarquin, which further works to collapse categories of meaning: what is the difference between a husband and a rapist? The two men, it seems, are an equal match for one another in their relentlessness: the 'bateless' and 'keen' Tarquin, and Collatine who 'did not let'. A further parallel is drawn between the two men because just as Tarquin's actions are inexplicable to the narrator, so are Collatine's: 'why', he asks, 'is Collatine the publisher / Of that rich jewel he should keep unknown / From thievish ears, because it is his own?' (33-35). The narrator offers no answer to this question, instead he attempts again to understand why Tarquin acts as he does: 'perchance [Collatine's] boast of Lucrece' sovereignty / Suggested this proud issue of a king' (36-37). The narrator's question is worth pursuing: why does Collatine go to such lengths to praise his wife in public? The Petrarchan nature of his praise has been noted elsewhere, and to speak of one's wife in such terms is relatively unusual.[75] The fundamental condition of Petrarchan verse is want: the beloved is always out of reach, always disdainful, always cold, always belonging to another. Admittedly, Collatine and

[75] See Enterline for a fuller analysis of Collatine's Petrarchan praise, and Margaret Rice Vasileiou who writes that 'the Petrarchan metaphors deployed in the poem motivate desire and violence'. Enterline (2000), 30; Margaret Rice Vasileiou, 'Violence, Visual Metaphor, and the "True" Lucrece', *Studies in English Literature, 1500- 1900,* 51 (2011), 47-63, 48.

Lucrece are apart, which goes some way to explaining why he evokes a poetic tradition predicated on frustrated and unconsummated desire to talk about his wife, but Collatine talks about Lucrece as though he were not her husband, but her seducer. His Petrarchan praise would be more appropriate to Tarquin, and indeed it is echoed in his later blazon of Lucrece's naked body. Collatine should be defending his wife's chastity, not making an assault on it, but he speaks of what he already has as though he wanted for it. In effect, both men position themselves as suitors to Lucrece. The contest between Collatine and Tarquin frames the entire poem, and Tarquin's rape of Lucrece is repeatedly discussed as a crime against Collatine, not least by Tarquin in his lengthy 'If Collatinus dream of my intent' speech (218), and, as Smith points out, by Lucrece herself.[76] Conceptualising rape as a property crime against a woman's husband or father is conventional in this period, but in *Lucrece*, it is one of a series of techniques used to erode the reader's sympathy for Lucrece.[77] In this case, by making the rape a question of competing male powers, and Lucrece's body the space on which they explore their rival claims, rather than an active agent of her own will or desire.

Both Collatine and Tarquin use Lucrece's red and white body to achieve their own aims, aims which might not be as distinct as they first seem. That the 'real' intention of Petrarchan poetry was to impress other men within a 'homosocial literary network' has been extensively documented.[78] Jeffrey Masten writes that the Petrarchan sonnet

> was in particular a public, courtly genre, circulating widely, expressing, in Arthur Marotti's familiar formulation, 'social, political, and economic suits in the language of love'; furthermore, this poetic practice was often specifically gendered; Petrarchan sonnets, though often written *to* and *about* women, were circulating between men and registering *male* 'suits': courtiership as courtship.[79]

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[76] Smith (2009), 415.
[77] Catty suggests that 'rape in the early modern period was in transition from "property crime" to "crime against the person"'. Catty (2011), xiv.
[78] Chloe K. Preedy, "'I am no woman, I": Gender, Sexuality, and Power in Elizabethan Erotic Verse', *e-Pisteme*, 2 (2009), 46-57, 47.
[79] Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Dram* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 44.

Might we picture these opening stanzas then, as a sort of literary salon, where Collatine speaks in praise of his lover in front of all his friends? Such a scene would hardly be unusual in early modern literary circles. Moreover, as Heather Dubrow argues, 'an often neglected aspect of Petrarchism' is 'the significance of competition, whether with other poets or other lovers'.[80] By describing his wife in such adulatory terms, Collatine seeks to bond himself to his male audience, but he also invites their competition. Collatine is described as the 'publisher' of his wife's beauty, which further extends this literary metaphor; he makes his wife's beauty public, which is in direct competition with the values of chastity. Collatine's Petrarchan description of Lucrece's beauty sets the tone for Tarquin's pursuit of Lucrece not only in the subject of his praise, but in its means of expression. Lisa Starks-Estes has shown how the 'rhetorical figures of Petrarchan poetry shape, control, and determine Tarquin's self-reasoning'.[81] From the poem's outset, Lucrece's body is a site for masculine grand-standing: a place for a man to assert his kinship with or dominance over other men. In Collatine's case, he narrates Lucrece's body to inspire jealousy in other men; later, Tarquin will narrate it to sexually gratify himself.

The poem's most extended example of a man drawing meaning from a woman's silence occurs when Tarquin first arrives at Collatium and is warmly welcomed by Lucrece, whose blushing face is extensively narrated:

> When at Collatium this false lord arrived,
> Well was he welcomed by the Roman dame,
> Within whose face beauty and virtue strived
> Which of them both should underprop her fame:
> When virtue bragg'd, beauty would blush for shame;
> When beauty boasted blushes, in despite
> Virtue would stain that o'er with silver white.
>
> But beauty, in that white intituled,

[80] Heather Dubrow, *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and its Counterdiscourses* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 2.
[81] Starks-Estes (2014), 118.

> From Venus' doves doth challenge that fair field:
> Then virtue claims from beauty beauty's red,
> Which virtue gave the golden age to gild
> Their silver cheeks, and call'd it then their shield;
> Teaching them thus to use it in the fight,
> When shame assail'd, the red should fence the white.
> This heraldry in Lucrece' face was seen,
> Argued by beauty's red and virtue's white
> Of either's colour was the other queen,
> Proving from world's minority their right:
> Yet their ambition makes them still to fight;
> The sovereignty of either being so great,
> That oft they interchange each other's seat.
> Their silent war of lilies and of roses,
> Which Tarquin view'd in her fair face's field (50-70)

The narrator slips between his own position outside the action of the poem and Tarquin's position within it in a manner which does away with any notion of his disinterest. In these lines, both Tarquin and the narrator enjoy Lucrece's silent beauty. No attempt is made on the narrator's part to communicate Lucrece's impression of the encounter; we see as Tarquin sees. These lines, with their repeated invocation of red and white, have been singled out by some critics as a particularly rhetorically poor section of the poem. [82] Reading these lines alongside the first stanza, in which Lucrece's beauty and virtue are linked together in Collatine's oration of her blush, will help us to make sense of them. The reader's attention is drawn to the fluctuation of Lucrece's blush, which alters between redness and whiteness. At the start of the poem, Collatine understood this interchange of red and white as the harmonious co-existence of Beauty and Virtue, but here the narrator and Tarquin imagine the two colours, and two qualities, in discord. At first, Beauty is associated with redness or blushing, and Virtue with whiteness or blanching, but there is an exchange in lines 57-63, in which Beauty claims whiteness and Virtue claims redness. Virtue's redness is the blush of shame: 'which Virtue gave the golden age to gild / Their silver cheeks, and

[82] Bal (2006) notes that the entire poem has been 'blamed for its rhetorical wordiness', 48. See also Vasileiou who writes that pre-1980 the poem was dismissed 'for ostentatious rhetoric', 47.

called it then their shield; / Teaching them to use it in the fight'. The martial imagery is, of course, a conventional feature of both classical and Petrarchan love poetry, but it is worth pressing on what 'the fight' might be. The assailant is 'shame', against which the body offers a blush. Lucrece's body offers the blush as a pre-emptive public communication of her innocence, suggesting that she can expect to be wrongly accused. The narrator assumes that Lucrece's innocent blush will be interpreted as proof of her innocence, even in the context of a poem which demonstrates how ambiguous the body's material communications can be. Just as Venus silenced her body in a swoon in an attempt to empower herself within the confines of the Petrarchan dynamic, so too does *Lucrece* moot the idea that Lucrece's most powerful communication is her silence, all the while underscoring how weak a defence silence is in the face of a real threat.

William Slights lists Tarquin as one of the 'would be moralizers' who commits 'egregious misreadings' of the 'notoriously ambiguous' blush in his work on blushing in Shakespeare, and whilst I agree that Tarquin manipulates Lucrece's blush, I would suggest that moralizing has very little to do with it.[83] As the poem progresses, we will find that Tarquin repeatedly uses Lucrece's silent blush against her not to moralize, but to exploit the gap between Lucrece's outer appearance and inside emotions to his own erotic ends. He begins this process in these lines. By imagining that the Beauty and Virtue of her body are already at war, Tarquin starts to excuse his violent intent by claiming that Lucrece's body is already the site of militaristic violence, and that he is simply another competitor stepping out onto the battlefield. Tarquin imagines himself immediately yielding to Lucrece; he is a 'coward captive' (76). This is the first, but not the last, time that Tarquin will describe himself as Lucrece's victim. Like Venus, Tarquin does not bother himself to inquire

[83] William W. E. Slights, '"Shame's pure blush": Shakespeare and the Ethics of Spectatorship', in *Early Modern Spectatorship: Interpreting English Culture, 1700-1780,* ed. Ronald Huebert and David McNeill (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), 47-76, 48;61.

what emotional experience lies behind Lucrece's fluctuation between red and white. Rather, he reads her face to confirm what he already suspects: that Lucrece is beautiful, and that her body is a site of violence.[84] These lines give us an insight into Tarquin's flawed logic, but they tell us almost nothing about Lucrece. Lucrece's blush does not give us any insight into her internal experience, rather it becomes both the site where the narrator explores Tarquin's interiority, and the site where Tarquin explores and gratifies his own desire.

The perceived legibility of Lucrece's body is contrasted to the perceived illegibility of Tarquin's body, and his skills as a reader are contrasted to her illiteracy. Tarquin makes no display of his harmful intent; his 'inward ill no outward harm expressed' (91). Lucrece's red and white face might be the 'sky of Collatine's delight', in which her beauty and chastity are communicated, but Tarquin's face is like a pale blue sky: 'no cloudy show of stormy blust'ring weather / Doth yet in his fair welkin once appear' (115-116). Tarquin's 'inward ill' is 'coloured with his high estate, / Hiding base sins in pleats of majesty' (91-93).[85] Tarquin assumes and manipulates the honesty of Lucrece's facial colours, even as he uses his own face to dissemble. His facial 'colour' is more like paint used to cover over his interior experience, rather than a blush which might express it. Tarquin projects much meaning onto the changing colours of Lucrece's cheeks, but she is completely unable to read his face:

> But she that never coped with stranger eyes,
> Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,
> Nor read the subtle shining secrecies
> Writ in the glossy margents of such books

[84] Lucrece's conflicting hue echoes a similar description of Venus in *Venus and Adonis*, in which the interplay of red and white in her face is described as a violent conflict: 'To note the fighting conflict of her hue, / How red and white each other did destroy: / But now her cheek was pale, and by and by / It flashed forth fire, as lightning from the sky. (345-348)

[85] Roe notes that the faces of both Lucrece and Tarquin are described in terms of their household colours: Lucrece's 'heraldry' and Tarquin who 'coloured with his high estate. Roe (1992), 148. This image explicitly links their personal behaviour, down to the moral receptiveness of their skin, with the honour of their families and households. The association recurs across the poem. Tarquin worries that his family heraldry will contain 'some loathsome dash [..] to cipher me' (206-207) in the future.

> She touched no unknown baits, nor feared no hooks;
> Nor could she moralise his wanton sight,
> More than his eyes were opened to the light. (99-105)

Tarquin kept some 'secrecies', but his looks were also 'parling', that is, 'speaking', yet Lucrece could not interpret them. There is a fundamental breakdown in communication between Tarquin and Lucrece in this section of the poem. This breakdown is precipitated both by Tarquin's ability to hide his true feelings, and Lucrece's inability as a reader. Even when Tarquin's eyes are communicating, Lucrece is not able to see, interpret, and respond to that communication. Her illiteracy is rooted not only in her chastity but in her lack of social experience. She has lived a cloistered life, and though she is a wife, and so has some sexual experience, her social isolation and the chastity for which her husband so prizes her contrive to make her unable to see the sexual desire that is seemingly writ large all over Tarquin's face, even when his eyes are likened to books and his lust to marginalia. The reader seems invited at this moment to contrast his own ability as a reader, able to 'pick' meaning from the text, with Lucrece's inability as a reader, and Tarquin's ability both as a reader and as a communicator. Tarquin's body is giving forth 'subtle shining secrecies' and because the narrator makes those signs explicit for the reader, unlike Lucrece, we cannot miss them. The narrator encourages the reader's sense of himself as highly competent, worldly, and knowing by making explicit Lucrece's incompetence, innocence, and lack of sexual and social knowledge. As such, the text courts the reader's sense of superiority over Lucrece and sense of affinity with Tarquin. We know more than Lucrece does, as much as Tarquin does, and by flattering our comprehension skills, the narrator encourages us to shift our allegiance to Tarquin, our equal in readerly skill and worldly sexual knowledge.

The sense of collusion between narrator, Tarquin, and reader intensifies when together they burlesque Collatine's Petrarchan praise of Lucrece. Breitenberg writes that the passage reads 'as if Shakespeare were filling in readers who unfortunately missed Collatine's earlier disclosure',

suggesting that the poet 'identifies his male readers with male characters by presenting Lucrece as a "text" within the poem' susceptible to various kinds of male readership.[86] Lucrece is asleep, and Tarquin takes the opportunity to stare at her with 'lewd unhallowed eyes' (392). The narrator recites a list of Petrarchan compliments, observing hr 'lily hand' and 'rosy cheek' (386); her other 'perfect white' hand (393); her 'pearly sweat' (396); 'her hair like golden threads (400); 'her breasts like ivory globes circled with blue' (407); 'her azure veins, her alabaster skin, / Her coral lips, her snow-white dimpled chin' (419-420). The gaze is Tarquin's, but the narrator articulates what Tarquin sees, emphasising their collusion. In these lines, we are confronted once again with the gulf between how a bodily communication is intended and how it is received. Roe notes of this passage in particular that 'an unconscious, innocent posture calls forth a voluptuous response'.[87] Lucrece sleeps with her hand under her cheek, an action which the narrator describes as 'coz'ning the pillow of a lawful kiss' (387). Lucrece's sleeping body is described as an active agent who can 'cozen'; she refuses even 'lawful' amorous activity: the narrator implies that Lucrece is a cheat and a prude. The agency ascribed by the narrator to Lucrece's unconscious body is hardly surprising given how Tarquin read the fluctuations of her face earlier in the poem, and the effect is the same: the narrator shifts agency, and therefore responsibility, from Tarquin to Lucrece. Lucrece's breath moves her hair, which the narrator finds particularly sexually exciting, exclaiming: 'O modest wantons, wanton modesty!' (401). This oxymoronic description emphasises the power that male readers have to dictate the meaning of the bodily texts that they read: they can even describe modesty as wantonness, yoking together diametrically opposed meanings in their readings. By ascribing agency to Lucrece's sleeping body, the narrator colludes with Tarquin to divest him of responsibility for his actions, and to suggest that Lucrece's body is

[86] Breitenberg (1996), 117.
[87] Roe (1992), 29.

signalling sexual availability, even if, were she given the opportunity to speak, she would deny this categorically.

Recognising that the narrator and Tarquin collude to create distance between the reader and Lucrece and closeness between the reader and Tarquin means that it can come as no surprise to discover that when Lucrece finally does speak, her oratory only has the effect of increasing Tarquin's lust, and that the reader understands these words as sexually suggestive:

> My sighs like whirlwinds labour hence to heave thee,
> If ever man were moved with woman's moans,
> Be moved with my tears, my sighs, my groans. (586-588)

So totally has the narrator eroded the reader's sympathy for Lucrece, and emotionally aligned the reader with Tarquin that at this point in the text, we see and hear as Tarquin does, opening up the space for a reading which hears sexual responsiveness in Lucrece's expressions of terror. Lucrece's bodily communications are turned entirely on their head, until they communicate the opposite of what they intended. We are instructed in this misreading by Tarquin, who repeatedly demonstrates his power to dictate the meaning of signs. This ability extends beyond Lucrece's body. For example, Tarquin interprets the obstacles on his way to Lucrece's door not as warning signs against his intention, but further spurs towards it: 'he in the worst sense consters their denial' (324). Tarquin's ability to misread signs in this way is directly linked to his own sense of himself as a warrior, not a rapist. He interprets 'all these poor forbiddings' in a way that reinforces his own sense of identity: as 'little frosts that sometime threat the spring, / To add a more rejoicing to the prime' (331-332). Tarquin does not use the material world around him to increase his knowledge, rather he uses it to cynically reaffirm his own self-serving presuppositions.

Tarquin undertakes a lengthy campaign of persuasion in an attempt to seduce Lucrece. When his rhetoric fails, he relies on his superior physical strength to carry out his desire. Lucrece

finds that the silence which was meant to be her best defence fails, but so do her words. Tarquin is unmoved by her pleas for pity:

> 'Have done', quoth he, 'my uncontrolled tide
> Turns not, but swells the higher by this let
> [...]
> The petty streams that pay a daily debt
> To their salt sovereign with their fresh fall's haste,
> Add to his flow, but alter not his taste.' (645-652)

The image of sexual desire as a swelling tide is familiar to us from *Venus and Adonis*, and here it is governed by the same logic as Angelo's words to Isabella in *Measure for Measure*:

> Who will believe thee, Isabel?
> My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,
> My vouch against you, and my place i' the state,
> Will so your accusation overweigh,
> That you shall stifle in your own report
> And smell of calumny. I have begun,
> And now I give my sensual race the rein:
> Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;
> Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes,
> That banish what they sue for;
> [...]
> As for you,
> Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.[88]

Both Tarquin and Angelo categorically state that they are at best indifferent to, and at worst, actively aroused by, female distress. Angelo calls Isabella's blushes 'prolixious', that is tedious, superfluous, and long-winded, and tells her that they 'banish what they sue for'. Isabella's blushes might communicate her chaste horror, but they only increase Angelo's ardour. So too do Lucrece's pleas to Tarquin 'add to the flow' of his lust: in a particularly suggestive image, they 'swell' it. Both men abdicate responsibility for their actions by suggesting that once set in motion, their sexual desire is out of their control. Tarquin's desire is an 'uncontrolled tide', whilst Angelo tells Isabella: 'I have begun, / And now I give my sensual race the rein'. But if both men proclaim their

[88] William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure,* ed. Brian Gibbons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), II.iv.167-180. Cf. Angelo's 'sharp appetite' with Tarquin's 'keen appetite' which has a 'bateless edge' (9), that is, an edge which 'cannot be blunted' (OED).

lack of control over their own bodies, they also take pains to express their physical and social power over the women in question. In Tarquin's case, his social threat to Lucrece's reputation is intimately connected to physical violence.

> 'No more', quoth he. 'By heaven, I will not hear thee
> Yield to my love; if not, enforced hate,
> Instead of love's coy touch, shall rudely tear thee.
> That done, despitefully I mean to bear thee
> Unto the base bed of some rascal groom
> To be thy partner in this shameful doom.' (666-672)

Tarquin threatens increased physical violence to Lucrece should she refuse to submit to him, but his final flourish is the threat of social shame that would come from being found in a servant's bed. He threatens to control the narrative, to create a new story with Lucrece's body, which he makes clear is his to do with what he will in life or in death. Angelo too leans on his capacity to inflict physical violence, in his case by threatening violence against Isabella's brother. Angelo also evokes his ability to create, control, and disseminate meaning: his 'false o'erweighs [Isabella's] true'. Both Tarquin and Angelo knowingly court women's silence in their threats. Tarquin threatens to silence Lucrece by killing her, but Angelo does not need to go that far because he knows when he asks 'who will believe thee Isabel?' that the answer is 'no one'. In both texts, men engage in a manipulative linguistic violation as a precursor to a material violation of a woman's body. They can rely on their physical power, but they know that the useful ambiguity of women's silence is so thorough going that their rhetorical power should be sufficient for the task in hand.

Tarquin abdicates control over his own body whilst claiming total control over Lucrece's body even as he explains to her directly why he has decided to assault her. He starts off speaking 'like a trumpet' (470), but then silences himself, and tries to communicate through his 'dumb demeanour' (474). Neither strategy is successful in silencing Lucrece's questions:

> But she with vehement prayers urgeth still
> Under what colour he commits this ill.

> Thus he replies: 'The colour in thy face,
> That even for anger makes the lily pale,
> And the red rose blush at her own disgrace,
> Shall plead for me and tell my loving tale:
> Under that colour am I come to scale
> Thy never-conquer'd fort: the fault is thine,
> For those thine eyes betray thee unto mine. (475-483)

Lucrece's question — 'under what colour' — returns to the system of heraldry through which Tarquin read Lucrece's own face at the beginning of the poem. By asking for Tarquin's household allegiance, Lucrece implies her suspicion that Tarquin's act is somehow politically motivated, alluding to the idea that this entire poem is really about the rivalry between Tarquin and Collatine. Tarquin picks up on Lucrece's martial language — 'the colour in thy face […] under that colour' — but twists the metaphor to blame her for her own rape: 'the fault is thine'. Tarquin is sexually attracted to Lucrece's red and white beauty, an attraction which he expresses in the same way that her husband Collatine did, but which ultimately motivates him to rape, rather than to Collatine's entirely Petrarchan, and therefore unconsummated, passion. The image is perversely chivalric: Tarquin undertakes his action under Lucrece's colour, and thus in her honour, as a knight might wear a sash in his lady's colours. Lucrece' body becomes both the motivation for the action and the site on which it is performed: the 'never conquer'd fort'. Tarquin understands Lucrece's question about whether the rape is a political act, but he rejects that understanding by acting not under his familial colours, but under Lucrece's own colours. He is temporarily allied to his *idea* of Lucrece: an idea which threatens the safety of her actual material body. In a courtly romance plot, such a betrayal of his family could communicate Tarquin's loyalty to his mistress, but here it represents the dangers of Tarquin stepping outside the bounds of familial reputation and doing exactly what he wants with no concern for the wider social and political consequences of his newfound 'loyalty' to his mistress.

Tarquin repeatedly refuses to accept his own agency over his actions, and thus refuses to accept responsibility for his crime against Lucrece. He begins, once again, to blame her for his actions:

> Thy beauty hath ensnared thee to this night,
> Where thou with patience must my will abide,
> My will that marks thee for my earth's delight,
> Which I to conquer sought with all my might;
> But as reproof and reason beat it dead,
> By thy bright beauty was it newly bred. (485-490)

Lucrece's beauty is not an autonomous actor, yet Tarquin ascribes great agency to it. He positions it as Lucrece's enemy, suggesting that it is Lucrece's beauty that has 'ensnared' her, not Tarquin. Just as Tarquin argues that Lucrece's beauty is somehow divisible and separate to her, to the extent that it can be her enemy, so too does he argue that his will is separate to him. He has sought to 'conquer' it, but it is in league with Lucrece's beauty against Tarquin's better judgement. Effectively, Tarquin removes Lucrece's body from his description of the rape by suggesting that the rape is a contest between two abstract concepts — his will and his reason — rather than an act of violence which Tarquin commits against Lucrece's person. Tarquin describes both himself and Lucrece as victims of her beauty, suggesting that although neither of them will the rape, it will happen nonetheless. Tarquin's passivity in the face of his sexual desire contrasts the great agency that the narrator ascribed to Lucrece's sleeping form earlier in the poem.

Tarquin knows that committing the rape risks his ruin— 'I know what thorns the growing rose defends, / I think the honey guarded with a sting' (492-493) — but he does it anyway because he 'must': 'this night I must enjoy thee, / If thou deny then force must work my way' (512-513). This image echoes one found in *Venus and Adonis*: 'Foul words and frowns must not repel a lover: / What though the rose have prickles, yet 'tis plucked' (573-574). These words narrate a kiss between Venus and Adonis, and when the relatively conventional image is deployed in that

context, it ironically highlights the impotence of Venus as a suitor, whose rose, even when plucked, yields no more than a kiss. The prickles that defend Adonis are his own frowns and foul words, but Lucrece is defended not by her own impotent communications, but by the 'sting' of her husband's revenge. The question, once again, becomes whether Tarquin is willing to challenge Collatine, who is powerful to defend himself in a way that Lucrece is not. The rape is really about their rivalry; it is merely played out on the space of Lucrece's body.

Venus was unable to distinguish between the different emotions that changed Adonis' complexion, responding erotically to the colour change from white to red and back again without further consideration of the emotional root of that change. Tarquin, however, locates the fluctuation in Lucrece's complexion to specific emotions: 'The colour in thy face, / That even for anger makes the lily pale, / And the red rose blush at her own disgrace' (477-479). Tarquin identifies that Lucrece is pale from anger, and red from disgrace. He responds erotically to these negative emotions, which enhances the joyful cruelty of the poem, particularly when Tarquin's enjoyment of Lucrece's discomfort is contrasted to Venus, who seems oblivious rather than sadistic. Tarquin's words to Lucrece — that her face 'shall plead for me and tell my loving tale' —gesture in a few different directions. Tarquin seems to be consciously evoking the ambiguity of the blush. He shifts the blame for his actions back to the failures of Lucrece's body— the fault lies in her eyes, in her alluring face — a piece of victim blaming that is foreshadowed in the narrator's early incredulity that Lucrece could not see the danger that was seemingly writ large all over Tarquin's face. Furthermore, her blush will communicate on Tarquin's behalf, perhaps by rescoring her beauty to onlookers, but even more insidiously, by creating ambiguity over her innocence. As we shall see, Lucrece is also fearful about the ambiguity of her blush. Tarquin knows that anyone, any man, can step into the breach between the transmission of the blush and its

reception and interpretation. Tarquin worries about his own ability to advocate for himself, but he does not worry that Lucrece's body will fail to speak on his behalf. He is reliant on the ambiguity of Lucrece's bodily communications, but he is also completely convinced that they will speak on his behalf and in his cause — even in his physical absence. He is not proved decisively wrong. The men believe Lucrece's account of the rape, but the ultimate 'proof' of her innocence is her suicide, not anything that she could say, and certainly not her blush.

Lucrece's face is a text, but it tells Tarquin's story, not her own. Tarquin evokes the communicative abilities of Lucrece's face in comparison to his own inability to speak. His reliance on 'the colour in thy cheeks' to tell his tale recalls his earlier words: 'Why hunt I then for colour or excuses? / All orators are dumb when beauty pleadeth' (267-268), which in turn echoes a sentiment offered by the narrator at the outset of the poem: 'Beauty itself doth of itself persuade / The eyes of men without an orator' (29-30) — beauty speaks for itself. These lines knowingly pun on 'rhetorical colour' and the red and white colour of Lucrece's face.[89] The communicative abilities of Lucrece's red and white face stand in stark contrast to Tarquin's self-proclaimed rhetorical shortcomings. He worries that he cannot come up with a sufficient excuse for the rape:

> O what excuse can my invention make
> When thou shalt charge me with so black a deed?
> Will not my tongue be mute, my frail joints shake,
> Mine eyes forgo their light, my false heart bleed? (225-228)

He worries both that he will be unable to speak — that his tongue will be mute — and that his body will betray some sign of his guilt, by losing his sight, shaking, or by having a 'bleeding heart',

[89] Derek Dunne notes that 'we should be alert to the dual meaning of colour as both hue and a term borrowed from the forensic rhetoric of Quintilian akin to *enargia*, giving something vividness (8.3.62)'. Brian Vickers also notes the rhetorical play that is possible in the word 'colour', arguing that in it 'body, shield, and rhetoric become one'. Dunne (2016), 236; Brian Vickers, *In Defense of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 180.

which is an 'image of extreme sorrow'.[90] William Perkins' 1595 treatise *A Direction for the Government of the Tongue According to Gods Worde* uses the image of the bleeding heart as he instructs his reader in how to 'get a pure heart'. He tells them: 'First, thou must seriously examine thy life and thy conscience for all thy sinnes past: then with a heavie and bleeding heart confesse them to God, utterly condemning they self'.[91] Perkins goes on to advise the penitent sinner to 'spread him selfe upon the crosse of Christ, aplying handes and feete to his pierced handes and his feete, and his wretched heart to Christes bleeding heart'.[92] The image of the bleeding heart is one of total sorrow and repentance. Tarquin's concern is not so much that he will feel this extreme sorrow, but that other people will notice it and guess its source. He implies that his body will communicate against his will, as Lucrece's body communicated against her will. Lucrece was concerned by the misinterpretation of her material communications, but Tarquin worries that people will interpret his body correctly. Yet, even as Tarquin fears the betrayal of his own body, he is confident that Lucrece's body will continue to communicate on his behalf, even in his absence.

The transition in the poem's sympathy from Tarquin to Lucrece happens at a formal level after the rape with two stanzas in which the narrator alternates lines describing the thoughts and actions of Lucrece and Tarquin in turn:

> He like a thievish dog creeps sadly thence:
> She like a wearied lamb lies panting there;
> He scowls and hates himself for his offence;
> She, desperate, with her nails her flesh doth tear;

[90] Cf. 'Hast thou the power straight with thy gory hands / To rip thy image from his bleeding heart?' Wendoll asks himself this question before he embarks on an affair with his friend's wife. Thomas Heywood, *A Woman Killed with Kindness,* ed. Margaret Jane Kidnie (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2017), VI.45-46.
[91] Qtd in *The Unruly Tongue in Early Modern England: Three Treatises,* ed. Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin (Madison MA: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), 43.
[92] Qtd in Vienne-Guerrin (2012), 44. For an overview of images of this kind, see Patricia Simons, 'The Flaming Heart: Pious and Amorous Passions in Early Modern European Medieval and Visual Culture', in *The Feeling Heart in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Meaning, Embodiment, and Making,* eds Katie Barclay and Bronwyn Reddon (New York NY: De Gruyter, 2019), 19-42.

> He faintly flies, sneaking with guilty fear;
> She stays, exclaiming on the direful night;
> He runs, and chides his vanish'd loathed delight. (736-742)

Tarquin leaves, and we do not hear from him again. Lucrece's body, and the poem, become her own until the moment of her suicide, when narrative control over her body passes back to men. Quay argues that '[i]n raping Lucrece of her chastity, Tarquin obliterates the characteristic around which she has been so carefully produced'.[93] In other words, if Lucrece is no longer 'Lucrece the Chaste', then she must negotiate anew her relationship with herself and with the world. Green MacDonald suggests that as 'silence and segregation' are 'indices of female chastity', it is the loss of her chastity which empowers Lucrece to speak.[94] This empowerment happens at a structural level because of the narrative and generic shift away from a quasi-pornographic tale about the extent of male rhetorical and physical power into a female complaint.[95] To lose one's chastity, Lucrece finds, is to be initiated into a world of experience, and Lucrece finds herself acting with a new suspicion: of herself, of others, and ultimately, of the stability of language itself. After her assault, meaning is no longer inherent to particular objects or signs. This loss of faith in the world and its referents is extensively illustrated in her negotiation of her blush. As the narrative shifts, and we begin to see over Lucrece's shoulder, not Tarquin's, we find that Lucrece deeply fears the ambiguity of signs, the very ambiguity on which Tarquin so depended.

Whereas Tarquin's decisive action takes place on the site of someone else's body — a male prerogative — Lucrece is powerless over anyone but herself, and even that power is seriously challenged by Tarquin's act of rape. Bal writes of Lucrece's suicide that

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[93] Quay (1995), 7.
[94] Green MacDonald (1994), 78-79.
[95] For more on the relation of *Lucrece* to the female complaint genre see William P. Weaver, *Untutored Lines: The Making of the English Epyllion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 123-147; and John Kerrigan's introduction to the edited volume *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and 'Female Complaint': A Critical Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1-84.

> the rapist dictates her self-image to her. *His* murder of her subjectivity becomes *her* self-murder. Only by *becoming* the rapist is the woman able to perform an act which, however negative and destructive it may be, is the only illusion of self-determination she has left.[96]

Bal provocatively frames Lucrece's suicide as a kind of self-rape. I would not go quite that far, but it is true that it is only in the second part of the poem that Lucrece is permitted to exercise any agency over her own body, and this empowerment directly leads to her suicide. Sibylle Baumbach is correct to say that 'after the dreadful deed, her body ceases to communicate', but we might see this change as a virtue, rather than a loss, and it is only true until her husband and father return.[97] It is only once Tarquin leaves the narrative frame that Lucrece begins to communicate with more than just her body. The silent woman, forced to tell men's stories with her fluctuating face, finds her voice, and becomes more than just a cipher for male anxiety, lust, and frustration: if only briefly. 'If male contact and exploration results in knowledge', ask Robertson and Rose, 'that is the "mapping" of women's bodies, we need to ask what knowledge is procured for women in such transactions?'[98] I want to refine this question slightly, to ask: what does Lucrece learn in *Lucrece*? The answer, I think, is that she learns just how unstable the world and its referents can be. She learns that men use that instability to seize linguistic and physical power. She learns how they cultivate their suspicion of women's words, arguing for the authenticity of their silent bodily communications instead, all the while twisting the meaning of those material communications to suit their own narratives.

Before the rape, Lucrece demonstrates no concern that her material communications might be misread, but afterwards, she is very concerned about the legibility of her facial expressions and colouration. She worries that because 'my true eyes have never practised how / To cloak offences

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[96] Bal (2006), 46.
[97] Sibylle Baumbach, *Shakespeare and the Art of Physiognomy* (Tirril, Penrith: Humanities-Ebooks, 2008), 83.
[98] Robertson and Rose (2001), 3.

with a cunning brow', everyone will see 'the same disgrace' that she sees in her reflection (748-751). Lucrece implies that the tell-tale sign is a blush: 'upon my cheeks what helpless shame I feel' (756), Her concern finds justification in the words of the narrator, who teases out the gendered dimension of this anxiety: '[t]hough men can cover crimes with bold stern looks, / Poor women's faces are their own fault's books' (1252-1253). Women's faces are legible, but men have superior powers of dissemblance. The 'smoothness' of women's faces 'lays open all the little worms that creep', whilst men's faces 'remain / Cave-keeping evils' (1247-1250). Lucrece has never needed to dissemble, and she struggles to do so. Now that Tarquin is out of the picture, the narrator offers some sympathy to 'poor women'. He reminds the reader 'not that devoured, but that which doth devour is worthy blame' (1256-1257) and that 'proud lords [are] to blame', even if they 'make weak-made women tenants to their shame' (1259-1260). The image of women as 'tenants' is striking: not only do women pay for men's shame, they have to live in it. Yet the narrator still describes Lucrece's face as displaying her 'faults', which is the same word that Tarquin used to excuse the rape — 'the fault is thine'. If Lucrece carried this 'fault' by virtue of being a woman, even whilst she was still 'Lucrece the Chaste' then how much more so must she do now she has lost her chastity? Lucrece's perceived legibility is dangerous because it is open to manipulation by nefarious men, and by neutrally reporting this idea, the narrator reinforces the idea that the meaning of Lucrece's face is open to (mis)interpretation, and that she has no ultimate authority over it.

As we saw with Tarquin, men are intermittently capable of controlling the messages that their faces publish. Women are always 'books': material objects imprinted by another, who controls the meaning of their message.[99] Both Lucrece and Tarquin express their concerns about

[99] There is an interesting parallel discussion in *Macbeth*, in which the idea that one's face might betray one's interior emotions, and so one should take precautions to obscure one's face, is less gendered. After he is betrayed by the Thane of Cawdor, Duncan announces scepticism about his own ability as a physiognomist: 'there's no art / To find the mind's

the publication of the rape in literary terms, each threatening the other with a kind of literary notoriety. Lucrece asks Tarquin: 'wilt thou be the school where Lust shall learn? / Must he in thee read lectures of such shame' (617-618), whilst he threatens her: 'thou, the author of their obloquy, / Shalt have thy trespass cited up in rhymes / And sung by children in succeeding times' (523-525).[100] Lucrece internalises this threat, and after the rape she is concerned that she will be 'made a theme for disputation' (823), and that 'the illiterate, that know not how /To cipher what is writ in learned books / Will quote my loathsome trespass in my looks' (810-812). Lucrece blames herself — *my* trespass — and she worries that her facial expression will become a kind of literary public property, quoted by the illiterate (810), nursemaids (813), and orators (815) alike. The irony here, of course, is that this is exactly how *Lucrece* was received by its early modern audience, who read it in order to extract gobbets for their commonplace books, and who, led by Augustine, endlessly debated Lucrece's culpability in print and in the school room.[101] Lucrece's fears about how her bodily signs would be interpreted, even when she clearly protested her innocence through her words, were clearly not unfounded.

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construction in the face: / He was a gentleman on whom I built / An absolute trust' (I.iv.11-14). Lady Macbeth expresses concern that Macbeth will give away the plot to murder Duncan by his face, which she describes as 'a book where men / May read strange matters' I.v.53-54). He agrees, advising her in turn that 'false face must hide what the false heart doth know' (I.vii.94-95) and later, that they must 'make our faces vizards to our hearts, / Disguising what they are' (III.ii.34-35). In turn, Lady Macbeth promises to 'guild the faces of the grooms' (II.ii.59) with blood, which is then taken as evidence of their guilt by Lennox (II.iii.94-98). Later, Macbeth thinks that Banquo has been murdered because the murderer appears with blood on his face (III.iv.13). When things start to come apart, Macbeth gets angry at his servant, calling him a 'cream-face loon' (V.iii.11) and advising him to 'go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear […] those linen cheeks of thine / Are counsellors to fear' (V.iii.16-18). William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. A. R. Braunmuller, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[100] Tarquin's threat here is to Lucrece's children. He says that their paternity will always be in doubt.

[101] Peter Stallybrass and Roger Chartier write about Lucrece's popularity as a source for commonplace books, suggesting that the inclusion of quotation marks in early printed editions of the poems amounts to them being 'marked up for commonplacing'. Peter Stallybrass and Roger Chartier, 'Reading and Authorship: The Circulation of Shakespeare 1590-1619', in *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare and the Text*, ed. Andrew Murphy (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), 35-56, 46. For a brief summary of the legacy of Augustine's doubt over Lucrece's innocence see Roberts (2002), 102-112 and for more on *Lucrece* as a source for commonplace books see Roberts (2002) 129-142.

The act of physiognomy tends to reflect and reinforce the dominant sex, class, and, as we shall discover in the next chapter, putatively racial, hierarchies of power in a given text. The text explores the knotty intersection of gendered and class-based power in the relationships that Lucrece has with her maid and groom. Lucrece calls over her maid, who notices that something is wrong. Lucrece has been crying so much that her cheeks are wet; they 'seem so / As winter meads when sun doth melt their snow' (1216-1217). Her maid does not understand why Lucrece is so sad, but she starts crying because she is 'enforced by sympathy' (1229) to do so. The maid's own emotional display is not prompted by her personal internal feelings; she merely mirrors Lucrece's sadness. This role in turn reflects her role within the house: she is there for whatever Lucrece needs her to do.[102] The relationship between Lucrece and her maid is influenced by their respective positions in the class hierarchy, but it does not seem right to rob it of all its emotional intimacy. The narrator dismisses the affinity between the women with a smug gloss: 'Their gentle sex to weep are often willing, / Grieving themselves to guess at other's smarts' (1237-1238). This snipe at once belittles the very great and touching empathy of the maid and draws a distinction on the basis of sex when it comes to reading faces. Men read women's faces like a book on which their internal lives are printed; when women read faces, they merely 'guess' at something internal, something to which, we might infer, they have no real access. Accurate physiognomy, it is implied, is the preserve of men: even if their ability to convert external signs into accurate readings into appropriate behaviour is far from certain.

Lucrece finds no solace in her maid's tears, telling her: 'it small avails my mood; / If tears could help, mine own would do me good' (1273-1274). Lucrece's rejection of her maid's empathetic mirroring seems strange, given that she previously longed for this kind of company:

[102] Kerrigan suggests that 'Shakespeare adapts a commonplace' in the exchange between Lucrece and her maid, noting that 'women were thought responsive readers of others' sorrow'. Kerrigan (1991), 30.

> I have no one to blush with me,
> To cross their arms and hang their heads with mine,
> To mask their brows and hide their infamy (792-794)

Lucrece's ideal companion is someone who blushes and feels deep shame of her own accord: someone to 'hide *their* infamy', not Lucrece's. Lucrece cannot accept that her maid could be such a person. Perhaps because Lucrece imagines that her maid has never been sexually assaulted, perhaps because the maid is unmarried, and therefore virginal rather than chaste, but equally perhaps because lower class women were imagined to be less sensitive about their chastity: as when Emilia shocks Desdemona with her easy-going attitude to adultery in *Othello*.[103] When the maid eventually asks Lucrece what the matter is, she declines to tell her because 'the repetition cannot make it less' (1285). Lucrece weeps but does not blush in front of her maid, and she does not worry about discovery at her hands. The maid's skills as a physiognomist are limited by her gender and class status. She can see that Lucrece is upset, she can extend her own empathetic emotional response, but she cannot read her face to discover the cause of her sadness and does not pry any further. In turn, Lucrece does not worry that the maid's actions will extend beyond mirroring Lucrece's own actions. So confident is Lucrece that she will not arouse suspicion in the maid that she even asks after Tarquin: '"But tell me, girl, when went" — and there she stayed / Till after a deep groan — "Tarquin from hence"' (1275-1276).

The relationship that Lucrece has with her maid is markedly different to that she has with her groom:

> The homely villain court'sies to her low;
> And, blushing on her, with a steadfast eye
> Receives the scroll without a yes or no,
> And forth with bashful innocence doth hie.
> But they whose guilt within their bosoms lie
> Imagine every eye beholds their blame;

[103] Cf. the conversation between Emilia and Desdemona in *Othello* IV.iii. Desdemona expresses great shock at the idea that a woman would cuckold her husband whilst Emilia accepts it as a fact of life. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

> For Lucrece thought he blush'd to see her shame,
>
> When, silly groom, God wot, it was defect
> Of spirit, life, and bold audacity.
> Such harmless creatures have a true respect
> To talk in deeds, while others saucily
> Promise more speed, but do it leisurely.
> Even so this pattern of the worn-out age
> Pawned honest looks, but laid no words to gage. (1338-1351)

The reader knows that the groom's blush is born from 'bashful innocence' (1341) because the narrator tells us so. Lucrece, who does not have the benefit of his voice in her ear, is left to work out the meaning of the groom's blush on her own: she 'thought he blushed to see her shame' (1344). This moment is poignant; Roe points out that 'Lucrece, who was once an innocent reader of facial expressions [...] now finds herself anxiously interpreting the least glance as a sign that her shame has been detected'.[104] Not only does this moment signal Lucrece's descent into suspicion, it also suggests her new self-consciousness. I want to suggest that Lucrece was not so much an innocent reader of facial expressions before her assault, as Roe would have it; rather, she was an inaccurate and inexperienced reader. Moreover, she did not feel the need to dissemble or to hide her own facial expressions, because she had nothing to obscure. Now, however, she finds herself terrified of exposure and desperate for clues about she is being perceived. Unlike her maid, whom Lucrece assumed was ignorant of her interior state, Lucrece assumes that her groom has some level of physiognomic skill. This assumption seems gendered, perhaps even linked to sexual experience. Nonetheless, there is an internal inconsistency in how Lucrece understands her own blush and that of the groom which suggests again the power of class hierarchy in this relationship. Lucrece assumes that her own face displays her shame, making it legible to the groom. But far from seeing the groom's blush as evidence of his internal personal state, she sees it as a reflection of her shame, just as the Maid's weeping reflected Lucrece's own sadness. In this poem, the faces of less

[104] Roe (1992), 207.

powerful characters reflect the emotions of more powerful characters. For the first 600 lines of the poem, Tarquin is the protagonist, and he sees his own desire reflected back to him in the red and white of Lucrece's face. Now that Lucrece controls the narrative, she sees her own guilt reflected back in her servants' faces.

However, the dynamic between Lucrece and her Groom is less stable than that between Lucrece and her Maid. At first, Lucrece imagines the Groom's blush to be merely a reflection of her own shame, but the emphasis shifts in the next stanza as they stand a while, awkwardly blushing at one another:

> His kindled duty kindled her mistrust,
> That two red fires in both their faces blazed;
> She thought he blush'd, as knowing Tarquin's lust,
> And, blushing with him, wistly on him gazed;
> Her earnest eye did make him more amazed:
> The more she saw the blood his cheeks replenish,
> The more she thought he spied in her some blemish. (1338-1358)

Lucrece no longer worries that the Groom blushes because he sees her shame, rather, she worries that 'he blush'd, as knowing Tarquin's lust'. Perhaps all that is meant by these lines is Lucrece's fear that the Groom has worked out that Tarquin has raped Lucrece, but perhaps we are meant to think the Groom *knows* Tarquin's lust very intimately. He is the first man with whom Lucrece has been alone since the assault. It is possible that he is the very same Groom in whose bed Tarquin threatened to lay the dead Lucrece, heightening the sense of a sexual threat. His cheeks keep renewing his blush, which could perhaps be misinterpreted not as repeated blushes but as the more intense and longer-lasting redness of sexual arousal: when Tarquin rapes Lucrece, his face is described as 'hot' (682), and we know from *Venus and Adonis* how red faces are associated with sexual arousal In turn, it is possible that this misreading might lead Lucrece to perceive the Groom as a sexual threat. Lucrece attempts to read Groom's face, but whether she thinks he is lusting after her, or merely that he knows about the assault, she interprets the blush incorrectly. At this moment,

the poem draws our attention to how poor a reader she is, implicitly contrasting her lack of physiognomic skill to Tarquin, who was a careless reader, but who knew how to manipulate the ambiguity of Lucrece's bodily signs for his own pleasure. Whatever the precise contours of her reading, Lucrece worries that her body is telling Tarquin's story to the Groom, that her body has become a repository for male experience, a means through which men can communicate with one another in a way that is entirely outside her control. The ending of the poem will prove that these fears are founded in reality.

After Lucrece has sent her letter, she finds herself tired of crying: 'For now 'tis stale to sigh, to weep and groan: / So woe has wearied woe, moan tired moan' (1362-1363). So she looks 'for means to mourn some newer way' (1365) and turns to a painting of Troy, on which she tries out her newly minted physiognomic skills.[105] She finds it easy to read the faces at first, admiring the painterly 'art / Of physiognomy' that she can see in the faces of Ajax and Ulysses, whose 'manners [are] most expertly told' (1379): 'the face of either ciphered either's heart' (1396). Hecuba is trickier; she is so aged by the siege that 'of what she was no semblance did remain' (1453. Yet Lucrece takes time to sympathise and to 'drop sweet balm in Priam's painted wound' (1466). Her empathy, however, does not extend to Helen: 'show me the strumpet that began this stir', she says, '[t]hat with my nails her beauty I may tear' (1471-1472). This act is no less cruel than that to which Lucrece has already subjected herself: 'she, desperate, with her nails her flesh doth tear' (739).[106] Just a few lines later, she identifies Tarquin with Paris, and makes it clear that she primarily blames Paris for the fall of Troy asking: '[w]hy should the private pleasures of some one / Become the public plague of many moe?' (1478-1479). Through this identification, Lucrece

[105] For a reading that 'Lucrece's ekphrasis rewrites the masculine and historical orientations of epic to find woman — mother, mistress, wife, sexual prey — deeply inscribed within' see Green MacDonald (1994) 91.
[106] Tearing of the skin, along with dishevelled hair, is a conventional image within rape narratives. See Catty (2011), 26.

demonstrates her understanding of the public consequences of Tarquin's actions, even as he rejected them.

There is a subtle shift in the following stanzas as she transfers blame from Helen onto three men: Paris, Priam, and Sinon. Paris is blamed for acting in the 'heat of lust' (1473); Priam is blamed for his inability to control Paris: 'Had doting Priam checked his son's desire, / Troy had been bright with fame, and not with fire' (1490-1491). The similarity between Paris and Tarquin is evident, but Lucrece must closely associates Tarquin with Sinon, whose face she finds almost impossible to read. He has '[c]heeks neither red nor pale, but mingled so / That blushing red no guilty instance gave, / Nor ashy pale the fear that false hearts have' (1510- 1513). Sinon is both red and white, an interim state that blots the legibility of his face. Lucrece reads this lack of facial clarity back into her own situation, understanding the contribution that her inexperience as a physiognomist made to Tarquin's assault: 'For even as subtle Sinon here is painted [...] To me came Tarquin armed to beguile' (1541-1544). Sinon, of course, convinced the Trojans to take the Trojan Horse into the city, thus winning the siege for the Greeks. Like Tarquin, he appeared as a friend and was welcomed, only to brutally trick and deceive his host. Lucrece explicitly links this deceit to Sinon's (and by extension Tarquin's) seemingly harmless physical appearance. So consumed by fury is Lucrece that she 'tears the senseless Sinon with her nails' (1564), subjecting him to the punishment to which she has already subjected herself, but which she was unable to inflict on Tarquin. In doing so, she renders his face utterly illegible.

When Collatine gets back, Lucrece stops blushing. Instead, she turns pale. This blanching is repeatedly emphasized: she extends a 'bloodless hand' (1597) to her husband, who observes her 'her lively colour killed with deadly cares' (1593), and asks 'what spite hath thy fair colour spent?' (1600); the narrator describes her as a 'pale swan' (1611). As Adonis' blood was repurposed at the

end of *Venus and Adonis* to signify only the material life of the body, so too is the meaning of Lucrece's blood altered at the end of *Lucrece*. Blood becomes a way of signifying the material body and dividing it from the interior life of the mind. 'Though my gross blood be stained with this abuse,' explains Lucrece, '[i]mmaculate and spotless is my mind' (1655-1656). Collatine's friends agree: 'her body's stain her mind untainted clears' (1710). Lucrece, however, cannot bear the thought of her story being used by unchaste women to excuse their behaviour — 'no dame, hereafter living, / By my excuse shall claim excuse's giving' (1714-1715) — and so she kills herself. Her blood, which hitherto has fluctuated beneath her skin in a lively and alluring ebb and flow, comes pouring out. Tarquin's act has physically changed it:

> Some of her blood still pure and red remained,
> And some looked black, and that false Tarquin stained.
>
> About the mourning and congealed face
> Of that black blood a wat'ry rigol goes,
> Which seems to weep upon the tainted place;
> And ever since, as pitying Lucrece' woes,
> Corrupted blood some watery token shows,
> And blood untainted still doth red abide,
> Blushing at that which is so putrefied. (1742-1750)

Lucrece's suicide, the narrator notes, fundamentally changed how blood behaved from then on. There is a division between the corrupted and uncorrupted parts of it.[107] The 'untainted' blood 'blushes' at the 'putrefied' part of itself. The juxtaposition of Lucrece's 'opposing streams', argues Harvey Wiltshire, 'confirms her ontological condition as both polluted and pure'.[108] When

[107] For more on the division made between healthy blood and *cruor* see Lesel Dawson, '"In Every Wound there is a Bloody Tongue": Cruentation in Early Modern Literature and Psychology', in *Blood Matters: Studies in European Literature and Thought, 1400-1700*, eds Bonnie Lander Johnson and Eleanor Decamp (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 151-66. Cruentation is the belief that a corpse's wounds will bleed in the presence of its murderer. Cf. *Richard III* in which Lady Anne laments that the dead King's wounds 'open their congeal'd mouths and bleed afresh' in Richard's presence, telling him to 'Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity / For 'tis your presence that exhales this blood [...] Thy deed, inhuman and unnatural / Provokes this deluge supernatural.' I.2.56-61. William Shakespeare, *King Richard III*, ed. Janis Lull (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) I.ii.56-61.

[108] Harvey Wiltshire, '"Ere she with blood had stained her stained excuse": Graphic stains in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* and Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece*', *Etudes Episteme: Revue de litterature et de civilisation XVI^e^ — XVIII^e^ siecles,* 33 (2018), 24. Lisa Starks-Estes also references this understanding of blood. Starks-Estes (2014), 125.

Lucrece's blood was kept inside her body, it could only appear beneath the skin's surface, trying to communicate her innocence through the blush. But once it is let out, the blood can communicate symbolically, rather than linguistically, which is the poem's preferred method of female communication. Lucrece is not, in the end, given true agency of speech after her rape; her most powerful communication is still her silence. The division of her blood into '*cruor* and *sanguis*, corrupt and clean' is both a 'humoral and ethical concoction', and one is accepted as final proof of her innocence.[109] Lucrece was unable to blush after Collatine returned, but after her death, her blood finally and decisively blushes for her, conveying her innocence with a finality that she was unable to achieve linguistically.

In the wake of Lucrece's suicide, the question of the poem becomes: how best to mourn? Indeed, who best to mourn? Collatine and Lucretius cannot decide, and so they descend into a bathetic one-upmanship that foreshadows Laertes and Hamlet at Ophelia's graveside.[110] Collatine's grief is largely silent, except when he asks Lucretius not to 'take away / My sorrow's interest' (1796-1797). In a particularly striking image, he 'falls, and bathes the pale fear in his face' (1775), covering himself with Lucrece's blood to 'counterfeit' (1774) her death 'till manly shame bids him possess his breath / And live to be revenged' (1777-1778). Collatine mimics Lucrece's shamed blush by silencing himself and covering his face in her blood, over-literalising the idea that the blush 'covers' the face, and obliquely mirroring the image of the blush as gold gilding on a shield (60-61). Lucrece could only overcome her shame and adequately communicate her sorrow through making her body inactive in death. Collatine can only overcome his shame and

[109] Wiltshire (2018), 26.
[110] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark,* ed. Philip Edwards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), V.i.

communicate his sorrow by living on to undertake activity in Lucrece's name. For Lucretius, however, the primary grief of Lucrece's death lies in his loss of a mirror:

> Poor broken glass, I often did behold
> In thy sweet semblance my old age new born.
> But now that fresh fair mirror, dim and old,
> Shows me a bare-boned death by time out-worn:
> O, from thy cheeks my image thou hast torn,
> And shivered all the beauty of my glass,
> That I no more can see what once I was! (1758-1764)

Just as Lucrece understood the blushes of her servants as essentially reflective of her own interior experience, so too does her father understand Lucrece's life and body as a means by which he might know himself. For Lucretius, Lucrece's body was a means by which he might relive his youth in the semblance of her face, and her death robs him of the chance to see himself more clearly. In her suicide, Lucrece has 'torn' not her own body, but Lucretius' image: once again, Lucrece's body is understood as a place where a man might know himself, rather than an agent of her own will.

After her death, Lucrece's male relatives once again use the material of her body to communicate with other men, an objectification which Smith writes 'is entirely contiguous with her objectification by Tarquin'.[111] They decide to 'show her bleeding body through Rome' (1849), an act which 'recalls Collatine's initial act of publication' as 'once again Lucrece's relations […] force her body into the public sphere'.[112] She is 'reduced to a public political symbol'.[113] When her male relatives parade Lucrece's body through the street as a symbol of the wrong that has been committed by Tarquin, they literalise their implicit belief that a woman's best and clearest communications are the communications of her material body. By using Lucrece's dead body in this way, her male relatives demonstrate that they still, fundamentally, understand themselves as

[111] Smith (2009), 418.
[112] Wiltshire (2018), 29.
[113] Wiltshire (2018), 29.

publishers, and Lucrece as their book. Her suicide does not gain her any real agency, and her blood, which was so callously manipulated by Tarquin when it was ebbing and flowing in her cheeks, is once again called upon to justify male violence.

One way of understanding *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* is that they are poems about two involuntary blood-flows — the blush, and the rush of blood in sexual arousal — and that these blood flows call into question the extent of the mind's agency over the body, and of an individuals' power over the meaning of their own bodily communications. In this respect, both poems testify to the power that men have to set the terms of material and linguistic engagement. The ambiguity of the blush allows a variety of actors within these texts — Venus, Adonis, Tarquin, Lucrece, and the poems' two narrators — to explore the unstable relationship between truth and appearance. Both *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* draw explicit attention to the processes by which the meaning of the blush, and of the body's material communications more generally, are created, understood, and disseminated through a series of collaborations between consensual and non-consensual parties. By drawing attention to these processes, to their repeated and various failures, and to how meaning might be manipulated, misinterpreted, or lost between its creation, dissemination, and reception, these poems interrogate how much can ever truly be known about another person, or about one's self, and how much of that knowledge can ever be accurately communicated. In the next chapter, on three seventeenth-century plays about Cleopatra, we will find that the blush can give insights not just about how one individual relates to another, but how a self-defined group of blushers might relate to another group who are defined by their perceived inability to blush.

2. Friends, Romans, Crocodiles: Feeling shame in Alexandria and London

Whilst researching the final chapter of this thesis, on seventeenth century retellings of the story of Adam and Eve, I discovered a hornets' nest of white supremacist articles, blogs, and sermons. These posts share an interest in a seemingly esoteric etymological question: what does the name 'Adam' mean? Each writer makes hay with the answer. In Genesis, we read that God created Adam 'of the dust of the ground'.[1] The name Adam is a pun on the Hebrew word אדמה or 'adamah' which means 'red earth': Adam is he who is red. Different white nationalist groups do slightly different things with this pun, but one common conclusion, as the historian Mattias Gardell writes, 'is the exclusive belief that only whites are of the Adamic race'.[2] To support this claim, white nationalists 'cite as evidence *Adam's* derivative meaning of "to show blood in the face"', and 'furthermore assume that only whites have the ability to blush'.[3] Since Gardell's book was published in 2003, white nationalism has grown in popularity in the UK and in the USA, and this pun has remained important for those who seek to distort the message of Christianity into a claim of white racial superiority.[4]

As shocking as it is to see the blush used to lend legitimacy to white supremacists, this kind of thinking is not new. The blush has been used to make quasi-racialised distinctions since at least the sixteenth century. In his chapter on 'Shame, Blushing, and Nakedness in Early Modern Europe

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[1] 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul'. Genesis 2.7. Where biblical references are supplied in early modern texts, I reproduce them in their original format; however, when providing references myself I follow MHRA guidelines.

[2] Mattias Gardell, *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2003),119.

[3] Gardell (2003),119. Emphasis original.

[4] For an indicative sample of white supremacist thinking on the blush see svenlongshanks, 'Adam the Aryan', *Aryan Israel*, 2013 <https://aryanisrael.wordpress.com/2013/12/29/adam-the-aryan/> [accessed 15 February 2021]; David James, 'The Race of Adam', *David James' Blog*, 2017 <https://davidjamesboston.com/the-race-of-adam/> [accessed 15 February 2021]. The latter post cites Thomas O'Brien, who writes in his book *Verboten* (1975) that 'the coloured races, not having been endowed with God's Spirit, have no abstract sense of right or wrong, consequently are never embarrassed'.

and the New World', Brian Cummings catalogues the role of the blush in early modern colonialist projects.[5] Cummings writes that as the Spanish pillaged and looted South America, they repeated a 'conquistador cliché' to themselves: 'how can he be trusted [...] who knows not how to blush?'[6] Modern socio-scientific experiments have confirmed both that skin tone has no impact on a person's physiological ability to blush, and that dark-skinned people often report that their blushes go unnoticed by observers.[7] The conquistadors thought that because they could not *see* a blush on the faces of the indigenous people, no blush existed.[8] From the perspective of the colonialists, the resultant problem is two-fold: because the indigenous person purportedly does not blush, their interior experiences are obscure to the onlooker, and so they cannot be trusted; secondly, the lack of an observable blush means a lack of the interior emotional experiences associated with blushing, the most important of which was shame. Like the twenty-first white supremacists, the conquistadors sought a way to establish their physical and moral superiority to a non-white population, and like their twenty-first century descendants, they found the blush a useful symbol with which to make their argument because of how it enabled them to make links between physical appearance, ethical belief, and social behaviour.

The conquistadors were not the first group to use blushing as a kind of social cement, and as a shorthand for their superiority to a population which they perceived as non-blushing. The Ancient Romans also thought of themselves as a blushing people. This chapter charts the legacy of the Roman blush in three seventeenth century plays about Cleopatra: John Fletcher's and Philip

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[5] Brian Cummings, 'Shame, Blushing, and Nakedness in Early Modern Europe and the New World', in *At the Borders of the Human,* eds Erica Fudge et al (London: Macmillan, 1999), 26-50.
[6] Cummings (1999), 39.
[7] Mark. R, Leary and Kaitlin Toner, 'Psychological Theories of Blushing', in *The Psychological Significance of the Blush*, ed. W. Ray Crozier and Peter J. de Jong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2013), 63-76, 63.
[8] Cf. Aphra Behn: ''tis a very great error in those who laugh when one says, a Negro can change colour; for I have seen them as frequently blush, and look pale, and that as visibly as ever I saw in the most beautiful white'. Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), 22-23.

Massinger's *The False One* (1619); John Dryden's *All for Love* (1694), and William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (1607). Unlike the conquistadors, the Roman sources on blushing do not make a distinction between Roman blushers and non-Roman non-blushers on the basis of skin tone. To be a Roman was to be a blusher because to be a blusher was to recognise one's subjection to Roman shame culture. Other ethnic groups might be conceived of as unable or unwilling to blush, but this is an ethical question, rather than one of skin colour. Nonetheless, as Yasmin Syed has argued, 'Augustan representations of Cleopatra form the birth of the Western discourse of Orientalism'.[9] These plays give a sense of how the Roman conception of Cleopatra as unable or unwilling to blush aided the emergence of a 'white European' identity in the early modern period: an identity which is partly defined by the ability to blush, which itself acts as a shorthand for standards of appearance, ethics, and behaviour.[10]

Each of the plays under consideration in this chapter has a basically Roman understanding of blushing: the Romans are blushers because they are ethically Roman, and non-Romans (particularly Cleopatra) are non-blushers because they are not ethically Roman, and so they do not participate in Roman shame culture. There are moments, however, when a different, early modern, understanding of blushing as a racialised sign of Western physical and ethical superiority emerges.

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[9] Syed (2004), 177.

[10] The importance of the blush as a vector for racial identity in eighteenth and nineteenth century racial pseudoscience is well documented. In the 'canonical' five race system of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach's *De generis humani varietate nativa* (rev and repr. 1795) 'the white colour holds the first place, such is that of most European peoples. The redness of the cheeks in this variety is almost peculiar to it: at all events it is but seldom to be seen in the rest'. Neil Irvin Painter writes that Blumenbach's hierarchy 'includes a large dose of aesthetic reasoning led by the blush'; Stephen Jay Gould writes that 'Blumenbach's descriptions were pervaded by his personal sense of relative beauty' The nineteenth century racial pseudoscientist Alexander von Humboldt repurposed the conquistador slur to write: 'it is only in white men that the instantaneous penetration of the dermoidal system by the blood can produce that slight change of the colour of the skin which adds so powerful an expression to the emotions of the soul. "How can those be trusted who know not how to blush?" says the European, in his dislike of the Negro and the Indian'. For Blumenbach see Neil Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010), 79; Robert Wald Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 411. For von Humboldt see Cummings (1999), 20. For the relationship between race and Christianity in the Enlightenment, see Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World 1600-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 79-120.

The plays demonstrate two different understandings of shame: Roman shame, which is a learned behaviour by which a person can demonstrate their *Romanitas*; and anachronistic Christian shame, which was thought by Christians to be inherent since the fall of Adam and Eve, and expressed in the blush. When these different types of shame are brought together, the English audience is encouraged to identify with the Romans and to 'other' the Egyptians. These plays provide a unique opportunity to see both the Roman origin of Western orientalism, and its development into proto-racism in the early modern period. The first part of this chapter will explain how shame dominated both Ancient Roman and early modern English culture, and the particular way in which Cleopatra is conceived of as 'shameless' in the Roman sources. The second half will read blushes in the three plays to demonstrate how they combine the idea that blushing is central to *Romanitas* with the idea that the blush is evidence of the ethical, physical, and behavioural superiority of proto-white Christian Europeans.

Shame cultures in Ancient Rome and Early Modern London

The 'comparison between shame and guilt has often been used to characterize the differences between pagan and Christian cultures', in social-science as well as philosophy.[11] In general, it has been argued that pagan cultures are shame cultures, and Christian cultures are guilt cultures. In her 1937 book *Cooperation and Competition Among Primitive Peoples,* Margaret Mead differentiates between 'shame cultures, in which the sanctions by which an individual is controlled are external, and guilt cultures, in which the sanctions are internal'.[12] Similarly, Ruth Benedict's hugely influential study of Japan, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1947), differentiates between

[11] Paul Cefalu, *Moral Identity in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 17.
[12] Hannah Dawson, 'Shame in Early Modern Thought: From Sin to Sociability', *History of European Ideas*, 45 (2019), 377-398, 378.

shame cultures which are ethically organized around 'external sanctions for good behaviour' and guilt cultures which rely on the 'internalized conviction of sin'.[13] There is, however, an emerging critical debate about whether the shame-culture / guilt-culture dichotomy is fit for purpose in relation to early modern England. For example, Patrick Gray's work on Shakespearean tragedy has suggested that classical shame exerts a significant pull on Shakespeare's tragic heroes.[14] Moreover, there is a significant number of critics who make the case for the importance of early modern Christian shame. Paul Cefalu, for example, makes a convincing case that 'sixteenth-century English and Continental Reformers […] emphasise the centrality of shame, rather than guilt, in their doctrinal treatises'.[15] More recently, Hannah Dawson has argued against the 'clean, sequential transition from shame to guilt' in the early modern period, instead suggesting that the seventeenth century witnesses the emergence of 'guilt-shame' which is 'shame brought about by being seen by oneself, or by God' and 'reputation-shame' which is 'brought about by being seen by others, or by imagining being seen by others': or, to put it another way, the distinction is between shame because one has committed an objective 'moral wrong' and shame because one has violated 'the conventional values of the community'.[16] In *Shame in Shakespeare* Ewan Fernie 'urge[s] the reader largely to set aside the traditional distinction between "shame-cultures" and "guilt-cultures"' as 'inaccurate and oversimplified'.[17] Where I differ from Fernie is in his suggestion that 'the public aspect of shame has been misunderstood and exaggerated', which he attempts to rectify by offering a view of shame as 'the disintegration of selfhood'.[18] Fernie's

[13] Cefalu (2004), 17.
[14] See Patrick Gray, 'Choosing between Shame and Guilt: *Macbeth, Othello, Hamlet, and King Lear*', in *Shakespeare and the Soliloquy in Early Modern English Drama* ed. A.D. Cousins and Daniel Derrin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 105-118 and Patrick Gray, *Shakespeare and the Fall of the Roman Republic: Selfhood, Stoicism, and Civil War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018).
[15] Cefalu (2004), 18.
[16] Dawson (2019), 379.
[17] Ewan Fernie, *Shame in Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 2002), 15-16.
[18] Fernie (2002), 15;9.

understanding of shame provides an apt way to read parts of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. His reading of Antony as 'so alienated from himself as to lack all agency, paralysed with the emotion, but also deformed to the point of vanishing' after his defeat in the sea battle is particularly persuasive.[19] But I want to offer an alternative to Fernie's highly individualised understanding of what shame can do, and rather than suggesting that shame is about the limits of the self, I want to suggest that shame is about the limits of community. This chapter will show both how shame operates as a form of social control, and how 'shame culture' operates as a group identity: we will find both Ancient Romans and proto-white European Christians thinking of themselves as 'the ashamed' and of their enemies as 'the unashamed'. My understanding of early modern shame as a form of social control has debts to Michel Foucault's 1976 work *Discipline and Punish*, in which he argues for a structural understanding of shame.[20] In Foucault's text, 'shame and guilt are both seen not so much as real emotions occurring within the soul of a subject', instead 'as dispositives or affective arrangements that seek different ways to regulate and modulate the feelings of justice and injustice within a society'.[21] Whilst I agree that shame is a structural phenomenon, I also understand it as a 'real emotion', and this chapter will seek to understand how structural shame is administered by individuals to control the behaviours of other individuals by making them *feel* a certain way, as well as by offering them a collective identity.

[19] Fernie (2002), 210.
[20] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1991).
[21] Philipp Wüschner, 'Shame, Guilt, and Punishment', *Foucault Studies*, 23 (2017), 86-107, 86.

Roman shame

Most of the Roman characters in the plays to come are men and understanding the intersection of Roman masculinity and Roman shame culture is key to understanding the Roman blush. The critic Brittany E. Wilson summarises the Roman approach to ideal masculinity succinctly, writing:

> In the Greco-Roman world, masculinity and power go hand in hand, with a manly man exercising power over others in terms of sexual, paternal, political, and military power, and exercising power — or self-control — over himself in terms of controlling his own body and emotions. In brief, to be a man in the ancient world meant to wield power over others and power over oneself.[22]

To be a man, a *vir*, rather than a *homine*, a human being, a person had to be an intact biological male of high social-status who comported himself like a man: that is, who wielded power over both his own appetites and other people.[23] This category was understood relatively narrowly, particularly by those at the top of the hierarchy: 'for the comparatively few men who held power, most other males failed to meet the necessary criteria to distinguish them as true men', including 'all those at the bottom of the social hierarchy, as well as those outside of the Roman Empire' such as 'slaves, "barbarians", and conquered nations'.[24] Wilson records that 'actual soldiers during the principate typically did not qualify as manly men', unless they were 'ranked officers such as centurions' because they 'lacked power over their bodies since they were enslaved to their officers'.[25] The ability to demonstrate physical power and violence to others was not sufficient in and of itself to allow a person to claim to be a man: one also had to exercise control over oneself and over one's body. Roman masculine identity was, by nature, precarious, and had to be constantly asserted and defended. Craig A. Williams describes Roman masculinity as 'a tenuous accomplishment', a status that is both difficult to attain and difficult to maintain, leading him to

[22] Brittany E. Wilson, *Unmanly Men: Refigurations of Masculinity in Luke-Acts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 60.
[23] Wilson (2015), 42.
[24] Wilson (2015), 42.
[25] Wilson (2005), 64.

the memorable, if mootable, conclusion that 'boys must be *made* men, while girls just *become* women'.[26] Understanding the instability of Roman masculine identity helps us to make sense of why the blush is so important in these sources and in the plays to come. It may seem somewhat ironic that the ultimate sign of one's self-control is an involuntary bodily sign, but the blush is so important precisely because of how it communicates one's deep, instinctive allegiance to Roman values, including, crucially, *pudor*.

Some virtuous moral beliefs were universal to all Romans, male and female, including *pudor*, which can be translated both as 'a sense of honour', and a 'sense of shame'.[27] Men and women experienced *pudor* differently, and whilst Fernie's argument that 'masculine shame traditionally derives from weakness or lack of power, feminine shame from unchastity of some other form of intemperance' is generally true, it is also a little too prescriptive.[28] The Romans might not have put much stock in masculine chastity, but it was an important Christian virtue, and in the plays to come, we will see both Cleopatra and Roman men publicly shamed for their lack of chastity. Moreover, temperance, or self-control, is a core value of Roman masculinity. In his impressively thorough and exacting article on 'The Roman Blush', Carlin A. Burton writes that because Ancient Rome had 'no centralised peacekeeping force', 'the suppression of the vendetta depended above all on the discipline and self-mastery (the *disciplina, modestia, temperatia*) and the sense of honour (*pudor, fides*) of the inhabitants'.[29] In Ancient Rome, civic order was maintained by a very deeply felt individual fear of social shame and desire for social honour. As unpleasant as it can be, shame was not generally understood by Roman thinkers as a negative

[26] Craig A. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 155. Cf. Simone de Beauvoir's axiom: 'One is not born, but rather becomes, woman'. Simone de Beauvoir *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (London: Vintage, 2011), 330.
[27] Carlin A. Burton, 'The Roman Blush: The Delicate Matter of Self-Control', in *Constructions of the Classical Body* ed. James. I. Porter (Ann Arbor MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1999; repr. 2005), 212-234, 212.
[28] Fernie (2002), 13.
[29] Burton (1999), 213.

emotion or experience. Robert A. Kastor writes that 'shame and honour were experienced as complementary, rather than opposed' by the Romans, and so 'those who valued honour most highly could expect to experience shame most intensely'.[30] A sense of shame, therefore, was evidence of a highly honed sense of personal honour, and a blush was the public evidence of that internal ethical inclination.

Core to the Roman conception of the trustworthy blush was its involuntary nature.[31] Burton quotes Seneca's Epistle XI, which is probably the most well-known Ancient writing on blushing, to support this claim. Seneca writes:

> Actors on the stage, who mimic the emotions, who portray fear and anxiety, who represent sadness, imitate bashfulness by keeping their head down, lowering their voices, and keeping their eyes fixed and rooted on the ground. They cannot, however, muster a blush; for the blush can neither be repressed or induce at will. Wisdom offers no defence or advantage; the blush comes and goes unbidden. It is a law unto itself.[32]

The Roman blush was precious precisely because it cannot be faked, but also because of the way in which it acts as a 'law unto itself': it comes regardless of the will of the one blushing. The blush 'revealed the strength of the blusher's commitment to social bonds. It was a confession of subordination that cemented society'.[33] To blush, for a Roman, was to acknowledge one's place within the social hierarchy, and the blush was often discussed in terms of social rank. It was 'the *colour ingennus*, the free-born, noble, innocent and sincere complexion' which contrasted 'stealthy, brazen, or deceitful behaviours' which were associated with 'servility'.[34] The Roman taste for blushing extended to the very top of the social hierarchy, and Burton cites three examples of Roman rulers who were praised for their blushing countenances. He records Seneca's words that 'nothing was more tender than the face of Pompey', who 'blushed whenever he was in public,

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[30] Robert Kastor, *Emotion, Restraint, and Community in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 40.
[31] Burton (1999), 215.
[32] Qtd in Burton (1999), 214.
[33] Burton (1999), 215.
[34] Burton (1999), 227, n.29.

especially in assemblies.[35] He also notes that 'the youthful emperor Domitian's persistent flush was taken as a mark of his goodness and modesty' according to Tacitus, and that Pliny the Younger interpret[ed] the emperor Trajan's blush as a sign of his transparent sincerity'.[36] Burton records the usefulness of the blush to the Roman public orator, who was expected to show 'a nervous modesty, a revelation that one was sensitive to the eyes of one's observers', regardless of his experience as a public speaker.[37] Quintilian, for example 'thought that the man about to start a speech should hesitate, sigh, pat his head, or wring his hands with anxiety'.[38] The oratorical blush was received by its Roman audience as 'an endearing imperfection; the blusher could trust in, could "presume upon" the goodwill of, his or her audience'.[39] The good orator never allows himself to become so used to public speaking that he ceases to feel shame and blush, and the Roman audience should approach his understanding of their shared social codes in a generous spirit.

However, it is in this discussion of the useful oratorical blush that cracks begin to show in the Roman approach to blushing as a genuine sign of social submission. The idea of the practised orator who can blush when occasion demands it sits rather uneasily with the idea of the blush as an unmediated sign of one's ethical inclination, and there was a concern amongst ancient Roman writers that excesses of self-control could lead to the blush being produced on demand and therefore becoming 'a mask, worn strategically — or even cynically'.[40] Similarly, Domitian's blush might have been received by some a sign of his 'goodness and modesty', but Tacitus writes elsewhere that it was the means by which Domitian 'galvanized himself against shame', and Pliny

[35] Burton (1999), 215.
[36] Burton (1999), 215.
[37] Burton (1999), 217.
[38] Burton (1999), 217.
[39] Burton (1999), 216-217.
[40] Burton (1999), 222. He cites Ovid's *Amores* 'in which the witch Dipsas urges Ovid's lover to be shameless and to blush strategically. The false blush, she explains, is advantageous; the true one an obstacle (1.8.35-36)'.

writes Domitian had an 'impudence masked by high colour'.[41] Burton concludes that the 'deliberate blush, then, was the *extreme* of self-control over mind and body that signalled the breakdown of the deep psychosomatic ties that bound one person to another within the society'.[42] These writers are evidently ambivalent about whether the blush is open to abuse by cynical orators. Nonetheless, they each stress the importance of the blush as a social sign, because blushing demonstrates one's capitulation to Roman shame culture.

Christian shame

In 2016, Peter Erickson and Kim F. Hall wrote an editorial 'On Rereading Early Modern Race' as an introduction to a special edition of *Shakespeare Quarterly* devoted to that topic.[43] In their article, Erickson and Hall identified the 'pathological averseness to thinking about race under the guide of protecting historical difference' which they see as endemic to the field of early modern studies.[44] The emergence of 'Race Before Race', an early modern sub-discipline which seeks to understand the emergence of racial identities before the Enlightenment, has begun to address some of these concerns, but there is a lot of work still to be done.[45] This chapter contributes to work in that field by suggesting that the seventeenth-century blush is an increasingly racialised phenomenon and a crucial part of an emerging white Christian European identity. These plays stage an encounter between a blushing and non-blushing population, which, as we have seen, were also the terms under which colonialist encounters with the inhabitants of the so-called 'New

[41] Qtd in Burton (1999), 223.
[42] Burton (1999), 223.
[43] Peter Erickson and Kim F. Hall, '"A New Scholarly Song": Rereading Early Modern Race', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 67 (2016), 1-13
[44] Erickson and Hall (2016), 2.
[45] 'Race Before Race' is the name of a symposium first held by The Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in 2019 to bring together scholars working on race in the pre-modern period. There have been several subsequent meetings of the seminar in the USA and in the UK, and scholars maintain a lively presence on social media, particularly on Twitter where they operate under the hashtags #ShakeRace and #RaceB4Race.

World' were understood. The plays are largely governed by a Roman understanding of the blush, but there are moments when one aspect of a distinctively early modern approach — the blush as a racial sign — emerges.

There are as many approaches to the question of how race was understood in the early modern period as there are critics to write about it, but what has emerged unambiguously from recent critical publications is that understanding early modern race necessitates understanding the term in all its multiplicity, inconsistency, and variety: not just as a proxy for skin colour. Elizabeth Spiller, for example, identifies that 'the history of race in the early modern period involves overlapping and often competing concepts of religion, nation, and ethnicity'.[46] Joyce Green MacDonald argues that the 'concentration of colour as the chief determinant of race is a modern rather than a Renaissance phenomenon', and that 'region, gender, sexuality, and religion' also contributed to an understanding of early modern racial identity.[47] At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that the blush is a sign which combines physical appearance, ethical inclination, and moral behaviour. This confluence of characteristics is also how we might understand early modern race, and one of the signs of an emerging white (European, Christian) racial identity was the blush.

In *The Body Embarrassed*, Gail Kern Paster characterises early modern England as a culture in which men deny the shamefulness of their own bodies by highlighting the greater shame of women's 'leaky' bodies.[48] Paster argues that early modern men use shame to create a community based on their shared physical appearance and social behaviour: they do not look like or behave like women, and so they are men (and thus superior). As we have seen, Cummings

[46] Elizabeth Spiller, *Reading and the History of Race in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2.
[47] Joyce Green MacDonald, *Women and Race in Early Modern Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 44.
[48] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

records that shame is used in a similar way by early modern colonialists to create a white European community who share a physical appearance and social behaviour — the blush of shame — in contrast to indigenous populations of the Americas. 'The early colonialists', writes Cummings, 'were transfixed by the lack of shame exhibited by the colonial native subject'.[49] 'No human culture previously reported in the West, however outlandish, chose to go naked, and so by 'doing what is natural to them, the natives disturb the normative standards of the colonists, which assume that genital shame is endemic to the human condition'.[50] This belief stems from the Christian creation story in which Adam and Eve are created naked, disobey God, and are punished with excruciating shame at their own nudity. I will revisit this story in more detail in the final chapter of this thesis, but for this chapter, its relevance is in its legacy of an 'axiomatic' European sense 'that human beings wear clothes to hide their nakedness', a belief which was called into question by the nudity of the indigenous Americans, and a sense that blushing was inherent to all humans, which was also called into question by indigenous and African populations.[51]

It did not take long for the fascination of the colonialists to devolve into censure, and for them to connect the shameless nudity of the indigenous people with apathy — 'in its literal sense the incapacity to feel passions at all' — which in turn was used to argue that, ontologically speaking, indigenous people (and other dark-skinned people, including Africans) existed somewhere between animals and humans.[52] As European colonialism and the Atlantic Slave Trade got into their stride, this stereotype was 'used to confirm with remorseless logic Aristotle's doctrine of natural slavery'.[53] Cummings notes that in 1799 the ethnographer Alexander Humboldt 'cites

[49] Cummings (1999), 33.
[50] Cummings (1999), 35; 34.
[51] Cummings (1999), 35.
[52] Cummings (1999), 39; 41. For more detail on 'a racial logic in *nascendus*, in which the threshold between human and animal is defined precisely by an inability to respond due to skin colour' see Steven Swarbrick, 'Shakespeare's Blush, or "the animal" in Othello', *Exemplaria,* 28 (2016), 70-85, 74.
[53] Cummings (1999), 41.

dispassionately the old conquistador slur' 'how can you those be trusted who know not how to blush' as he writes to defend the superior civility of Europeans.[54] The blush, writes Cummings, becomes 'the index of civilisation'.[55] The groundwork for this theory was laid by sixteenth century European colonialists as they sought to rationalise the shameless nudity of the Americans within their own Christian framework. In contrast to the occupants of the Americas (and Africa), Europeans created an image of themselves as subject to natural law, highly sensitive, and civilised: three characteristics which were expressed in their blush. In the plays to follow, we will get glimpses this racialised understanding of the blush, and a sense of the longevity with which ethnic distinctions have been made on the basis of shame, including in the Roman approach to the shameless Cleopatra.

Cleopatra's shame in the Roman sources

Given the centrality of shame to the Roman self-image, it is perhaps unsurprising to find Cleopatra repeatedly described in the extant Augustan sources in terms of the shame that she brought to herself and to Antony. The key challenge for Augustan propagandists in the wake of Octavius' victory at Actium was to recast the events not as 'a Roman civil war between two rival strongmen', but as 'the triumphant consolidation of the Roman Empire'.[56] To this end, Ovid, Virgil, and Horace, 'good Augustans' all, approached Antony and Cleopatra as Octavius' 'final obstacles' on the road to his deification as Augustus Caesar, and their conflict as 'the consolidation of all that toward which Roman history had been moving'.[57] In turn, 'Vergil's Actium is a founding text for

[54] Cummings (1999), 40.
[55] Cummings (1999), 40.
[56] William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. Michael Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 9. All further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text; Janet Adelman, *The Common Liar: An Essay on Antony and* Cleopatra (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 54.
[57] Adelman (1973), 54.

the Western discourse of orientalism'.[58] The following sources are indicative rather than exhaustive, but what emerges from them is a sense that the Augustan shame-based criticism of Cleopatra was three-pronged: Cleopatra was variously she who brought shame; she who was shameless; and she who ought to be shamed. This classical narrative of Cleopatra's shame heavily influenced the plays to come. All the classical sources that I have referenced in this section were widely available in the seventeenth century, and I have included some information on editions and critical material in footnotes.

Many of the Augustan poets express their disrespect of Cleopatra by refusing to use her name, finding a wide variety of alternatives, including *regina, mulier,* and *illa.*[59] In the *Aeneid,* for example, Virgil writes:

> On the other side comes Antony with barbaric might and motley arms, victorious over the nations of the dawn and the ruddy sea, bringing in his train Egypt and the strength of the East and farthest Bactra; and there follows him (oh the shame of it!) his Egyptian wife.[60]

Translated as 'oh the shame of it!' in the Loeb edition, Pramit Chaudhuri suggests that the exclamation 'nefas' comes from the verb 'fari' that is, 'to speak', which leads him to argue that Cleopatra's name is 'something that ought not to be spoken'.[61] A more conservative etymology is that 'nefas' comes from 'ne' meaning 'not' and 'fās' meaning 'divine law': shameful behaviour is that which contravenes divine law. Or, as the seventeenth-century lexicographer Adam Littleton would have it, nefas refers to 'a thing detestable, a wicked act, a cursed deed, a heinous matter, an unlawful and shameful thing, a mischief and villainy, a thing that is unpossible [*sic*]'.[62] Reading

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[58] Syed (2004), 178.
[59] Pramit Chaudhuri, 'Naming Nefas: Cleopatra on the Shield of Achilles', *Classical Quarterly,* 62 (2012), 223-226, 223. The words mean 'queen', 'woman', and 'she' respectively.
[60] Virgil, *Aeneid,* trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, rev. G. P. Goold (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 8.685-688
[61] Chaudhuri (2012), 223-224.
[62] Adam Littleton, *Linguæ Latinæ liber dictionarius quadripartitus* (London: T. Basset, J. Wright and R. Chiswell, 1684).

this passage with these various etymologies in mind deepens our understanding of what is at stake in these lines, not least because it suggests a close connection between Roman shame and both that which is 'unspeakable', in the sense of behaviour that exceeds the code of divine law, and that which ought to go 'unspoken'. The shame is two-fold: Cleopatra's name goes unspoken by the author to shame her, but her unspeakable presence also haunts Antony and shames him. There is some ambiguity in these lines as to what exactly it is that is 'nefas': is it shameful to have an Egyptian wife, or is it shameful to have a woman follow you into battle? Perhaps it is both; either way, the message is clear: Antony's relationship to Cleopatra is a source of shame because her behaviour exists outside Roman social codes, which were ordained by the gods. Duane W. Roller's translation of 'Aegyptia coniunx' as 'Egyptian mate', cited by Yasmin Arshad in her 2019 book *Imagining Cleopatra*, significantly overstates the rancour of the original Latin.[63] 'Coniunx' is a common Latin word for 'spouse'.[64] Of course, Cleopatra was not Antony's legal spouse, which might lead us to ask why Virgil describes her in such terms.[65] In doing so, he hints at the sexual relationship between the pair, but as we shall see, in a rather more discreet manner than some of his antecedents. By translating 'coniunx' as 'mate' rather than 'spouse', Roller, and Arshad after him, suggest that Virgil wants to emphasise the sexuality of the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra. I think that Virgil's insult operates in a different register. By calling Cleopatra Antony's 'Egyptian spouse', rather than, for example, 'the Egyptian Queen', Virgil diminishes her role as a sovereign, emphasising instead her femininity, her foreignness, and her relation to Antony: she is

[63] Duane W. Roller, *Cleopatra: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2. Yasmin Arshad, *Imagining Cleopatra: Performing Gender and Power in Early Modern England* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc 2019), 5.
[64] Yasmin Syed glosses 'coniunx' as 'husband', describing it as 'the motif of the unsuitable marriage'. Syed (2004), 183.
[65] An English translation of the *Aeneid* was partially completed and published by Thomas Phaer in 1558, and fully completed and published by Thomas Twyne in 1584. Margaret Tudeau-Clayton, 'Supplementing the *Aeneid* in Early Modern England: Translation, Imitation, Commentary', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 4 (1998), 507-525, 525. For more on the accessibility and reception of *Aeneid in* early modern England see David Wilson-Okamura, *Virgil in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 27-30; 191-247.

not a Queen; she is just Antony's wife. By describing her in these domestic terms, Virgil seeks to diminish and shame her.[66]

Virgil slyly elides Cleopatra's political role, but this was by no means a consistent Augustan trope. Lucan, for example, is much more proactive in his condemnation of Cleopatra in his *Pharsalia*.[67] Like Virgil, he connects Cleopatra with shame, calling her 'Dedecus Aegypti', that is, the 'shame of Egypt'.[68] If Virgil hints at the sexual relationship between Antony and Cleopatra, Lucan revels in imagining the many sins of the one 'whose unchastity cost Rome dear'.[69] In *Pharsalia*, the Roman soldier Pothinus fixates on Cleopatra's sexual impropriety, arguing that she 'considers every man of us guilty if he has not defiled her', and that she 'hasten[s] from one husband to another' as she 'possesses Egypt and is playing the harlot for Rome'.[70] Lucan calls upon Antony to feel shame at his association with Cleopatra — 'pro pudor!' (shame on him!) — but unlike Virgil, he does make some attempt to understand what it was about Cleopatra that Antony found so alluring.[71] He repeatedly concludes that it was her beauty and asks: 'who can refuse pardon to the infatuation of Antony, when even the stubborn heart of Caesar took fire?'[72] Nonetheless, Lucan is careful to argue for Augustus' immunity from Cleopatra's charms. She may have gone to Julius Caesar 'trusting in her beauty', but 'vain would have been her appeal to the stern ear of Caesar [Augustus]'.[73] Comparing the relatively prominent role of Cleopatra in Lucan's text to her relative obscurity in Virgil underscores Janet Adelman's observation that Lucan

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[66] Yasmin Syed points out that this passage highlights the 'oriental nature' of Antony's army 'to the point of historical distortion': 'the idea that Antony's forces were comprised of Egyptians, Indians, Arabians, and Sabeans has little or no basis in historical fact, but it has a powerful impact on the ideological polarization of the two enemies represented here.' Syed (2004), 178-179.
[67] For more on the early modern influence of Lucan's *Pharsalia* see Edward Paleit, 'Lucan in the Renaissance, pre-1625: An Introduction', *Literature Compass*, 1 (2005), 1-6.
[68] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, trans. J. D. Duff (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), X.59.
[69] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.59.
[70] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.369; 358-360.
[71] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.77.
[72] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.70-72.
[73] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.82; 104.

condemns Cleopatra's wickedness whilst being fixated on her lavishness.[74] Lucan is grimly fascinated by the idea of a woman ruler, an interest that he ventriloquizes through Cleopatra, who says: 'I shall not be the first woman to rule the cities of the Nile: Egypt is accustomed to put up with a queen and make no distinction of sex'.[75] The shocking idea of an Egyptian population that makes no distinction of sex gives an early hint that the Romans consider Egypt a place in which the 'normal' categories of gender and power do not apply, and this is repeatedly contrasted to Rome and to Roman values in terms of its shamefulness.

Lucan is fascinated by the variety of life in Egypt as he imagines it, including in the physical appearance of the Egyptians. He writes of the Egyptians that '[s]ome had the hair of Africa, and others were so fair-headed that Caesar said he had never seen hair so red in the Rhine country; some had dark skins and woolly heads, with hair receding from the forehead'.[76] Lucan emphasises the physical variety within the Egyptian population, but when he writes about Cleopatra's physical appearance, he describes her beauty, and does not give her any particularly distinctive racial markers. His one descriptor of her skin colour — her 'white breasts' — is more easily read as a conventional sign of beauty than of a comment on her race.[77] Lucan is not alone in this omission. None of the Latin texts under consideration in this chapter discuss Cleopatra's racial difference to the Romans in terms of her physical appearance. Rather, they focus on her inappropriate, shameful behaviour to explain why she is not like the Romans.

The idea of a female ruler also fascinated Horace, who finds himself caught in a 'pattern of condemnation and admiration' for this 'mad and presumptuous queen' in his 'Ode on the Death

[74] Adelman (1973), 56.
[75] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.90-92.
[76] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.130-132.
[77] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, X.142.

of Cleopatra'.[78] He writes with evident wonder that she 'was devising mad ruin for the Capitol and death for the empire', and has to concede that she was a brave, noble, and courageous woman, who was defiant even in death.[79] Adelman suggests that Horace's final verdict on Cleopatra is that she is 'not a base woman', but his concluding phrase 'non humilis mulier' is rather ambiguous.[80] The Loeb edition translates the epithet as 'no humble woman'.[81] Whether Cleopatra is 'no humble woman' because of her royal heritage or because of her exceptional behaviour is not made clear. Reading the two translations together, with 'humilis' as 'humble' and 'base' emphasises that Cleopatra is understood within a socially hierarchized and gendered Roman frame of shame, humility, and proper behaviour.

The Augustan template proved powerful for later Roman historians, many of whom blended a repulsed fascination with Cleopatra's sexual power and perceived shamelessness with an understanding of Octavius' victory at Actium as the ultimate culmination of the Roman will to power. Cleopatra is mentioned in Suetonius' biographies of Augustus and Julius Caesar (the latter was an important source text for *The False One*).[82] Suetonius focuses on the great love that Julius Caesar had for Cleopatra, and how Augustus treated her children after her death, but says little about the Queen herself.[83] Dio Cassius shares his forebears' fascination with and repulsion by the idea of a female ruler, writing that Octavius fought so that 'no woman [will] make herself equal to a man', mocking the Egyptians for being 'slaves to a woman and not to a man', and calling Antony

[78] Adelman (1973), 56.
[79] Horace, *Odes and Epodes,* trans. Niall Rudd (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 37.6-8.
[80] Adelman (1973), 56.
[81] Horace, *Odes,* 37.7. For a brief account of the early modern publication and reception history of *Odes and Epodes* see Ian Green, *Humanism and Protestantism in Early Modern English Education* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 229-232.
[82] For the early modern reception of Suetonius, Dio Cassius, and Florus, see Freya Cox Jensen, *Reading the Roman Republic in Early Modern England* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 52; 49; 36.
[83] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars,* trans. J. C. Rolfe, 2 vols (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), i, 35; 52; Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars,* ii, 17.

'the Egyptian woman's slave'.[84] Unlike Virgil, who dismissed Cleopatra as no more than Antony's spouse, Dio Cassius is particularly affronted by what he perceives as the reversal of a gendered power balance between Cleopatra and Antony. He writes that 'she had enslaved him so absolutely that she persuaded him to act as gymnasiarch to the Alexandrians; and she was called "queen" and "mistress" by him, had Roman soldiers in her bodyguard, and all of these inscribed her name upon their shields'.[85] So too does Florus condemn Antony for being 'a slave to his love for Cleopatra', a man 'forgetful of his country, his name, his toga'.[86] Like Lucan, Florus is careful to explain that Augustus was immune to Cleopatra's charms, writing that 'the queen, casting herself at Caesar's feet, tried to attract his glances, but in vain, for her beauty was unable to prevail over his self-control'.[87] Across these texts, we witness repeated claims of Augustus' exceptionality — he is the only man capable of resisting Cleopatra — alongside fascination with, and suspicion of, Cleopatra's sexual shamelessness, and condemnation of Antony's lack of self-control.

There is an argument, most recently made by Yasmin Arshad in her 2019 book *Imagining Cleopatra,* but also offered elsewhere, that suggests the mid-sixteenth century rediscovery of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans* was the start of 'a watershed period in shifting attitudes away from the misogyny and ethnic suspicion prevalent in past representations towards an emerging sympathy for Cleopatra'.[88] I have a number of misgivings about this argument. Firstly, Plutarch was not the only Ancient writer to excuse himself from the Augustan propaganda project. His contemporary Tacitus saw Octavius' triumph not as the culmination of Roman history,

[84] Qtd in Neill (1994), 10.
[85] Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, trans. Earnest Cary, 9 vols (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), i, 445. Cary notes that a gymnasiarch is a 'Greek official, who exercised complete supervision of the gymnasium, paying for training and incidentals, arranging the details of contests, etc.'
[86] Florus, *Epitome of Roman History*, trans. E. S. Forster (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1929), II.xxi.1-3.
[87] Florus, *Epitome of Roman History*, II.xxi.10.
[88] Arshad (2019), 8.

but as 'the final deathblow to Roman liberty'.[89] Although Tacitus was 'never as popular in the Renaissance as Ovid, Virgil, or Horace', this 'Tacitian-Plutarchan Octavius seems to have been as well-known as the deified Augustus'.[90] That is to say, there was an equally compelling vision of Augustus available to Renaissance (and Medieval) writers before the rediscovery of Plutarch, in which he was not a great leader, but a tyrant. Secondly, Arshad's argument overstates the ubiquity of the censure offered by the Augustan sources, which I have demonstrated blend horror and fascination in their approaches to Cleopatra. Thirdly, the argument neglects an alternative Medieval tradition in which the story of Antony and Cleopatra is told as 'one of courtly love' or as 'a chivalric romance', exemplified in English by Geoffrey Chaucer in 'The Legend of Good Women'.[91] This tradition is very sympathetic to Cleopatra, and it pre-empts the rediscovery of Plutarch by many years. Finally, as my readings in the plays to come will demonstrate, we see no lessening of misogyny and ethnic suspicion in seventeenth-century representations of Cleopatra. These Roman texts offer many glimpses of how the Romans conceptualised the shame of Cleopatra. As we turn our attention to the seventeenth-century plays, we will see that they repeat the Roman association of Cleopatra with shame, blending it with an emerging early modern proto-racial and quasi-Christian sense that the blush is a sign of a person's ethical, physical, and behavioural superiority and their right to claim membership of the dominant blushing group.

[89] Adelman (1973), 55.
[90] Adelman (1973), 55-56.
[91] Arshad (2019), 7; Neill (1994), 11. See also Adelman (1973), 57 who describes Chaucer's 'magnificently propagandistic praise of Cleopatra'. Arshad cites Jehan de Tuim's *Li hystoire de Julius Cesar* and *I Fatti de Cesare* as examples of retellings of the story in the courtly love tradition, and Giovanni Boccaccio's *On Famous Women* as a counter-example, in which Cleopatra is described as a woman 'known throughout the world for her greed, cruelty, and lustfulness'.

The False One

Written by John Fletcher and Phillip Massinger c.1619, *The False One* tells the story of how Cleopatra became Queen of Egypt, and the story of her love affair with Julius Caesar.[92] There is also an important secondary plot about the Roman soldier Septimius, the eponymous 'false one', who engages in a series of duplicitous schemes in an attempt to grab power, but who is ultimately unsuccessful in doing so. It is in the relationship between Septimius and the other Romans that we most clearly see a Roman vision of blushing as the public display of one's submission to Roman values. Cleopatra recognises the value of the blush as a Roman symbol, and she uses it to subtly control Caesar. Cleopatra understands her relationship with Caesar in terms of his relationship with the 'moor' Eunoe, against whom the playwrights contrast Cleopatra's 'unusual' fair skin. Fletcher and Massinger do not understand Cleopatra's difference to the Romans as a difference in skin colour, but they do express some self-consciousness about Cleopatra's colour, and they repeatedly cast Cleopatra as the shameless counterpart to the shame-filled Romans.

When the Roman Septimius offers his loyalty to the Egyptian Photinus he does so by telling him to 'but thinke / A deed so darke, the Sun would blush to looke on [...] Command me, I will on'.[93] The image of the Sun blushing, familiar to us from *Venus and Adonis*, takes on a new valence in this context and reinforces our understanding of the blush not just as a colour change, but as an intense increase in both heat and light. 'Command me to do something so awful that the Sun, the hottest, brightest thing in the world, will blush and so become even hotter and brighter still', offers Septimius, 'and I will do it'. That Septimius brags about his willingness to do something so awful

[92] Although *The False One* is now attributed to Fletcher and Massinger, it was published in the *Collected Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, and it is this edition which I have used. In his book on the playwright, A. H. Cruickshank notes that 'characters in Massinger are very fond of blushing', and supplies a heady concordance of examples. A. H. Cruickshank, *Philip Massinger* (New York NY: Frederic A. Stokes, 1920), 119-120.

[93] Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *The False One*, in *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 10 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966-96; 1992), viii, I.i.164-167. All further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text.

that it would merit this kind of blush represents how far he has declined from Roman martial morality. A few lines earlier Septimius brags of his ability to 'la[y] by foolish modesty', arguing that bragging about achievements 'fires the blood / And heightens Crest-faln appetite' (I.i.119-123). His notion of martial masculinity is tied to the open celebration of excess because restraint or modesty suggests a lack of passion, which is incommensurate, at least to Septimius, with the appetites of masculinity. However, Septimius' view on this matter is radically divergent from the 'ideals' of Roman masculinity as explored in the Latin sources above, and by the other Roman men in the play, who believe that to be a man is to be in control of one's impulses, desires, and appetites.

Masculine appetite, like blushing, is discussed in *The False One* in terms of heat. Septimius tells Photinus 'you are cold, / And know not your own powers' (I.i.169-170). Similarly, Photinus is angered by a political manoeuvre that he considers 'base / Most base and poore; a servile cold submission' (II.i.34-35). There is a division in the play, and indeed in many classical and early modern texts, between men who understand masculine honour in the terms of the exercise of restraint, and those who realise it in the indulgence of unfettered appetite. *The False One* makes clear that true Roman masculinity is based on restraint. Photinus' disgust at the 'servile cold submission' echoes a similar phrase in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Romeo, keen to avoid fighting a duel with his new wife's cousin, tries to deescalate a heated exchange with Tybalt: 'I […] love thee better than thou canst devise, / […] And so, good Capulet — which name I tender/ As dearly as mine own — be satisfied'. Mercutio is infuriated, and accuses his cousin of making a '*vile, dishonourable, cold submission'*.[94] Romeo's love for Juliet allows him to transcend Tybalt's dream vision of unfettered, and ultimately un(re)productive, violent masculinity and to

[94] William Shakespeare, *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet,* ed. Jill L. Levenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), III.i.67-72. My emphasis.

call for the restraint of appetite in the pursuit of the common good. So too do the men who wield real power in *The False One* place a high value on restraint. Photinus announces: 'let him leave / The Sceptre, that strives only to be good, / Since Kingdomes are maintain'd by force and blood' (I.i.309-311). But in the real corridors of power, kingdoms are maintained as much by restrained appetites as by bloodthirstiness, and those in power are suspicious of anyone who would try to prove something, whether their loyalty or their masculinity, through brute force. As Caesar makes clear: 'hasty to please in blood are seldom trusty' (II.i.129). True Roman honour is achieved not through the indiscriminate expending of appetite, but through the submission of one's personal desires to a Roman frame of restrained, self-controlled, appropriate behaviour that seeks to serve the good of Rome.

In the middle of the play, dressed in new clothes and, he thinks, on the rise, Septimius asks: 'who dare blush now at my acquaintance?' (III.ii.56), but his murder of the Roman General Pompey places him outside the fold of Roman masculinity, as does his offer to act as a pander to Antony and Sceva, both of whom are disgusted by Caesar's relationship with Cleopatra, and with Septimius' offer to act as their pander:

SEPTIMIUS: [...] Would ye have partners?
I doe consider all your wants, and weigh'em
He has the Mistris, you shall have the maids,
I'le bring 'em to ye, to your armes.
ANTONY: I blush.
All over me, I blush and sweate to heare him:
Upon my conscience, if my Armes were on now
Through them I should blush too: pray ye let's be walking. (III.ii.104-110)

Septimius was wrong to think that it is extremes of blushlessness which facilitate political power. Rather, it is Antony's promise of excessive blushing —even through his 'armes' — that makes him a truly Roman Roman. By imagining this extreme blush, Antony bonds himself to Sceva through a shared physical and verbal language of shame which unites them against the lascivious

excess of Septimius. The extent of Septimius' miscalculation is re-inscribed later in the same scene when Sceva dismissively tells him to go and live somewhere 'even the Sun will shame to give thee light' (III.ii.119). At the opening of the play, Septimius boasted of his ability to make the Sun blush, but for Sceva, the idea of the sun becoming ashamed of you is a curse. Septimius' approach to blushing makes clear that he is fundamentally unfit to wield power, because he is unable to understand the value of restraint.

If Roman masculine honour is tied to restrained appetites, then this helps us to make sense of the central drama of the play: Caesar's infatuation with Cleopatra. No one is more upset by their relationship than Sceva, Caesar's Captain and advisor, who appeals to Caesar's sense of honour when seeking to dissuade him from the affair.[95] Caesar asks Sceva if he would not be tempted by Cleopatra, and he replies:

> Not as an Emperour,
> A man that first should rule him selfe, then others, [...]
> And if thy flesh be deaf let thine honour,
> The soule of a commander, give ear to me. (II.iii.179-185)

Septimius and Photinus are unable to seize power because they are unable to subject their appetites to their reason, and Sceva worries that such a fate awaits Caesar. The failure of Photinus and Septimius in this regard only really impacts themselves (and some people in their immediate environ, like General Pompey, whom Septimius beheads), but Caesar's failure to control his appetite could have consequences for the entire Roman Empire. Sceva accuses Caesar of leaving his men to die whilst he 'most lasciviously dye[s] in delights' (IV.ii.161), essentially accusing him

[95] Miryana Dimitrova notes that Sceva plays a relatively minor role in Julius Caesar's *Commentaries,* whereas Labienus is much more important. The two roles are essentially inverted in *The False One*, which Dimitrova suggests demonstrates the influence of Lucan's *Pharsalia* on the play, in which Sceva is more important than Labienus. Miryana Dimitrova, 'Labienus and Sceva: Two Classical Supporting Characters and Their Early Modern Dramatic Life in Fletcher and Massinger's *The False One*', *Early Theatre,* 18 (2015), 101-113.

of prioritising his own private sexual pleasure over his public role as Caesar. Sceva makes a similar accusation earlier in the play, arguing that Cleopatra:

> Invites you like a Gamster, note that impudence:
> For shame reflect upon your selfe, your honour
> Looke backe into your noble parts and blush: (II.iii.114-116)

Sceva's complaint takes aim at both Cleopatra and Caesar. He accuses Cleopatra of behaving like a 'gamster', that is, 'a person given to flirtatious dalliance or sexual indulgence' (OED 5a). This is a fairly basic and non-class-based critique of unseemly feminine behaviour. Cleopatra's sexual behaviour is not whorish because she is a Queen, it is whorish because she is 'impudent' that is, without shame. Sceva's demands of Caesar are intermittently highly personal and tied to the social and political function of his office. What he really calls for here is the control of appetite that I have argued is central to Roman martial masculinity. He asks Caesar to delay action in favour of thoughtful consideration: asking him to 'note', 'reflect', and 'looke back'. Once this process of careful deliberation is over, Sceva argues, Caesar will be so overcome with shame at how he has betrayed both his own personal honour and the honour of his office that he will blush. Septimius thought that throwing off the blush was the key to wielding political power, but Sceva makes clear here that to be a Roman leader is to be a blusher because to be a blusher is to understand what it truly means to be a Roman. The notion of 'looking back' can hardly avoid an extension of that spatial metaphor into one that takes the Caesar's body not as his own, but as representative of the Roman body politic and of Rome itself. Look back to Rome and remember Roman values, implores Sceva, leave Cleopatra's bed. We witness here the interpersonal nature of *Romanitas*. It is not just a means by which one might construct one's own identity. It is also a form of social control and group bonding: a shared system of beliefs through which Sceva can unite himself and

Caesar as blushers in contrast to the impudent Cleopatra in the hope that he will influence Caesar's behaviour.

Sceva's appeal to Caesar is conventionally Roman: think of your honour, blush for shame, and amend your actions so they are more in line with *Romanitas*. He assumes that Caesar is ultimately driven by his sense of himself as a self-controlled and moderate Roman. Cleopatra understands Caesar's motivations differently, though, as we shall discover, she does understand that he values blushing. Caesar, she argues, is driven to domination above all else, an argument which she racializes when she evokes his former lover Eunoe:

> [...] Caesar is amarous
> And taken more with the title of a Queene
> Than feature or proportion; he lov'd Eunoe,
> A More, deformed too, I have heard, that brought
> No object to inflame his blood,
> But that her husband was a King, on both
> He did bestow rich presents; shall I then,
> That with Princly birth, bring beauty with me,
> That know to prize my selfe at mine owne rate,
> Despaire his favour? (I.ii.91-99)

Sceva might be able to separate sex and politics, but Cleopatra argues that for Caesar, the drive to dominate reigns in both spheres, making such a division impossible. As evidence of Caesar's political lust, Cleopatra presents the case of Eunoe: the 'deformed' 'More' who 'brought / No object to inflame his blood, / But that her husband was a King'. Eunoe was the wife of Bogudes, King of Mauretania, and she was 'linked contemporaneously' to Caesar.[96] The only extant Latin source for Eunoe is a fleeting mention in Suetonius' *Life of Julius Caesar,* which records that Caesar 'had love affairs with queens too, including Eunoe the Moor, wife of Bogudes, on whom, as well as her husband, he bestowed many splendid presents': a detail repeated by Cleopatra.[97] Eunoe enjoys more prominence in French sources than in English ones prior to the seventeenth

[96] Diana E. E. Kleiner, *Cleopatra and Rome* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 90.
[97] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars,* i, 52.1.

century. In the popular medieval French text *Li Fet des Romains*, 'the translator turns half a sentence of Suetonius into a complete love episode about Eunoe'.[98] Eunoe's moorishness is conspicuous in both *Li Fet des Romains* and *The False One*. Although I can find no evidence that the medieval French text would have been available to the playwrights, comparing the two on this point is instructive. The author of *Li Fet des Romains* demonstrates self-consciousness about Eunoe's race when he writes that 'Eunoe was the most beautiful woman in four kingdoms — nevertheless, she was Moorish'.[99] As Jeanette M. A. Beer writes, 'it was unimaginable that Caesar, the medieval lover, could love an ugly woman, yet to the thirteenth-century the Moor was the epitome of ugliness'.[100] Indeed, Beer finds it odd that the translator 'neglects this opportunity to construct a second portrait of Eunoe that would match Cleopatra's', of whom he writes is 'it would be impossible to find a more beautiful woman', thus eliding Cleopatra's own Moorish identity.[101] Early modern sources on Eunoe tend not to dwell on her Moorishness. When Eunoe appears at the head of a list of Caesar's amorous conquests in Montaigne's 'The History of Spurina', and as a footnote to Pierre Matthieu's *History of Levvis the eleuenth* as an example of Caesar's capacity for love, she is described by both as 'the Queen of Mauritania', which implies her Moorishness, but does not emphasise it.[102] By retaining Eunoe's Moorishness whilst removing any trace of Cleopatra's Moorishness, both *Li Fet* and *The False One* reinforce the implicit contradiction between blackness and beauty nascent in thirteenth-century France, and in seventeenth century England. Eunoe is only really of interest to the authors of *Li Fet* and *The False One* in as far as she acts as a foil to the more famous and more beautiful Cleopatra and as a shocking footnote in

[98] Jeanette M. A. Beer, *A Medieval Caesar* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1976), xvi.
[99] Qtd in Beer (1976), 162.
[100] Beer (1976), 162.
[101] Beer (1976), 162.
[102] Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays,* trans. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin, 1993), 826; Pierre Matthieu, *Histoire de Lovys XI: Roy de France* (Paris: P. Mettayer, 1610), 559, n.4.

the life of Julius Caesar. These texts share a desire to explain away any erotic appeal that Eunoe's blackness might have held for Caesar, either by asserting that she was very beautiful *in spite* of her blackness in *Li Fet* or, in *The False One*, by stating that Caesar's interest in her was because she was a Queen, and in fact had nothing at all to do with her physical beauty, and everything to do with his overwhelming desire to dominate. The description of Eunoe ultimately paves the way for Cleopatra's ultimate assertion of her own power on the basis of two factors: she is both a Queen, and she is not Moorish; she has both 'princly birth' and beauty': how could Caesar resist?

The whiteness of Cleopatra's skin was, to some extent, a theatrical convention inherited from the sixteenth century.[103] There were two English Cleopatra plays in the 1590s — Samuel Daniels' *Tragedie of Cleopatra* (1594) and Mary Sidney's translation of Robert Garnier's *Marc Antonie* (1578), *Antonius* (1592) — both of which feature a conspicuously white Cleopatra.[104] These plays discuss Cleopatra's whiteness only in terms of her beauty, rather than as an explicitly racial characteristic. Cleopatra's difference to the Romans in terms of her skin colour is famously asserted in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, but *The False One* and *All for Love* are more ambivalent in their depictions of Cleopatra's skin colour.[105] Cleopatra herself elides her

[103] There is an ongoing debate about the race of the historical Cleopatra. Broadly speaking, critics divide in two between those who place Cleopatra's lineage in the Mediterranean (normally Greece), and argue that she had white skin, and those who place her in North Africa (normally Egypt) and argue that she had black skin — or at least that she was not white. This debate is by nature highly speculative, and often politically motivated. Henry Louis Gates Jr., for example, criticises an 'Afrocentrist preoccupation with Egypt for its "unexpressed belief that deep continuities supervene on skin colour"', suggesting that 'the belief we cherish is not so much a proposition about melanin and physiognomy; it's the proposition that, through the mists of history, Cleopatra was a *sister*'. In other words, claims about the skin colour of the historical Cleopatra are claims both about her cultural heritage, and about the cultural heritage to which she belongs, or, who gets to claim Cleopatra as their own. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., 'Beyond the Culture Wars: Identities in Dialogue', *Profession* (1993), 6-11, 6. Emphasis original. For an account of popular discussions about the racial heritage of Cleopatra see Joyce Tyldesley, *Cleopatra: Last Queen of Egypt* (London: Profile Books, 2008), 29-31.

[104] See Green MacDonald (2002), 17; and Arshad (2019), 203.

[105] There is a wealth of critical material on race in *Antony and Cleopatra*. For recent studies on the identification of Cleopatra as a 'gypsy' see Keir Elam, '"Cleopatra a gypsy": Performing the Nomadic Subject in Shakespeare's Alexandria, Rome, and London', *Memoria di Shakespeare, A Journal of Shakespearean Studies*, 4 (2017), 35-60, 35-36; Carol Mejia LaPerle, 'An Unlawful Race: Shakespeare's Cleopatra and the Crimes of Early Modern Gypsies', *Shakespeare*, 13 (2017), 226-238, 230. For studies on early modern conceptions of Cleopatra's blackness see Pascale

Moorishness when she compares herself favourably to Eunoe, and the *The False One* demonstrates its self-consciousness about Cleopatra's skin colour in its very first scene by establishing her exceptional whiteness. The Captain of the Egyptian Guard Achillas describes her as 'the faire Cleopatra / (An attribute not frequent in this Clymate)' (I.i.26-27). The pun on 'faire' meaning 'white' and 'faire' meaning 'beautiful' is conventional, and the description is repeated twice more in the play: 'Shee was used to take delight, with her faire hand, / To angle in the Nyle' (I.ii.10-11); 'Even in shadows you are faire' (I.ii.36). This reference to Cleopatra's fairness operates as a self-referential joke about the skin colour of the actor playing Cleopatra, and also seems to respond to Shakespeare's assertion that Cleopatra had dark skin. I want to suggest that the assertion of Cleopatra's whiteness in this play has another purpose: it enables her to claim that she is blushing, and by proclaiming her blush, Cleopatra is able to manipulate Caesar.

We have already seen how Sceva uses the blush to appeal to Caesar's sense of *Romanitas*. Sceva directly implores Caesar to blush and to change his behaviour, but Cleopatra's influence over Caesar is much more subtle. She proclaims her own blush, and by doing so, is able to manipulate him without threatening his sense of dominance. She allows Caesar to feel like he is in control by playing the role of the reticent woman, overcome by a superior force: a dynamic familiar to us from *Venus and Adonis*. Cleopatra has already decided to seduce Caesar as one step on her road to becoming Queen, but when Caesar begins his seduction attempt, she responds by saying that he is 'too violent' (I.iii.204) He replies that she is 'too cold' (205) at which point, Cleopatra says that she is blushing:

CLEOPATRA: Sweare to me

Aebischer 'The Properties of Whiteness: Renaissance Cleopatras from Jodelle to Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Survey*, 65 (2011), 221-238; Carol Chillington Rutter, *Enter the Body: Women and Representation on Shakespeare's Stage* (London: Routledge, 2001), 62; and Green MacDonald (2002). For more on race in performance see Celia R. Daileader, 'The Cleopatra Complex: White Actresses on the Interracial "Classical" Stage', in *Colorblind Shakespeare: New Perspectives on Race and Performance*, ed. Ayanna Thompson (New York NY: Routledge, 2006), 205-220; and Jyotsna G. Singh, *Shakespeare and Postcolonial Theory* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 109-118.

And by your selfe (for I hold that oath sacred)
You will right me as Queene —
CAESAR: These lips be witnesses (*he kisses her*)
And if I breake that oath —
CLEOPATRA: You make me blush Sir,
And in that blush interpret me.
CAESAR: I will do,
Come let's go in, and blushe againe: this one word
You shall beleeve.
CLEOPATRA: I must, you are a conqueror.
(I.iii.205-210)

In this exchange we find the mingling of sexual passion and politics that Sceva found so unacceptable. Cleopatra's sexual coyness is of note, but rather than reading her reticence merely as virginal shyness, it is important to notice how Cleopatra proclaims her blush to achieve her political aim. She does not blush until Caesar has promised to make her Queen, and her self-proclaimed blushing response is something of a non-sequitur. Cleopatra interrupts Caesar mid-sentence to tell him that she is blushing. He wants to delay action to make more oaths, but he has already said what Cleopatra needs him to. Her interruption moves the action forward, forcing them to stop talking and start acting. Crucially, no blush must take place in order for this exchange to function as Cleopatra needs it to, and I would suggest that Cleopatra does not actually blush. Why should she? She is held up by Sceva as the antithesis of the blushing Roman, and she rejects the values of *Romanitas*, which motivate all other blushes in the play. When Cleopatra compares herself to Eunoe, she demonstrates how deeply she understands what Caesar wants: to dominate a beautiful and powerful woman both politically and sexually. By pretending to submit to a blushing Roman morality, Cleopatra can control Caesar without him feeling like he has ceded any power to her. Like Sceva, she uses the blush to create shared values and a shared manner of physical expression between herself and Caesar. Cleopatra uses the blush as a symbol for emotions that she does not experience, and so enacts the fear of discrepancy between inside and outside which I outlined as a key early modern concern in the introduction to this thesis. In the previous chapter,

we saw Shakespeare proclaim that a woman's best defence is her blush. Cleopatra agrees, but with one important caveat: a woman's best defence is her blush when she can control its appearance, meaning, and interpretation. I rather think that Lucrece would agree.

Cleopatra offers to let Caesar 'interpret me', but really, she guides his interpretation to such an extent that the true meaning of Cleopatra's blush (if a blush actually occurs), in the sense of its emotional source, is irrelevant. It functions in this exchange not as a proxy for Cleopatra's internal experience, but as a means through which she can exert power and control over Caesar. Cleopatra recognises that the communications of the material body are assumed to be more trustworthy than its verbal communications, particularly when that body is coded female, and she manipulates that assumption to her own ends. Caesar falls for her performance of inarticulacy brought on by sexual desire and modesty and expressed in blushing. Sceva appeals to Caesar to share his blushing as a sign of their unity as Romans, but Caesar offers to share Cleopatra's blush as a sign of their sexual *and* political unity; he invites her: 'let's goe in and blush again'. Cleopatra, for her part, replies: 'I must, you are a conqueror'. This response allows Cleopatra to divest herself of any power at all, though she has controlled the entire conversation, and Caesar's response to her, with the proclamation of a blush which may, or, more likely, may not have even occurred.

In *The False One*, Cleopatra recognises that the Romans are blushers, and that her power over Caesar lies in her ability to manipulate his Roman belief that the blush is a proxy for certain deeply held beliefs about self-control, power, and restraint. She uses the symbol without holding the beliefs, and as such, is able to control Caesar. To use the blushing symbol in this way, the play must first establish Cleopatra's own exceptional whiteness, a physical distinction which distinguishes her from her fellow Egyptians, and from Eunoe. Cleopatra's exceptional whiteness allows her to convince the Romans that because she shares their blushing hue, she also shares their

ethics, particularly their sense of shame. In *All for Love*, we will see the same opposition of blushing Romans and non-blushing Egyptians, but the conflict is understood not only as between love and military duty represented by Cleopatra and Ventidius, but between sexual love and marital duty, represented by Cleopatra and Octavia. Both women offer Antony a route out of blushing. Octavia through submission to Roman values; Cleopatra through their rejection. We see Antony prevaricate between the two, and his ultimate rejection of his Roman identity proves his downfall.

All for Love

From the outset of *All for Love*, blushing — both the act, and the Roman shame culture for which it stands — is presented as a central value of Roman martial masculinity, which is itself opposed to the perceived excesses of Egyptian life. In the opening scene of the play, Cleopatra throws a festival held in Antony's honour, but his General Ventidius expresses great scepticism about this supposed cause for joy and celebration:

> Curse on the tongue that bids this general joy.
> Can they be friends of *Antony*, who Revel
> When Antony's in danger? Hide, for shame
> You *Romans*, your Great grandsires Images,
> For fear their Souls should animate their Marbles,
> To blush at their degenerate Progeny.[106]

Ventidius' lament contrasts the current 'degenerate' bacchanal with a past in which Romans, the 'Great grandsires' of those in attendance at the festival, were truly Roman. Ventidius argues that a true Roman knows where his loyalty lies, and he is disgusted by Antony's soldiers, who forget their obligation to their General, preferring the pleasures of the festival to doing their duty. He also extends Roman identity widely across the company, arguing that the true 'Great grandsires' of the

[106] John Dryden, *All for Love*, in *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. George R. Guffey et al, 20 vols (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1956-1990; 1984), xiii, I.i.150-255. All further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text.

Roman army are those mighty Romans who merited sculpture. This speech is an amusing, somewhat hyperbolic, statement of the glory days of Rome and of the values of *Romanitas*, but Ventidius is completely serious in his censure.[107] Ventidius stretches the metaphor even further by saying not that the Romans' current behaviour is enough to make a statue blush, but that their behaviour is bad enough to inspire their ancestors to come back to life and blush through their statues. Rome was built on *Romanitas*, not on Egyptian revelry, and upholding Roman values is far more important, argues Ventidius, than enjoying the fleeting pleasures of the festival. Just as Antony and Sceva bonded through a shared language of embodied shame in *The False One*, so too does Ventidius make a physical plea to Antony. He begs him to return to Rome in tears, and Antony responds with a blush: 'Stop 'em *Ventidius*, / Or I shall blush to death: they set my shame / That caus'd 'em, full before me' (I.i.268-270). Roman Blushing is a matter of life and death: it could bring Roman grandsires back to life, or strike Antony down dead. The desire to avoid shame and blushing blush animates many of Antony's actions in *All for Love*, and, as we shall discover, he tries two different routes out of shame, which might be either characterised as the choice between rejecting and reclaiming his *Romanitas*, or, choosing between Cleopatra and Octavia.

At the end of the first act of the play, it appears that Ventidius' plea has worked. Antony commits to leaving Cleopatra, who in turn sends her waiting woman Charmion to deliver a message. Charmion reports that she moved through crowds to speak to Antony and when he saw her '[h]e blush'd, and bade, make way' (II.i.54). Ventidius hopes that by making Antony blush, he has reminded him of his responsibilities as a Roman, but Antony's blushing response to Charmion

[107] Gary B. Miles augments Paul Cantor's argument that Shakespeare's Roman plays 'reflect a decline of public life and values that distinguished the period of the Roman Empire from that of the Republic' with a reference to portraiture, noting that in portraits from the Roman Republic, 'the attention to imperfections, to marks of age, of scars of battle, and to signs of care seem emphasised, even exaggerated'. He goes on to suggest that this 'aggressive verism' is a deliberate strategy: 'these traditionalists make clear their morality. They represent themselves as careworn, as caretakes of the republic, not as charismatic adventurers set on personal glorification'. Gary B. Miles, 'How Roman are Shakespeare's "Romans"?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 40 (1989), 257-283, 262.

suggests another part of Roman shame culture: the oratorical blush. When Charmion reports their very public conversation to Cleopatra, it becomes apparent that the conversation has been a performance for both Antony and Charmion, in which Charmion plays the role of Cleopatra, and Antony plays himself. Charmion reports the encounter to Cleopatra:

> [...] I told my message
> Just as you gave it, broken and disorder'd;
> I numbered in it all your sighs and tears:
> And while I mov'd your pitiful request,
> That you but only beg'd a last farewel,
> He fetch'd an inward groan, and ev'ry time
> I nam'd you, sigh'd, as if his heart was breaking,
> But shun'd my eyes, and guiltily looked down;
> He seem'd not now that awful *Antony*
> Who shook an Arm'd Assembly with his Nod.
> But making show as he would rub his eyes,
> Disguis'd and blotted out a falling tear. (II.i.57-68)

As loyal as she is to her mistress, Charmion does not feel the emotions — those of a betrayed lover — which she is performing. Her 'broken and disorder'd' delivery merely copies Cleopatra's initial speech: it is 'just as [Cleopatra] gave it'. We know that waiting women often mirror the emotions of their mistresses from a similar episode in *Lucrece*, but whereas in that poem, the mirroring seems 'enforced by sympathy' (1229), here it is performed deliberately. We seem invited to contrast Charmion's false performance of emotions that she does not feel to Antony's display of his own emotions in the scene; Charmion recounts that he blushes, groans, sighs, looks down, and cries. Yet, Charmion is not Antony's only audience; he is surrounded by crowds of his fellow Romans. As I explored at the beginning of this chapter, such material communications are expected of a Roman orator, which ought to lead us to ask: if Charmion is performing Cleopatra's emotions, whose emotions is Antony performing? Are they his own, or is he playing the role of a lover receiving bad news? The ambiguity over this point seems to invite us to think about the relationship between emotion and performance, or between interior experience and its outward

manifestation. Antony's performed emotions are at a distance from his interior experience because Roman oratorical conventions prize the realistic performance of emotions, and because the emotions are not performed by Antony in front of the audience for *All for Love*: we merely hear them reported by Charmion. The theatrical audience does not even have the benefit of Antony explaining or glossing his bodily communications first-hand, we experience them only through Charmion, who does a lot of glossing. Not only did Antony look down, he looked down 'guiltily' to 'shu[n] my eyes'. He didn't just rub his eyes, he made a 'show as he would rub his eyes' to disguise a tear. He sighed 'as if his heart was breaking'. Charmion's reading of Antony's body language is remarkable because she is Antony's structural inferior in every conceivable way: she is a female Egyptian servant. It is relatively rare for women to offer readings of men's blushes, and it is even more unusual for a racially-othered female servant to read the blush of her supposed racial, gender, and class superior.

Nonetheless, Charmion's social position in relation to Antony has little impact on her ability to read the material communications of his body. Like others who would seek to interpret a person's interior state from their outward behaviour, Charmion is not able to glean any real insight from Antony's material communications. She can observe his blushes, sighs, and groans, but she cannot say what they truly meant, only what they were 'as if'. The layering of sign on sign of Antony's utter despair does seem a bit suspect. Perhaps Antony is performing, or Charmion is exaggerating, or both. It is worth pushing on this fracture a little harder to ask: why was the conversation between Antony and Charmion not staged? The only significant logistical difficulty for staging the conversation is that Charmion describes moving through a crowd, but the cast list includes 'servants of Antony', who could surely be repurposed from, and who might even be intended by, Charmion's earlier description of Antony's soldiers standing around him like 'iron

statues' (48). Charmion's performance, first of Cleopatra, and then of Antony, seems to invite reflection on the relationship between emotion and performance by staging Charmion's deliberate performance of outward signs which do not reflect internal experiences. Her self-conscious performance calls into question the authenticity of Antony's performance of emotional excess which might or might not be merely the fulfilment of an oratorical convention. This scene explores the difficulty of accurately reading the signs of the material body by removing the material body from the scene and leaving us only with verbal descriptions of the body's material signs, the veracity of which have already been called into question by Roman oratorical conventions.

When Antony and Cleopatra meet in the next act, their conversation refers back to the plot of *The False One* as they discuss Cleopatra's relationship with Julius Caesar. During this exchange, Antony describes both his own and Cleopatra's sexual activity in terms of staining. Whilst Antony thinks that he and Cleopatra are both 'stained' by their sexual behaviour, Cleopatra rejects the idea that she should be ashamed, or that she should blush. This part of the argument begins with an echo of *Antony and Cleopatra,* in which Cleopatra describes her relationship with Caesar as '[m]y salad days, / When I was green in judgement, cold in blood' (I.v.73-74). In *All for Love,* Antony tells Cleopatra that he fell in love with her as a child, but whilst he 'left th'acknowledgement for time to ripen', 'Caesar stept in, and with a greedy hand / Pluck'd the green fruit, ere the first blush of red, / Yet cleaving to the bough' (II.i.266-269). In the lines from Shakespeare's text, Cleopatra uses the language of greenness to dismiss her relationship with Caesar as essentially unimportant.[108] Here, it is repurposed by Antony into an accusation, not of Caesar the statutory rapist, but of Cleopatra, who by the time she came to Antony was 'stain'd by *Caesar* / And not half mine' (276-277). Antony compares himself to Caesar favourably, telling

[108] The medical and poetic association of the colour green and young female virgins was conventional. See Helen King, *The Disease of Virgins: Green Sickness, Chlorosis, and the Problems of Puberty* (London: Routledge, 2004).

Cleopatra that whilst Caesar was 'greedy' for the unripe fruit, Antony waited, not only for Cleopatra but for his wife. Caesar may have grabbed at green fruit, but 'I took *Octavia* [...] / in her pride of youth / And flow'r of Beauty' (302-304). Antony recognises that the power to 'pluck' or 'take' women lies with the men in either case, but he refuses to allow that to influence his verdict on Cleopatra's behaviour. The real shame, to Antony's mind, is not Caesar's but Cleopatra's. Cleopatra is indelibly stained by Caesar's abuse, even after all this time.

Cleopatra talks about this episode of her life very differently in *All for Love* than in either of the other two plays. She reminds Antony that 'half constrain'd, I gave, as to a Tyrant, / What he would take by force' (II.358-359). This explicit threat of sexual violence is echoed in *The False One,* in which Caesar threatens to rape Cleopatra, saying: 'I will enjoy her Beauty: / I will not be deni'd; I'le force my longing' (IV.ii.145-146). In that play, the threat of sexual violence is not recognised, and Cleopatra has a degree of control over Caesar, albeit control that is enforced surreptitiously though her performed self-disempowerment and self-proclaimed blush. In this play, Cleopatra talks about her relationship with Caesar in terms of his dominance and her powerlessness. It is neither unimportant — her salad days — nor a canny political manoeuvre through which she might ascend the Egyptian throne. She consented to a Tyrant because she had no choice but to consent. Antony seeks to shame Cleopatra for Caesar's behaviour, and he draws an imaginative comparison between his own shame at how he has betrayed the martial and domestic values of his *Romanitas* with the sexual shame that he imagines Cleopatra must feel. He describes Octavia:

> Whom blushing I must praise, because I left her.
> You called; my love obeyed the fatal summons:
> This raised the Roman arms; the cause was yours.
> I would have fought by land, where I was stronger;
> You hindered it, yet when I fought at sea,
> Forsook me fighting, and — oh, stain to honour!
> Oh, lasting shame! — I knew not that I fled,

But fled to follow you. (305-312)

The end of this passage verbally echoes Antony's declaration in *Antony and Cleopatra* that he 'followed that I blush to look upon' (III.xi.12). In *All for Love* his honour is stained by his failures both as a soldier and as a husband. These lines foreshadow the play's interest in understanding Antony's dilemma as a choice between two women, each of whom is a source of shame and both of whom offer a route out of shame. Antony blushes to praise his wife, but the real 'stain to honour', the 'lasting shame' he feels is because of his fidelity to Cleopatra, for whom he left both his wife and a battle. Antony's confession here demonstrates the reach of Roman shame across the personal and public spheres, and emphasises that by choosing Cleopatra, Antony has disgraced himself in both.

Antony describes his disloyalty to Roman values in terms of staining and blushing, but when he tries to encompass Cleopatra within that worldview, she rejects it. She listens to all of Antony's accusations, and replies that '[s]ince my innocence will not offend, / I shall not blush to own it' (344-345). The Roman Ventidius observes the conversation secretly and is horrified by Cleopatra's rejection of Roman shame: '[a]fter this', he says, 'I think she'll blush at nothing' (345-346). When Cleopatra refuses to blush, when she refuses to consider herself stained by her sexual conduct, she demonstrates her rejection of Roman values. By rejecting Roman values, she rejects the shame culture through which they are enforced, and places herself outside of its control. Cleopatra's passionate defence of herself and her conduct manages to delay Antony's leaving, and their reinstated relationship saves him, for a time, from a blushing Roman morality. She offers instead to 'mark [him] red with many an eager kiss' (II.i.10), and for his part, Antony temporarily renounces blushing, and the Roman values which would lead him to blush: 'let those who took [*sic*] us blush; I would love on / With awful State, regardless of their frowns' (21-22). When

Antony and Cleopatra are at their most in love with one another, the only redness is that of kisses, and the only shameful or scandalized feelings are felt by onlookers, to whom they are entirely indifferent. They have rejected Roman shame culture, and those who enforce it through public shaming. Nonetheless, this detente cannot last. Cleopatra has made her case for the rejection of Roman shame culture, but Dollabella and Octavia soon arrive to make the case for its defence.

Dollabella is first to mention blushing, when Antony reminds him that he accused Cleopatra of being 'an accessary to [his] Brothers death' (158). Dollabella responds: 'Spare my remembrance; 'twas a guilty day, / And still the blush hangs here' (III.159-160). But the most consistent appeals to blushing Roman morality are made by Octavia, who arrives with Antony's two small daughters, Agrippina and Antonia, in tow. Dollabella asks Antony to receive them 'for shame, my Lord, if not for love' (243), and Antony agrees to do so. Octavia offers Antony freedom from blushing twice, telling him that:

> [T]he conditions I have brought are such,
> You need not blush to take: I love your honour,
> Because 'tis mine; it never shall be said,
> Octavia's husband was her brother's slave. (III.289-294)

She also sends her children to their father, saying:

> [...] Go to him children, go;
> Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him;
> For you may speak, and he may own you too,
> Without a blush; and so he cannot all
> His children: go, I say, and pull him to me
> And pull him to your selves, from that bad Woman. (III.350-355)

Octavia offers Antony a distinctively Roman way out of blushing; she argues that he can avoid blushing by submitting to Roman shame culture and coming back within the fold of Roman society by fulfilling Roman expectations of how a soldier and father should behave. Octavia's dual-pronged approach addresses Antony's sense of military honour, and his sense of familial honour:

both of which he described to Cleopatra in terms of the shame he felt. He need not blush for the military terms that she has brought him, and he need not blush to acknowledge his paternity of their daughters. Cleopatra might offer Antony freedom from blushing through the rejection of Roman shame culture, but Octavia offers him freedom from blushing through the embrace of his duty as a Roman soldier and father. Antony responds to Octavia's offer with a blush. Dollabella calls upon Ventidius to observe how 'she has touched [Antony] in the tender'st part; / See how he reddens with despite and shame, / To be outdone in generosity' (308-310). For a moment, it appears that Antony is only too glad to fulfil their Roman expectations. His friends and family address him by his role — he is Ventidius' 'emperor' (362); Dollabella's 'friend' (363); Octavia's 'husband' (363); his children's 'father' (363) — and, for his part, Antony is utterly 'vanquished: take me, / Octavia; take me, children; share me all' (363-364). It does not take long, however, for Cleopatra to return and assert her claim on Antony.

All for Love is unique in this chapter because it stages a confrontation between Cleopatra and Octavia, who, I argue, personify the two routes of out blushing which are open to Antony: the rejection or embrace of Roman values, and the shame culture through which they are enforced. Understanding the personal reputations of the actresses who originated the roles on the Restoration stage will sharpen our sense of the conflict. Of the three plays under consideration in this chapter, *All for Love* is the only one in which female actors originated the women's parts: Elizabeth Boutell played Cleopatra, and Katherine Corey played Octavia. In her history of Restoration actresses, Elizabeth Howe writes that Boutell had, 'by the mid-seventies [...] begun to specialise very successfully in gentle, timorous heroines', and she lists Cleopatra as an example of this casting.[109] My reading of the play so far makes clear that Cleopatra is far from but a gentle and timorous

[109] Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 111.

heroine, and I would suggest instead that this role appeals to a different aspect of Boutell's talents. The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (*ODNB*) records that '[a]fter 1670 Mrs Bowtell turned to a wider range of parts: cuckolding wives and tragic heroines, especially meek, virtuous women caught up by larger forces'.[110] This description makes Boutell's range as an actress clear: cuckolding wives require a rather different performance than do tragic heroines or meek, virtuous women. Cleopatra is understood by both Howe and Maria José Mora as an example of Boutell's skill in playing mild women, but I think the role appeals to a different side of her talents: namely, her skill as the actor of cuckolding wives and tragic heroines.[111]

It is interesting to read *All for Love* bearing in mind Elizabeth Boutell's contemporary reputation for sexual promiscuity. She was satirised as 'chestnut-maned Boutell, whom all the town fucks' in the contemporary lampoon *The Session of Ladies* (1688), and the bookseller Edmund Curll wrote that 'the Generosity of some happy Lovers enabled her to quit the Stage before she grew old', implying her successful career as a mistress, if not as a prostitute.[112] Boutell seems well-cast, then, as the forceful and sexually voracious Cleopatra. In contrast, Katherine Corey was 'a big woman with a gift for comedy' who was 'popular in a variety of roles, but especially in old women parts: scolding wives, mothers, governesses, waiting women, and bawds'.[113] Her entry in the *ODNB* emphasises her abilities as a comic actress, writing that she 'specialise[d] in older women and widows', and was '[n]ever the tragic heroine or the flirtatious ingénue' but that she 'built a solid, long, popular career in strong comic supporting roles'.[114] I

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[110] Deborah Payne Fisk, 'Bowtell [Boutel; née Davenport], Elizabeth', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/3013 > [accessed 19th September 2019].
[111] Maria José Mora, 'Type-casting in the Restoration Theatre: Dryden's *All for Love*, 1677-1704', *Atlantis*, 27 (2005), 75-86.
[112] Qtd in Fisk (2004).
[113] John Harold Wilson, *All the King's Ladies: Actresses of the Restoration* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 132-133.
[114] Cheryl Wanko, 'Corey [née Mitchell], Katherine', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/67758> [accessed 19th September 2019].

agree with Mora that the contemporary social reputations of the two actresses seem to have been diametrically opposed, but where she reads the conflict as between 'innocent' Boutell and 'domineering' Corey, I think the conflict is better characterised as between sensual, indulgent Boutell, and virtuous, dutiful Corey.[115] The critic Tanya Caldwell centralises the dynamic between the two women in her short introduction to the play, writing that '[t]he cat-fight between Cleopatra and Octavia must have especially delighted audiences'.[116] The scenes between the women are certainly some of the most dynamic in the play, but to dismiss this exchange as nothing more than a scrap is to miss the fact that it contains one of the sharpest articulations of the central drama of the play: which route out of blushing will Antony choose? When they first meet, Octavia approaches Cleopatra demanding to 'view nearer / That face, which has so long usurp'd my right, / To find the enviable charms […] that ruin'd my dear Lord' (III.i.434-437). Octavia explicitly understands her own superiority to Cleopatra and what Antony has lost in terms of the superiority of Roman identity to life in Egypt. Octavia is 'a Roman / a name that makes, and can unmake, a queen'; Antony 'lost that name / To be a slave in Egypt', but she has come 'to free him thence' (419-424). Will Antony choose to live a blushless life in the shade of Cleopatra's 'enviable charms', or will he respect the 'right' of long-suffering Octavia and free himself from blushing by being her Roman husband?

Antony describes Cleopatra's difference to the Romans using imagery of colour: blushing and staining, but Octavia is the only character in the play to describe Cleopatra's difference to the

[115] Mora (2005), 75. Mora goes on to argue that the audience's sympathies are reversed in the 1704 revival of the play, in which the 'pathos and passion' of Elizabeth Barry's Cleopatra is bested by the wifely virtue of Anne Bracegirdle's Octavia. She suggests that the productions reflect the values of the courts of Charles II and Queen Anne respectively.
[116] Tanya Caldwell, 'Introduction to *All for Love*', in *The Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century Drama: Concise Edition*, eds J. Douglas Canfield and Maja-Lisa von Sneidern (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2003), 275.

Romans explicitly in terms of her blackness. She continues her discussion of Cleopatra's 'charms' only to dismiss them:

OCTAVIA: I would view nearer *coming up close to her*
That face which has so long usurped my right,
To find the enviable charms that catch
Mankind so sure, that ruined my dear lord.

CLEOPATRA: Oh, you do well to search, for had you known
But half these charms, you had not lost his heart.

OCTAVIA: Far be their knowledge from a Roman lady,
Far from a modest wife! Shame of our sex,
Dost thou not blush to own those black endearments,
That make sin pleasing?

CLEOPATRA: You may blush, who want them.
If bounteous nature, if indulgent Heaven
Have given me charms to please the bravest man,
Should I not thank them? Should I be ashamed,
And not be proud? I am, that he has loved me;
And, when I love not him, Heaven change this face
For one like that. (III.435-449)

Octavia's first reference to Cleopatra's 'enviable charms' seems to allude to her 'personal attractions' (OED 3a), but by calling Cleopatra's charms her 'black endearments', Octavia orientalises her critique, alluding perhaps to some magic on Cleopatra's part. The connection between Cleopatra's 'charms' and sorcery is intensified in the next act, when Ventidius describes Cleopatra's eyes which have 'pow'r beyond *Thessalian* charms' (IV.233). Thessaly, the editor notes, 'was famous for witches' (p.432). Octavia's suspicion that Cleopatra's charms might be supernatural reflects a widespread trope which brought suspicions about race, sexuality, and pagan belief together in accusations that indigenous Americans and Africans (particularly women) performed witchcraft.[117] Other familiar examples include Brabantio's suspicion of Othello, whom

[117] See Diane Purkiss, who writes that 'the explanation of witchcraft was one among many means by which Europeans sought to familiarise an otherwise unbearable challenge to their worldview' during the period of American colonization, and who details a list of 'classical witches of ethnic alterity', including North Africans such as Medea and Dido. Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1996), 253, 262.

he accuses of using 'foul charms' to pursue Desdemona, and Othello's own reference to the 'Egyptian […] charmer' who gave his mother the embroidered handkerchief.[118] Aaron refers to his own 'charming eyes' which 'in triumph long / hast prisoner held, fettered in amorous chains', and to Tamora as a 'siren, that will charm Rome's Saturnine' in *Titus Andronicus*.[119] Caliban calls down 'all the charms / Of Sycorax' on Prospero's head.[120] In *Antony and Cleopatra,* Pompey refers to the 'charms' of Cleopatra's love: 'let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both!' (II.i.639). Octavia's racialised critique of Cleopatra's 'black endearments' implies that there is something unfair in Cleopatra's seduction of Antony: both unfair in its sense of something unjust or uneven, and in its sense of un-fair or not being white. Octavia accuses Cleopatra of not playing by the rules of whiteness, of refusing to conform her behaviour to Roman and (anachronistic) Christian standards. Octavia frames her critique of Cleopatra first in terms of Roman shame and appropriate behaviour, making a virtue of her ignorance of anything that would be unseemly for 'a Roman lady' and 'modest wife'. But her declaration — 'shame of our sex' — hinges her Roman criticism with an anachronistically Christian critique: Cleopatra's 'black endearments' 'make sin pleasing'. It is certainly common for Roman sources to critique Cleopatra's sexual liberty, but to describe it as 'sin' judges it within a Christian, not a Roman, moral frame. By combining the two different types of shame, Octavia demonstrates how the proto-white sense of Europeans superiority to non-European populations grew from claims of the moral superiority of *Romanitas* and incorporated an understanding of Christian shame which emphasised the presence of the blush as the prime proof of a person's ability to think and behave ethically.

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[118] William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), I.ii.73; III.iv.56.
[119] William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Alan Hughes, rev edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), II.i.14-16; 23.
[120] William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. David Lindley, rev edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), I.ii.340-341.

Octavia's reference to Cleopatra's 'black endearments' suggests the ethnic difference between the two women, a difference which Cleopatra expressed some self-consciousness about earlier in the play. In *The False One,* Cleopatra is confident of her physical superiority to Eunoe, but in *All for Love,* she expresses a paranoid fear about Octavia's beauty:

> […] Is she fair?
> Bright as a goddess? and is all perfection
> Confined to her? It is. Poor I was made
> Of that coarse matter, which, when she was finished,
> The gods threw by for rubbish. (III.402-406)

Cleopatra's fear is based on whether Octavia is 'fair' and 'bright', two synonyms for beauty which also allude to physical whiteness. Cleopatra, on the other hand, describes herself as 'poor', 'coarse', and made of the 'rubbish' left behind when Octavia was created. Within this acutely tactile metaphor, the women are made of the same 'matter', but all that is beautiful is 'confined' to Octavia, who is 'bright as a goddess': they become diametrically opposed as beautiful, fair Octavia and ugly, dark Cleopatra, continuing this play's stark sundering of the two women. Before Octavia arrives, Cleopatra concedes that she cannot compete in terms of physical fairness; she cannot claim whiteness and the social and ethical beliefs and behaviour that term implies. However, after Octavia's diatribe on Cleopatra's charms, Cleopatra finds herself able to defend her position on different terms. She rejects Octavia's Roman / proto-Christian shame and embraces her charms, arguing that it is Octavia who should feel shame at her inability to ensure her husband's fidelity: 'You may blush, who want them'. Cleopatra rejects the superiority of fairness and its moral claims, instead embracing the power of her own 'charms' and her own physical attractiveness, saying that it is only when her love for Antony is lost that she would want to 'change this face for one like that'. Cleopatra asserts that neither a Roman nor a Christian moral frame has the power to make her ashamed of her sexual reputation, and her lines hover between genuine emancipation and a continuation of the racialised stereotype of the rapaciously lascivious oriental.

Cleopatra's rejection of both Roman and Christian shame confirms her non-white non-European non-Christian sexual liberty, which is played out as titillation for the audience, who are never seriously encouraged to consider that Cleopatra's appeal to Antony might be more than purely sexual. In this exchange between Cleopatra and Octavia, we see the central conflict of the play sharply articulated: will Antony submit to or reject shame culture? Cleopatra defends herself against Octavia's blushing shame, and in doing so gestures towards the emergence of a new early modern understanding of whiteness as the confluence of appearance, behaviour, and ethical inclination, with the blush as its proof.

The final blushing episode of *All for Love* comes in Act IV, when Ventidius tries to drive a wedge between Cleopatra and Antony by accusing the former of flirting with Dollabella. Like Charmion's earlier report to Cleopatra of how Antony behaved when he heard her news, Ventidius augments his report to Antony with a lot of glossing. Unlike Charmion's report, we also see the conversation between Cleopatra and Dollabella first-hand, and so are in a position to assess the accuracy of Ventidius' report. The circumstances under which the conversation between Cleopatra and Dollabella is conducted are damning. Dollabella goes to Cleopatra at Antony's bidding to tell her that Antony is going to leave her. Before he speaks to the audience, he laments to himself that he 'wish[es] that I were he, to be so ruined' (IV.52), and resolves to declare his love to Cleopatra asking 'what injury / To him, to wear the robe which he throws by?' (IV.60). Ventidius overhears Dollabella and decides to make use of Dollabella's declaration of love for Cleopatra 'to ruin her yet more with Antony' (IV.62). Alexas urges Cleopatra to 'try / To make [Antony] jealous' (IV.71), and suggests that she might 'practise on' Dollabella, who 'looks as if he were laid for Nature's bait / To catch weak women's eyes' (80-82). Cleopatra resolves to try. The conversation between Cleopatra and Dollabella might be played in any number of ways, certainly it could be

flirtatious, particularly up to the point when Ventidius leaves, declaring 'I have enough. / But how to manage this! Well I'll consider' (144-145). Yet, when Ventidius reports the exchange to Antony, he focuses not on what Cleopatra said, but on how she said it. He declares Dollabella

> Young; I think him young,
> And handsome too, and so do others think him.
> But what of that? He went by your command,
> Indeed 'tis probable, with some kind message,
> For she received it graciously: she smiled,
> And then he grew familiar with her hand,
> Squeezed it, and worried it with ravenous kisses.
> She blushed, and sighed, and smiled, and blushed again;
> At last she took occasion to talk softly,
> And brought her cheek up close, and leaned on his,
> At which he whispered kisses back on hers,
> And then she cried aloud that 'constancy
> Should be rewarded'. (281-293)

Aside from Cleopatra's declaration that 'constancy should be rewarded', Ventidius' retelling of the exchange between Cleopatra and Dollabella relies on the layering of non-verbal details — Cleopatra's smiles, that Dollabella squeezed and kissed her hand; her blushes and sighs; and that she leant on Dollabella's cheek. Whether or not Ventidius' description accurately reflects the scene that has been played earlier is a decision that needs to be made in performance, but I would suggest that there are significant clues to suggest that this account is meant to seem like a deliberate exaggeration, or even a lie.

Firstly, Ventidius eavesdrops with the intention of finding something to discredit Cleopatra; he encourages Octavia to tell her husband that she witnessed the exchange, even though she did not; and he leaves before the conversation is finished. This sequence of behaviours suggests that he is not much concerned by giving an accurate report. Secondly, we are primed to consider the truthfulness of one person's account of another's body language firstly by Charmion in the first act, and in this scene by Dollabella when he gives an inaccurate report of his commission by Antony by deliberately misrepresenting Antony's bodily communications. Antony asked

Dollabella to deliver the news so that 'our parting be as gently made / As other loves begin' (21-22), but Dollabella reports to Cleopatra that the words were spoken 'with fiery eyes and with contracted brows' (160). Dollabella's report sets a precedent by which the wrong impression of a verbal communication is created through the exaggeration of the material communications that accompanied it. Finally, Ventidius accuses Cleopatra of blushing, a behaviour which she has never undertaken before, and to which she does not seem much inclined. Ventidius' evocation of the blush appeals to Antony as a Roman who prizes the blush as a moral sign, and who might be aroused to jealousy through an allusion to the erotic blush. Once again, we find that the communications of the material body are considered more compelling evidence than the linguistic communications of that body, and once again, we find that even if those material communications are more compelling, they are not more accurate, unambiguous, or easily replicable than verbal communications.

For Antony, the central question of *All for Love* is: how can I avoid blushing? He can see two routes out: the first, the rejection of Roman shame culture through the embrace of Cleopatra; second, the recognition of his responsibilities under Roman shame culture through his return to Octavia. The Romans repeatedly try to control their own and each other's behaviour by calling for a blush, but they are unable to control Cleopatra because she refuses to blush and rejects the Roman shame culture which would try to make her do so. Her refusal to blush is understood in the play both as a rejection of Roman shame culture, and within an anachronistic Christian frame of racialised shame. This play revisits the communicative power of the material body, and also how those bodily communications might be twisted when they are retold by other people, as we witness Charmion, Dollabella, and Ventidius each evocatively retell a scene of the play with an emphasis on the material communications of the participants.

Antony and Cleopatra

The blush is used as a symbol much more frequently in *All for Love* and *The False One* than it is in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra,* but revisiting this play with all we have learned about how the blush is used to differentiate Cleopatra against the Romans in those later plays sheds new light on two key moments: the opening scene, and Enobarbus' description of Cleopatra's barge. In the play's opening scene, Cleopatra reads Antony's blush and in doing so, she establishes both the nature of their relationship, and the nature of the conflict in which Antony is embroiled. Namely, that their relationship is one in which traditional Roman values are inverted, and the conflict over whether Antony will reject or embrace his Roman identity. Revisiting Cleopatra's barge with an eye for a blush gives the lie to a commonly repeated critical misconception: that Enobarbus' barge is missing its Cleopatra.

Antony and Cleopatra begins with a blush, and in that blush we see established three important contexts for the play. Firstly, in Cleopatra's reading of the blush, we witness the usurpation of normative gender and racial power dynamics in the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra. Secondly, these lines make clear that Cleopatra deeply understands that Antony is a Roman and that to be a Roman is to be a blusher. Thirdly, Antony's blush represents the central drama of the play: will Antony reject his *Romanitas* and stay with Cleopatra, or will he embrace his *Romanitas* and leave? Cleopatra addresses Antony:

CLEOPATRA: You must not stay here longer. Your dismission
Is come from Caesar; therefore hear it Antony.
Where's Fulvia's process? — Caesar's, I would say — both?
Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt's queen,
Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
Is Caesar's homager — else so they cheek pays shame,
When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. (I.i.28-34)

I suggested in the previous chapter that the relationship between the blusher and the one who reads the blush works to support the structural power of the blush's reader far more often than it works to dismantle it. That observation holds true here, but this exchange is extremely unusual, because it involves a woman reading a man's face. We saw the usual gender dynamic of a female blusher and a male reader overturned even more shockingly in *All for Love*, when Cleopatra's servant Charmion offers her reading of Antony's blush, but the fact that this play begins with an Egyptian woman reading the face of a Roman man already hints that this play will reverse norms of gendered and racialised power. In these lines, Cleopatra demonstrates her refusal to conform to expectations of feminine passivity and stakes her claim to total knowledge of Antony's body, inside and out, and her right to declare that knowledge publicly.

In this scene, Cleopatra proves herself to be a particularly subtle and insightful reader. She understands the importance of Antony's blush, but, unlike many readers before and after her, she is not overly prescriptive about exactly what it means. Instead, she offers two readings: that Antony blushes because Fulvia's scolding makes him feel ashamed, or that he blushes in homage to Caesar. Cleopatra's question — 'both?' — blends the two readings together, suggesting that she understands that whatever the precise cause of this blush, it stems from a single source: Antony's blushing Roman morality. The Roman blush occurs only twice in this play: when Antony describes leaving the sea battle to follow Cleopatra as following 'that I blush to look upon' (III.xi.12); and when Caesar discovers that Cleopatra has hidden some of her property, and tells her to 'blush not, Cleopatra, I approve / Your wisdom in this deed' (V.ii.149-150). Each of these references to blushing demonstrates the moral and behavioural gulf that exists between Cleopatra and the Romans. Caesar's words demonstrate both his instinctive understanding of morality as a matter of blushing, and how little he understands Cleopatra's behaviours and motivations. Unlike Lucrece,

that epitome of Roman femininity, Cleopatra is a reader, not a text. Cleopatra's reading of Antony's face is a powerful way to begin the play because it demonstrates her precise understanding of the conflict in which she finds herself. She knows that Antony is a blushing Roman, that he demonstrates his deep cultural allegiance to Rome in the very involuntary responses of his body. This allegiance is both familial and political — he has obligations to Fulvia and to Caesar — and the Roman moral framework to which Antony is subject is one that Cleopatra will never be able to satisfy. She can offer an alternative Egyptian life, but it is a blushless one which cannot satisfy Antony's desire to be a fully realised Roman man.

It is a commonly repeated critical misconception that Enobarbus never describes Cleopatra's body in his speech about her barge.[121] In fact, he does describe her cheeks, in a passage that is the closest that Shakespeare's Cleopatra ever comes to a blush:

> […] On each side her
> Stood pretty, dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
> With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem
> To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
> And what they undid did (II.ii.208-212)

Enobarbus does not talk about colour change, instead he talks about heat. Cleopatra's cheeks are heated and cooled by the fans of her retinue.[122] Within the framework that I have established for this thesis, this is properly a flush, not a blush, because it does not have an emotional source: it's a change related to heat. Yet, I think it is worth discussing as a blush for two reasons. The first, because of the way in which it engages Cleopatra's association with paradox.[123] Just as she 'makes

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[121] See, for example, Lisa Starks-Este, who writes that the barge is missing its Cleopatra. Lisa Starks-Este, *Violence, Trauma, and Virtus in Shakespeare's Roman Poems and Plays* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 100.

[122] This detail about heating and cooling Cleopatra's glowing cheeks does not feature in Plutarch's *Life of Antony*, in which he writes that 'She herself reclined beneath a canopy spangled with gold, adorned like Venus in a painting, while boys like Loves in paintings stood on either side and fanned her'. Nor does it feature in Dryden's version of the speech in *All for Love*, III.i.160-182, where he reports that 'Boys like *Cupids*, / Stood fanning, with their painted wings, the winds / That plaid about her face' (171-173). Plutarch, *Lives*, trans. Bernadotte Perrin, 11 vols (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1920), ix, 193.

[123] Geoffrey Miles notes that *Antony and Cleopatra* is 'dominated by a sense of mutability', and that 'almost every critic has commented on this quality of the play'. Miles (1996), 169.

hungry / where most she satisfies' (II.ii.244-245), so too does Cleopatra's blush endlessly defer resolution. She does not turn from white to red and back again, rather her cheeks heat and cool simultaneously until they are stuck, as Cleopatra is, in a state that defies teleology or completion: she simply is. For Enobarbus, this image gives his listeners some sense of Cleopatra's power and allure, but as we saw earlier, the idea of skin that cannot blush, that cannot operate within a red and white bodily hermeneutic, that does not behave like white skin does, was used as evidence to support suspicions about the morality of non-Europeans. The power of the blush depends on fluctuation, but Cleopatra is in constant flux, which makes blushing impossible. The blush only has power if it is an exceptional fluctuation that exists against an otherwise steady backdrop. Cleopatra is, paradoxically, both too dark to blush, that is, her skin's colour is too stable, and too much in flux; her blackness is associated both with excessive stability and with too much variability. Jyotsna Singh writes about a cultural 'conflation of the feminine and theatrical' that Shakespeare turns on its head in his conception of Cleopatra.[124] She suggests that 'the very qualities that characterize the Renaissance stereotype of the duplicitous female — beauty, eroticism, changeability, ingenuity — are those that enrich and empower Cleopatra's artistry in shaping her own self-representations and in challenging those of the Romans'.[125] Singh gives a rather generous reading of the play as essentially the emancipation of these qualities, but of course, Cleopatra is ultimately punished for them. Just as Rhodri Lewis argues that Antony views the crocodile as 'an engagingly alien curiosity […] one piece of tourist exotica with which to explain another', so too is the unblushing Cleopatra a way of explaining the physical and moral superiority of a putatively white Roman racial identity.[126]

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[124] Jyotsna Singh, 'Antitheatricality, Antifeminism, and Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra'*, *Renaissance Drama,* 20 (1989), 99-121, 113.
[125] Singh (1989), 113.
[126] Rhodri Lewis, 'Romans, Egyptians, and Crocodiles', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 68 (2017), 320-350, 337.

In *The False One*, *All for Love*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, we witness the staging of an encounter between a blushing and a non-blushing population. Both the Romans and seventeenth century Europeans understood themselves as a blushing people, in contrast to non-blushing non-Romans and non-blushing non-Christians, respectively. These plays stage this encounter largely within a Roman frame, but we witness the occasional interjection of the racialised early modern blush, which became a sign of the physical, ethical, and behavioural superiority of Europeans to non-blushing indigenous American and African populations. The next chapter will explore another aspect of the Christian blush — how it was used by John Donne to create Christian community, and to answer a crucial post-Reformation question: what do I do now?

3. 'What do I do now?': Walking the *via media* with John Donne

The *Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne* (*OESJD*) aims to

> highlight the distinctiveness of sermons preached to a single auditory and, by extension, to illuminate the careful attention paid by Donne and early modern preachers to the rhetorical category of decorum: the time, place, and persons at, in, and to which their sermons were delivered.[1]

This editorial decision reflects both the 'historical turn' in literary studies, and a more recent turn in the study of early modern sermons in particular towards considering individual sermons not just as texts, but as 'events'.[2] Criticism of this kind recognises that the overwhelming majority of early modern sermons were originally written to be preached, or, more provocatively, performed, in front of an audience. Most of Donne's sermons, for example, were only published posthumously.[3] One of the most important achievements of this historical turn, argues David Colclough, is that it urges

> readers to consider the sermons as individual performances and texts, rather than collapsing them into a vast body of work whose homogeneity is implied or assumed, and which can be mined for comments, opinions, or points of style without any attention to the different moments and places of their delivery.[4]

Both the *OESJD* and the recent work of scholars such as Mary Morrissey, Emma Rhatigan, Jeanne Shami, and Peter McCullough are testament to the value of reading early modern sermons with a particular focus on 'the different moments and places of their delivery'.[5] Indeed, it has been

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[1] David Colclough, ed., *The Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne: Volume III Sermons Preached at the Court of Charles I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), xv.

[2] Mary Morrissey, 'Interdisciplinarity and the study of Early Modern Sermons', *The Historical Journal*, 42 (1999), 1111-1123.

[3] For a thorough account of the early publication history of Donne's sermons see Robert Krueger 'The Publication of Donne's Sermons', *Review of English Studies,* 15 (1964), 151-160.

[4] Colclough (2013), xxv.

[5] See, for example, Mary Morrissey 'John Donne as a Conventional Paul's Cross Preacher', in *John Donne's Professional Lives,* ed. David Colclough (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 159-178; Emma Rhatigan, 'Donne's Readership at Lincoln's Inn and The Doncaster Embassy', in *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, eds Dennis Flynn et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 576-588; Jeanne Shami, 'The Sermon', in *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne,* eds Dennis Flynn et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 318-347; Jeanne Shami, 'Sermons', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Literature and Religion,* eds Andrew Hiscock and Helen Wilcox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Peter McCullough, 'Donne as Preacher', in *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne,* ed. Achsah Guibbory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 267-182.

claimed by Rhatigan and others that Donne's sermons in particular are 'always notable for their sensitivity to the specific occasion and location of preaching'.[6] Yet, Colclough is a little ungenerous here, I would suggest, in his characterisation of the methodology of scholars who do not make occasion their focus as merely a process of collapsing and mining. Each of Donne's sermons does indeed exist as an independent and, to some extent, a freestanding work, and they can also be usefully grouped together by audience. Yet, the sermons undeniably constitute 'a vast body of work', and there is much to learn from considering the recurring themes, motifs, and concerns of that body.[7] For all that choosing to focus on audience or performance makes possible, it also precludes other kinds of equally valuable work.[8] My own interest in how Donne writes about the blush has, rather unmodishly, led away from a performance or audience-based approach — not least because the audience and occasion for the last sermon under consideration in this chapter is unknown. Donne mentions blushing in at least one surviving sermon preached to each of his major audiences. There is a blushing sermon at Lincoln's Inn, one at St. Dunstan's, one before James I, another before Charles I, another before the congregation at St. Paul's. The purpose of this chapter is to emphasise the consistency of how Donne approaches the blush as a motif in his preaching, and to suggest that the blush is one way of figuring Donne's position on a key theological question of the age, for which I shall borrow Norman Jones' usefully prosaic phrase: 'what do I do now?'.[9] To attempt to answer this question is to take a different approach to the

[6] Rhatigan (2011), 581.
[7] Arguably, this tendency to isolate has been present for some time in Donne studies, though at the level of genre, rather than audience. Ramie Targoff touches on this idea when she writes that 'studies of the sermons tend to distance them from the poems, as if consideration of the latter risks contamination of the former'. Ramie Targoff, *John Donne, Body and Soul* (Chicago IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 5.
[8] Margaret Fetzer, for example, writes that her work on performativity in Donne leads her criticism to be less interested in what is said in Donne's texts, and more interested in 'how what is said is articulated, transmitted, effected and received'. Margaret Fetzer, *John Donne's Performances: Sermons, Poems, Letters, and Devotions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 2.
[9] Norman Jones, *The English Reformation: Religion and Cultural Adaptation* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002), 2.

history of the Reformation than that advanced by many of its most prominent historians, who have tended to think in much more macro terms. There is 'no one issue […] more central to the politics or political thought of the age' than 'how the sacred was, or should be, embodied and institutionalised in the state', but this chapter does not seek to give a new account of Elizabethan or Jacobean political theology, nor to sketch out the extent of the Reformation, nor its pace, nor to minutely delineate between different religious factions: all of these topics have already been masterfully covered.[10] Rather, I want to focus on how Donne uses the blush to think through his answer to the question asked by thousands of ordinary women and men in the wake of the seismic changes of the Reformation. It is easy to imagine them, huddled in churches from St. Ives to Cheapside, looking down at their Bibles, listening to sermons in English, perhaps aware of the theological debates raging around them, perhaps not. 'That's all very well', the clerks and the housewives and the farmers and the butchers seem to say, 'but what do I do now?'

How might John Donne have answered a parishioner who asked him that question? Donne's personal religious convictions are a matter for critical debate, with some critics arguing that he was a 'moderate Calvinist', others that he was an Arminian, and still others that he 'deliberately mapped out a middle course between theological extremes', or that he was 'in transit'

[10] Debora Shuger, *Political Theologies in Shakespeare's England* (London: Palgrave, 2001), 42. The literature on these subjects is too vast to adequately indicate here, but on political theology one might consult: Jaume Aurell et al., eds, *Political Theology in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Discourses, Rites and Representations* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2017); Graham Hammill and Julia Reinhard Lupton, eds, *Political Theology and Early Modernity* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Francis Oakley, 'Jacobean Political Theology: The Absolute and Ordinary Powers of the King', *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 29 (1968), 323-346; Charles W. A. Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church: The Politics of Religious Controversy, 1603-1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); On the English Reformation see Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Karl Gunther, *Reformation Unbound: Protestant Visions of Reform in England 1525-1590* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993; repr. 2012); Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Cathy Shrank, *Writing the Nation in Reformation England, 1530-1580* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Nicholas Tyacke, ed., *England's Long Reformation 1500-1800* (London: UCL Press: 1998).

between Catholicism and Protestantism.[11] I must confess myself somewhat sceptical about the value of defining Donne's theological leanings in this totalising way. The very fact that it is possible to hold so many well-reasoned and thoughtfully argued positions on the question suggests to me that, like so many others who have struggled with these fundamental questions, Donne's personal theology is in no way entirely consistent, and that aiming to impose order and harmony on the entire body of his theological writings is to risk the process of collapsing and mining of which Colclough is rightly so disparaging. Nonetheless, I intend to suggest that on the question of what we might term 'practical theology', that is, how one should go about living one's life in a Christian way —what one should do now — Donne is distinctively and consistently Anglican, by which I mean that he prioritises the importance of public worship above almost everything else. As we shall see, it is towards this end that he evokes images of blushing. To fully understand what I mean by 'Anglican', it is necessary to understand the theological context from which it arises, which I shall now briefly delineate.

A (very) brief history of Anglicanism, or, the emergence of the *via media*

Debora Shuger writes that 'the Reformation shattered whatever consensus there had been — probably quite a strong one — over what a Christian life, a Christian church, and a Christian kingdom looked like'.[12] The 'great matter' of Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine of Aragon precipitated an era of unprecedented change: one for which Protestants in England were not entirely prepared. At the moment of the establishment of the Church of England in 1534, Protestantism in England 'revolved around an opposition between the authority of the church and

[11] Colclough (2013), xxxvii. See xxxvii-xxxviii for a more detailed rehearsal of this debate. Cummings (2002), 8.
[12] Shuger (2001), 3.

the authority of scripture'.[13] That is to say, Protestants in England were in opposition to the authority of the Catholic Church because they understood it to contravene the teachings of the Bible. That this minority mind-set developed into a 'tension between a view of the true church as an embattled minority of true believers, and the idea or ideal of a truly national church' is a significant context for the formation and codification of the Church of England.[14] Upon the establishment of a national Protestant church, the challenge facing English Protestants rapidly changed. Once surviving in the margins, they were suddenly tasked with building a protestant nation. Some Protestants never fully made the transition. English theological writing had been 'associated with dissidence' for some 100 years by the time of the reformation and a significant population 'continued to regard the inner core of true believers created by the spread of the Gospel as least as much "a persecuted little flock of Christ" as the avatars of incipient Protestant triumph'.[15] The conclusion to which others came is neatly summarised by Anthony Milton:

> If we understand by 'Anglicanism' an assumption that the Church of England occupies a distinctive '*via media*' between Rome and reformed Protestantism, allied to a distaste for speculative theology, a strong concern with ceremonies and their value, a deep attachment to the prayer book, a reverence for patristic authority and a strong sense of continuity with the medieval past, combined with a conviction that these attitudes constitute a natural reflection of a coherent English Reformation settlement, then it has been not the least significant achievement of Nicholas Tyacke (along with historians such as Peter Lake and Patrick Collinson) to have established that much of what we think of as 'Anglicanism' was not present in the churchmanship of the leaders of the Elizabethan Church and state.[16]

Anthony Milton's summation of the core characteristics of Anglicanism is particularly useful because of his caveat that it was by no means always present in all aspects (or in the conduct of all

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[13] Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 1.
[14] Lake (1988), 2.
[15] Cummings (2002), 188; Peter Lake, '"Puritans" and "Anglicans" in the History of the Post-Reformation English Church, in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Vol. 1: Reformation and Identity c.1520-1662,* ed. Anthony Milton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 353-379, 354.
[16] Anthony Milton, '"Anglicanism" by Stealth: The Career and Influence of John Overall', *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England,* eds Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 159-176, 159.

members) of the Elizabethan (or, I would add, the Jacobean or Caroline) Church. If English Catholics had the long history of Catholicism and the ongoing institutions of Rome to look to for guidance, Protestants in England had to decide for themselves what a state church looked like, what its priorities were, and how it would implement them, without the benefit of a strong continental avatar.[17] This lack of a historical precedent resulted in a church that was 'subject to incessant political and polemical construction and reconstruction'.[18]

Yet, it would be disingenuous to emphasise the potency of this debate at the expense of emphasising the great stability and continuity that was to be found within the Church of England for the better part of Elizabeth's reign, and under James I. Indeed, Richard Bancroft's *Constitutions and Canons*, drawn up in 1604 at the beginning of James' reign, 'were to remain in force for three centuries and more', and were, argues Collinson 'not so much a New Deal as a codification of existing laws and procedures symbolising not the end of the Tudor Church but its perpetuation'.[19] Elizabeth was well-known for being 'unwilling to contemplate any change whatsoever' to the state church; a trait which James was to echo when he remarked to a friend that he would be 'sorry not to be as constant indeed as she who called herself *semper eadem*', that is, 'always the same'.[20] Anglicanism was created across the Tudor period, consolidated under James, and behind it lay an impulse towards conservatism, tradition, and the idea of occupying a precious and contested 'middle ground'.

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[17] The question of civic religion (i.e. the question of whether religion should be under the control of the state administration) has been live since Antiquity, and although it is most commonly associated with Republicanism in this period, its concerns are also reflected in the disagreements between Puritans over the extent of state control of religion. There was a split, for example, between 'black' and 'white' Puritanism on the question of whether the state or the consistory should be responsible for enforcing moral discipline. See Shuger (2001), 32.

[18] Peter Lake, 'Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice', in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England,* ed. Peter Fincham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 80-97, 87.

[19] Patrick Collinson, 'The Jacobean Religious Settlement: The Hampton Court Conference', in *Before the English Civil War: Essays on Early Stuart Politics and Government,* ed. Howard Tomlinson (New York NY: Macmillan Education, 1984), 27-52, 28.

[20] Qtd in Collinson (1984), 28, 34.

The conception of the Church of England as a 'middle ground' between the extremes of Catholicism on the one hand and Anabaptism on the other first appeared during the reign of Edward VI.[21] It remained a potent and 'constant theme in the self-image of the English church', albeit a highly contested one.[22] By the 1590s, the threat of Anabaptism had abated, and occupying the 'middle way' was now a question of mediating between Catholicism and Genevan Protestantism.[23] The idea of the Church of England as a 'middle way' proved captivating for mid-twentieth century critics, who tended to promote a vision of the 'peculiarly English nature of the English reformation' that was broadly in line with the church's own image of itself.[24] The rather credulous critical acceptance of the church's self-image has shifted thanks to the work of Nicholas Tyacke and others who have demonstrated the influence of continental developments on the English Church, particularly during the reign of Charles I.[25] The church in England, nevertheless, does have some claim to distinctiveness, mostly on the basis of its moderation: for example, in its 'stress on continuity with the Christian, indeed with the Catholic past', and in its 'vision of religion

[21] Lake (1988), 67, n.46.
[22] Lake (1988), 67, n.46.
[23] Lake (1988), 67, n.46.
[24] See Peter Lake, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Nicholas Tyacke', in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England*, ed. Peter Fincham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-15, 5. A prime example of this Whiggish tendency is the work of Charles and Katherine George, who in their 1961 book *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation* write that 'Between Roman Catholicism and Anabaptism, two chasms of profound error on the right and left, extends the wide and relatively level plateau of valid Protestantism'. Qtd in Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion, and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 21. See also Geoffrey Elton, who argues not only for the distinctiveness of the English reformation, but the distinctiveness of England itself. Geoffrey Elton, 'England and the Continent in the Sixteenth Century', in *Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent c.1500-c.1750*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 1-17.
[25] It is difficult to overstate the influence of Nicholas Tyacke's research on the history of the Reformation in England. See Peter Fincham, ed., *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) for essays celebrating Tyacke's work. See Nicholas Tyacke, 'Introduction: Re-thinking the "English Reformation", in *England's Long Reformation 1500-1800*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (London: UCL Press, 1998), 1-32 for an account of the influence of continental thinkers on the English reformation.

centred on ceremony and outward worship', which it managed to blend with a theology that was broadly Calvinist, at least under Elizabeth and James.[26]

Anthony Milton points out that 'advocates of the richly ceremonialist "avant-garde conformity"' of the 1590s 'would have struggled to find earlier English protestant advocates'.[27] The Church of England's self-image as the *via media* did, nonetheless, gain significant traction in England, in no small part because of the significant influence of the ideal of 'moderation' in various kinds of public discourse: an ideal that 'was often coded Protestant'.[28] The language of the 'middle way' took on a new significance in the 1590s, as a wide variety of different groups

> manoeuvred within and in terms of the basic legal and institutional, the political, textual and ideological structures provided by the national Church, structures that, of course, they all hoped (to different extents) to change and even, in some cases and at some times, to transform, in order to gloss and claim that Church as their own.[29]

Lake argues that in this debate, each party sought to consign their rivals to the positions of 'extremes' and to construct their own position as 'mainstream'.[30] In turn, he suggests that the polemic positions of each group 'can in turn be seen as attempts to shift and modify the definition of "true moderation" by the manipulation of the twin threats of popery and separation'.[31] There are, however, some important exceptions to this generally useful rule. Some Presbyterians dreamt of setting up 'presbytery within episcopacy', but many Puritans were happy to think of themselves as distinctive 'others', set apart from the rest of the state church, and from 'the variously

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[26] Lake (2006 1), 1. See also Eamon Duffy: 'the religion of Elizabethan England was of course full of continuities with and developments of what had gone before'. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 35.
[27] Milton (2006), 159. McCullough notes that the term 'avant-garde conformity' to mean 'anti-Calvinist' is a Lake coinage, and one that he thinks is 'minted in pure gold'. Peter McCullough '"Avant-Garde Conformity" in the 1590s', in The *Oxford History of Anglicanism, Vol. 1: Reformation and Identity c.1520-1662,* ed. Anthony Milton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 381-393, 340.
[28] Shagan (2011), 3.
[29] Lake (2006 1), 12.
[30] Lake (2006 1), 12.
[31] Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 77.

unconverted, crypto-popish, superstitious, profane, or indifferently lukewarm mass of the population'.[32] We must reconcile the idea that every group tried to claim the national church for themselves with the idea of Protestantism as something necessarily exclusive to Lake's pre-Reformation small embattled community of true believers. The exclusivity of a truly Christian identity remained attractive for puritanically leaning believers well into the seventeenth-century and beyond, and this was an important counter-balance to the moderation and, crucially, the inclusiveness of the national church.

In answer to the question of why the *via media* took on such an important role in the English church, Anthony Milton argues for the influence not only of Richard Hooker, who is widely acknowledged as the father of Anglicanism, but of John Overall, in whose work we might find many early espousals of particular parts of what we now think of as Anglican doctrine: including the particular 'Englishness' of the religious settlement, a defence of its moderation, an 'elevated sense of the importance of the Eucharist', and an insistence on the continuity between the Church of England and the early church on matters of 'doctrine, religion, Church, ministry, ecclesiastical order, [and] sacraments'.[33] The influence of Hooker's *Of the laws of ecclesiastical polity* (1594-1662) on the codification of the Anglican inclination is well-known.[34] Diarmuid MacCulloch writes that Hooker was 'the first to articulate in print the core characteristic of avant-garde conformity', that is, the emphasis of 'the role of the sacraments and liturgical prayer at the expense of preaching'.[35] Particularly important for this study is Hooker's emphasis on the value of the church's ceremonies as a conduit to the Christian past (not just as indifferents); an emphasis on public worship, particularly on the public partaking of the sacraments; and in his approach to the

[32] Lake (1982), 1; Lake (2017), 358.
[33] Milton (2006), 161, 174, 163.
[34] See Lake (1998), and McCullough (2017).
[35] Qtd in McCullough (2017), 381-382.

nature of Christian community.[36] In contrast to the Puritans, who 'wanted to use the sacraments to define the Christian community by excluding the ungodly from them', Lake argues that 'Hooker wanted to define it by inducing as many people as possible to receive them'.[37] Hooker's approach to Christian community demonstrates one of the fundamental differences between Anglicanism and Puritanism, and one which we see refracted in the sermons of John Donne. Puritanism understands 'the Christian community as a fused group of true believers [...] in the midst of a corrupt world'; Anglicanism is the theology of a state church with a mission to create a nation of believers.[38] Unlike Puritanism, Anglicanism is inclusive rather than exclusive, and, crucially for Donne, that community is created through public worship, and through the partaking of the sacraments.

If the Elizabethan settlement was 'more or less secure, or at least in the ascendant by about 1580', there were still those in Puritan circles who hoped for significant reform under James.[39] Their optimism was not altogether unfounded; James has grown up under a Calvinist-leaning church, and had professed some Calvinist beliefs himself.[40] Moreover, a few strongholds aside, Catholicism in England had been all but eradicated by the end of Elizabeth's reign.[41] The *Book of Homilies*, with its 'uncompromising condemnation of essential Roman Catholic beliefs' and establishment of a 'distinctly Protestant religious culture now mandated by [the] government' was

[36] Lake (1988), 164, 173.
[37] Lake (1988), 182.
[38] Shuger (2001), 46.
[39] Duffy (1992), 33.
[40] Collinson (1984), 28.
[41] Jeremy Gregory, 'The Making of a Protestant Nation: "Success" and "Failure" in England's Long Reformation', in *England's Long Reformation 1500-1800*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (London: UCL Press, 1998), 307-334. 309. Catholicism was not widely practised in England, but those strongholds which did remain were devout in their belief and a source of fear to Elizabeth. For an overview of recent research into Elizabethan Catholicism see James E. Kelly and Susan Royal, eds, *Early Modern English Catholicism: Identity, Memory, and Counter-Reformation* (Leiden: Brill, 2017). This edited volume was produced after a conference to celebrate the work of the historian Eamon Duffy, whose work on this subject is essential reading. See Eamon Duffy, *Reformation Divided: Catholics, Protestants, and the Conversion of England* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), and (2005).

introduced in 1559 and so had been in common usage for over 40 years by the time James ascended the throne.[42] Even by the end of the 1570s, Eamon Duffy notes, 'a generation was growing up which had known nothing else [...] which did not look back to the Catholic past as their own, but another country, another world'.[43] Puritan hopes for reform solidified around the Hampton Court Conference, called by James in 1604 to try to sketch out what the Church of England might look like under his leadership. The impact of the Conference remains murky: 'Historians have argued in different places that it represents either the high water mark of English Calvinism, or the sign of its ultimate defeat, or else the beginnings of English Arminianism'.[44] Whatever its longer term significance, the immediate impact of the Conference was characterised by 'the failure of the Puritans to win a definitive victory … and by Bancroft's subsequent drive for conformity'.[45] That said, the victories won by the Puritans were not insignificant. They secured a new English translation of the Bible, and James publicly committed to the doctrine of predestination, but nor did they affect any meaningful change in the 'ideological tone of the English church'.[46] The 'Jacobean religious Settlement [was] little more than an endorsement of the Elizabethan *status quo*.[47] Included within that settlement were some of even the most vociferous Puritan voices, leading Lake to conclude that:

> In the central years of James's reign Puritanism was, if not dead, then certainly dormant, incorporated into a Calvinist consensus, a basic agreement about the central soteriological doctrines centred on predestination that bound the majority of English protestants together, and served as an 'ameliorating bond' linking erstwhile puritans even to some of the most aggressive proponents of the ecclesiastical status quo.[48]

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[42] Ashley Null, 'Official Tudor Homilies', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon,* eds Peter McCullough et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 348-363,363. Null evocatively compares the *Book of Homilies* to Mao's *Little Red Book*, arguing that the former was intended as a 'manifesto of the regime's theological agenda and the means of its revolutionary implementation', 348.
[43] Qtd in Gregory (1998), 309.
[44] Cummings (2002), 393.
[45] Lake (1982), 243.
[46] Lake (1982), 248.
[47] Collinson (1984), 32.
[48] Lake (2006 1), 2.

It is into this context that Donne gives the sermons under consideration in this chapter. The Church of England is well-established, and has enjoyed years of consistency in practice and doctrine.[49] It is committed to the values of moderation, but it is a broad church, and there is room under its auspices for even the strongest Puritan voices: it 'permitted the conservatives of the north and west to remain yoked to the Puritans of East Anglia in a single state church'.[50] It is, essentially, an inclusive institution. Anglicanism, as Anthony Milton defined it at the top of the chapter, began as an inclination rather than a fully-formed and fully-enforced denomination, but under James it rapidly became the defining characteristic of the Church of England. Crucially, at the heart of the Jacobean state church is an investment in its self-image as the *via media*: the middle way. How, then, would Donne have advised a parishioner who asked how they should live now? In his sermons Donne boldly defends an Anglican vision of church community: a widespread, inclusive and diverse group of people walking the *via media* together, bound together through the sharing of the sacraments, and through public worship. The role of individual members is not only to care for their own mortal souls, but to encourage, challenge, and rebuke their fellow congregants along the way. One way in which this might be achieved is through the public display of blushes.

Donne makes use of the blushing motif throughout his career, from a 'Sermon preached at Whitehall on Ezekiel 34.19 (1618)', to the first of a pair of 'Two sermons preached before King Charles, upon the XXVI verse of the first chapter of Genesis' (published in 1634). This chapter considers three of these sermons: 'Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn, 1618 [Psalm 38.3]'; 'Preached at Whitehall. The Second Sermon on Ezekiel 34.19 [? April 1622, 1623 or 1624] [Ezekiel 34.19]'; and 'A Sermon Preached Upon the Penitential Psalms [Psalm 6:8-10]'. These

[49] There is a debate over whether the Calvinist consensus is better thought of as a Calvinist hegemony. It was, at any rate, never total, and always under discussion, but those discussions largely happened within the Church of England, not without it. See Lake (2006 2).
[50] Jones (2002), 5.

texts contain some of the most sustained discussions of blushing in Donne's sermons, and the rest of the chapter is given over to close readings of blushes in the texts, with the aim of demonstrating how blushing acts as a resource for Donne as he seeks to build Christian community. In the footnotes, I have indicated some points of comparison between these sermons and others that mention blushing, and I have cited the biblical text under consideration at the head of each section. The *OESJD* volumes containing the sermon texts under consideration in this chapter are not yet available, so I have used the edition edited by Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter, and silently modernised its spelling.[51] Donne's sermons are exceptionally rich texts, and there is much to say about each of the sermons under consideration here that simply falls outside the scope of this study — which is to say nothing of the wealth of sermons that do not explicitly mention blushing. I sincerely welcome the renewed attention that the sermons have received since the announcement of the *OESJD* project, and hope this chapter gives an indication of another kind of scholarship that the *OESJD* might make possible beyond its project to bring audiences and occasions to life.

Sermon preached at Lincoln's Inn, 1618. [Psalm 38.3][52]

Donne was ordained in 1615 and began his ministry at the Lincoln's Inn chapel, which was 'one of the most prominent pulpits in London'.[53] Both the chapel and the congregation were known to

[51] In turn, the printed editions edited by Simpson and Potter was not available to me during the Covid-19 pandemic. As far as possible, I have given references to the texts in the Brigham Young University Library's online collection. The sermons in the BYU collection reproduce Simpson's and Potter's text, but their pagination does not correspond to the printed edition.

[52] John Donne, 'Number 2. Preached at Lincolns Inne. Psal. 38.3 There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin', in *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. George Potter and Evelyn Simpson, 10 vols (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1953-1962), i, 72. All further references to this sermon are from this edition and are given parenthetically in the text.

[53] Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church, Volume 4: The Age of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 340.

Donne, who had spent a brief period as a law student at Lincoln's Inn in the early 1590s.[54] Rhatigan argues that in his Lincoln's Inn sermons, Donne draws 'on his first-hand experience of life in the Society'; she gives a reading of his sermon on the second verse of Psalm 32 which demonstrates 'Donne deliberately shap[ing] the exegesis of the psalm to speak directly to the Lincoln's Inn students', and suggests he 'often deliberately sought out biblical texts with a particularly legal theme' in the sermons that he delivered there.[55] Donne also brings out a particular legal emphasis in this sermon on Psalm 38.3, in which he dwells at length on God's role as a Judge. **[56]** Given the emphasis in recent criticism on the idiosyncrasies of sermons given to different audiences, we might reasonably expect Donne to deploy particular strategies in order to reach the 'elite, highly educated, and politically attuned congregation' at Lincoln's Inn.[57] Instead, I have found that Donne's rhetorical strategies across his different sermons are remarkably consistent, and that his audiences had broadly similar requirements from a sermon: namely the expectation that they would be moved, instructed, and encouraged to live more Christian lives.

That early modern preachers in general, and that Donne in particular, sought to move the emotions of their parishioners through their sermons has been the subject of sustained recent critical attention.[58] This rhetorical strategy can be broadly attributed to three interlinked sources:

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[54] Rhatigan (2011), 576.
[55] Rhatigan (2011), 581.
[56] The Psalms were widely read in many different editions throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For an account of the life of the Psalms in England in the sixteenth century, see Hannibal Hamlin, 'Piety and Poetry: English Psalms from Miles Coverdale to Mary Sidney', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature: 1485 - 1603*, eds Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 203-221; and Rivkah Zim, *English Metrical Psalms: Poetry as Praise and Prayer 1535-1601* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). For a view of the Psalms in England across the early modern period, see Hannibal Hamlin, *Psalm Culture and Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[57] Rhatigan (2011), 576.
[58] See Kate Armstrong, 'Sermons in Performance', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon,* eds Peter McCullough et al., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 120-136, 135; Daniel Derrin, 'Engaging the Passions in John Donne's *Sermons*', *English Studies,* 92 (2012), 452-468, 453; McCullough (2006), 175; Noam Reisner, 'The Preacher and Profane Learning', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon,* eds Peter McCullough et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 72-86, *passim*.

the Christian tradition; the demands of classical rhetoric; and theatrical practices. As Anthony Milton noted, the Church of England's desire to commune with its past is one of its most distinctive features, and its past constitutes both a Catholic and a Patristic context. Jeanne Shami locates Donne's focus on emotionally engaging his audiences in his interest in Augustine and Erasmus. 'What [these two thinkers] had in common', she writes

> despite the hundreds of years that separated them, was their overtly biblical focus, their emphasis on the character and motive of the preacher, and their end of not only *instructing* their hearers in Christian doctrine, but of *moving* them to apply that doctrine to their lives — to live in conformity with Christ.[59]

The balance between emotional and intellectual engagement recalls Fetzer's work on Donne's performances, in which she argues that Donne's sermons are themselves a kind of performance which draw upon theatrical conventions. It was with the theatre that Donne 'competed … for listeners', argues Fetzer, and he 'seize[d] upon the potential of dramatic communication' in his preaching.[60] This sense of competition is perhaps overstating things — public theatres were not open on Sundays, and church-going was all but mandatory — but there are contemporary touchpoints for the analogy for both auditors and preachers. A 1599 sermon-listening manual by William Zepper, for example, describes the church as 'a public arena in which the hearer was put on show before the community "as it were upon the Theatre"'.[61] The analogy has remained popular in criticism; Brian Cummings describes Paul's Cross as 'an open theatre of the streets in a way which makes the Globe Theatre seem like a private club in comparison'.[62] However the comparison between the churches and theatres can meaningfully stretch, Donne is keenly aware

[59] Shami (2011), 322. For more on the impact of Erasmus' account of amplification on Donne's sermons see Derrin (2012).
[60] Fetzer (2010), 26.
[61] Qtd in Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 66.
[62] Cummings (2002), 366.

that one of the key features of a good sermon is that, like a good play, it should stir the emotions of its audience.[63] Another important aspect of this emotional engagement is the cultivation of affective response in listeners. They should not only feel because of a sermon, but they should also be seen by others to be feeling. John Browning in his 1636 defence *Concerning publicke-prayer* uses the term 'bodily reverence' to describe this practice, and he writes that 'whereas the Priest preacheth to the ear only, every on in his devotion, and by his example (which is more forceable) preacheth to each other's eye'.[64] Similarly, Foulke Robarts asks in his 1639 tract *Gods Holy House and Service:* 'how doth the visible and expressive devotion of one Christian beget and increase the same in another? And how powerfully shall the reverend behaviours and gestures of an whole Congregation together work upon another?'[65] The notion of 'bodily reverence', argues Ramie Targoff, 'resonates through late-sixteenth and seventeenth-century devotional texts', encouraging Christians to witness to one another not only in their words, but with their bodies and facial expressions.[66] Christian auditors expected to be moved emotionally, and preachers and their audiences expected to be able to see outward evidence of that emotional shift.

The importance of rhetorical performance to the early modern sermon extends far beyond the emotional engagement of the listener. At their best, early modern sermons were feats of intellectual and rhetorical craftsmanship, rigorously constructed around the five canons of classical rhetoric.[67] As Donne's sermons will demonstrate, preachers could speak for an hour or more on just one or two biblical verses. As a result, many sermons are given over to minute fine-readings

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[63] Martin White, *Renaissance Drama in Action* (London: Routledge, 2013), 112.
[64] John Browning, *Concerning publike-prayer, and the fasts of the Church Six sermons, or tractates. By Io. Br. B.D. Their severall contents are set downe in the next page* (London: Richard Badger 1636), 25.
[65] Foulke Robarts, *Gods Holy House and Service* (London: 1639), 61-62.
[66] Ramie Targoff, *Common Prayer: The Language of Public Devotion in Early Modern England* (Chicago IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 12.
[67] Greg Kneidel, 'Ars Praedicandi: Theories and Practice', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, eds Peter McCullough et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3-20, 3.

of the biblical text, and the amplification of single words into copious pages of text. Early modern preachers also relied heavily on commentaries by medieval (and contemporary) writers, which was yet another kind of continuity between the Protestant English church and its Catholic past.[68] Important too were the writings of the Patristics.[69] All of these features appear in Donne's sermons regardless of their audience, and there is little evidence of any desire to mediate his interest in what now seems like exceedingly thorough, if not a little pedantic, exegesis, to conform to popular taste. Rather, it seems fair to suggest that this interest in patristics, etymology and the like *was* popular taste for all audiences, from the Law courts to St. Paul's.

Finally, there was an expectation that the listener would be instructed on how to lead a more Christian life through the sermon. Preaching was 'more than merely informative on morality or goodness: the sermon was to make that particular part of Scripture operative for the hearers'.[70] The sermon was 'one of the primary means appointed by God (along with the sacraments) for the receipt of grace'.[71] Faith itself was understood to be a result of hearing, as Paul writes to the Romans: 'So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God' (Romans 10:17).[72] The wealth of early modern treatises on how to listen to sermons bears testament both to how important listening well was, and the fact that it was more than a merely passive activity to contemporary audiences.[73] In order for the sermon to take effect, 'they must pray for faith to be edified and attend

[68] See Carl Trueman, 'Preachers and Medieval and Renaissance commentary', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon,* eds Peter McCullough et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 54-72.
[69] See Katrin Ettenhuber, 'The Preacher and Patristics', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon,* eds Peter McCullough et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 34-53.
[70] Mary Morrissey, 'Scripture, Style, and Persuasion in Seventeenth-Century English Theories of Preaching', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 53 (2002), 686-706, 689-690.
[71] Morrissey (2002), 689.
[72] The connection between faith and hearing posed an interesting question: how could deaf women and men be saved? For an account of how this question was answered see Rosamund Oates, 'Speaking in Hands: Early Modern Preaching and Signed Languages for the Deaf', *Past and Present,* (forthcoming, 2021). I am grateful to Rosamund Oates for sharing her work in draft with me.
[73] See Hunt (2010), 60-116, for more on these treatises and on 'the art of hearing'.

diligently to what is said'.[74] Being a good listener was a religious obligation, and neglecting to listen risked one's very soul.

Understanding the importance of the basic principles that a good sermon ought both to intellectually instruct and to emotionally move the listener, who then ought to live in a more Christian way helps us make some sense of Donne's strategies in this sermon. One of his most distinctive rhetorical strategies is the way in which he evokes etymologies to illustrate and explain the destitute emotional inner life to which man was consigned at the Fall. He writes:

> In all those names that the Holy Ghost hath given man, he hath declared him miserable, for, Adam, (by which name God calls him, and Eve too) signifies but Redness, but a Blushing: and whether we consider their low materials, as it was but earth, or the redness of that earth, as they stained it with their own blood, and the blood of all their posterity, and as they drew another more precious blood, the blood of the Messiah upon it, every way both may be Adam, both may blush. So God called that pair, our first Parents, man in that root, Adam. (78-79)

In this extract, Donne very clearly links blushing to guilt. His meaning becomes clearer when we reorient ourselves away from the contemporary usage of the word 'miserable' to mean something akin to 'very unhappy', and think of it rather as 'living or existing in a state of external distress or misery; that is in a wretched condition' (OED 1). The OED definition is helpful here because it establishes both the ongoing nature and the external quality of this misery; the misery is evident to others because of how the miserable person lives, and in this sermon, the misery of guilt is displayed by red cheeks. So inherent is red-faced guilt to the very nature of mankind that it is implied even in the name of the first man. As we discovered in the last chapter, the etymology of the name Adam is a sort of pun, it means 'to be red' in Hebrew, and sounds like the Hebrew word for 'earth': *adamah.* Donne expects his audience to be alive to this wordplay, which animates his

[74] Morrissey (2002), 690.

tightly constructed sentences at this point.[75] Appealing to his audience's interest in etymology is a common rhetorical strategy in Donne's sermons, one which, as Hannah Crawforth suggests, 'appeal[s] to the members of his audience who possess precisely these qualities', whilst 'flattering those who do not'.[76] Donne is particularly interested in Hebrew etymologies.[77] In her reading of Donne's sermon on Job 16:18, Chanita Goodblatt notices how he 'makes his way through Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant' readings of the word 'blood', 'ultimately combining their various readings to define … "blood" as figuratively the "spiritual blood, the blood of the soule"'.[78] Donne undertakes a similar rhetorical move here, evoking multiple meanings of the symbol 'blood', and linking the blood of the blush to other blood flows: the sin of Adam and Eve condemned mankind to death — and so mankind stains the earth with their blood when they die — and it also condemned the Messiah, who in turn stained the earth with his blood in death, for which 'both may blush'.[79] This attribution of blame for the Fall is worth noting for its gender equality; Donne does not single out Eve for being at particular fault, neither does he try to impose a hierarchy of

[75] Cf. 'An anniversary sermon, preached at St. Dunstan's, upon the commemoration of a parishioner, a benefactor to that parish', in which Donne makes a similar pun on redness: 'since we are all made of red earth, let him that is red, be more red; let him that is red with the blood of his own soul, be red again in blushing for that redness, and more red in the communion of the blood of Christ Jesus; whom we shall eat all the days of our life, and be mystically, and mysteriously, and spiritually, and sacramentally united to him in this life, and gloriously in the next.' John Donne, 'An anniversary sermon, preached at St. Dunstan's, upon the commemoration of a parishioner, a benefactor to that parish', *BYU Library Digital Collections*, 2004-2005 <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/JohnDonne/id/325/> [accessed 22nd February 2021], 13.

[76] Hannah Crawforth, *Etymology and the Invention of English in Early Modern Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 132.

[77] Trueman (2011), notes that 'there was a positive connection between Jewish and Christian exegesis on a number of fronts from the twelfth century onwards' and that this 'continued into the Reformation and post-Reformation periods', 55. See this article for more on the rise of Hebrew linguistic studies and its impact on preaching in the Early Modern period, particularly 61-64.

[78] Chanita Goodblatt, 'From "tav" to the Cross: John Donne's Protestant Exegesis and Polemics", in *John Donne and the Protestant Reformation: New Perspectives*, ed. Mary Arshagouni Papazian (Detroit MI: Wayne State University Press, 2003), 221-246, 225.

[79] Cf. *A sermon preached before King Charles upon Genesis*, in which Donne writes that God made mankind 'all of red earth […] a redness that amounts to shamefastness, to a blushing at our infirmities […] we are all red, red so, even from the beginning, and in our best state'. John Donne, *Fifty Sermons Preached by that Learned and Reverend Divine, John Donne, Dr in Divinity Late Deane of the Cathedrall Church of S. Pauls London,* 2 vols (London: Ia. Flesher for M.F. I.A. Marriot and R. Royston, 1649), ii, 248.

sexes: 'both may be Adam, both may blush'.[80] Blushing with guilt, then, is fit for both men and women, who are both equally culpable for the Fall, and should thus show equal remorse for resultant sin.

In his sermons, Donne exclusively identifies blushing with unpleasant emotions and bodily experiences, and, unusually, does not make any connection between the blush and sex.[81] The pairing of Adam and blushing is one part of a thorough-going list of man's great unhappinesses: '*Adam* is *Blushing*, *Ish* is *lamenting*, *Geber* is *oppressing* [...] *Enosh* is *Homo aeger*, a man miserable, in particular by the misery of *sickness*' (79).[82] There is a powerful emotional discourse in play here: the life of men is marked out by blushing, lamenting, oppressing (that is, the sensation of being overwhelmed (*OED* 2b)), and sickness. In this passage, blushing is not a sign of lascivious pleasure, of vitality, of beauty, or youth, as we have found it used elsewhere: it is only evoked as a sign of guilt, and Donne takes pains to emphasise that the emotional experience of guilt is acutely unpleasant: it makes a person miserable. Left in his postlapsarian but pre-redemption state, this is as much as a person's life might amount to: a never-ending cycle of misery caused by guilt, and of guilt caused by misery — all manifested outwardly in blushing cheeks, and in the agonising internal experience of guilt.

In this sermon, God himself models the ideal relation of interior emotion to exterior display by displaying his anger on his face.[83] Man is miserable, and diseased, because of 'the inevitable

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[80] For more on the gendered attribution of blame for the Fall of Man, see Philip C. Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 173-210, and Stephen Greenblatt, *The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve* (London: The Bodley Head, 2017).

[81] There is one exception to this rule. In *A Sermon preached at St. Paul's, in the evening, upon Easter Day, 1625* Donne writes that a rouged cheek 'may do some ill offices of blood, it may tempt'. John Donne, 'A sermon preached at St. Paul's, in the evening, upon Easter Day, 1625', *BYU Library Digital Collections*, 2004-2005 <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/JohnDonne/id/3364> [accessed 22nd February 2021], 9.

[82] Cf. *A sermon preached before King Charles upon Genesis*, in which Donne also lists these names for man, 26-27.

[83] Cf. *A sermon preached at St. Paul's, in the evening, upon Easter Day, 1625*, in which Donne argues against obscuring the face with make-up because 'it is ill, when it is not our own heart, that appears in our words; it is ill

anger of an incensed God, and such an anger of God as hath a *face,* a manifestation, a reality' (91). The expression of God's face is the 'manifestation' or 'reality' of his emotion: this is a useful template with which to understand how human faces, which are made in God's image, are meant to reflect interior emotion. God's anger is visible on his face, just as man's guilt is expressed in his red cheeks: 'God 'shewed man his face in the Law, and saw Mans face in the transgressions of the law' (91). That God's face is primarily textual — it is expressed 'in the law', i.e. in the Bible — in contrast to man's face, which is described in terms of actions — 'transgressions' — leads us to consider how images of red faces and *read* faces operates as powerful metaphors within the biblical text. God shows his face that men might read it, and God in turn sees man's red face and sees their guilt; the first vision is figurative, but the second hovers between the literal and the metaphorical. If you are a devout Christian, then you believe in an omniscient God who sees you blush, but this experience is highly subjective: as far as you experience it, no physical looking takes place. 'Seeing' the expression of God's face, even in this highly figurative sense, has a profound psychosomatic impact on the Psalmist David: 'There is no soundness in my flesh, from the face of thine anger'. As real as David's experience of guilt is, his vision of God's face is entirely metaphoric. What is described in physical and visual terms as a literal experience is really a highly subjective emotional sense: David reads the scriptures and in doing so *feels* as though he sees God's face. This sentence represents in microcosm Donne's understanding of a functioning relationship between subject and object of an emotion. God displays his emotion in his face — he makes it manifest — and David experiences it in his body. God feels anger; therefore, David feels unsound. The face is highly legible, but what is displayed and what is experienced by the viewer

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too, when it is not our own blood, that appears in our cheeks'. John Donne, 'A sermon preached at St. Paul's, in the evening, upon Easter Day, 1625', *BYU Library Digital Collections*, 2004-2005 <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/JohnDonne/id/3364> [last accessed 22nd February 2021], 8.

are two different things. God displays anger, David feels unsoundness. God's emotional display is mediated through David's own body, until his anger turns into unsoundness, and yet the communication is perfectly clear, nothing is lost in translation. So too ought the face of the Christian honestly demonstrate their internal emotional state, particularly when that emotion, like shame or guilt, comes as part of repentance, and might be usefully turned to the task of encouraging one's fellow church-goers.

That blushes act as emotional cues for other people is explored elsewhere in the sermon as part of a longer passage about the importance of being seen to do good publicly, and about the responsibility that each member of the congregation has to encourage one another to behave appropriately. 'There cannot bee a heavier punishment laid upon any sinne', warns Donne, 'than Christ lays upon *scandall: It were better for him a mil-stone were hanged about his neck, and hee drowned in the Sea'* (89). Jesus is particularly talking about people who corrupt children in this quotation, which features in two Gospels (Luke and Matthew), but Donne has some general warnings about the importance of good public conduct before he comes onto the subject of good parenting. He is aware that scandal, in its OED 1a sense of 'discredit to religion occasioned by the conduct of a religious person', might result from the appearance of sin, and not necessarily its reality, but this, it seems, is no excuse:

> In cases, where there is not always sin, in the action which we do, but if we do any action, so, as that it may scandalise another, or occasion sin in him, we are bound to study, and favour the weakness of other men, and not to do such things, as they may think sins. We must prevent the misinterpretation, yea the malice of other men; for though the *fire* be theirs, the *fuel*, or at least, the *bellows*, is ours; The uncharitableness, the malice is in them, but the awaking, and the stirring thereof, is in our carelessness, who were not watchful upon our actions. (89-90)

So concerned is Donne for the importance of public piety that he equates behaving in a way that causes people to suspect that you might have sinned with actually sinning. This proactive concern for weaker members of the congregation might be open to 'malice', he concedes, but even if 'the

fire is theirs, the fuel, or at least, bellows is ours', suggesting that it is a grave sin to stoke up scandal through ambiguity. In other words, members of the church owe one another legibility and clarity in their actions.[84] Behaving in a way that allows 'misinterpretation' to happen is the equivalent of lending someone material to start a fire. This stark image reminds the congregation at Lincoln's Inn of their ties of obligation to one another, and particularly of the responsibility that they have to encourage one another to behave ethically. It also blends the biblical exhortation to 'spur one another on to good deeds' with 'a general trend in Renaissance rhetoric towards epideictic, the specific goal being to direct the audience to ethical conduct', emphasising once again the blend of biblical and classical influences which guide both the style and content of Donne's sermons.[85] Sujata Iyengar has explained Donne's 'sacramental reverence', his emphasis on public worship, and his reluctance to criticise women for caring too much about their appearance (which was a favourite topic of some of his more extreme protestant contemporaries) on the grounds of his Anglicanism: 'Herbert and Donne praise female concern for appearance because, according to Anglican theology, dismissing appearance altogether indicates not a fine disregard for the flesh but a disrespect for the church and for public worship'.[86] We might find this concern for 'appearance' reflected in his exhortation of public piety above. Not to care about how things look disrespects the church and the congregation. This idea applies just as much to Donne's parishioners' actions as it does to their faces.

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[84] Cf. *A sermon preached at St. Paul's in the evening of Christmas Day 1624,* in which Donne makes a similar argument for the importance of reputation and appearance, arguing that 'it is not enough for a virgin to be a virgin in her own knowledge, but she must govern her self so as that others may see that she is one, and see that she hath a desire, and a disposition to continue so still'. He emphasises that the virgin must make herself known through her 'garments', 'language', and 'motions' so that no one who sees her can 'question nor dispute whether she be a maid or no'. He argues that the virgin should hide herself from public view because ' the eyes of others, that strike upon her […] dry up that blood, that should blush'. John Donne, 'A sermon preached at St. Paul's in the evening of Christmas Day 1624', *BYU Library Digital Collections*, 2004-2005 <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/JohnDonne/id/3359> [accessed 22nd February 2021], 13-14.
[85] Vickers (1989), 291.
[86] Iyengar (2004), 61.

Having established that God's face shows his emotion in perfect legibility, that David reads and understands those emotions with perfect clarity, and that this is a model for relations within the Christian community, Donne is particularly concerned with people who would obscure their blushing faces through the habitual practice of sin. Donne's concern for setting a good example with one's own blushing extends particularly to the responsibility that each person has for the moral instruction of their children. 'Take heed of doing any sin, in the sight of thy Child', he warns,

> for, if we break through that wall, we shall come quickly to that *facim Sacerdotis non erubuerunt*, they will not be afraid, nor ashamed in the presence of the Priest, they will look him in the face, nay receive at his hands, and yet sin their sin, that minute, in their hearts; and to that also, *faciem seniorum non erubuerunt*, they will not be afraid, nor ashamed of the Office of the Magistrate; but sin for *nothing*, or *sin at a price, bear out*, or *buy out* all their sins. (90)

In these quotations from Juvenal, Donne warns his congregation not to diminish their children's ability to feel shame, nor their ability to display that shame on their blushing faces. Donne pleads with his parishioners to cultivate their children's ability to blush by avoiding hypocrisy, which causes the face to become brazen and unable to blush. If you commit sins in front of your children, you threaten not only your own ability to blush, but their ability to blush: so close is the relationship between the emotional display of the one person, and the emotional impact on another. The loss of a child's ability to blush must cause anxiety for a parent, he argues, because without it, children can sin 'in their hearts', even when looking into the face of a Priest. Again, we find anxiety about the obscurity of the human heart, and thus the obscurity of hidden sin, along with a sense that each person owes the example of their own blush to another person; in this case, to one's child, but for Donne, these bonds of obligation extend far beyond the immediate family unit and outwards into the wider church community.[87]

[87] Compare 'A Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn, 1618, Matthew 18.7', in which Donne conceives of the individual, the church, God and the angels as a kind of family, united through blood-ties (particularly the Eucharist, and the atoning blood of Christ). Donne warns his congregation not to make the church, their mother, 'blush' with shame because of their sin. He tells them that they have 'dishonoured our mother abroad' because of their behaviour. Donne (1649), ii, 139.

The idea that one owes it to one's community to cultivate one's blush has several important classical and patristic precedents. The philosopher Philo, for example, writes that 'it is a special property of divine wisdom that it ever soars aloft like a bird, of human wisdom that it implants modesty and discretion; and a blush, where the matter calls for blushing, is the clearest proof of the presence of these qualities'.[88] The sense that blushing might be a cultivated response is brought out a little more clearly in C.D. Yonge's translation of the same passage: 'it is the characteristic of human wisdom to study modesty and temperance, so as to blush at all objects which are worthy to cause a blush'.[89] For Philo, is not entirely naturally apparent which things one ought to blush at: rather, one has to read and study (and, I sense Donne would add, listen to sermons) in order to make sure that you blush at *all* the things you ought to blush at. Augustine follows this line of thinking, arguing in his anti-Pelagian writings that 'this kind of shame — this necessity of blushing — is certainly born with every man, and *in some measure* is commanded by the very laws of nature'.[90] This is a language of cultivation and not, as Alison Bumke argues, in her article on 'Donne's Imagery of Humours', of choice. Bumke suggests that Donne thinks 'a thinking, feeling body *chooses* to express an internal state of shame and humility' in a blush.[91] I would suggest, instead, that Donne is anxious about brazening the face, and thus removing the natural ability to blush, rather than necessarily teaching the face to blush. As he frequently reminds his congregation by at once alluding to the fall of man and the blush, the guilty blush is a result of man's descent

[88] Philo, 'Who is the Heir of Divine Things?', in *The Works of Philo,* trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whittaker, 10 vols (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1932), iv, 346-347, xxvi. Donne wrote an epigram about Philo called 'An obscure writer', suggesting that he was familiar with the philosopher.
[89] Philo, 'On Who is the Heir of Divine Things', in *The Works of Philo Judaeus,* trans. C. D. Yonge, 2 vols (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854), ii, 118, xxvi.
[90] Augustine, 'A Treatise Against Two Letters of the Pelagians', 33. All quotations from Augustine are taken from *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* ed. Philip Schaff, series 1, 14 vols (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885-1890). Hereafter only the relevant treatise and reference will be given.
[91] Alison Bumke, 'More than Skin Deep: Dissecting Donne's Imagery of Humours', *The Review of English Studies,* 66 (2015), 655-675, 671.

into sin. It comes naturally, hence his interest in protecting children's blushes, but can be easily lost, and must be defended against brazenness. As concerned as Donne is by the threat of brazen sin to the sensitive faces of his parishioners, privacy is by no means permanent in his doctrine. He warns his congregation that even their hidden sins will be discovered on the Day of Judgement, reminding them that David prayed 'to be cleansed from his secret sins', and St. Paul 'glories so devoutly, in having *renounced the hidden things of dishonesty*' (90). The judgement, he reminds them, is total exposure: 'men shall stand naked in the sight of one another, and all their sins shall be made manifest to all' (90). Obscurity might be a cause for concern now, but it will not last forever, as even hidden things will be uncovered on the Day of Judgement. In this way, Christianity promises a final unveiling and an end to the obscurity of the human heart, fulfilling the fantasy of visibility which appears in part to animate the early modern obsession with the blush.

This anxiety over the status of privacy has a particular resonance for early modern Protestants. In her *Political Theologies,* Shuger compares Martin Bucer's *De Regno Christi* (1550) to Plato's *Laws* and Cicero's *De Legibus* in order to explain (amongst other things) how 'a humanist education would produce Puritans'.[92] Shuger's work also helps to explain the nature of Christian community, as she explains that in *De Regno,* and *Laws,* 'the law simultaneously brings individuals "under God" and binds them into a community', emphasising that for Plato, 'the best laws are those "which render the State as unified as possible"'.[93] For Shuger, this unifying force works to create a repressive Puritan society, obsessed with policing sexual matters, and with a uniformly negative view of privacy. Donne is rather more positive about the good that can be worked in a unified community, and is preoccupied with rendering his auditory as unified as possible through binding them into a community under the same auspices as Bucer, who gives

[92] Shuger (2001), 21.
[93] Shuger (2001), 22.

'priority to the cords of duty, affection, and authority that binds persons into families and communities over the individual's own desires and decisions'.[94] 'For all Bucer's authoritarianism', Shuger writes, he is 'less interested in structures of power than in bonds of obligation'.[95] The same could be said for Donne, who makes a powerfully emotive case for community based not on legalism, but on bonds of obligation, and administered not only through the structures of Church and state discipline, but through the sense that even one's face is not one's own, but a shared community resource with the power to lead one's neighbours towards, or away from, God. This sense that one's body is not one's own is, of course, deeply rooted in biblical teaching, and Donne quotes from Psalm 12 to this effect: 'When they come to say, Our lips are ours, who is Lord over us? They will say so of their hands, and of all their bodies, They are ours, who shall forbid us, to doe what wee will with them?' (90). These speakers are singled out by the Psalmists for their lies and disloyalty, and the inference in the sermon is the same: those who aggressively assert their right to do what they will with their bodies are enemies of God, living in open sin. The individual body is subject to the needs of the collective, and each person has a responsibility to live in a way that edifies, instructs, and encourages their neighbour.

Donne's interest in the life of the Christian community extends outside the confines of the church walls, and he explicitly warns against 'sins that have put on so brazen a face as to out-face the Minister, and out-face the Magistrate', arguing that in sinning so openly, one might make people question 'the very Power, and Justice of God' (90): a poignant moment, when we consider that he addresses an audience of lawyers at Lincoln's Inn. Throughout this sermon, Donne has clearly stated that each congregation member ought to have a sense of responsibility towards their fellows, and explained how that sense of responsibility ought to inform their conduct, down to the

[94] Shuger (2001), 26.
[95] Shuger (2001), 26.

blush on their faces. If there was any doubt, however, about his commitment to public worship, then that ambiguity is eradicated in his surprising argument that 'an Hypocrite at Church, may do more good, then a devout man in his Chamber at home'. His reasoning is that

> the Hypocrites outward piety, though counterfeit, imprints a good example upon them, who do not know it to bee counterfeit, and we cannot know, that he that is absent from Church now, is now at his prayers in his Chamber: so a lesser sin done with an open avowment, and confidence, may more prejudice the Kingdome of God, then greater in secret. (90)

This pronouncement materialises the tension of the Elizabethan religious settlement by uncovering how it might facilitate hypocrisy. Elizabeth I may not have wanted to 'make windows into men's hearts and secret thoughts', but she was almost alone in this: as discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the early modern period is marked out by its anxiety about the obscurity of the interior of people's bodies.[96] Iyengar reflects a commonly held critical position when she notes that 'the Elizabethan Settlement required only outward conformity; one's own beliefs did not matter as long as one attended church along with one's neighbours'.[97] Yet, it is difficult to sit down to one of Donne's sermons and rise again in any doubt about whether he cared about the internal spiritual lives of his congregations. Donne's advocation of hypocrisy challenges this critical commonplace by causing us to question how such a policy vcould have been enforced at a congregational level. Targoff also disputes the critical commonplace understanding of the Elizabethan religious settlement as a 'simple request for an untaxing and potentially unmeaningful participation in a weekly service', arguing instead that the push for public worship at almost any cost is better understood as a reflection of 'an affirmative belief in what Aristotle describes as the efficacy of "habit"'.[98] In the *Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle 'posits a causal link between ethics (*ethike*) and habit (*ethos*), and Targoff suggests that this philosophy lies behind the Anglican insistence on regular church

[96] The phrase 'make windows into men's hearts and secret thoughts' is commonly misattributed to Elizabeth I, but it was actually Francis Bacon's summation of the queen's policy. Collinson (1984), 178 via Targoff (2001), 2.
[97] Iyengar (2004), 61.
[98] Targoff (2001), 4.

attendance: the Church of England was deeply invested in 'the transformative capacity of external behaviour'.[99] For Donne, this power extends beyond the transformation of the self through habit, to the transformation of others through example. We witnessed his belief in the power of models earlier, when he warned the congregation against ambiguity in their actions, and the same force lies behind his public approval of hypocrisy — as long as that hypocrisy is committed at a public church service where others can see and benefit from it. Donne's is not alone in his belief in the power of habit. Targoff notes that 'established churchmen tended to minimize the threat' posed by 'externally convincing but internally empty acts of devotion'.[100] Ultimately, Donne argues, 'we cannot know' what the person who hides away in secret is up to, and not only is this lack of knowing so much worse than empty gestures, but it robs both the hypocrite and his audience the opportunity to be changed through the transformative power of habit.

Donne does not entirely satisfactorily reconcile his warning against brazenness with his advocacy of public hypocrisy, briefly commenting that his preference for public hypocrisy over private piety is 'that which may be principally intended, or, at least, usefully raised out of', a phrase from the Psalm in question: '*A facie peccati'*, which Donne translates as 'that this sin will have a face, that is, a confidence, and a divesting of all bashfulness or disguises' (89-91). This is also the phrase — '*a faccie*' — which he used to discuss the face of God's anger, and to illustrate the importance of the genuine external expression of interior emotions. If God has a face to display emotional cues which might be learned from, so too does the sinner. It is interesting that in this moment, Donne does not seem to differentiate between the face of God and between the face of the sinner, regardless of how genuine their expression of emotion is, relying instead on the transformative power of habit, and on the enduring power of learning by example.

[99] Targoff (2001), 4.
[100] Targoff (2001), 4.

Preached at Whitehall. The Second Sermon on Ezekiel 34.19 [? April 1622, 1623 or 1624] [101]

Donne was a court preacher from the very beginning of his career, but as Crawforth helpfully identifies, both the venues and congregations 'grouped together under the banner of "court sermons" were diverse'.[102] In this sermon, Donne issues stark warnings against the dangers of Catholicism, and places a great emphasis on the importance of taking the sacraments. The two are closely connected, and particularly poignant for a royal audience. The queen, Anna of Denmark, was a Catholic.[103] Rather than opting for 'the staunch recusancy urged by Catholic missionary propaganda', she 'like so many conforming Catholics, opted for conformity to the routine non-Eucharistic services of the church'.[104] Donne makes it clear that he finds this practice unacceptable. There is nothing that 'more loosen[s] a man's footing', he warns 'than when he gives himself leave to think irreverently, slightly, negligently of the sacraments, as of things, at best, indifferent, and, many times, impertinent' (3). The Church of England's message of inclusivity extends only as far as its own doors: non-attendance or non-participation in the sacraments is unacceptable. In this sermon, Donne thinks about the communal life of the congregation, and particularly, about the role of blood in public worship, both in the blushes of his parishioners, and in the wine of the Eucharist.

The sermon opens with a long meditation on those whom Donne deems insufficiently enthusiastic in their conversion to Protestantism. He concedes that the Catholic Church is not all bad: 'those that are skilful in that art, know how to sever the base from the pure, the good parts of

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[101] 'And as for my flock, they eat that, which ye have trodden with your feet, and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet' (Ezekiel 34.19). John Donne, 'Preached at Whitehall. The Second Sermon on Ezekiel 34.19', *BYU Library Digital Collections*, 2004-2005 <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/JohnDonne/id/3128> [accessed 22nd February 2021]. All further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text.
[102] Crawforth (2013), 116.
[103] For more on Anna of Denmark see Leeds Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England: A Cultural Biography* (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).
[104] Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 174. See his chapter 'Sermons for the Jacobean Queen and Prince of Wales' for more detail on how Donne addressed Anne's Catholic sympathies.

the religion from the bad' (4). Nevertheless, he says it would have 'been better to have stayed at home and served God in private, than to have communicated in a superstitious service' (4). This is a markedly different approach to the relation between public and private than was suggested by his earlier interest in useful public hypocrisy, which suggests that the justificatory power of habit is only made possible within the confines of the Protestant church. It is interesting to note that the 'line in the sand', as it were, is superstition. Given that it comes at a point in the sermon when Donne is discussing the Eucharist, it seems fair to read his condemnation of superstition as an allusion to the Catholic belief in transubstantiation. However, Donne also emphasises the long historical precedent of public devotion: private domestic devotion 'was not permitted to our fathers [...] to church they must come' (4). Donne again centralises public worship, and the common responsibility that each church member has to encourage the others by regular church attendance, and through participation in the sacraments.

Both the importance of the Eucharist in the early modern period and Donne's interest in the sacraments is well established in existing criticism. Fetzer, for example, writes that 'the major purpose of Donne's sermons' was 'humankind's reconciliation with God', and notes that 'there were two major channels through which such a conversion might be achieved: the sermon and the Eucharist', suggesting that '[d]espite their interrelatedness, homiletic and ritual elements of the early modern English service did not readily coexist', and that the manner in which 'Donne's sermons combine homiletics with ritual' was unusual for the period.[105] Important too in this discussion in Sophie Read's work on *Eucharist and the Poetic Imagination in Early Modern England*, in which she uncovers how Donne's interest in the Eucharist informs his poetry, and in particular, his puns. Read argues that 'Donne's doctrinal position on the sacraments … is not

[105] Fetzer (2010), 26.

entirely straightforward', noting that the evidence of his sermons on this matter 'has not been accepted without question'.[106] There is a critical discussion about Donne's theology of the Eucharist, informed on the one hand by R. V. Young's 'suspicion that the sermons peddle an orthodox position in which their author did not necessarily believe' and Theresa DiPasquale's reading of Donne's ability to combine Calvinist theology and Catholic language.[107] I do not intend to speak definitively about exactly where Donne's theology of the Eucharist lies on the spectrum from Zwinglian memorialism to Catholic transubstantiation, but simply to note that he repeatedly demands that his congregation partake in the sacrament, and that his interest in the Eucharist is one manifestation of his wider interest in blood as a Christian devotional symbol, and in the importance of public worship.[108] The Eucharist has always been a way of creating community. Caroline Bynum writes that 'from the very beginning the Eucharistic elements stood primarily not for nature, for grain and grape, but for human beings bound into community by commensality'.[109] In this way, it distinguishes itself from other kinds of religious or ritual eating: 'not the carnival, nor the bacchanal', but a 'frugal repast'.[110] It is importantly different even to the Passover meal, at which Jesus initiated the first Eucharist: 'from the Christian Passover', writes Gillian Feeley-Harnik, 'none was excluded. Rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, coward and hero, all celebrated together. Eating Christ's body was an inclusive act, one that created community'.[111]

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[106] Sophie Read, *Eucharist and the Poetic Imagination in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 74.
[107] Read (2013), 74.
[108] Read helpfully delineates 'the four broad positions on the nature of Christ's presence in the Eucharist to which it was possible to subscribe'. She writes that 'on a spectrum moving from the most to the least corporeal, or from the literal to the literary, these are: the traditional Catholic view of transubstantiation; Lutheran consubstantiation, also known as a belief in the "real presence"; Calvinist focus on Christ's spiritual presence in the Eucharist; and Zwinglian memorialism, which rested on a purely figurative interpretation of Christ's words at the Last Supper'. Read (2013), 18.
[109] Caroline Bynum Walker, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1987), 48.
[110] Bynum Walker (1987), 48.
[111] Qtd in Bynum (1987), 48. Bynum also notes that Wayne A. Meeks in his history of the *First Urban Christians* (2003) 'stresses the extent to which 'the single loaf used in the ritual symbolises the unity […] of the community', 49.

Having asserted the importance of sharing the sacraments as a community, Donne moves on to an extended three-colour (red, white, and black) analogy in which he compares his congregation to sheep. Donne expands on the biblical image of God's people as sheep into an uncited 'natural story' which recounts 'diverse pastures, and divers waters, which will change the colour of cattle, or sheep' (8). 'Some waters', he writes, 'change sheep of any colour to white' (8). He compares this water to 'temporal or spiritual afflictions', which 'may bring God's children to […] languishing paleness' (8). He comforts his congregation, however, by alluding to the story of 'Daniel and his fellows' (8). In this story, when Daniel and the Israelites were captured as slaves, they refused to eat food from the King of Babylon's table because it had been sacrificed to pagan gods. Instead, they grew strong and healthy on a diet of water and vegetables 'appear[ing] fairer and fatter in flesh' than those who had dined from the King's table (Daniel 1:15). So too, writes Donne, will the hearts of the children of God 'be filled as with marrow and fatness' in times of affliction, where others 'have all their hearts' desire, but leanness in their souls' (9). The metaphor rests on a language of nourishment: the Christian soul is analogous to a well-fed body, made literal in Daniel's story, but subsumed to an internal sense of wellbeing for Donne's audience, and one which is implicitly linked to the sharing of the Eucharist meal.

'There are waters', Donne continues,

> that change all coloured sheep to black. So may these troubled waters, afflictions, effect that upon God's children, the enemy shall come, and before him all faces shall gather blackness, as Jerusalem complains, that their faces were blacker than coals. (9)

For this illustration, Donne draws on Lamentations 4.7-8:

> Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire: Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

The Lamentations passage is about the erosion of signs of physical good health: namely, the replacement of implicitly healthy and beautiful red and white skin with skin that 'is blacker than a coal', and implicitly sick and ugly. For the people in Lamentations, this blackness reflected their external circumstances: they were being punished by God for their transgressions. For the purposes of the illustration, Donne takes this passage out of its biblical context. For his congregation, it is 'the enemy' which causes their blackness, not God's judgement. This image of blackness is another example of Donne's tendency in this sermon to use metaphors of skin colour as a way of indicating an internal emotional state. At this point, Donne returns to emphasise the importance of attending a public congregation and taking sacraments, and in particular, the Eucharist:

> yet as long as they stay, and continue sheep, members of the body, as long as they partake of the body, they shall partake of the complexion of the church, who says of herself, I am black, O daughters of Jerusalem, but comely, (acceptable in the sight of my Christ) and that shall be verified in them, which Solomon says, By the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better; that is, by the occasion of the sadness, God's correction. (9)[112]

In her work on the theologian and pastor Henoch Clapham, Iyengar convincingly argues that for Clapham, the black but comely complexion of the church represents the balance that Anglicanism managed to strike between the asceticism of extreme Protestantism and the grandeur of Catholicism.[113] This analogy sheds some light on the passage, but given what we have already uncovered about the contagious nature of blushing in Donne's other sermon, it is tempting to think of this partaking of complexion rather more literally. Figurative blackness represents sadness and God's correction, which, Donne argues, is morally good, and easiest to endure within a collective who partake in the sacraments together. We find a slippage and cycle here between interior and exterior: the heart (internal) is 'made better' by the sadness of the face (external), the sadness of

[112] For a reading of images of blackness in the part of Songs of Solomon to which this passage alludes, see Iyengar (2004), 44-79.
[113] Iyengar (2004), 63.

the face is caused by God's correction, which might be internal (conviction) or external (punishment), comfort and support (internal) is given by the complexion (external) of the congregation, each one of whom is, as an individual, in the middle of this web of internal and external factors. Donne's emphasis once again is on public worship, and on continuing as active members of the church community: He urges his congregation to remain within the church, telling them that 'as long as they stay, and continue sheep, members of the body, as long as they partake of the body' they will also 'partake of the complexion of the church', that is, they will be acceptable in the sight of God. In his focus on external appearance, on 'complexion' earned through participation in a community, Donne offers a distinctively Anglican take on how one might become acceptable to God. He does not call for deep searching within oneself, nor a change of heart or a rebirth or any other kinds of bodily metaphor: he calls for a unified complexion, a public presence that is evident to others, and more concerned with external appearance than with internal private change.

Whiteness is fear, and blackness is sadness, and redness is 'the strangest change', argues Donne, 'the most unlikely, most extraordinary, most improper colour for sheep' (9). 'Yet', he continues: 'there is one redness natural to our sheep in the text, the redness of blushing, and modesty, and self-accusing; and there is another redness, which is not improper, the redness of zeal and godly anger' (9). Donne links blushing to both modesty and self-accusing. These virtues encompass the private and public spheres, drawing them together in the single image of the blush. Jennifer Clement helpfully differentiates early modern modesty from humility on the basis of its relational focus, arguing that 'modesty and meekness tend to be primarily invoked towards other humans', whereas humility 'helps the soul understand its relationship to God first of all, and only

then to other people'.[114] If modesty is about the public comportment, then self-accusing is a distinctly and distinctively solitary activity, and much more about one's inner life. This internal focus seems an unusual divergence for Donne at this point, whose attention has previously been given over to how blushing contributes to communal life. Yet they operate together as 'natural' virtues for the Christian, Donne argues, with both informing the other, and with both indicated to an outside audience through the blush.

Redness does not only signify blushing in this passage, and the 'worst redness that can befall them, is the redness of sin' (9). The colour red, then, at once represents modesty, self-accusing, anger, and sin. However, God promises a perfect whitening. Given the myriad of associations that redness has within this text, once it has been rescued from its associations with pallid fear, whiteness offers a radical simplicity. Donne quotes Isaiah 1.18: 'though your sins be scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool'. The image is striking, even if we have become somewhat inured to it by familiarity. Bumke is helpful on this point, as she recounts the laborious process of dying wool:

> Dye changes an object's interior, as well as its exterior: it soaks wool, permeating every fibre. As a result, frequent sinners acquire a sinful redness 'deeply died in grain', Donne writes in his sermon on Ezek. 34.19. Wool's 'grain' is its underlying matrix of fibres or particles. If dye permeates wool deeply enough to reach this matrix, the resulting colour is vivid. Scarlet dye is called 'grain-colour', in fact, because it must saturate the wool's grain to achieve its concentrated hue.[115]

The Bible promises that crimson, that most tenacious, saturating dye, can become white. Donne again returns to ideas about public conformity and corporate worship: the sheep are made white, and they are made homogenous through their whiteness. This homogeneity reflects the union of the church as the body of Christ, but also impresses upon Donne's congregation the importance of public order and unity: they ought to all be the same, characterised by whiteness. Whiteness now

[114] Jennifer Clement, *Reading Humility in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005), 3.
[115] Bumke (2015), 674.

means purity and perfection: 'the whiteness of God's mercy doth pursue and overtake this redness of sin' (9). Redness is linked in this passage to sin, to the personal knowledge and conviction of one's own sin, and to the public somatic confession of that conviction. Sin as a concept is metaphorically coloured red, but the knowledge and emotional experience of being convicted of one's sin is physically experienced on the body as literal redness of skin. Nevertheless, just as a blush is a temporary flush of colour across the cheek, so too is the redness of sin merely a temporary state. Whiteness, which represents God's purity, overcomes redness, and covers over all transgressions permanently.

Donne returns to the passage from Lamentations about how the Nazarites are both red and white, and diverges from the KJV, which reads: 'Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies' (Lamentations 4.7). Donne instead quotes a Rabbinical translation: 'the religious men of the Jews before that time, were whiter than milk, and redder than pearl'; and the Vulgate translation: '*rubicundiores ebore antiquo*, redder than the oldest ivory' (9). As Crawforth has demonstrated in her reading of another court sermon, Donne's fluid movement between English, Latin, and Hebrew 'evokes yet another manifestation of the tension between continuity and change that is central to his preaching'.[116] This tension is present, I would suggest, in Donne's evocation of the blush as a way of thinking through the impact of both sin and grace on the body. The condition of the blush is change: the colour of the skin must alter, but to notice the alteration, the colour of the skin must be otherwise stable. Similarly, for God to demonstrate his changing grace, there must be omnipresent sin. There is always sin, because man was born in sin — it is in their blood — and remains in sin whilst they are on Earth. There must be redness within whiteness: the Christian might be so holy that they are whiter than

[116] Crawforth (2013), 119.

milk, but they will always contain some spot of red sin that makes them redder than pearl. Donne explains

> there is neither in the holiest actions, of the holiest man, any such degree of whiteness, but that it is always accompanied with some redness, some tincture, some aspersion of sin, nor any such deep redness in sin, any sin so often, and deeply dyed in grain, but that it is capable of whiteness, in the application of the candour, and pureness, and innocency [sic] of Christ Jesus. (9-10)

There is no act that is without some red stain of sin, but nor is there a sin so great or so habitual that it cannot be made white by Christ. Donne's message is of man's total dependence on God for salvation, and their helplessness. Yet there is a grain of hope and comfort, as Donne moves away from images of redness, blackness, and whiteness as a way of explaining sin, and back to using them as a way of explaining emotional distress. 'Our fathers were not discouraged', he continues, 'when they were discoloured; what paleness, what blackness, what redness soever', they continued as sheep: and not as foxes, wolves, horses, or unicorns (10). These are loaded terms, each referring to a role one might take up in relation to the state. Foxes 'delude the state with equivocations'; wolves 'join with the state to the oppression of the rest'; horses 'suffer themselves to be ridden by others'; unicorns 'think to reform all abuses in state, and church at once' (10). Donne's message to those assembled in the congregation at Whitehall is clear: no 'biting, nor barking', no 'murmuring, or reproaching the present government' (10). In this sermon, Donne demonstrates his ability to speak pertinently into the lives of many different kinds of congregations, and also his ability to deploy the same material — in this case, metaphors of red, white, and black — in many different ways, but always to the same ends: to emphasise the importance of regular church attendance, engagement in communal life, the partaking of the sacraments, and the performance of public piety.

Preached Upon the Penitential Psalms [April, May, or June, 1623] Psal. 6.8,9,10[117]

This sermon raises some interesting questions for the editors of the *OESJD*, and it has yet to be assigned a place in their new series.[118] It is one of six sermons preached by Donne on Psalm 6, all of which were printed posthumously in *LXXX Sermons* (1640).[119] Simpson dates the Psalm 6 sermons from c.1623-1628, whilst Stanwood and Shapiro argue that they were composed between 1616 and 1622 for the chapel at Lincoln's Inn.[120] The title of the preceding sermon in *LXXX Sermons*, on Psalm 6.6-7, notes that it was 'Preached to the King at White-hall, upon the occasion of the fast, April 5, 1628'. Shapiro and Stanwood argue that 'only the first sixty-four lines of the sermon and the last forty are specific to that occasion', and suggest that it is likely 'a reworking' of an earlier Lincoln's Inn sermon.[121] How does a curatorial method such as that employed by the editors of the *OESJD*, which is built around occasion and audience account for the likelihood that Donne reused and reworked sermons, and preached them in front of multiple audiences? The risk of a reception-based approach to collection and editing, which seeks to bring sermons to life, is that it actually ossifies them to a particular time and place, limiting their auditory to the very day of preaching, rather than offering a more realistic picture of reusing, reworking, and repeating sermons to different audiences and at different times: not least to readers. As we shall see, much

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[117] 'Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer. Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly' (Psalm 6: 8-10). John Donne, 'Preached upon the Penitential Psalms [April, May, or June, 1623] Psal. 6.8,9,10', *BYU Library Digital Collections,* 2004-2005 <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/JohnDonne/id/1728/rec/9> [accessed 22nd February 2021]. All further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text. For an overview of the importance of the Penitential Psalms in Late Medieval and Early Modern England, and an account of how they were translated, adapted, and used by various different writers, see Clare Costley King'oo, *Miserere Mei: The Penitential Psalms in Late Medieval and Early Modern England* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012).

[118] This sermon is not listed on the Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne website, but four other sermons preached on Psalm 6.1-5 are listed under 'unassigned sermons'. *Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne* <https://donnesermons.web.ox.ac.uk/further-volumes> [accessed 6th July 2020].

[119] Philip Michael George, 'The Sacramental Art of John Donne's Sermons on the Penitential Psalms', unpublished PhD thesis, The University of British Columbia, 1996, 96.

[120] George (1996), 96.

[121] Qtd in George (1996), 96.

of Donne's treatment of blushing in this sermon echoes his concerns in the previous sermons very closely, to an extent that I would suggest amounts to the reusing of material.

Donne's discussion of blushing comes towards the end of this sermon, when he considers the last verse of his passage: 'let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly'. Donne is alive to literary form throughout his sermons, and to the aesthetic pleasures of a well-turned verse. He allows himself time here to meditate upon those pleasures:

> those words which are here rendered, *Convertentur,* et *erubescent*, and which in the original *ktejashabu,* and *jeboshu,* which have a musical, and harmonious sound, and agnomination in them, let me note thus much, even in that, that the Holy Ghost in penning the Scriptures delights himself, not only with a propriety, but with a delicacy, and harmony, and melody of language; with height of metaphors, and other figures, which may work greater impressions upon the readers, and not with barbarous, or trivial, or market, or homely language. (17)

This passage reminds us that Donne is both interested in (Hebrew) etymology, and attuned to concerns of 'delicacy, and harmony, and melody', and that he finds his desires for synergistic form and content are met in scripture, and particularly in the Psalms. 'To a priest and poet such as John Donne the Psalms embodied "the highest matter in the noblest forme".'[122] For Donne, the Bible is a source of literary pleasure and moral instruction, and the two are bound up together. As he argues above, metaphors, 'may work greater impressions upon the readers': literary innovation is a means by which an audience might be reached and moved; God speaks in poetry. Donne knows that there is more to communication than simply thinking about what words mean, just as there is more to Christian conviction than the intellectual acknowledgement of one's sin: metaphor allows space for divine mystery. It is poignant that Donne singles out the words for vexed and blushing at this moment. 'Convertentur' comes from 'converto', meaning 'to turn upside down'; 'erubscent', as noted previously, is 'to be ashamed' or 'to blush' (17). In Hebrew, the words are '*ktejashabu*, and

[122] Zim (1987), 1. See 'Upon the Translation of the Psalms by Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke his Sister' in Donne (2013) 580-582.

jeboshu', which Donne argues have 'agnomination' in them: that is, the sound of one alludes to another. The words for 'to be confounded' and 'to blush' share a similar sound in Hebrew, which Donne suggests amounts to a pun, linking them closely together in his mind. The experience of blushing, as David wishes it upon his enemies, is vexing, inverting, confounding, confusing and defeating. It is an intensely unpleasant and dislocating experience. Yet, Donne also wishes this same experience on his congregation, because, as he will go on to discuss in more detail, the intense emotional experience of guilt is part of the repentance. Donne emphasises once again in this sermon that to be convicted of one's sin, one needs to be capable of both feeling shame and of blushing at it. He quotes St. Bernard to this effect, telling his congregation that 'as long as we are ashamed of sin, we are not grown up, and hardened in it; we are under correction; the correction of a remorse' (19). He wishes for his congregation a softness that amounts to a kind of spiritual malleability, and the possibility of change and correction through emotional experience. This possibility of change is inherent to the very nature of the blush, which can exist only when flux is possible. The mutable blush is a model for the power of emotional response to inspire and shape spiritual change.

As he did previously, Donne turns to Adam, explaining the impulse to hide one's sin from others by noting that '[a]s soon as Adam came to be ashamed of his nakedness, he presently thought of some remedy' (19). Donne believes that instinctive shame at nakedness is shared by all people: a conviction which, as we discovered in the previous chapter, was called into question by European travellers in the Americas. Donne writes that if someone 'saw thee do such or such a sin, this would put thee to a shame, and thou wouldst not do that sin, till thou wert sure he could not see thee' (19). This understanding of how the gaze of others might act as a temporary discouragement from sin intensifies Donne's reminder that even if other people only see some of

the time, God is always watching: 'O, if thou wouldst not sin, till thou couldst think that God saw thee not, this shame had wrought well upon thee' (19). Shame is instructive, and it is linked to being watched: shame would have worked well on the congregation if they only sinned when God could not see, that is to say, they never sinned. For Donne at this moment, true conviction of one's sin means not only behaving well in public when one can be seen, but also behaving well when only God can see. Shame is a powerful instructional tool for Donne, and the fear of shame ought to inspire his congregation to behave themselves. The fact that he has to remind his congregation of God's omniscience suggests that he worries they are pleased to sin in the sight of God — or, more likely, that they are less than mindful of the fact that God is watching at all. Again, we return to Donne's disbelief in the reality of privacy: God is always watching, and that, he implies, should be enough to make any man blush.

Donne returns to the imagery of white, black, and red, and to his anxiety about brazenness, warning that 'there are complexions that cannot blush; there grows a blackness, a sootiness upon the soul, by custom in sin, which overcomes all blushing all tenderness' (19). In this analogy, Donne inverts the normal process of the blush — the skin blushes because of internal conviction — and instead argues for a figurative redness, whiteness, and blackness with regard to the soul itself. This idea echoes Tertullian, who writes:

> [T]he soul certainly sympathizes with the body, and shares in its pain, whenever it is injured by bruises, and wounds, and sores: the body, too, suffers with the soul, and is united with it (whenever it is afflicted with anxiety, distress, or love) in the loss of vigour which its companion sustains, whose shame and fear it testifies by its own blushes and paleness.[123]

[123] Tertullian, 'A Treatise on the Soul', in *Anti-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, ed. Philip Schaff, 10 vols (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1867-1873), iii, 181-235, 185.

For Tertullian, and for Donne, both the soul and body blush.[124] Tertullian's comparison serves to differentiate the body and soul more sharply from one another. The body is the soul's 'companion', an analogy to which Donne will return at the end of the sermon, and one which conceptualises the body and soul as being in a mutually informative relationship, rather than being as one. Blaine Greteman's work on 'John Donne and Bodily Presence' is helpful on the point of how Donne conceptualises the relationship between the body and the soul. Greteman notes that:

> Although various anatomists were working to confine the soul specifically to the heart or pituitary gland, the idea that the entire soul was diffused through every part of the body, 'all in all', was very current in Donne's time. Plato, Plotinus, the Church Fathers Augustine and Aquinas, and a whole range of Neoplatonists had advanced the concept, grounding it in the best philosophical and theological authority (Waddington 1990, 40-45).[125]

If the early modern soul is indeed diffused around the body, as Greteman suggests, and the soul waxes red and white, as Donne suggests, then it is possible that when we look at a blush, we see the actual soul of the person in their cheeks. This fantasy of visibility offers a compelling alternative to the argument which this thesis offers: instead of understanding the blush as a way of underscoring the obscurity of the other, Donne offers it as a way to see their very soul. Donne's approach to blushing renders it much more like the prelapsarian blushes of the next chapter than the sceptical and divided blushes of the first chapter. For the blush to operate in the way that Donne wants it to — as one of a series of bloody Christian devotional symbols that can be used to create Christian community — he needs to be able to trust it implicitly as an honest bodily sign through which another person can be known. Tertullian's idea of the blushing soul, repeated here by Donne, brings together inside and outside, internal and external, soul and body, in the blush. Donne offers enough counter-examples of untrustworthy or deceptive blushes, for example the blush of the

[124] For more on Donne's relationship to Tertullian's conception of the soul, see Targoff (2008), 21.
[125] Blaine Greteman, '"All this seed pearl": John Donne and Bodily Presence', *College Literature,* 37 (2010), 26-42, 29.

hypocrite, to suggest that he understands that this eloquent, insightful blush is a fantasy, but it is certainly his ideal blush, and one to which he believes his congregation should aspire.

Whiteness represents fear, Donne says, and redness alone is anger, but a soul that is white because it avoids habitual sin, and because it avoids 'coming within distance of a temptation, or of a suspicion' (19) is pleasing to God. Donne again stresses the public dimension of piety. Being under 'suspicion' of sin is as bad as actively putting oneself in the way of a temptation; we are reminded of his warning from the pulpit of Lincoln's Inn about the sinfulness of scandal. Donne also returns to the narrative of red, white, and black skin colour in Songs of Solomon that he made such extensive use of in the earlier sermon on Ezekiel. In this sermon, he quotes from Songs of Solomon 4.7 once again: 'Thou art all fair my love, and there is no spot in thee'; and later 'My beloved is white and ruddy' (5.10). There is a subtle shift between the last sermon and this one; whereas previously Donne has emphasised the perfect blanching effect of God's mercy on the soul, and thought of slight redness as evidence of impiety and imperfection, here he actively cultivates redness within whiteness. As much as God loves a white soul, he particularly loves one which protects its own 'erubescence', that is, 'an aptness in the soul to blush, when any of these spots do fall upon it' (19): a blend of whiteness and redness is rehabilitated as evidence of proper piety, rather than as a sign of the inherent sinfulness of the human condition, as it was in the 'redder than pearl' analogy.

Donne continues to use blushing as a way of thinking through the importance of public piety when he writes about the utility of confession. Although he is alive to the benefits of confessing one's sins 'to man', he takes an adamantly Protestant stance on this most Catholic of practices. 'God is the universal confessor', he begins, 'and all die in the guilt of their sin that go not to confession to him' (19-20). Nevertheless, blushing, which is occasioned by the gaze of

another person, is a moral good, and evidence of true conviction of one's sin: 'In this holy shamefastness, which we intend in this outward blushing of the face, the soul goes to confession too' (20).[126] Donne takes the opportunity to speak negatively about the Catholic practice of 'confessions by letter', because

> that took away one of the greatest evidences, and testimonies of their repentance which is this erubescence, this blushing, this shame after sin; if they should not be put to speak it face to face, but to write it, that would remove the shame, which is part of the repentance. (20)

Again, we find blushing used as outward public evidence of an internal emotional state: in this case, a state of the true repentance of one's sins. Yet, having spoken out against the Catholic practice of confessing to a priest, it seems that the 'testimonies' of Donne's congregants ought to be played out in front of the entire congregation. Donne also again makes space for emotional engagement with God: the unpleasant emotional experience of shame is 'part of repentance'. One's shame should make one *feel* badly about one's sin, as well as acknowledging it intellectually. The blush offers a somatic confession of the internal sense of shame that is necessary for proper contrition.

Donne does not emphasise this public confession for long, concluding that the 'soul that goes not to confession to itself, that hath not an internal blushing after a sin committed, is a pale soul, even in the paleness of death, and senselessness, and a red soul, red in the defiance of God' (20). In these lines, Donne first presents the blush as evidence of internal conviction, and then offers an alternative reading of the red and white soul. Previously, Donne argued that white was symbolic of the uniform salvation of the church and red was symbolic of rightful shame. Here, white symbolises death, and red symbolises defiance of God. At this point, Donne emphasises the

[126] See also Tertullian's Exhortation to Chastity, in which he writes 'if the conscience blush, prayer blushes'. Tertullian, 'Exhortation to Chastity', in *Anti-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, ed. Philip Schaff, 10 vols (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1867-1873), iv, 181-235, 56.

blush not as a public example for one's fellow congregants, but as a deeply internalised emotional experience witnessed only by the one blushing: each soul must confess to itself. In this sudden turn to individual piety, Donne offers an alternative to his previous emphasis on collective piety, underscoring his belief that each person must be saved individually: even if the life of the church ought to be lived in blushing community, Donne still understands the work of salvation as proceeding person by person.

Ultimately, each person is responsible for the state of their own soul. Donne suggests that if David wishes his enemies to come to a conviction of their sin, then a man should consider it no 'malediction, or imprecation' to 'wish it to his best friend, which should be his soul', ultimately wishing 'let me be ashamed with such a shame' (20). This sense of dislocation — I am not my soul; I relate to it as I might relate to my best friend — echoes how Tertullian describes the soul in the passage quoted above, and emphasises both the difficulties and pleasures of using the figurative language of the blush to understand how the soul works. Ramie Targoff writes that 'the parting between the body and soul is the great subject of Donne's writing', and the relation of the soul to the body in this period, and in Donne's corpus, is both extremely important, and, as we have seen, critically contested.[127] By using this language of red and white, and encouraging his audience to think of the moral displays of their bodies and their souls as indications of one another, Donne increases his audiences' reliance on the blush as a moral barometer and gives them a way of understanding their own and others interior moral processes in terms of how they manifest themselves outwardly in the blush. He offers the blush as a way to increase moral visibility and to build intimacy within religious community, without losing sight of the fact that such a community is built of individuals, all of whom must individually receive salvation from God. Individual

[127] Targoff (2008), 2.

members of the church may take on the complexion of the entire body, but each of them also needs to cultivate their own blush, and their own sense of repentant shame in the face of God's judgement.

Conclusion: O my blacke soule

Donne's best-known reference to blushing is contained in the last four lines of his Holy Sonnet 'O my blacke soule':

> O, make thyself with holy mourning black,
> And red with blushing, as thou art with sin;
> Or wash thee in Christ's blood, which hath this might,
> That being red, it dyes red souls to white.[128]

Brian Cummings writes of the poem's ending that:

> Its conclusion is a rhetorical question, the superfluous dangling clause, 'But who shall give thee that grace to beginne?' Beyond questions, there are only commands, voiced into a vacuum from the self to the self, urging what cannot in any event be urged — an autoptic 'blushing' or a self-sanctifying sacrament.[129]

We saw in the last sermon that Donne does make some allowances for the 'autoptic' blush: the internal blush that no one else sees. But, overwhelmingly, Donne's sermons argue that the autoptic blushing cannot be achieved. Without a gaze, there cannot be a blush; without a blush, there cannot be true repentance. For Donne, a truly Christian life is lived communally amongst a widespread, inclusive body of believers, who worship, confess, and partake in the sacraments together. They also learn from the examples set by their peers, including even the blushes of their faces. Donne emphasises throughout his sermons the responsibility that individuals have to demonstrate their piety publicly, and to cultivate their ability to blush so that it might act as a moral cue for other

[128] John Donne, *Complete Poems*, ed. Robin Robbins (London: Routledge, 2013), 545.
[129] Cummings (2002), 389.

congregants. Less well-known than the Holy Sonnet, yet possibly more indicative of Donne's general approach to the blush, are these lines from his 'Elegy on Mistress Elizabeth Drury':

> […] we understood
> Her by her sight; her pure and eloquent blood
> Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
> That one might almost say, her body thought.[130]

Donne believes that a truly good person — a woman whose 'soul […] 'was gold' (1) — can be 'understood […] by sight': the inside and outside of Drury's body were as one, without gaps. Her blush was 'pure and eloquent'; it communicated her internal state perfectly clearly with her external audience. Drury was, by this description, Donne's ideal religious subject: a person whose holiness is so thorough that she had no need to dissemble. Her body and soul were as one, and she was able to communicate her holiness as an example to others even through her involuntary bodily responses. Implicitly, such a feat is reserved only for the most devout of believers, but Donne holds up this image of a communicative, testifying blush as an ideal that might inspire everyone who sees it on to greater holiness, continuing his previous practice of holding up blushing individuals as examples for the wider congregation.

In this chapter, I have argued that Donne answers the question 'what do I do now?' by encouraging his congregation not only in their quest for personal piety, but in their commitment both to public worship and to their unified corporate identity as members of the Church of England. Donne's congregations are joined by a series of bloody Christian symbols: the blood of the blush, which keeps them accountable to one another, the blood of Christ, shed in atonement for their sins, and the blood of the Eucharist. If they consider the full significance of these bloody symbols, Donne argues, it will ensure their attendance at public worship. I have also alluded to Donne's fantasy of a body without gaps, in which the outer appearance reflects the holiness within. In the

[130] Donne (2013), 860-868, 3-6.

next chapter, we shall see this fantasy taken to the extreme by writers who sought to explore the communicative possibilities of Adam's and Eve's perfect bodies, which could communicate in perfect clarity through their blushes.

4. 'Within, without, disordered in the storm': Adam and Eve in the seventeenth century

In the months between May 1641 and April 1642, John Milton wrote five anti-prelatical treatises. Penned against a group of pro-episcopal writers led by Bishop Joseph Hall and in support of the five anti-episcopal clerics who wrote under the name Smectymnuus, Milton's tracts 'oppose[d] Episcopal church government on the basis of scriptural evidence, early church precedents, and ecclesiastical history, while also to varying degrees supporting liberty of conscience and the individual pursuit of truth'.[1] The third of these texts, *Animadversions upon the Remonstrants Defence Against Smectymnuus,* was published in July 1641. It directly attacks Hall and 'demonstrates the normative business of an animadversion, rebuttal, ordinarily literal, logical, and straightforward'.[2] James Egan cites the Yale Editors of Milton's *Prose,* who argue that the texts which came out of the Admonition Controversy of 1570-1572 were the 'first instance of the structural format which came to typify the mode of animadversion: the quotation of an opponent's text and extensive refutation of it by means of logical, pathetic, and ethical proof'.[3]

The *Animadversions* proceeds in this fashion, and at one point, Milton imagines his opponent inviting him to blush. He gives the idea short shrift:

> Remonst. If yet you can blush.
>
> Answ. This is a more Edomitish conceit than the former, and so must be silenced with a counter quip of the same country. So often and so unsavourily has it been repeated, that the reader may well cry, down with it, down with it, for shame. A man would think you had eaten over-liberally of Esau's red porridge, and from thence dream continually of blushing, or perhaps, to heighten your fancy in writing, are wont to sit in your doctor's scarlet, which through your eyes infecting your pregnant imaginative with a red suffusion, begets a continual thought of blushing; that you thus persecute ingenuous men all over your book, with this one overtired rubrical conceit still of

[1] Elizabeth Sauer, 'Milton and Caroline Church Government', *The Yearbook of English Studies,* 44 (2014), 196-214, 206-207.
[2] James Egan, 'Oratory and Animadversion: Rhetorical Signatures in Milton's Pamphlets of 1649', *Rhetorica,* 27 (2009), 189-217, 203.
[3] Egan (2009), 194.

> blushing: but if you have no mercy upon them, yet spare yourself, lest you bejade the good galloway, your own opiniatre wit, and make the very conceit itself blush with spurgalling.[4]

Milton's complaint is not entirely unfounded; Hall does indeed make repeated use of the conceit of the blush. For example, he uses the word 'blush' and its derivatives six times in his *Short Answer to the Tedious Vindication of Smectymnuus*, which was published in the same month as *Animadversions*, once telling his opponent: 'I hope somebody will blush for you'.[5] At first glance, Milton's mockery of Hall's obsession with blushing perhaps seems misplaced because two of Hall's references to blushing are nominally quotations from one of Milton's previous tracts. Hall imagines his opponent saying: 'if we are able to produce no fuller evidence of this, then you have done out of your Iewish Leiturgie ever since Moses time, we should blush'; 'If you should set downe what you have read in the Liturgies of those Churches, you beleeve the Remonstrant would blush for intimating'.[6] Hall responds to this last accusation by writing 'I doe blush indeed, but it is to see your bold mis-takings, and confident obtrusions of things never spoken, never meant'.[7] This accusation is somewhat ironic, given that Milton in fact does not use the word 'blush' in either of the anti-prelatical tracts which pre-date *Animadversions*, though he picks up the image in the two which follow.[8] The irony doubles when we consider that Hall once describes himself as blushing

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[4] John Milton, *Animadversions upon the Remonstrants Defence, against Smectymnuus* (London: Thomas Underhill, 1641), 60. Doctoral robes have been made from scarlet cloth since at least the seventeenth century. The biblical patriarch Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau, the eldest, whose name was also 'Edom', meaning 'red', sold his birth-right to his younger brother in exchange for some lentil stew (or, 'red porridge'). His descendants, the Edomites, are the enemies of Jacob's descendants (and God's chosen people) the Israelites. 'And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom' (Genesis 25.30). Nicholas Groves, ed., *Shaw's Academical Dress of Great Britain and Ireland*, 3rd edn (Morrisville NC : The Burgon Society, 2011), 10.

[5] Joseph Hall, *A short answer to the tedious vindication of Smectymnuus by the author of the Humble Remonstrance* (London: Nathaniel Butter, 1641), 6.

[6] Hall (1641), 19.

[7] Hall (1641), 71.

[8] There are two blushes in *The Reason of Church Government* (1641). One is used in the sense of 'at first glance'; Milton writes about how something appears 'at first blush'. The second comes when Milton writes that a person who holds themselves in 'reverence and due esteem' should not 'fear so much the offence and reproach of others, as he

in this tract and that is when he anticipates a misunderstanding of the precise details of his view on the divine right of the monarchy, which he and his allies have 'oft blusht, and sighed to see laid in our dish, by Popish Authors'.[9] In spite of his own concern about being misquoted and misunderstood, Hall puts the word 'blush' into Milton's mouth, but in *Animadversions,* Milton spits it back out again. Hall concludes in *A Short Answer*: 'Now let the Reader say, who is worthy to wear those Liveries of Blushes, which, in your Wardrobe of Wit, you have been pleased to lay up for your friends', but Milton will have none of it.[10] He accuses Hall of using the conceit of blushing excessively, warning him not to 'bejade the good galloway', or, tire out the horse. The reference to 'spurgalling' the conceit, or spurring it so hard that it becomes wounded (spur + gall), continues this image. Hall's rhetoric, argues Milton, is knackered. The blush is an 'overtired rubrical conceit' that can have nothing new to say. Twenty-five years later, as he composed *Paradise Lost,* Milton would come to change his mind.

This thesis began by citing a central argument of David Hillman's *Shakespeare's Entrails*: that there was a widespread early modern anxiety about the perceived gap between the inside and outside of the human body, and about the possibility that this disjuncture might result in the performance of outward signs that did not reflect internal states. In the preceding chapters, I have demonstrated how this anxiety influences both how blushing and unblushing faces are understood by characters within texts, and how the blush functions as a literary symbol through which writers

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dreads and would blush at the reflection of his own severe and modest eye upon himself, if it should see him doing or imagining that which is sinful, though in the deepest secrecy'. The final blush of the anti-prelatical treatises is *An Apology for Smectymnuus* (1642). It comes as part of an attack on Hall's *A Modest Confutation* (1642). Hall is so very modest, writes Milton, that he has even advertised his modesty on the front of his tract: 'his modesty, set there to sale in the frontispiece is not much addicted to blush'. John Milton, *The reason of church-government urg'd against prelaty by Mr. John Milton; in two books* (London: E.G. for John Rothwell, 1641), 47; 54; John Milton, *An apology against a pamphlet call'd A modest confutation of the animadversions upon the remonstrant against Smectymnuus* (London: E.G. for John Rothwell, 1642), 7.

[9] Hall (1641), 8.

[10] Hall (1641), 19.

can ask questions about the ways and means of knowledge production and communication. For every example of concern about the gap between interior truth and exterior appearance— Lucrece, who searches for the true meaning of her Groom's blush; Octavia, who accuses Cleopatra's blushless face of hiding a lascivious soul; John Donne, who warns against the corrosive effect of scandal — there is another example of a speaker who has discovered how that gap between inside and outside might prove useful: Tarquin, who uses the ambiguity of Lucrece's blush to control her behaviour; Beaumont and Fletcher's Cleopatra, who proclaims her own blush to manipulate Julius Caesar; John Donne, who tolerates hypocritical blushing to aid the spiritual life of the community. In this final chapter, I turn to two texts — Lucy Hutchinson's *Order and Disorder* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* — each of which dares to imagine a body with no gap between its inside and its outside, and to ask a challenging question: what kind of knowledge and communication would be possible if the material communications of the body were entirely trustworthy?

In Milton's prelapsarian Eden, the blush represents the possibility of true knowledge of and communication with both human and divine others. After the fall, Milton's blushes communicate the fracturing of the relationship between the self and the other, and the impossibility of adequate communication with, or true knowledge of, another person. Milton's prelapsarian blush closes the gap between the inside and outside of the body, and between the self and the other, but for Hutchinson, it is only the blush of the eschatological body — the body that has been restored by God at the end of the world — that is capable of bridging those divides. In Hutchinson's text, true communication with and knowledge of the other, human or divine, is reserved for the end of the world. We will see the blush used by each author to explore some other themes along the way: both texts use the blush to imagine a sinless and shame-free sexuality, which Milton extends to the angels, and Hutchinson extends to Christ himself; and Hutchinson uses the blush to

satirise what she perceives as a culture of excess in the Restoration Court. Tellingly, both writers argue that this kind of 'closed' body, a body without gaps, is reserved for a time without sin, imagined by Milton as a time lost, and by Hutchinson as a time to come. To illustrate the kind of knowledge and communications that the blushes of this closed body make possible, each writer offers an account of the blushes of the fallen body, which are riven with the kind of incongruity between inside and outside that Hillman describes. To this chapter's main question — what if the material communications of the body were entirely trustworthy? — both texts give the same answer. If there was no gap between a body's inside and its outside, then — and, the texts suggest, *only* then — there could be true communication with, and knowledge of, both human and divine others. As it stands, in the postlapsarian, pre-eschatological world, the blush emblematises the distance of fallen humans from sinless standards of physical, devotional, and relational perfection.

This chapter takes as its focus two related texts: John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667-1674) and Lucy Hutchinson's *Order and Disorder* (1679). I will also make reference to John Dryden's opera *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man,* and finish by considering how some of the themes of the chapter are treated in Hendrick Goltzius' 1616 painting *The Fall of Man*. John Milton's life and the context of *Paradise Lost* are sufficiently well known as to not need much by way of introduction, but as Hutchinson is less familiar, and because this chapter will dwell on some of her poem's more satirical moments, I will spend some time now giving an overview of the social and personal conditions of her writing.

David Norbrook, editor of the only academic edition of *Order and Disorder,* writes that although *Order and Disorder* and *Paradise Lost* share a subject and are roughly contemporaneous, their 'precise chronological relationship' is unknown.[11] The first five cantos of *Order and Disorder*

[11] Lucy Hutchinson, *Order and Disorder,* ed. David Norbrook (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), xiv. All further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text.

were published anonymously in 1679; *Paradise Lost* was first published in 1667 and revised and republished in 1674. Both Norbrook and Elizabeth Baumann suggest that the initial date on which composition of *Order and Disorder* began could be as early as 1664, which is the date on the only extant complete manuscript, though both agree that the poem was most likely written over many years (xvi). The full twenty canto version of the poem exists in a single manuscript in a notebook owned by Hutchinson's cousin Anne Rochester, now held at the Beinecke library at Yale University.[12] The anonymously published five canto version was attributed to Allen Aspley, Lucy Hutchinson's brother, by the Victorian antiquarian Anthony Wood, and only published in full under Hutchinson's name in 2001 (xii). Until recently, it was generally assumed that *Order and Disorder* was written in response to *Paradise Lost.* The first modern critic of the poem C. A. Moore called it 'both an imitation of *Paradise Lost* and a veiled rebuke of Milton', and even though Norbrook raises a question over the precise relationship between the two texts, many critics have since made arguments suggesting that certain parts of *Order and Disorder* directly respond to sections of *Paradise Lost*.[13] There is much more research to be done on the precise relationship between the two texts. For example, little follow-up work has been done on Norbrook's observation that both Milton and Hutchinson maintained a close friendship with the Earl of Anglesey 'to whom each of them entrusted sensitive manuscripts', and so it is 'not wholly implausible' that each author would have been able to access the unpublished work of the other (xvii). The purpose of this chapter is not to untangle these complex textual relations, but nor do I want to assume, as others have done, that Hutchinson is always responding to Milton. As a

[12] Elizabeth Scott-Baumann, *Forms of Engagement: Women, Poetry, and Culture 1640-1680* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 172.

[13] C.A. Moore, 'Miltoniana (1679-1741)', *Modern Philology*, 24 (1927), 321-339, 321. See, for example: Shannon Miller, 'Maternity, Marriage, and Contract: Lucy Hutchinson's Response to Patriarchal Theory in Order and Disorder', *Studies in Philology*, 102 (2005), 340-377; Elizabeth Scott-Bauman, *Forms of Engagement: Women, Poetry and Culture 1640-1680* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 171-202; and Robert Wilcher, 'Lucy Hutchinson and Genesis: Paraphrase, Epic, Romance', *English*, 59 (2010), 25-42, 28-29.

compromise, I have effectively treated the texts as being relatively free-standing and have indicated moments of textual or thematic similarity rather than implying or arguing for the influence of Milton's text on Hutchinson's.

Understanding Hutchinson's social commentary in *Order and Disorder* necessitates understanding the immediate context in which she was writing. Hutchinson's most celebrated work is her *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, which was written in defence of her husband's reputation after he died in prison, having been arrested for an alleged role in an uprising against Charles II (xv). Both Hutchinson and her husband were staunch Republicans; her husband signed the death warrant of Charles I, and was one of the few of that group whose life was (initially) spared by the new King, in no small part because of Lucy Hutchinson's intervention on his behalf (xv-xvi). Colonel Hutchinson lived out the rest of his days in ignominy: 'deeply suspect to republicans without gaining the trust of royalists' (xvi). Hutchinson never recanted her belief in the 'values of the Puritan Revolution' and, 'at considerable personal risk' she 'committed to paper her belief that the regime of Charles II was utterly illegitimate and would probably bring down divine retribution' (xiv). The extent of these beliefs are only hinted at in the printed cantos of *Order and Disorder*, but the full manuscript of the poem makes Hutchinson's political views clear; she is an expressly Republican writer (xiv). Understanding Hutchinson's personal and social context sharpens the edge of her political commentary in the early cantos, some of the most important moments of which, as we shall see, centralise the image of the blush.

Equally important as Hutchinson's Republicanism is her Puritanism. *Order and Disorder* is a Christian epic, written, or at least publicised as a recantation of Hutchinson's earlier, more secular work. Hutchinson's canon roams widely across different genres. As a young woman, she was famous for her love-songs; she wrote 'a vindication of her husband's political activities'

during the Civil War, penned many elegies, and worked on a translation of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* 'up until the late 1650s' (xvi). The Lucretius translation was a surprising choice for a Puritan, both because of its 'strongly atheistic, or at least anti-superstitious' content, and because Lucretius had been 'taken up by royalist exiles who admired his hostility to religious fanaticism' (xvi-xvii). In the preface to *Order and Disorder*, Hutchinson expresses regret for having undertaken the translation, and whilst such a recantation was both a literary and religious convention — there is a 'long Christian tradition in which poets apologize for earlier, sinful works', and 'such language was required of those who joined a Dissenting congregation' — no one can read *Order and Disorder* and doubt the sincerity of Hutchinson's belief (xviii). *Order and Disorder,* then, is the work of a life-long Republican and Puritan, two interlocking identities which were firmly opposed to the Royalist values of the Restoration court, an opposition which is given voice in the text, often in passages which evoke the blush. In *Order and Disorder,* Hutchinson looks forward to the new creation both because it will fulfil her religious beliefs, and because it will cause the final deposition of what she sees as the corruption and degeneracy of monarchical rule.

Blushing in/and Genesis

That Hutchinson and Milton populate their Edens with blushing is remarkable not only because of Milton's previously stated disdain for the image, but because by the seventeenth century, it was virtually a commonplace that Adam and Eve did not blush in the Garden of Eden. One of the earliest articulations of this idea is in St. Jerome's fourth century translation of Genesis 2.25 which records that: 'erant autem uterque nudi Adam scilicet et uxor eius et non erubescebant'. This verse was in turn translated by William Tyndale (1534) as '[a]nd they were ether of them naked both

Adam and hys wyfe and were not ashamed'. Most early modern English translations follow Tyndale's formulation fairly closely. Yet the Vulgate — *the* Medieval Bible — includes Jerome's ambiguous Latin phrase 'et non erubescebant'. This Latin formulation can correctly be translated as 'and they were not ashamed', and it is this translation which comes closest to the original Hebrew text, but it can equally be translated as 'and they did not blush'.[14] Although none of the major English translations of Genesis 2.25 use the word 'blush', the enduring importance of the Vulgate, along with the wealth of subsequent biblical commentators who concur that the blush is a postlapsarian phenomenon, suggests that for generations of pre-modern readers the state of innocence was connected, at least implicitly, to not blushing.[15]

The connection between the state of innocence and not blushing was made still more explicit by Augustine, who argued that the result of the Fall was a loss of control of the genitals, and accordant shame, expressed in blushing:

> For it was not fit that His creature should blush at the work of his Creator; but by a just punishment, the disobedience of their members was the retribution to the disobedience of the first man, for which disobedience they blushed when they covered with fig-leaves those shameful parts which previously were not shameful.[16]

Adam and Eve's shame after the Fall was both for their disobedience *and* for their nakedness. Crucially for this study, Augustine was also adamant that prior to the Fall, there was no sexual

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[14] My thanks to Dr. Sarah Dalrymple for confirming this detail about the Hebrew text.

[15] There was, of course, a significant backlash against the Vulgate during the Reformation, and doubts were raised about its accuracy by Protestant and Catholic scholars, humanists, and reformers across sixteenth century Europe. See Michael Davies, 'Enter the Book: Reading the Bible on the Early Modern Stage', in *Early Modern Drama and the Bible: Contexts and Readings, 1570-1625*, ed. Adrian Streete (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 27-47, 33. Nonetheless, the legacy of Jerome's translation endured, not least, argued Gordon Campbell because it 'had bequeathed to English and other European languages many of the key terms in the Christian vocabulary: no Reformation Christian could articulate his or her faith without the English versions of words such as *apostolus, creatio, ecclesia, evangelium, iustificatio, regeneratio, salvatio, santificatio* and *testamentum*'. Gordon Campbell, 'The Catholic Contribution to the King James Bible', in *The English Bible in the Early Modern World*, eds Robert Armstrong and Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 131-140, 131.

[16] Augustine, 'A Treatise Against Two Letters of the Pelagians', 1.31-32. All quotations from Augustine are taken from *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* ed. Philip Schaff, 14 vols (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885-1890). Hereafter, I will cite the name of the Augustinian text and the place of the quotation within it.

intercourse in Eden, and that the sexual passion necessary for conception to take place ensured the sinfulness of the child that was its result:

> Hence it follows that infants, although incapable of sinning, are yet not born without the contagion of sin, not, indeed, because of what is lawful, but on account of that which is unseemly: for from what is lawful nature is born; from what is unseemly, sin.[17]

Marriage covers up the unruliness of sexual passion, which Augustine describes as 'the evil [...] at which even marriage blushes for shame', but it cannot eradicate it, and the result of parental sexual passion is children who are born in sin.[18] We might usefully contrast Augustine's horror at the involuntary nature of an erection with his approval of the involuntary nature of the blush. Augustine seems to imagine that an erection is the only example of the body refusing to obey the will: 'Is it not even now the case, in "the body of this death", that a command is given to the foot, the arm, the finger, the lip, or the tongue, and they are instantly set in motion at this intimation of our will?'[19] But as I have shown throughout the duration of this thesis, the appearance or absence of the blush is also outside the will of the one blushing. The difference for Augustine is that one involuntary blood-flow represents a turning away from 'what is lawful', and the other represents acquiescence to God-given shame at the knowledge of having broken holy law. Nonetheless, to the Augustinian mind at least, an erection and a blush are united in the fact that they are both postlapsarian phenomena.

Having undertaken a review of all the Genesis commentaries mentioned in John L. Thompson's *Finding Guide* for the period 1600-1700, I can outline a consensus amongst those seventeenth century biblical commentators that there was no blushing in Eden.[20] Some of the texts

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[17] Augustine, 'A Treatise of Grace', 42.
[18] Augustine, 'Against the Pelagians', 3.42.
[19] Augustine, 'Against the Pelagians', 3.53.
[20] I am grateful to John L. Thompson's 'A Finding Guide to English Translations of Commentary Literature Written 1600-1700', *English-Language Resources for Studying the History of Exegesis*, c.2007 <http://documents.fuller.edu/sot/faculty/thompson_john/HistExeg/homepage.htm> [accessed 31st March 2020].

which I reviewed did not explicitly mention blushing in their commentary on Genesis 2.25, but those which do mention blushing do so only to clarify that it did not occur. The texts find a variety of explanations for why there was no blushing in Eden, surprisingly few of which depend on an Augustinian horror at sexual passion. The philosopher Henry Moore emphasised the innocence of Adam and Eve, as well as the link between blushing, shame, and nakedness, in his *Conjectura cabbalistica* (1653), in which he wrote that Adam and Eve 'having done nothing amisse, appeared naked in the presence of [the divine light] without any shame or blushing'.[21] Moore states that whilst they were in a state of innocence, Adam and Eve were not ashamed to be naked in front of God, suggesting that blushing is linked to sin generally rather than sexual sin specifically. A year later, the Presbyterian minister Benjamin Needler was adamant that 'there was no palenesse to be seene in the state of innocency, no tremblings, no shiverings, no tears, no sighs, no blushes: so not the least tincture of shame'.[22] Needler concurs with Moore that there was no need for blushing because there was no need for shame, but he also accounts for the lack of blushing on the basis that unpleasant emotions and their physical symptoms had no place in prelapsarian Eden. This widely-held belief stems from Augustine's idea that the Edenic couple could 'suffer no perturbation', and will be important when we come to consider Milton's Eve's post-nightmare blush.[23] Needler lists the blush as one of a number of unpleasant physical symptoms of shame, all of which are denied a place in Eden. The immaculacy of the prelapsarian soul, the perfection of the prelapsarian body, and, it is implied, its humoral balance, mean that the prelapsarian couple neither had the cause nor the ability to blush.

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[21] Henry More, *Conjectura cabbalistica or, a conjectural essay of interpreting the minde of Moses, according to a threefold cabbala: viz. literal, philosophical, mystical, or, divinely moral* (London: 1653), 69.
[22] Benjamin Needler, *Expository notes, with practical observations; towards the opening of the five first chapters of the first book of Moses called Genesis. Delivered by way of exposition in several lords-dayes exercises* (London: 1654), 75-76.
[23] Augustine, 'The City of God', 14.10.

This bodily emphasis is picked up by John Pettus in 1674, for whom the lack of Edenic blushing is explicitly a question of humours. He writes that Adam knew 'those outward coverings were but the Excrements of their tempers', that is, that prelapsarian skin perfectly reflected the internal state of each person: the prelapsarian body had no gaps.[24] Because their bodies were perfect, 'the motion of their Blood was according to the Course of nature', with 'no obstructions from the spleen, or diffidence of their mutual goodness, to raise or alter the Current of nature to a blush'.[25] Pettus' interest in the 'course of nature' seems to suggest his awareness of William Harvey's extremely influential *De Motu Cordis* (1628), which sought to explain how blood circulated around the body.[26] Pettus imagines that the blush might be occasioned either by a physical obstruction, or by 'diffidence of their mutual goodness': in other words, it might have a physiological or moral source. Like Needler, Pettus emphasises the humoral balance that the Edenic couple enjoyed, and their shared moral perfection. Moreover, he explicitly identifies the blush as evidence that an internal equilibrium has been upset, and that this upset might be either purely mechanical or caused by an external conflict between the couple. Either way, such an upset was impossible in prelapsarian Eden.

This trend continued at the turn of the century. Simon Patrick, the Lord Bishop of Ely, addresses the question of whether it is proper to feel shame in being naked in front of one's spouse by writing that Adam and Eve 'did not blush; no more than little Children do, when they behold one another naked and embrace with innocent affection', adding 'besides, there was no Body but they two (who in effect were as One) to behold them', concluding that 'therefore they had no more

[24] John Pettus, *Volatiles from the history of Adam and Eve containing many unquestioned truths and allowable notions of several natures [Gen. 1-2]* (London: 1674), 75.
[25] Pettus (1674), 75-76.
[26] Harvey does not discuss blushing in *De Motu Cordis.*

reason to blush than a Man doth when he is naked alone by himself'.[27] It seems that the pre-sexual union of Adam and Eve was even deeper than that achieved by sexually active postlapsarian couples, precisely because there is no sexual element to the relationship. Patrick's proclamation that the couple were 'in effect as one' mirrors Genesis 2.26 in which the married couple become 'one flesh' through sexual union. Here, it is the absence of sex which allows them to be virtually one because without sex, there is no awareness of the physical difference that divides them, and there is no need for divisive sexual shame. Patrick's words are distinctive in part because it was by no means universally accepted that nakedness becomes shameful only when witnessed by another. John Calvin, for example, reserved unashamed nudity for prelapsarian Eden, writing in his Commentary on these verses that 'everyone is ashamed of his own nakedness, even though other witnesses may not be present'.[28] Patrick's implication that a man on his own would have no need to blush in shame at the sight of his own naked body is a reclamation of the body and of nakedness from inherent shamefulness, even in a postlapsarian context.

Finally, the non-conformist preacher Matthew Henry's mammoth *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (1708-10) was hugely influential for generations of English Protestants.[29] Henry commented of Adam and Eve that

> [t]hey knew not what shame was, so the Chaldee reads it. Blushing is now the colour of virtue, but it was not then the colour of innocency. Those that had no sin in their conscience might well have no shame in their faces, though they had no clothes to their backs.[30]

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[27] Simon Patrick, *A commentary upon the first book of Moses, called Genesis* (London: 1695), 57-58.
[28] Qtd in Alida Sewell, 'Nakedness and Shame in Calvin's Writings', *Pro Rege*, 37 (2009), 12-17, 13.
[29] Matthew Henry's entry in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge details that his *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* (also known as the *Complete Commentary*) was 'long celebrated as the best of English commentaries for devotional purposes' and that the prominent evangelical Calvinists Robert Hall, George Whitefield, and Charles Spurgeon all 'used the work and commended it heartily'. Samuel Jackson McCauley, ed., *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge,* 13 vols (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 1951), v, 229.
[30] Matthew Henry, 'Commentary on the Whole Bible', *Christian Classics Ethereal Library* <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc.i.html> [accessed 24th March 2020].

Henry's tricolon 'no sin in their conscience … no shame in their faces … no clothes on their backs' is rhetorically very pleasing, and he gestures towards an important distinction between virtue and innocence: '[b]lushing is now the colour of virtue, but it was not then the colour of innocency'. Blushing was not the colour of innocence in Eden because innocence was a steady state that did not need to be demonstrated through the blush, or so this line seems to suggest. By attributing blushing to 'virtue' Henry emphasises that there can be no innocence after Eden. To demonstrate virtue through blushing is to tacitly admit that virtue *must* be demonstrated rather than assumed. To the Protestant minds behind each of these commentaries and the literature and paintings to come, all are born in sin, and the postlapsarian blush helps each person and their neighbours navigate the moral maze of the fallen world, but it is still a symptom of the body's fallen nature. Even as he asserts that blushing is the colour of virtue, Henry emphasises that the blush is, nonetheless, symptomatic of a moral decline from the Edenic standard, and that virtue is a poor substitute for innocence.

The idea that blushing was impossible before the Fall was so ubiquitous and instinctive that one eighteenth-century commentator maintained that Milton's prelapsarian Adam and Eve could not blush, even though Eve repeatedly does so. Patrick Hume, who authored the first commentary on *Paradise Lost*, echoes the reasoning of biblical commentators when he explains the phase 'in naked majesty' (V.290) with the gloss 'in the State of Innocence, there was such an Agreement between Soul and Body […] that no audacious, unbecoming thought could with a guilty Blush have stain'd the Cheek of *Adam*, Majestick even in Nakedness'.[31] Milton's early commentators had a clear sense that Milton's Eden was a place where the inside and the outside

[31] Patrick Hume, *Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1695), 141. Also in Paul Hammond, *Milton's Complex Words: Essays on the Conceptual Structure of Paradise Lost* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 342.

of the body were as one, and that the blush is incompatible with such bodily unity, even as Milton works to rehabilitate the blush and champion its place in paradise.

So strong is the intuitive association with blushing and sinfulness that Eve's prelapsarian blush has caused problems for some critics. There are those who misread Milton's 'bold attempt to reinsert the "sensuous and passionate" into the Paradisal ideal' as an Eden which has already fallen; but there are also those who simply point out that 'the eroticism of the language is not easily freed from its fallen associations'.[32] The latter position is unconsciously echoed by Christine Rees who writes that 'although unfallen, Milton's Eve is also given to blushing', suggesting an intuitive discrepancy between innocence and blushing.[33] James Grantham Turner records the critical assumption that blushing 'can only derive from an "inner psychic tension" most inappropriate (though delightfully "fallen") in Eve', citing Laurence Lerner's memorable line that 'the very fact that Milton can see the blush as part of Eve's charm is testimony to his own fallen state'.[34] I want to suggest instead that Milton's reclamation of the blush incorporates the reclamation of Edenic sensuality. Far more significantly, the legibility of Milton's prelapsarian blushes signify the Edenic body as a body without 'gaps', and thus a body which is capable of communicating with and being entirely known by another person.

Blushing in Paradise Lost and Order and Disorder

Given its prelapsarian nature, it is perhaps a surprise to discover that the very first blush of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* results from a nightmare. Adam awakes to find Eve still asleep, but 'with

[32] James Grantham Turner, *One Flesh: Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 263; Lucy Newlyn, *Paradise Lost and the Romantic Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 77.
[33] Christine Rees, *Johnson's Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 31-57.
[34] Grantham Turner (1994), 263-264.

tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek / As through unquiet rest' (V.10-11). He wakes Eve, and she recounts her nightmare, explaining that in her dream, she stood by the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil with 'one shaped and winged like one of those from Heaven' (V.55), who held the fruit of the tree to her mouth so that 'I, methought, / Could not but taste' (V.85-86). Whether or not Eve actually eats the fruit in her dream, or merely smells it, is not clear, but she flies with the creature above the Earth before she wakes. It is common to read this passage as a pre-figuring of Eve's temptation by Satan, but I would suggest that it is better to read it as a pre-figuring of Eve's temptation of Adam. A beautiful figure, who eats first, and then presses fruit to the mouth of its horrified but tempted companion sounds much more like Eve's temptation of Adam than it does Satan's temptation of Eve. Eve's recollection that 'He pluckt, he tasted; me damp horror chilled' (V.65) casts Satan and Eve in roles that will later be fulfilled by Eve and Adam: 'she pluck'd, she eat' (IX.781), Adam 'astonished stood and blank, while horror chill / ran through his veins' (IX.890-891). I will revisit this moment in more detail later in the chapter, but for the moment I want to consider where this affinity with Satan leaves Eve's blush.

Clearly, Eve experiences some level of emotional distress as a result of this dream. This episode takes Milton's Eden even further away from Augustine's, who argued that the Edenic couple could not have experienced any kind of emotional disturbance or perturbation in Eden.[35] Why is Eve allowed to experience emotional distress in a prelapsarian world where surely such emotions have no place? Eve's display of emotional distress has raised critical questions about the perfection of Milton's Eden. The critic Ana M. Acosta goes as far as to say that Eve's nightmare is evidence that Milton's Eden 'is not submitted as an absolute standard of perfection but, to the contrary, as a standard of plausible perfection toward which the average fallen Christian can yet

[35] Augustine, 'The City of God', 14.10.

aspire'.[36] Similarly, E. M. W. Tillyard argues that Eve's dream means that because 'no human being can conceive or represent evil entering a mind quite alien to it', 'the mere fact of entrance implies some pre-existing sympathy', and so in the dream Eve 'has really passed from a state of innocence to one of sin', whilst Millicent Bell argues that the Edenic couple were always fallen.[37] There is sufficient evidence elsewhere in the text to suggest that Adam and Eve are indeed sinless and unfallen up until the moment that they eat from the tree, and to dispute claims to the contrary. Adam's rather glib explanation that 'Evil into the mind of God or Man / May come and go, so unapproved, and leave / No spot or blame behind' (V.117-119) does go some way to settling the matter (at least to his mind), his explanation leaves many questions unanswered.

Nonetheless, even if Eve's blush appears incongruous with the prelapsarian setting, it is notably different to her postlapsarian blush, and to other postlapsarian blushes throughout this thesis. Eve blushes 'as through unquiet rest'. The simile is a closed loop: her unquiet rest causes the kind of blush that results through unquiet rest. Even when Eve experiences unpleasant emotions, which arguably have no place in Eden, her body is still working in order to communicate its interior motions to an exterior audience, and that communication is received and understood by its intended audience. The inside and outside of Eve's body are working together, and she and Adam can understand one another's non-verbal communications. This coalescence between inside and outside is only enjoyed for as long as the couple remain unfallen.

Perhaps the most striking thing to note about the prelapsarian blush in Milton and Hutchinson is how often it is linked to sexual activity. This celebration of Edenic, and thus sinless

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[36] Ana M. Acosta, *Reading Genesis in the Long Eighteenth Century: From Milton to Mary Shelley* (London: Routledge, 2006), 53.

[37] E. M. W. Tillyard, *Studies in Milton* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1951), 11; Millicent Bell, 'The Fallacy of the Fall in Paradise Lost', PMLA, 68 (1953), 863-83. Qtd in Marcia Lynn Toms, "'And Dreams Advise": The Dreams in *Paradise Lost* and their Precursors', unpublished Master's thesis, North Carolina State University, 2003.

and perfect, sexual activity is highly unusual. The Genesis commentators with whom this chapter opened were all adamant that there was no sexual desire or sexual activity in Eden, as was Augustine. Philip Almond argued that Milton is unique amongst his contemporaries in representing a sexually active prelapsarian Adam and Eve, which would have been true had Hutchinson not written *Order and Disorder*.[38] Both Milton and Hutchinson represent a sexually active Adam and Eve, who copulate under the watchful eye of an approving God. Hutchinson is even more explicit than Milton in her depiction of God's approval of marital sexual activity:

> Thus God did the first marriage celebrate
> While man was in his unpolluted state,
> And th' undefiled bed with honour deckt,
> Though perverse men the Ordinance reject,
> And pulling all its sacred Ensigns down
> To the white Virgin only give the crown (III.433-438)

Hutchinson's disapproving allusion to the practice of celibacy amongst Catholic priests is fairly conventional, but her representation of Edenic sex is not. She explicitly states that this sexual activity happened 'whilst man was in his unpolluted state' and makes a point of giving God himself an activity that makes his awareness and approval of the activity explicit: he decks the undefiled marital bed with honour. Even Milton does not dare to take it this far: in *Paradise Lost* it is Eve who 'decked first her nuptial bed' (IV.710), not God. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski's note that 'the time reference ['first'] implies that [Eve] continues to do so, reviving the nuptial ceremonies nightly', which in turn emphasises that sex is a common activity in Milton's (and Hutchinson's) Edens.[39] There is no suggestion that the marriage is consummated to satisfy a technicality before sex is abandoned in pursuit of nobler pleasures. 'Adam and Eve, having only themselves to please,

[38] Philip Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 165.
[39] Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Paradise Lost and the Rhetoric of Literary Forms* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 192.

decline protracted courtship', writes Robert H. Bell about *Paradise Lost*; their relationship becomes sexual almost immediately. [40] Moreover, in Milton's Eden both Adam and Eve initiate sex: 'Nor turned I ween / Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites / Mysterious of connubial love refused' (IV. 741-743). Neither Adam nor Eve turns away from or refuses the other. They are both depicted as sexual initiators.

When comparing Hutchinson's Eve to Milton's Eve at the moment of marital bliss, it is notable that Hutchinson's Eve does not blush, not even chastely. Milton's Eve might be led to bed 'blushing like the morn', but Hutchinson's Eve is no 'white Virgin'. Hutchinson's vindication of sexual desire extends beyond prelapsarian Eden to the present time: 'nor yet is marriage grown less sacred since' (III.439). Hutchinson defies Augustine both by placing sex in her prelapsarian Eden and defending its goodness even in its postlapsarian state. Her language blends a religious register with a political one — those who advocate for celibacy reject the 'ordinance' and pull down the 'ensigns' — suggesting that this dispute over sex is far from marginal: those who deny the goodness of the marital bed fundamentally undermine the rule of God. By defending the sexual relationship between a prelapsarian Adam and Eve, and asserting their prelapsarian state as a blueprint for the lives of her readers, Hutchinson rescues sex from any associations with postlapsarian shame and guilt, arguing that sexual desire within marriage need not be covered over, not even with a blush.

Milton and Hutchinson both assert that Eve's sexual desire is sinless and shameless. Milton does this rather obliquely, with Eve's 'eyes of conjugal attraction' (IV.493) and her 'swelling breast' (IV.495). Christopher Tilmouth writes that in these images the poet 'imagines her

[40] Robert H. Bell, '"Blushing like the Morn": Milton's Human Comedy', *Milton Quarterly*, 15 (1981), 47-55.

arousal'.[41] Hutchinson's unblushing yet sexual Eve is radical, but we need not read the sexual blush of Milton's Eve purely as a symbol of her chastity and restraint within marriage. When Adam tells Raphael about his wedding night, he is particularly attentive to and fond of Eve's blush. He recounts 'to the nuptial bower / I led her blushing like the morn' (VIII. 510-11). A conservative reading might suggest that this blush suggests an attractive modesty that becomes a virgin, or even an attractive chastity that becomes a wife, but if we read the sexual relationship between Adam and Eve in the radical spirit in which I think this passage is intended, then Eve's blush becomes a sign for something much more interesting. In Eve's blush, Milton alludes to blood-flow throughout her body, suggestively implying her arousal, and in turn making clear that not only do Adam and Eve have sex, they enjoy it. More radically still, this pleasure is sufficient justification for sexual activity. It is hard to read the rush of blood in female arousal without thinking about how that blood flow might be repurposed later, namely in menstruation, conception, pregnancy, and breastfeeding.[42] For Augustine, sexual intercourse between a married couple for the purposes of having a child is the only appropriate outlet for sexual passion. But in both *Paradise Lost* and *Order and Disorder*, Adam and Eve have sex in the Garden of Eden without ever conceiving a child. For Hutchinson and Milton, perfect, Edenic sex is not necessarily generative. Sex that is just for pleasure is, implicitly, perfect sex.

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[41] Christopher Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph over Reason: A History of the Moral Imagination from Spenser to Rochester* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 191.

[42] For more on the interrelation of these kinds of feminine blood flows, see Jennifer Evans, *Aphrodisiacs, Fertility, and Medicine in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2014); Cathy McClive, *Menstruation and Procreation in Early Modern France* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2015); Sara Read, *Menstruation and the Female Body in Early Modern England* (Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Cf. Patricia Simons who records that one of the contemporary responses to William Harvey's theory of circulation was a greater interest in considering sexual arousal in terms of blood flow: 'Gradually, the tactile excitation brought about by the flow of seed was re-envisaged in relation to the flow of blood, and thence semen, testicles, and heat began to fade as the determining principles of male sexuality. But that was more a story of the Enlightenment, or later.' Patricia Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 212.

Hutchinson and Milton are boldly counter-cultural in their assertion of the moral perfection of sex that is purely for pleasure. Augustine denies that Edenic sex ever took place, but even when he allows himself to imagine perfect prelapsarian sex, he imagines it as utterly banal: 'The man, then, would have sown the seed, and the woman received it, as need required, the generative organs being moved by the will, not excited by lust'.[43] Indeed, he argues that a man's lack of control over his erection is proof of the Fall:

> Well, then, how significant is the fact that the eyes, and lips, and tongue, and hands, and feet, and the bending of back, and neck, and sides, are all placed within our power—to be applied to such operations as are suitable to them, when we have a body free from impediments and in a sound state of health; but when it must come to man's great function of the procreation of children the members which were expressly created for this purpose will not obey the direction of the will, but lust has to be waited for to set these members in motion, as if it had legal right over them, and sometimes it refuses to act when the mind wills, while often it acts against its will! Must not this bring the blush of shame over the freedom of the human will, that by its contempt of God, its own Commander, it has lost all proper command for itself over its own members?[44]

Elsewhere, he imagines perfect ejaculation that is controlled like urination; argues that 'the connexion of sharing children' is 'the one alone worthy fruit [...] of sexual intercourse'; and that 'intercourse of marriage for the sake of begetting has not fault; but for the satisfying of lust, but yet with husband or wife, by reason of the faith of the bed, it has venial fault'.[45] Milton and Hutchinson both reject this narrow vision of what perfect marital sex can be, and that rejection is encapsulated in *Paradise Lost* by Eve's body, which blushes with arousal, but is, for the duration of the couple's time in Eden, sterile.

Female sexual pleasure did not go unaccounted for in seventeenth-century England, but its importance, at least in theory, was as a prerequisite to conception, not as an end in itself. The 'two-seed model' held that both the male and female partner 'needed to ejaculate, hence to experience

[43] Augustine, 'The City of God', 14.24.
[44] Augustine, 'On Marriage and Concupiscence', 1.7
[45] Augustine, 'On Marriage and Concupiscence', 2.53; 'On the Good of Marriage', 1;6.

orgasm, for conception to occur'.[46] The belief that 'conception was most likely if the male and female orgasm was simultaneous' led to an emphasis in medical books on making sure that 'the woman was sufficiently warmed and aroused before intercourse'.[47] It is indisputable that, like everyone else in human history, seventeenth century Europeans engaged in sexual activity that was deliberately, or incidentally, non-generative. Indeed, Valerie Traub has argued for the primacy of 'non-procreative, non-missionary, and even non-private sex in the early modern period', suggesting that these activities 'seem to have been what most people actually did'.[48] Nonetheless, the bold restitution of a non-generative, purely pleasurable sexual act into Eden is a radical refiguring of what the purpose of sexual activity is, and what its highest aim might be: nothing more, but also nothing less, than mutual pleasure. By putting pleasure at the centre of their Edens, both Hutchinson and Milton seek to liberate sex and sensuality not only from shame, but from duty.

This chapter argues that Hutchinson and Milton offer a fantasy of a body without gaps, which can communicate with, know, and be known by, another. The texts also offer a radical refiguring of the purpose of sex, rescuing sexual desire and sexual intercourse from both shame and duty by asserting that mutual pleasure is a sufficient motivation for perfect Edenic sex. As radical as this prelapsarian pleasure is, both authors offer an equally compelling vision of non-human sex as a form of knowledge and communication: as a chance for two beings to completely know and be known. For Milton, it is the borderless bodies of the angels which can truly achieve this kind of sexual knowledge and communication. For Hutchinson, the body which makes this kind of sex possible is only achieved at the end of the world, when a naked Christ caresses his

[46] Evans (2014), 59.
[47] Evans (2014), 59-60.
[48] Valerie Traub, *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns* (Philadelphia PA: University of Philadelphia Press, 2016), 150.

naked Bride: each is seen and seeing, known and knowing. Hutchinson's vision of the restored Church as the Bride of Christ derives from similar images in the Bible, but her use of the imagery is unusual because of its obvious eroticism:

> The Bride with these caresses entertained
> In naked beauty doth before him stand,
> And knows no shame, purged from all foul desire
> Whose secret guilt kindles the blushing fire.
> Her glorious Lord is naked too, no more
> Concealed in types and shadows as before.
> So our first parents innocently did
> Behold that nakedness which since is hid,
> That lust may not catch fire from beauty's flame
> Engendering thoughts which dye the cheeks with shame, (III.493-502)

Three timeframes are evoked in this short passage.[49] Firstly, an imagined 'innocent' prelapsarian past in which Adam and Eve were naked and unashamed: '*so* our first parents innocently did...'. Secondly, a seventeenth-century present in which such innocent and unashamed nakedness is impossible because of 'foul desire', 'lust', and 'secret guilt', which are evidenced by blushing. Hutchinson expands the fire conceit: the 'secret guilt' of 'shame' 'kindles the blushing fire'; and lust itself is a tinderbox waiting to 'catch fire' from 'beauty's flame'. In the two blushing images, the blush allows a glimpse at the blusher's interior life, exposing 'secret guilt' and shameful 'thoughts'. By using this same image of fire in 'beauty's flame', Hutchinson also alludes to the sexually suggestive or inviting nature of the blush, implicitly linking the cause and effect of lust in a cycle of blushes. Finally, there is an imagined future when Christ will come back to claim his Bride, the Church, and we will witness the restoration of innocent and unashamed nudity. The

[49] Milton repeatedly evokes multiple timeframes in *Paradise Lost*. In her essay on '*Paradise Lost* and the Multiplicity of Time', Amy Boesky writes that time is 'often layered or deflected in the epic'. She argues that 'Milton makes continuous comparative use of the future to shade his representations of unfallen Eden; Eve's naked innocence, for example, is first presented in Book IV contrasted by a flash-forward to its eventual degradation: "Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed, / Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame /Of nature's works, honour dishonourable, / Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind /With shews instead (IV. 312-16)"'. Amy Boesky, '*Paradise Lost* and the Multiplicity of Time', in *A New Companion to Milton,* ed. Thomas N. Corns (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2001), 408-421, 410.

image of Christ and the Church as a Bridegroom and a Bride is conventional, but it is unusual to see a poet dwell so openly on the sexuality of the image — not least when the poet is a Puritan woman who so explicitly delineates the female sexual gaze, and who alludes to the 'entertaining caresses' that Christ might give the restored Church. The Bride stands in 'naked beauty', and the Lord's body is 'glorious': they are united in their nudity and in their desire for one another. Scott-Baumann argues of this passage: 'both Eve and the Lord are "naked", her physical nudity is a pure manifestation of his unmediated truth'.[50] I think we could take this reading even further, and say that their *shared* nudity is symbolic of the clarity of knowledge, insight, and communication which they now share. The closest earthly thing to this kind of communion, implies Hutchinson, is sex, but even that is tainted by postlapsarian lust and shame. In the new creation, Christ's body will not be known in 'types and shadows' — a biblical phrase which is also, perhaps, a reference to the devotional practices of the church, particularly the Eucharist — rather it will be entirely exposed, known to the church as entirely as a husband's body is known to his wife. The wife in turn will be free from the assault by lust and shame which is symptomatic of the fallen body. There will be no blushes because the body and soul of the Church will be restored to heavenly perfection. There will be nothing to hide: all 'foul desire' will be purged, and all divine mysteries exposed. The inside and outside of the body will be perfectly synchronised and there will be no gaps, misunderstandings, or ambiguities in the relationship between Christ and the Church. The fantasy of the body without gaps which can communicate with and know another perfectly will be fulfilled.

Perhaps the most famous blush of *Paradise Lost* belongs to Raphael when Adam asks him whether the angels have sex. Raphael answers 'with a smile that glow'd / Celestial rosie red, Loves proper hue' (VIII.618-19). Karma deGruy pinpoints this moment as key to Milton's rehabilitation

[50] Scott-Baumann (2013), 184.

of both sex and blushing, writing that 'in imagining angelic sex and having Raphael endorse sex so warmly, Milton rescues sexuality from sin' and 'in having Raphael blush, he likewise rescues human physiology and affect from the shame with which Christian patristics had tended to clothe it'.[51] As this chapter explores, Milton's rehabilitation of both sex and blushing extend far beyond these lines, but it is important to consider exactly what it is that Raphael condones here, and the implications of his permissiveness for our understanding of Miltonic sexuality as a kind of knowing. It is important, for example, that Raphael's blush happens in the context of an ongoing didactic conversation, not least because it allows us to think about the erotics of knowledge transfer, a phenomenon alluded to repeatedly, if ambivalently, across Milton's corpus.[52] As Thomas H. Luxon points out, Milton attempts in *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* 'to draw a sharp distinction between the fit conversation God intended husbands and wives to enjoy in marriage and that other sense of the word conversation — erotic touching'.[53] The difficulty of making such a distinction was picked up on by an anonymous contemporary respondent who, writes Luxon, demanded of Milton 'when you say conversation [...] what do you mean: talking or touching?'[54]

Milton seems less concerned with delineating different kinds of conversation in *Paradise Lost*. The erotic and the educational are collapsed in the immediate aftermath of Eve's first blush, when Adam soothes his wife by explaining away her nightmare and kissing away her tears:

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[51] Karma deGruy, 'Desiring Angels: The Angelic Body in *Paradise* Lost', *Criticism*, 54 (2012), 117-149, 123.
[52] Eric B. Song uses Mieke Bal's reading of Judges, in which she argues that 'the dissymmetry of knowledge posed by the riddle genre is eroticized and gendered' to read the riddle in *Samson Agonistes*: 'Milton's Samson alludes to his riddle begrudgingly because it represents the perils of erotic knowledge'. He also suggests that 'in *Paradise Regained*, as in both *A Masque* and *Paradise Lost*, the temptation of eating is also one of erotic knowledge'. Eric B. Song, *Dominion Undeserved: Milton and the Perils of Creation* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 142, 127.
[53] Thomas H. Luxon, '"How Human Life Began": Sexual Reproduction in Book 8 of *Paradise Lost*', in *Sex Before Sex*, eds James M. Bromley and Will Stockton (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 263-290, 264.
[54] Luxon (2013), 265.

> So cheered he his fair Spouse, and she was cheered,
> But silently a gentle tear let fall
> From either eye [...]
> [...] he ere they fell
> Kissed as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
> And pious awe, that feared to have offended. (V.129-135)

Later, Eve absents herself from the conversation with Raphael because she prefers to learn from Adam:

> He, she knew would intermix
> Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
> With conjugal Caresses from his Lip
> Not Words alone pleased her (VIII.54-57)

Eve expects a blend of words and kisses from Adam's mouth; he is both her teacher and her lover, and he occupies both roles simultaneously. We should remember Eve's eroticised praise of Adam's mouth when Raphael praises Adam's ability to speak: 'Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men, / Nor tongue ineloquent' (VIII.218-219). Luxon suggests that Raphael, like Eve, is really praising the beauty of Adam's mouth, rather than his speech when he says that 'speaking or mute all comeliness and grace / attends thee' (VIII.222-223).[55] Certainly, Eve's eroticisation of Adam's mouth as the source of both knowledge and kisses seems to allude to the dual meaning of marital 'conversation', and Adam and Raphael go on to have a conversation that is explicitly about sex, during which Raphael blushes. In *Thinking Se*x, Traub argues that 'speech about sex tends to depend on, solicit, and deflect the desire to know'.[56] As I have argued throughout this thesis, the blush is a site of epistemic inquiry, and so finding blushes at the centre of a passage which interrogates the relationships between eroticism, knowledge, and communication should perhaps not come as a surprise to us. What new knowledge is produced by Raphael's blush, and how is that knowledge communicated to the readers of his body both within and without the text?

[55] Luxon (2013), 283.
[56] Traub (2016), 193.

Both Raphael's blush and Eve's blush 100 lines earlier are compared to the sky ('celestial rosie red' / 'blushing like the morn'), which seems to encourage us to read the two together.[57] The fact that Eve's blush seems to be a straight-forward sign of her arousal induces us to ask: is Raphael aroused by Adam's question? There has been some resistance to an eroticised or queer reading of Raphael's blush, most famously by C. S. Lewis, who 'warned readers against the assumption that Milton imagined the angels living "a life of homosexual promiscuity"'.[58] The ideology behind Lewis' refusal to countenance a queer reading of this passage is exposed by his comment that whilst Milton was 'poetically imprudent in raising a matter which invites such a misconception', 'the real meaning is certainly not filthy, and certainly not foolish'.[59] Modern critics have been more willing to explore the latent queerness of Raphael's blush and this wider exchange. In David L. Orvis' recently published collection of essays on *Queer Milton,* Lara Dodds writes that this exchange has 'authorized a number of queer readings of *Paradise Lost*'.[60] Orvis' edited collection grew out of a special issue of *Early Modern Culture*, in which Will Stockton argued that '*Paradise Lost* raises but does not foreclose a set of queer possibilities for the sexual "orientations" of Adam and Eve'.[61] In the same volume, Stephen Guy-Bray argues that for Milton 'only angelic sexuality is perfect', and that angelic sex is a 'non-reproductive and ultimately ungendered sexuality that we

[57] Milton describes the (red) dawn as smiling three further times: 'when fair morning first smiles on the world' (V.124); 'Sure pledge of day, that crownst the smiling morn' (V.168); 'the morn / All unconcerned with our unrest, begins / Her rosy progress smiling' (IX.173-175).
[58] Qtd in Lara Dodds, 'Virtual or Immediate Touch: Queer Adaptations of *Paradise Lost* in Science Fiction and Fantasy', in *Queer Milton,* ed. David L. Orvis (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 153-177, 153, 153. Goldberg cites William Empson's response to Lewis in *Milton's God* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Goldberg suggests that Empson argues 'angelic sex is egalitarian, the only happiness of angels, who are routinely humiliated by a God who imposes meaningless tasks at which they invariably fail'. Jonathan Goldberg, *The Seeds of Things: Theorizing Sexuality and Materiality in Renaissance Representations* (New York NY: Fordham University Press, 2009), 199 n.25.
[59] Qtd in Will Stockton, 'An Introduction Justifying Queer Ways', *Early Modern Culture,* 20 (2018), 1-13, 7.
[60] Dodds (2018), 153.
[61] Stockton (2018), 2.

can only call queer.[62] Similarly, Jonathan Goldberg cites Raphael's blush as the occasion to think about sex in *Paradise Lost* as existing beyond the constraints of the physical body and beyond the restrictions of 'hierarchy', 'monogamy', or a '"correct" position'.[63] There are still modern critics who find ways to ignore the sexual connotations of this exchange. Such readings tend to evoke an entirely incongruous sense of Raphael's sexual shame or his emotional perturbance. Peter C. Herman, for example, argues that Adam's question 'so embarrasses Raphael that he blushes [...] and rushes off the moment he senses an opportunity'.[64] Milton makes it clear that shame has no part to play in a prelapsarian sexuality, and given this context, it seems strange to suggest that the angels might be ashamed of their sexuality. I think the blushing affinity between Raphael and Eve — Adam never blushes in *Paradise Lost* — allows us to extend our understanding of the queerness of this passage, so that it encompasses not only men having sex with men, but a kind of polymorphous sexual liberation that includes gender-fluidity.

A conservative reading of this passage offers the possibility that Raphael's blush is indicative of the decorousness of veiling sexual activity with a little mystery, which in turn serves to underscore Adam's total lack of self-consciousness. As Bell points out, Raphael takes pains to 'reaffir[m] his affability and the dominant tone of the episode', which is 'the pert and nimble spirit of mirth', arguing that it is perhaps meant to be amusing that Adam's total lack of sexual shame makes Raphael blush.[65] Yet such a reading seems to cut the passage off at the knees, particularly when we consider the fact that Raphael seems interested in alluding to the mysterious nature of angelic bodies. Raphael tells Adam that when the angels have sex, they 'enjoy in eminence / and

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[62] Stephen Guy-Bray, '"Fellowships of Joy": Angelic Union in *Paradise Lost'*, in *Queer Milton*, ed. David L. Orvis (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 139-151, 140.
[63] Goldberg (2009), 195.
[64] Peter C. Herman, '"Whose fault, whose but his own?":*Paradise Lost*: Contributory Negligence, and the Problem of Cause', in *New Milton Criticism,* eds Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 69-67, 62.
[65] Bell (1981), 53.

obstacle find none / Of membrane, joynt, or limb' (VIII.623-625). This seems to point towards a kind of entirely satisfying intermingling that is not restrained by physical form. Joe Moshenska suggests these lines respond to a passage in Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, in which Lucretius describes sexual intercourse as 'vanity […] for they can rub nothing off, nor can they penetrate and be absorbed body in body'.[66] Moshenska argues that Lucretius' representation of sex as a 'cluster of painful and ludicrous actions, not the happy culmination of desire but the necessary failure of a futile urge entirely to interpenetrate and possess' are 'among [his] most influential lines in the Renaissance', and certainly there is a wealth of unsatisfied early modern literary lovers ready to support this claim.[67] In his account of angelic sex, Milton offers an alternative to Lucretius' vision of sex as an ultimately unsatisfying reminder of how two cannot become one.[68] Raphael does not dismiss Adam's desire to know through touching, rather 'angelic love is described precisely as the fulfilment rather than the repudiation of the desire to fully mingle that Lucretius mocks'.[69] Even as Milton rejects Lucretius' limited vision of what sex can do and be, he stops short of allowing Adam and Eve full access to sex as a tool by which the other is known. Raphael alludes to an angelic ability to participate in what the human lovers cannot: a sexual experience in which physical boundaries are entirely transcended, and the beloved is entirely known to the lover.

What Adam seeks when he looks at Eve's blush is the same thing that he seeks when they have sex: knowledge of the inside of her body in all senses. In the prelapsarian world, he can

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[66] Joe Moshenska, *Feeling Pleasures: The Sense of Touch in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 250.
[67] Moshenska (2014), 251.
[68] For an overview of recent scholarship on the popularity of *De rerum natura* in the early modern period and the importance of 'Lucretius' Epicurean *ataraxia*, or, mental calm' as a way of understanding the difference in how Satan and Adam 'seek serenity and security after their falls' see Jessie Hock, '"The Mind is its Own Place": Lucretian Moral Philosophy in *Paradise Lost*', in *Milton's Modernities: Poetry, Philosophy, and History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present,* eds Feisal G. Mohamed and Patrick Fadely (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 2017), 67-84, 67.
[69] Moshenska (2014), 251.

achieve this knowledge, to a point, both by looking at Eve and by touching her, but even prelapsarian knowledge and communication is inferior to that enjoyed by heavenly beings because of the limitations of the human body. Raphael's vision is not of a body without gaps between its interior and exterior, which is the most for which a human can hope. Rather, his blush draws attention to a body for which such categories are meaningless: an entirely borderless body which can completely mingle with another body and so fully know and be known by that other.[70]

Like Milton, Hutchinson is alive to the erotic appeal of the blush. Unlike Milton, whose Adam never blushes, Hutchinson describes Adam's blush, and argues for its erotic appeal. God's creation of Adam on the sixth day occasions a blazon on his body:

> Whereas all other creatures clothed were
> In shells, scales, gaudy plumes, or wools, or hair,
> Only a fair smooth skin o'er man was drawn,
> Like damask roses blushing through pure lawn. (III. 39-41)

Hutchinson's blazon of Adam's body 'switches the usual gendering of such language by applying it directly to Adam and only implicitly also to his bride'.[71] Hutchinson does not blazon Eve; Adam preoccupies her sensual and aesthetic interest, and Scott-Baumann has traced how closely Hutchinson's description of Adam mirrors her description of her own husband in *Elegies*.[72] As in her description of Christ, Hutchinson uses sensual language to describe Adam. The description of his skin as 'damask roses blushing through pure lawn' is a convention of erotic poetry: for example, the same image is used in both *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*.[73] Hutchinson evokes the

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[70] The presence of *De rerum natura* also haunts Hutchinson's text. She completed a translation of the text — the first complete English translation of a major classical epic — in the 1650s, and in the preface to *Order and Disorder*, she 'strongly recants the translation, self-consciously dedicating her[self] to a new vocation as a divine poet'. Norbrook (2001), xiii; xvii. For more on how Hutchinson responds to *De reum natura* in *Order and Disorder* see Cassandra Gorman, 'Lucy Hutchinson, Lucretius and Soteriological Materialism', *Seventeenth Century*, 28 (2013), 293-309.
[71] Scott-Baumann (2013), 180.
[72] Scott-Baumann (2013), 180-181.
[73] 'O, how her fear did make her colour rise! / First red as roses that on lawn we lay, /Then white as lawn, the roses took away.' (*Lucrece*, 257-259); '[...] sudden pale, / Like lawn being spread upon the blushing rose, / Usurps her cheek' (*Venus and Adonis*, 589-591).

blush in this blazon only in its meaning as an erotic sign. Even as she undertakes a more extensive blazon of each feature of the human face, the blush of the cheeks is only evoked as a sign of beauty, and then only very briefly: 'on rising cheeks, beauty in white and red / Strives with itself' (III.107-108). This image of red and white in discord is, again, a conventional feature of love poetry, and is familiar to us from *Lucrece*, 'within whose face beauty and virtue strived / which should underprop her fame' (53-54). The verb 'strives' suggests an interplay between red and white, effectively alluding to a blush. Hutchinson's use of this conventional image is quite distinctive, as the human body that she has in mind is Adam's, who is male, and this image is most often used by male poets to describe the bodies of the women or young men who are the — it is implied passive or receptive — objects of poetic desire. Hutchinson offers a distinctive take on the conventions of love poetry by repurposing this symbol and using it to describe an ideal, archetypal man beloved by a woman. She does so again when she describes the sun as being 'like a fresh bridegroom with majestic grace / And joy diffusing vigour in his face' (II.212-213).[74] When Hutchinson imagines an ideal male body, which is a sexual male body, she imagines it blushing; and when she identifies what it is that differentiates humans and animals, the blush is the first thing that she names. She identifies the human skin both as particularly beautiful, and as particularly expressive: it is capable of fluctuating in colour.

The blush is, however, conspicuously absent from the praise of human emotions that follows:

He only hath a voice articulate

[74] Both Hutchinson and Milton engage with the poetic convention of describing the dawn in terms of blushing or redness. Hutchinson writes 'the perfumed morning opes her purple gates' (II.212). Milton uses the image three times before the fall: 'Now Morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime / Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl, / When Adam waked' (V.1-2); ''til Morn, / Waked by circling Hours, with rosy hand / Unbarred the gates of light' (VI. 2-4); the morn, / All unconcerned with our unrest, begins / Her rosy progress smiling' (IX.173-175). Milton only uses the word 'blush' to describe the dawn after the fall: 'after a short blush of morn' (XI.184). The shift from general redness to blushing paradoxically increases the association between bushing and guiltiness that Milton has otherwise worked so hard to complicate.

> Varied by joy, grief, anger, love, and hate
> And every other motion of the mind
> Which hereby doth an apt expression find
> Hereby glad mirth in laughter is alone
> By man expressed; in a peculiar groan
> His grief comes forth, accompanied by tears,
> Peculiar shrieks utter his sudden fears (III.53-60)

This account must give us pause, because although Hutchinson is praising mankind at this point, her blazon is located in the postlapsarian world. The emotions that she picks out as examples of the ingenuity of the human body are not wholly positive. There is joy and love, but there is also grief, anger, and hate. The body is, she writes, 'by sin corrupted now' (III.125). Nevertheless, she argues for the peculiarity, that is, the particularity, of each emotion and its physical sign, even in the postlapsarian world, and the examples that she chooses are indeed highly particular: mirth in laughter; grief in tears and groaning; sudden fear in shrieking. It is perhaps not all that strange, then, that the multivalent and evocative blush does not appear on this list. This passage makes clear that Hutchinson believes that the human body's outward signs were designed to bear some association to its inward states, and that whilst there is some association between the two in the postlapsarian world, this relation is corrupted by sin, and is no longer entirely stable or secure.

Like Milton, Hutchinson is interested in angels, though she dwells less on the mechanics of their sex life, and more on how they set an example for human behaviour. She writes of the angels:

> So kind, so humble are they, though so high,
> They do it with the same alacrity.
> Why blush we not at our vain pride, when we
> Such condescension in Heaven's courtiers see,
> That they who sit on heavenly thrones above
> Scorn not to serve poor worms with fervent love,
> And joyful praises to th'Almighty sing,
> When they a mortal to their own home bring? (I.277-284)

Hutchinson's use of a conceit of heaven as a court and the angels as courtiers draws directly from biblical descriptions of heaven, but given her own Republican sympathies, and disdain for the spectacles of court-life, her imagery seems pointed.[75] Scott-Baumann suggests that Hutchinson's 'opposition to the Restoration regime is expressed much more openly in the later, unprinted, cantos', here in the early cantos, 'the institution of monarchy itself is not wholly emptied of meaning and authority, but it is shown to be currently corrupted and usurped'.[76] These lines provide one example of Hutchinson's vision of a worthy monarchy. In this court, courtiers serve the poor and undeserving, in implicit contrast to the court of Charles II. Hutchinson points her readers to a higher court to remind them that the true King, the true authority, the true courtiers, sit in the heavenly court, the 'home' to which these devoted angels bring mortals. She warns that the earthly court, and its values, cannot last. Hutchinson's question — 'why blush we not' — is the only direct address in either text which asks the reader to blush. By using the plural first pronoun 'we', Hutchinson nominally offers to join her imagined reader in blushing, her criticism outward from the court to the proud at large: though we sense that she might readily attribute pride to courtiers. This direct address is indicative of the third way in which Hutchinson uses the blush: firstly, to suggest the possibility of true knowledge and communication between Christ and the Church at the end of the world; secondly, to defend sexual desire and pleasure as fundamentally good; and thirdly, to criticise the values of the Restoration court.

Scott-Baumann notes that 'Hutchinson's *Elegies* are profoundly anti-Restoration poems'.[77] So too is *Order and Disorder*, in which Hutchinson chastises not just the proud courtiers of the

[75] Norbrook writes that Hutchinson 'frequently vindicates Nature against Art' favouring the 'various clouds' which 'sail over the unhoused head' to the 'embroidered canopies' and 'painted roofs' of the court (II.21-24). Hutchinson (2001), xxviii-xix.
[76] Scott-Baumann (2013), 191.
[77] Scott-Baumann (2013), 186.

Caroline court, but at the King himself. Hutchinson's *Elegies* 'vehemently refuse the praising association of monarch with sun and light', which leads Scott-Baumann to suggest that Hutchinson 'overturns such imagery with her sardonic versions' in *Order and Disorder*.[78] Hutchinson makes use of courtly language to describe the rising of the sun:

> The king of day came forth, but unadmired,
> Like unpraised gallants blushingly retired;
> As an uncourted beauty, nights pale queen,
> Grew sick to shine where she could not be seen. (II. 236-239)

Scott-Baumann offers a fine reading of this passage, helpfully gesturing to some of its many generic resonances. She writes that Hutchinson 'adopts the common analogy of sun as king', but rather than using it to 'reflect glory', she uses it to 'depict the world's emptiness before God created living beings'.[79] Hutchinson might have 'tremble[d] to think of turning Scripture into a romance' (p.5), but in these lines, she 'evokes chivalric romance to pun on "uncourted" and suggests the Cavalier or courtier, stereotypically attention-seeking and dramatic'.[80] Closer attention to how these lines evoke an image of blushing will further illuminate what is at stake in the description. The Sun (the 'king of day') comes forth but 'like unpraised gallants blushing retired', that is to say, the Sun blushed like a fashionable man about court would blush if he was being ignored. This blushing image is relatively unusual, as it depends on the gallant blushing because he goes unseen, when, as we have witnessed across this thesis, the blush is usually occasioned by being seen. The inversion of the usual trope of the blush being occasioned by the gaze of another highlights the disdain in which Hutchinson holds the pride of the court gallant, who is so lacking in modesty, that he perverts the 'normal' course of blushing, and instead blushes to go unseen and unpraised.

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[78] Scott-Baumann (2013), 186.
[79] Scott-Baumann (2013), 186.
[80] Scott-Baumann (2013), 186-187. For more on the influence of the Romance genre on *Order and Disorder* see Wilcher (2010), 32-41.

Hutchinson's image of the unblushing courtier responds to the Aristotelian idea that men should not blush, which was popular in a range of discourses and which contravened the Christian concept of blushing as both natural and pious. Aristotle writes:

> Modesty cannot properly be described as a virtue, for it seems to be a feeling rather than a disposition; at least it is defined as a kind of fear of disrepute, and indeed in its effects it is akin to the fear of danger; for people who are ashamed blush, while those in fear of their lives turn pale; both therefore appear to be in a sense bodily affections, and this indicates a feeling rather than a disposition.
>
> The feeling of modesty is not suitable to every age, but only to the young. We think it proper for the young to be modest, because as they live by feeling they often err, and modesty may keep them in check; and we praise young people when they are modest, though no one would praise an older man for being shamefaced, since we think he ought not to do anything of which he need be ashamed. For indeed the virtuous man does not feel shame, if shame is the feeling caused by base actions; since one ought not to do base actions (the distinction between acts really shameful and those reputed to be so is immaterial, since one ought not to do either), and so one never ought to feel shame.[81]

The idea that blushing was not proper to men had been in circulation in England since at least the mid-sixteenth century. The discourse was highly gendered. In all that I have read, I have not once come across any writer who tried to make the case that it was unbecoming for women to blush.[82] Roger Ascham disapprovingly writes in *The Schoolmaster* (1570) of the 'ill company' in the Tudor court, who 'if [a young gentleman] be bashful and will soon blush they call him a babish and ill brought-up thing'.[83] Ascham argues that the blushless naysayers follow Aristotle, whom he says argues that '"blushing in youth [...] is nothing else but fear to do ill"', directly alluding to this passage from *Nicomachean Ethics*.[84] These young men, writes Ascham, think that to behave with 'grace' is 'to blush at nothing': 'to do thus in court is counted of some the chief and greatest grace

[81] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 249-250.
[82] Indeed, conduct books for women made quite the opposite case. *The English Gentlewoman* repeatedly advises its female readership to blush, culminating in words to a young woman who seeks to draw in a suitor: 'be as silent as the night', advises the writer, 'your best Rhetoricke consists in maiden blushes, and bashfull smiles; which will worke more powerfully on a Louers heart, than a Rhetoricall tongue, bee it neuer so curiously tipt with Art'. Richard Braithwait, *The English gentlewoman* (London: B. Alsop and T. Fawcet, 1631), 170.
[83] Roger Ascham, *The English Works of Roger Ascham: Preceptor to Queen Elizabeth*, ed. James Bennett (London: White, Cochrane and Co., 1815), 221-222
[84] Ascham (1815), 222.

of all; and termed by the name of a virtue, called courage and boldness'.[85] Similarly, the 'central message' of James Cleland in his *Institution of a Young Nobleman* (1607), was that 'a boy must not be bashful, by showing "foolish shamefastness in hanging down his head and blushing at every light word"'.[86] There was also an emphasis in the conduct books across the period on not causing other people to blush. *Youth's Behaviour*, which 'went through eleven editions between the 1640s and 1872', warned its readers not to 'reproach not anyes imperfections, although they be naturall. Take not pleasure to make any body blush, either by thy deed or word'.[87] In *The Book of the Courtier* (1528; trans. 1561), Baldesar Castiglione advises young women to respond to 'wanton talk' with 'a little blushing and shamefastnes' — though not too much, lest they seem prudish or encourage speculation about their own behaviour— whilst repeatedly admonishing young men who 'are filthye and bawdye in talke, and that in the presence of women have no maner respect, and seeme to take none other delite but to make women blushe': though not without noting that 'for my part I have bine ready to blushe for shame at words which women have spoken to me oftener than men'.[88] There is a clear discord between Aristotelean-derived conduct books which see blushing as improper for men, and the religious and classical discourses which sees it as proper for everyone, and sometimes *particularly* proper for men. By evoking an image of an unblushing gallant, Hutchinson gestures to the coda — evidently long-standing —between religious values and the values of the court and makes her position on the seemliness of the blush clear. Hutchinson consistently argues that it is proper for men to blush, whether they are in their bed chambers or at

[85] Ascham (1815), 222.
[86] Anthony Fletcher, *Growing up in England: The Experience of Childhood 1600-1914* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 16.
[87] Fletcher (2008), 16. Francis Hawkins, *Youths behavior, or, Decency in conversation amongst men composed in French now newly turned into English by Francis Hawkins* (London: W. Wilson, 1651), 17.
[88] Baldesar Castiglione, *The Courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio divided into foure bookes. Very necessary and profitable for Yonge Gentilmen and Gentilwomen abiding in Court, Palaice or Place, done into Englyshe by Thomas Hoby* (London: Wyllyam Seres at the signe of the Hedghogge, 1561).

court, and she argues that this blushing is motivated by a Christian sense of seemliness and appropriate behaviour in both instances.

Just as Hutchinson writes about her unblushing contemporaries, Milton also devotes some time and attention to a blush which does not happen: Eve stands naked in front of Adam and Raphael without need of a veil and without a blush.

> [...] but Eve
> Undecked, save with herself more lovely fair
> Then Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feigned
> Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove,
> Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil
> She needed, virtue-proof, no thought infirm
> Altered her cheek. (V.379-385)

We are meant to be amazed, I think, at Eve's total lack of inhibition. She *stands* naked, emphasising her exposure. Adam is naked too, of course, though that goes unmentioned, perhaps because the idea of a man being naked in front of another man strikes Milton as less inherently erotic. Eve does not blush because her cheek is 'proofed' by virtue; there is an echo here, perhaps, of Ambrose's idea 'that before the Fall Adam and Eve were naked but clothed in virtue'.[89] The *OED* defines 'virtue-proof' as 'that [which] is impervious to sin or some other harm as a result of being virtuous', citing this line as its earliest example. The construction is very unusual. Here are contracted versions of four *OED* definitions of similar constructions:

> sermon-proof *adj.*
> *A*1631 J. DONNE *Serm.* (1953) VI. 219 It is a fearfull obduration, to be Sermon-proofe.

> storm-proof *adj. (a)* impervious to storm; also, protected from or affording protection from stormy weather; *(b)* proof against storming or assault; also *figurative*

> 1594 T. NASHE *Vnfortunate Traveller* sig. D3v Sailers do pitch their apparell, to make it storme-proofe

> sword-proof *adj.* proof against the sword; capable of resisting the stroke of a sword
> *A*1593 MARLOWE *Edward II* (1594) sig. Bv Vnlesse his brest be sword proofe he shall die.

[89] Qtd in Hammond (2017), 342.

> shot-proof *n.*
> 1601 B. JONSON *Fountaine of Selfe-Love* v. v. sig. L3 Aretes fauour makes any one shot proofe against thee Cupid.

In all these examples, and every modern example (bulletproof, cattle-proof, idiot-proof, waterproof …) the proof or protection is against the noun within the construction. That is to say that something idiot-proof is not protected by the idiot, but against the idiot, the same with bullets, cattle, sermons, storms, swords, shots, and water. Yet Eve is protected *by* her virtue, and so she has no need to blush. This example highlights the difference between pre- and postlapsarian blushing because in the postlapsarian world, blushing is proof of virtue (and virtue, as our reading in Matthew Henry showed, is not the same as innocence), but here it would be proof of a 'thought infirm'. We return, once again, to the distinction between Edenic perfection and postlapsarian virtue, though the term 'virtue' is used more freely here. In the postlapsarian world, Eve's unblushing cheek might be understood as brazen, but here in Eden it is proof positive of virtue. Moreover, the postlapsarian world has fallen so far from the state of innocence that even the involuntary sign which now demonstrates the height of virtue in the fallen world would be out of place in Eden. To blush out of shame at one's infirm thoughts, one must have infirm thoughts, and so one must be fallen. The postlapsarian blush is a sign of virtue, but not of prelapsarian innocence, which cannot be regained. Eve does not need to cover her face, neither with a veil nor with a blush. Her virtuous unblushing cheek stands in stark contrast to the sensuality of her red cheek in the marital bed, but also to the glowing cheek that resulted from her nightmare. In these lines, Milton asks what it means *not* to blush, and rather than present brazenness as a sign of sinfulness, as it was in Donne's sermons, he presents it as the ultimate sign of innocence. In this, of course, he alludes to the conventional understanding that Adam and Eve did not blush whilst they were in a state of innocence. By dwelling on the way in which brazenness is repurposed in Eden as a sign of virtue, and how

blushing is repurposed in the postlapsarian world as a sign of sin, he demonstrates just how far the prelapsarian world, and the prelapsarian body, has fallen from the state in which it was created.

The second conspicuous non-blush of Milton's poem has enjoyed a rather different reception history to Eve's shameless nudity. The poem's long eighteenth-century critics could not accept Milton's blushless roses. As Satan arrives in Eden, he spots Eve alone:

> Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
> Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
> Half spied, so thick the roses bushing round
> About her glowed (IX.424-427)

In both the 10-book 1668 edition of the poem, and the revised 12-book 1674 edition, the lines are printed as above: the roses *bush* around Eve, and their proxy or portentous blushing is implied only by the word 'glowed', a word which, as we saw in Raphael's and Eve's glowing cheeks at VIII.618 and V.10 respectively, could mean 'blushed'. However, this implication was not enough for some later editors. Having reviewed eight printings of the poem from the period 1668-1695, I can confirm that the roses bush until Patrick Hume's 1695 annotated edition, in which they start to blush:

> V.27. *The Roses blushing round about her glow'd;* A grove of bushing roses seemed to be on fire round her.
>
> — — — Quam sepsit Rosa plurima circum
> Flagrantes persusa gena, quen vividus ignem
> Subjecit rubor. Æn. 12.[90]

Hume states the purpose of his annotated edition on its title page which reads:

> Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost
> Wherein
> The texts of sacred writ, relating to the poem, are quoted; the parallel places and imitations of the most excellent *Homer* and *Virgil,* cited and compared; All the obscure parts rendered in phrases more familiar; The old and obsolete words, with their originals, explained and made easie to the English reader.

[90] Hume (1695), 253.

Hume's quotation from the Aeneid aims to fulfil his second stated intention: to note where Milton is imitating Virgil.[91] His chosen citation, Lavinia's blush 'was a favourite one for later poets to imitate', directly evoked by 'Spenser, Ovid, Statius, Claudian, and Ariosto' and discussed at the opening of this thesis.[92] By evoking this image, Hume locates *Paradise Lost* (and Milton), within a long humanist poetic tradition. Other editors followed suit: Richard Bentley changes 'bushing' to 'blushing' in his much maligned 1732 'new edition' of the poem, as does Samuel Johnson in his 1796 edition.[93] The bushing roses also struck some readers as odd: in one copy of the 1668 edition held at the Henry Huntington Library, a scribal hand has annotated an 'L' into the margin beside the line in question.[94] It is not clear whether these editors and readers consciously imitated one another or not — Johnson includes scholarly notes from Bentley and Hume in his edition, but none of them are about blushing — but each of their decisions can be understood in the wider context of eighteenth-century projects designed at enhancing Milton's posthumous reputation by emphasising the classical credentials of his work. This project was undertaken via numerous strategies, including translating *Paradise Lost* into Latin (which also made the poem accessible to international readers), production of critical editions of the poem which 'rel[ied] on principles of classical criticism to assess the poem's aesthetic value', and which emphasised its classical allusions through editorial notes, and, evidently, Latinising editorial changes.[95]

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[91] For more on how Milton engages with the *Aeneid* in *Paradise Lost* see Richard J. Durocher, '"Such tears as angels weep": Passion and Allusion in *Paradise Lost',* in *Their Maker's Image: New Essays on John Milton,* ed. Mary C. Fenton and Louis Schwartz (Selinsgrove PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2011), 23-46.

[92] David Wilson-Okamura, *Virgil in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 234 n.151. Cf. the introduction to this thesis.

[93] Richard Bentley, *Milton's Paradise Lost: A New Edition* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1732), 282; Samuel Johnson, *Paradise Lost by John Milton, with Notes selected from Newton and others to which is prefixed The Life of the Author with a critical dissertation on the poetical works of Milton and observations on his language and versification*, 2 vols (London: J. Parsons, 1796), ii, 44.

[94] John Milton, *Paradise lost a poem in ten books / the author J. M.* (London: 1668), VIII.424. Held at The Huntington Library, Wing / M2138.

[95] Esther Yu, 'From Judgment to Interpretation: Eighteenth Century Critics of Milton's Paradise Lost', *Milton Studies,* 53 (2012), 181-208, 185. See Estelle Haan, '"Latinising" Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Latinitas and the Long Eighteenth

This editorial change was made with the aim of 'Latinising' the poem, but it had an unintended consequence: the paratextual invocation of one of the strangest and most ambiguous blushes in literary history.

> Lavinia heard her mother's words, her burning cheeks steeped in tears, while a deep blush kindled its fire, and mantled her glowing face. As when someone stains Indian ivory with crimson dye, or white lilies blush when mingled with many a rose—such hues her maiden features showed.[96]

By linking Milton's roses to the blush of Lavinia, the later editors aim to bring Milton into the fold of Virgilian poets, but they also introduce a note of uncertainty into the text. The critic John Watkins confirms that Lavinia's 'most memorable act is blushing when her mother begs Turnus not to confront the Trojans', but he also writes that 'her blush is so inscrutable that classicists still debate whether it reveals her love for Turnus or her embarrassment over her mother's hysterics'.[97] What does it mean, then, to introduce a paratextual blush whose meaning is famously obscure into the text at this point? In the first instance, this editorial decision merely heightens the drama of the verse. The roses 'glowed' around Eve, which already might be understood as a portentous blush, and so to say that they also blushed intensifies this image: the roses, with whom Eve perhaps has a special affinity, because she named them, try to warn of the danger that she is in. It also heightens the sensuality of the image, suggesting that Satan's temptation of Eve has a sexual element, foreshadowing Adam's description of the Fall as a sexual betrayal. Most proleptically, and most likely unintentionally, by evoking Lavinia's blush in all its ambiguity, the editors introduce a note of intractability and uncertainty into the text and so foreshadow the trajectory of the couple from

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Century', *Milton in Translation: Theory and Practice*, eds Jonathan Olson et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 93-113. For more on how *Paradise Lost* became a literary 'classic' through 'republication in deluxe folio format, commentary, translation, and imitation' see William Poole, who also writes that it was 'never really plausible' to suggest that Latin editions made the poem more accessible to a continental audience, instead suggesting that Latin translations were 'a thoroughly English thing to do, made by and for Englishmen'. William Poole, *Milton and the Making of Paradise Lost* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 281-297, 284, 290.

[96] Virgil, *Aeneid Books 7-12 Appendix Virgiliana,* trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, rev. G. P. Goold, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1918), 305

[97] Qtd in Wilson-Okamura (2010), 234.

a state of perfect knowledge and communication to one of obscurity and confusion. Both the meaning and the cause of Lavinia's blush are unclear, and as we shall see in the next section of this chapter, the postlapsarian blushes, and indeed the material communications of the body, in *Paradise Lost* and *Order and Disorder*, share its ambiguity.

Guilty blushes in Milton, Hutchinson, and Dryden

1677 saw the publication of John Dryden's *The State of Innocence and the Fall of Man*, a libretto adaptation of *Paradise Lost*.[98] The only human blush of John Dryden's adaptation of Milton's poem is immediately accompanied by denial that such a blush ever took place.[99] Adam's suspicion that something is awry is first ignited by Eve's blush.

> ADAM: My trembling heart forbodes some ill; I fear
> To ask that cause which I desire to hear.
> What means that lovely fruit? what means (alass!)
> That blood, which flushes guilty in your face?
> Speak — do not — yet, at last, I must be told. (V.i.27-31)

Adam's reading of Eve's face allows him to infer that something has gone wrong. He has all the pieces of the puzzle — he looks from the fruit in Eve's hand to the guilty blush on her face — but the blush's ability to communicate what is going on inside the body to the outside has already started to collapse. Where Eve's prelapsarian blushes in *Paradise Lost* invited Adam in, here Adam is shut out by the blush. The blush results not in a state of greater certainty, or new knowledge, but in division through scepticism about the relation between Eve's blush and her interior emotional state. Initially, Adam reads Eve's blush as evidence of her internal emotional and ethical state, but

[98] For a useful primer on the relationship between the two texts see Thomas H. Luxon, 'Heroic Restorations: Dryden and Milton', *Milton Studies,* 59 (2017), 199-230. For more on Dryden's work with *De rerum natura* and physiognomy in *Marriage-a-la-mode* see Curtis Le Van, 'Body as Text: Physiognomy on the Early English Stage', unpublished PhD thesis, University of South Florida (2017), 137-150.

[99] Eve names the 'blushing Rose' as one of Eden's sensual delights. John Dryden, *The State of Innocence and the Fall of Man,* ed. George R. Guffey and Maximillian E. Novak (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1984), III.i.60. All further references are to this edition and are given parenthetically in the text.

the connection between the inside and outside of her body has been destroyed by the Fall. Although Adam sees in her face that something is wrong, Eve demonstrably does not *feel* guilty. Nonetheless, she is unable to control the colour of her face, and this loss of control indicates the spread of disorder through her body and through creation. Eve's unruly blush represents her body in revolt, as her cheeks display a clue as to what she has done, even if the physical change of colour does not accurately indicate her internal emotional response. Even if Eve does not fully understand or admit the full gravity of what she has done, her body appears to know and to cede that she has committed a great trespass. This reading is, of course, complicated by the fact that this incident is one of the very few times in this thesis when a man reads a woman's blush and accurately interprets it, rather than simply projecting his own insecurity and fear, or manipulating it to suit his own ends. Perhaps Adam's skill as a physiognomist is evidence of his prelapsarian state.

Eve, meanwhile, refuses even to acknowledge her blush. Instead, she attempts to justify her behaviour:

> EVE: We have been cozen'd; and had still been so,
> Had I not ventur'd boldly first to know.
> Yet, not I first; I almost blush to say
> The serpent eating taught me first the way. (5.1.40-43)

Eve blasphemously accuses God of 'cozen(ing)' her and Adam: that is, 'tricking'. She conceptualises her fall as a move into greater knowledge, a role which flies in the face of Adam's designated position as her teacher, and which undermines the pains that he has taken in that capacity to date (though admittedly, he acquits himself rather poorly in the role). Eve categorically denies that she is blushing, which implies that she thinks that she is still in control of her body and of the situation, even though the blush that Adam observed on her face challenges that understanding. It appears that she 'almost' blushes out of a sense of shame that she was not wise enough to pre-empt the serpent and think of eating from the tree under her own steam. What this

passage suggests, and what Milton's account of the guilty blush confirms, is that the ambiguity of the blush as a sign comes about as a part of the Fall, and is indicative of a postlapsarian separation between the inside and outside of the body, and between individuals. Where the blush once represented the harmony and clear communication between the Edenic couple, now it represents the separation, suspicion, and obscurity between them.

Dryden's sense of the Fall as a cause of discrepancy between the inside and outside of the human body stems directly from Milton. Like Eve in *State of Innocence,* Milton's Eve does not seem capable of grasping the full seriousness of what she has done:

> Thus Eve with Countenance blithe her story told;
> But in her Cheek distemper flushing glowed.
> On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
> The fatal Trespass don by Eve, amazed,
> Astonished stood and Blank, while horror chill
> Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed;
> From his slack hand the Garland wreathed for Eve
> Down dropped, and all the faded Roses shed:
> Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
> First to himself he inward silence broke. (IX.886-895)

Whereas Adam is pale and silent; Eve is flushed and talkative. She affects a casual appearance, with her 'countenance blithe', but as in Dryden, her body tells the truth, even when she dissembles verbally. The poet records that 'in her face excuse / Came prologue' (IX.854): Adam can tell that she is trying to cover up some wrongdoing just by looking at her. We could go as far as to accuse Eve of lying, so great is the discrepancy between her distempered cheek and her dissembled blithe countenance. Eve's distempered blush here is much more reminiscent of the 'glowing cheek' that resulted from a nightmare than it is of her aroused blush. Nonetheless, what those blushes had in common, and what this blush lacks, is a sense of cohesion between Eve's internal emotional experience and its manifestation in the blush. Whereas previously Eve's blushing face clearly communicated how she felt on the inside, i.e. distress or arousal, in these lines there is a

discrepancy between Eve's words and her body. She is 'distempered', which suggests a perversion of the prelapsarian blood flow which allowed her to feel distressed or aroused and to outwardly demonstrate that interior feeling: the blush has become a symbol of her body's perversion, not its fit and right working.

The Fall is reflected in a breakdown of communication between the couple which manifests in the deliberate performance of outward signs that do not accurately reflect internal feelings, as in Eve's blithe countenance. Similarly, Adam's response to Eve's transgression is a retreat first to introversion— he breaks his silence 'first to himself […] inward' — and then to dissemblance. His inward response and what he says to Eve are very different. Inwardly, he calls her '[d]efaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!' (IX.901), suggesting that this act has spoiled her appearance, and taken her chastity. This line calls back to the 'faded roses' that are themselves a sign of the Fall: of sin as paleness, as implied in Needler's Genesis commentary.[100] Adam's 'amazed / Astonished' response is also indicative of his fall into ignorance. The OED offers four definitions for 'amazed', all of which hint at how Adam has fallen from a position of knowledge to one of ignorance: he has been 'driven stupid, stunned or stupefied' (OED 1); 'bewildered, confounded, confused, perplexed' (OED 2); 'terrified, alarmed' (OED 3); or 'lost in astonishment' (OED 4). Similarly, 'astonished' suggests that Adam has been 'stunned or paralysed mentally' (OED 2); 'filled with consternation' (OED 3); or 'amazed (OED 4). Adam is thrown into confusion by Eve's illegible body, and his once expressive body in turn becomes obscure. He is 'blank'. The OED uses this line to illustrate definition 5: 'Of persons: (Looking) as if deprived of the faulty of speech or action; "shut up", utterly disconcerted, discomfited, resourceless, or non-plussed'. This definition of 'blank' communicates Adam's own confusion and inability to communicate, but I

[100] Cf. Satan in *Paradise Lost*: 'care / Sat on his faded cheek' (I.601-602).

think there is another meaning of the word in play here. Adam is as paper 'left white or "fair"; not written upon, free from written or printed characters' (OED 2a): his own face is illegible to Eve. Eve's sin has caused a fundamental breakdown in communication between the couple to the extent that even before he eats for himself, Adam's body no longer accurately or legibly communicates its interior, and his thoughts and feelings are obscure to his wife by default.

Hutchinson also emphasises the bodily impact of the Fall: both Adam and Eve turn pale, and their interiors and exteriors are changed: 'Within, without, disorder'd in the storm, / The colour fades, and tremblings change the form' (IV.247-48). Hutchinson's poem continues long after the Fall, narrating most of Genesis, and the blushes that follow are linked to the fallen nature of the body. When Cain murders Abel, his guilt is evidenced by his blush: 'And in his blushes, guilt it self betrayed / When inquisition of the fact was made' (VI.193-194). All the other postlapsarian blushes of *Order and Disorder* are linked to sex and are the preserve of women. Satan sends devils to stir up lustful animosity between men and women, the latter of whom 'believ[e] her bright cheeks richly shine / When her wan lovers all grow sick and pine' (VI.483-484); when Lot's daughters get him drunk and sleep with him their sin is prefaced with a lack of blushing: 'The bashful red did from their cheeks retire / The white was sullied with their foul desire' (XIII.317-318). But some women do manage to vindicate themselves in their blushes: when Rebecca finds out she is due to marry Isaac ' … a chillness run / Begot by virgin fears, which swiftly chase / Her lively blood out of its proper place / And her fair cheeks with crimson blushes dyed' (XVI.240-243); and Sarah demonstrates her chastity when she responds to the Pharaoh's lustful gaze with a blush that only causes his lust to increase: 'The more she saw him burn, the more she blazed, / For blushes which her guilty fear had raised / The lustre of her beauty did augment' (XI.63-65). Hutchinson offers many more examples of postlapsarian blushes than does Milton, both blushes

which happen in a Genesis framework, and blushes which take place in a contemporary framework. What all these postlapsarian blushes share is a decline from the beauty and shameless sexuality of Adam's red and white cheeks and from the unblushing prelapsarian sexual desire of Eve. The need to demonstrate virtue through the blush still implies the essential sinfulness of the one blushing and emphasises just how far virtue has fallen from the state of innocence.

This chapter began with a question: What if there were no gap between the inside and the outside of the body? I have argued that both Milton and Hutchinson answer this question by suggesting that if, and *only* if, there were no gap between a body's inside and outside, then there could be true knowledge of, and communication with, human or divine others. Effectively, by closing the gap between the inside and outside of the body, these authors close the gap between the self and the other. For both Milton and Hutchinson, truly united bodies, whether that unity is between a body's inside and its outside, or between one body and another, is reserved for non-humans: in Milton's case, angels; in Hutchinson's case, between Christ and the eschatological body of the Church. They each offer a vision of the blush which can be used to communicate, and so to close the gap, between the self and the other, but also a vision of the blush which can be used to widen that gap, and so to emphasise that the other cannot be truly known in the postlapsarian world.

Coda: Hendrick Goltzius, *The Fall of Man* (1616)[101]

In closing, I would like to consider the Edenic blush in a different medium: painting. As we have seen across this thesis, a blush is a process — a movement between white and red — which raises a question: how can a painter represent this kind of momentary fluctuation in a static medium?

[101] In the interest of clarity, I will provide short references for the artworks to follow. Full references for all artworks are available in the bibliography.

Milton's sense of narrative time in *Paradise Lost* is a thesis in itself, but considering just one example will help frame this issue more clearly.[102] In Book 9, there are three occasions on which Eve makes a long speech which is followed by a description of the action undertaken whilst she was speaking in the formula 'so saying, she [verb]'.[103] For example, Eve talks herself into eating the fruit of the forbidden tree in a speech lasting some 40 lines which is followed by a timestamp: 'So saying, her rash hand in evil hour / Forth reaching to the Fruit, she plucked, she eat' (IX.780-781). 'So saying … forth reaching' obscures the time that it takes to pick the fruit and eat it, which is the work of the moment, and which hardly accounts for the length of time given to the speech.[104] On the other hand, the present continuous tense of 'she eat' elongates the action of eating so that it reverberates throughout time: there is a sense in which Eve will always be eating. On other occasions, Milton shortens narrative time by using a single word to describe an entire process, including the word 'blush'. A process can be described in myriad linguistic ways, and Milton has the luxury of getting to choose which parts of any given process he focuses on, and which he glosses over, whilst still representing the entire narrative.

Most early modern fine artists chose a single frame of the Genesis story as the subject of their image.[105] The most popular choice, by some margin, was the moment when fallen Eve holds

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[102] The edited collection *Milton and the Ends of Time* offers a range of approaches to Milton's views on a range of topics including millenarianism, time, eternity, and apocalypse. Juliet Cummins, ed., *Milton and the Ends of Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[103] 'So saying [...] she plucked, she eat' (IX.780-781); 'So saying, from the Tree her step she turned' (IX.834); 'So saying, she embraced him, and for joy / Tenderly wept' (IX.990-991).

[104] Cf. Judith Scherer Herz who writes that in *Paradise Lost* 'whatever the day, whatever local time line we are that moment within, there is always another time. It is always meanwhile'. Judith Scherer Herz, 'Meanwhile: (un)making time in *Paradise Lost*', in *The New Milton Criticism*, eds Peter C. Herman and Elizabeth Sauer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012), 85-101, 86.

[105] There are, of course, exceptions to this general rule. Some artists tell the story of Adam and Eve across a series of images (e.g. Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (1490-1510)), and there are artists who paint several scenes from the story onto the same canvas (e.g. Michelangelo, *The Fall and Expulsion from Garden of Eden* (1509-1510); Isaac van Oosten, *The Creation of Adam and Eve with the Temptation and Original Sin in the Background* (seventeenth century). By the seventeenth century, the majority of large-scale paintings of the Fall depicted a single spatial and temporal plane.

out the fruit of the forbidden tree to sinless Adam. The popularity of the image allows us to consider the importance of compositional decisions in creating dramatic and narrative tension in still, single images. Take, for example, Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Adam and Eve* (1504): an image which popularised a composition that became a European standard.[106] One of the extant preparatory drawings of the plate for the print (fig. 1) shows an image that is almost the perfect mirror image of the final engraving with one subtle change.[107] In the preparatory drawing, Adam and Eve both hold fruit — Eve's temptation of Adam has succeeded — but in the final image, only Eve holds fruit.[108] In his final composition (fig. 2), Dürer decides to take us backwards in the narrative, to the last moment at which things could have been different; Cummings describes it as an image 'of the moment before the moment after'.[109] This decision dramatically increases the tension of the image; Adam and Eve are falling, not fallen. The deed is not yet done. This significant increase in dramatic tension is accomplished simply by taking the fruit out of Adam's hand.

Goltzius' most distinctive compositional decision is to include four prominent blushes in his painting: the blush on Eve's face; the blush of the damsel-faced serpent; the blush of the fruit; and the blush of the dawn. Yet, the question remains: how can a painter represent a blush in a static medium? I would suggest that these blushes can be identified in the first instance by viewing them in the context of the colours in the rest of the painting. There is a patch of red sky in an otherwise

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[106] For further examples of this composition see Jan Gossaert, *Adam and Eve* (c.1520); Cornelius van Haarlem, *The Fall of Man* (1592); and Hans Baldung Grien, *Adam and Eve* (c.1520). Hans Sebald Beham's *Adam and Eve* (1543; fig. 4) riffs on the artistic standard by replacing the tree with a skeleton. In Beham's image, the skeleton, Adam, and serpent all look towards Eve, directing the reader's eye to the guilty party whose *pudica* posture contrasts the unencumbered contrapposto nudity of Adam, suggesting Eve's incipient shame at her nakedness.

[107] For more on Dürer's preparatory drawings for this print, including related drawings of classical figures including Apollo and Venus see Brian Cummings, *Mortal Thoughts: Religion, Secularity, & Identity in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 284-289.

[108] It would be remiss to write about Dürer's *Adam and Eve* without recording the bombastic opening to Brian Cummings' chapter on Renaissance artistic representations of the couple. He writes of this engraving: 'They stand naked before us, God's animate machines'. Cummings (2013), 279.

[109] Cummings (2013), 290.

bluish wash; the fruit in Eve's hand looks different to the fruit on the rest of the tree; and the two faces both seem particularly red when compared to the face of Adam, even though Goltzius demonstrates his knowledge of the Adam / 'Adamah' pun and reddens the skin tone of his Adam. Moreover, when all of these blushes are viewed together, and in conversation with one another, they combine to create a sense of narrative pace by creating a composition consisting almost entirely of events 'in progress', including the Fall, of which these blushes are a key part.

Noticing where Adam is looking in these 'temptation' images can give a clue as to whether he engages in a 'knowing Fall': that is, whether he is tricked by Eve into eating the fruit or whether he eats it deliberately either to join her in her sinful state or to satisfy his own desire. In Dürer's engraving, for example, Adam watches Eve take the fruit out of the serpent's mouth and can have no doubt as to its origin,. In Hendrick Goltzius' *The Fall of Man* (1616; fig. 3), however, Adam looks straight at Eve, who, quite casually, brings a fruit up to his mouth. Although the subject is familiar, this composition is far from a typical version of an artistic standard. Anyone familiar with the history of the depiction of Adam and Eve in Western European painting to this point might reasonably expect full-frontal nudity from both Adam and Eve, perhaps with some level of 'incidental' genital covering: there are a wealth of oversized leaves, casually crossed legs, bent knees, and convenient shrubs in other images of this scene.[110] Indeed, Adam conforms to that expectation: his body is positioned to face the viewer, and there is a vine nonchalantly draped across his naked lap. Eve, in contrast, has turned away from us, and turns her head back to look over her shoulder at Adam. Effectively, she hides her nakedness from us and from her husband. If Eve has nothing to hide, then why is her nudity so obscured? The contrast between Adam's

[110] The most common incidental genital covering solution is expedient foliage, whether from adjacent trees or shrubs or, somewhat ironically, from the fruit in Eve's hand. See Jan Gossaert, *Adam and Eve* (c.1520) for an example of the latter.

reclining posture and Eve's twisted crouch gives the painting a wonderful compositional balance, but it is highly unusual for a painting of Adam and Eve not to involve both parties standing completely naked, and if there is one seated and obscured party, it tends to be Adam.[111] By turning away, Eve's body tries to reject the gaze of the viewer and claim a bodily privacy that is incongruous with prelapsarian innocence. The eroticism of Goltzius' image is further increased by the fact that the 'woman with her back to the viewer' pose is far more commonly used in representations of Venus (see fig. 5) than in paintings of Eve.[112] Eve's suggestive body language, along with the gentle pressure of her left hand on Adam's chest and the intense eye contact that the two maintain, suggests that Eve's temptation of Adam is primarily erotic.[113] The notable redness in her cheeks could simply be a part of this erotically suggestive picture, but given where we are in the story —at the moment when fallen Eve tempts sinless Adam — we must ask: is Eve blushing because of some incipient shame at her nakedness?

There are three other blushes in this image that will help to support this reading of the painting: the blush of the damsel-faced serpent, the blush of the fruit, and the blush of the dawn. That the serpent appeared to Eve with a human face was a convention dating from at least the late

[111] For three indicative examples of a seated Adam see Jan Gossaert, *Adam and Eve* (1525); Jacob Jordeans, *Adam and Eve* (1642) and Titian, *The Fall of Man* (c.1550). In Tintoretto's *Adam and Eve* (1550), Adam has turned away from the audience to the extent that his face is in one-quarter view, but this composition is unusual.

[112] Examples of paintings of Venus with her back to the viewer include: Peter Paul Rubens, *Venus at a Mirror* (1614-1615; fig. 5); Annibale Carracci, *The Bacchante* (1588-1590); Titian, *Venus and Adonis* (1550s); and Diego Velázquez, *The Toilet of Venus* (1647-1651). Venus often looks back at the viewer with the help of a mirror.

[113] Goltzius is not alone in his representation of the temptation of Adam as an erotic event. Consider, for example, Jan Brueghel I's *The Temptation of Adam in Paradise* (1590s), in which a seated Adam turns away from the viewer, whilst Eve stands naked, bending erotically back from the waist to display her body as she passes the fruit of the tree to her husband. Similarly, Beham's evocation of the *pudica* pose in *Adam and Eve* (1543) connects his representation of Eve to an explicitly eroticising classical art tradition. There are other examples of artists mapping the fruit of the forbidden free onto the body of Eve to more closely connect the Fall and sexual desire. For example in Hans Sebald Beham's *Eve Standing* (1523; fig. 6), the figure holds the fruit directly over her breast (with a conspicuously flaccid snake in the other hand), whilst in David Tenier the Younger's *Adam and Eve in Paradise* (1650s), Adam takes the fruit directly out of Eve's lap.

fourteenth century.[114] The grotesque face of the serpent in Goltzius' painting sets off the beauty of the Edenic couple by way of comparison, whilst adding a voyeuristic element to this already sexually charged scene. The redness of the serpent's face is not easily accounted for. Is it lasciviousness that turns her so red? Exertion? Triumph? Is she meant to be beautiful? Whatever its cause, the intense redness of her face contrasts the delicacy of the cheeks of Adam and Eve, which mingle red and white in a way that seems to welcome the word 'blush' in contrast to the serpent's 'flush'.

Eve holds the fruit of the Forbidden Tree between her face and Adam's. There is a large bite mark in the side facing Eve, and she seems to invite Adam to eat the fruit from her hand, adding to the erotic charge of the image. The fruit in Eve's hand has a pale green skin, fading into red at the top, which contrasts the fruit on the rest of the tree. The fruit immediately above their heads are much redder than is the one in Eve's hand, and the ones far off in the distant branches of the trees are redder still. It is curious that Eve has picked the least red fruit, the one that mingles redness with paleness. It looks much more like her own face, and the face of Adam, than the bright red ones, which mirror the face of the serpent. There is a certain familiarity to this fruit: it looks like a face. It surely cannot do any harm, as delicate and familiar as its skin, which mingles redness with paleness? Whether or not Eve deliberately chose this face-like fruit to tempt Adam— perhaps she was taken in by its familiarity as well — its human skin-like familiarity seems an important part of why it is so tempting to touch. The fruit looks like the faces of Adam and Eve, not like the dangerously red face of the serpent who tempts them. Perhaps the serpent, at whom neither Adam nor Eve looks, has turned red in triumph? When she tempted Eve, did she have this same flushed

[114] John K. Bonnell, 'The Serpent with a Human Head in Art and in Mystery Play', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 21 (1917), 255-291, 263. Bonnell lists a compendium of examples of this trope.

face that we see now, or was she as pale and beautiful as the Edenic couple, and as the fruit in Eve's hand?

There is a streak of pink behind the serpent's head, which interrupts the muted blues, greys, and greens of the sky. As we know, the red dawn is a poetic and commonplace convention, one to which the painting seems to gesture. The reddish dawn, whether it is breaking or fading, reminds us that time is passing. We see the couple suspended in a state that lasted only briefly, and we are reminded that the Fall is already in motion. Just as the red dawn is inexorably marching towards day, so too will Edenic couple fall into sin. The sense that we are witnessing a pause is amplified by the goats who watch Eve tempt Adam.[115] Iconographically, the goats gesture towards the concupiscence into which Adam and Eve will fall, but they also work distinctively in this composition. The two goats are positioned to walk away from Adam and Eve towards the mountain in the background, but they have stopped, and turned their heads for a moment to look over their shoulders at the couple. This glance over the shoulder mirrors Eve's body language, linking her to the sexuality represented by the goats, but also to their sense of momentum. The goats cannot stop forever; they must keep walking, the doe must finish eating her mouthful of grass. Life must continue, but in this painting, at this moment, we all might all pause mid-blush, mid-touch, mid-walk, mid-dawn, and look at the moment just before it all went wrong.

Goltzius' painting represents several small actions in motion, which culminate to an overall sense that the painting operates as a sort of freeze-frame mid-way through the fall. In Adam's right hand, he holds another fruit between his thumb and forefinger, squeezing it so tightly that you can

[115] There are several other animals in this painting, including an elephant and a cat. For the iconographic significance of each of these animals in paintings of the Fall see James P. Conlan, 'Milton's Elephant', in *The Human-Animal Boundary: Exploring the Line in Philosophy and Fiction,* eds Nandita Batra and Mario Wenning (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2019), 127-156; and Eric Ziolkowski, 'From Ursus Diabolus to Ursus Ex Machina: The Ambivalent Legacy of Biblical Bears in Christian Art and Hagiography', in *Fallen Animals: Art, Religion, Literature* ed. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 23-46, 26-27.

see the depression in its side. The calm and blithe initial appearance of this image is further undercut by the pressure Adam focuses onto this little fig, which looks like it is about to pop under the pressure of his fingers. The fig looks ahead to the end of the story, when Adam and Eve must stitch together fig leaves to wear to cover their nakedness. Proleptic too is the carefully painted dirt under Adam's fingernail.

Where does this leave Eve's blush? I would suggest that, like Milton's Eve, whose postlapsarian blush gave Adam a clue that she had done something wrong, so in this painting does Eve's body language, including her blush, give us a sense that the Fall is in motion. Goltzius' Eve might look at Adam with 'countenance blithe', but like Milton's Eve, her body seems instinctively to know something that her mind does not fully understand: that her nudity has suddenly become shameful, and that she must obscure it from view. Her liminal state, after innocence, but before knowledge, is reflected in the glow of her red cheeks, which are also passing from one state to the next. Eve is falling, and this motion is punningly mirrored in the other actions of the painting which are all mid-way through completion.

This chapter has argued that John Milton and Lucy Hutchinson recognise the discrepancy between the inside and outside of the body, and that they each offer a vision of a sinless body without gaps. For Milton, this body is a prelapsarian phenomenon, which is capable of bringing together the self and the other through sexual intercourse and through verbal and non-verbal communication, including the blush. The postlapsarian blush in *Paradise Lost* represents the rendering both of the body's inside and outside and between the self and the other. Hutchinson's vision is of an eschatological body, restored by God to be his bride on the day of Revelation, when all will be known, and when sex will be restored to a holy mode of communication, and way of knowing the other perfectly. To this chapter's main question — what if the material

communications of the body were entirely trustworthy? — both texts give the same answer. If there was no gap between a body's inside and its outside, only then could there be true communication with, and knowledge of, both human and divine others.

Conclusion: Making sense of the early modern blush

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

- 1 Corinthians 13:12

In this thesis, I have noted the omnipresence of the blush across a wide range of classical and early modern genres including narrative poetry; Petrarchan verse; Latin love elegies; medical treatises; travel writing; Roman histories; Jacobean and Restoration drama; the Bible; Jewish hermeneutics; biblical commentaries; patristic writings; sermons; Greek philosophy; conduct books; closet drama; and epic poetry. My thesis is the first study of the blush to bring this many disparate genres together at such length, and its primary contribution has been to uncover and preserve the idiosyncrasies of how different genres treat the blush whilst drawing out similarities between genres, including in their imagery, language, and source texts. My aim has been to explain why the blush is so pervasive in early modern English literature. In answer to that question, I have suggested that it is the ambiguity of the blush which makes it such a ubiquitous symbol because that ambiguity offers an opportunity to consider how the meaning of the body is created and communicated.

The texts of this thesis use the blush to explore the making of meaning in many different ways. They consider how the meaning of the body might be received and understood, but also how it might be lost, falsified, misunderstood, and how it might compete with, submit to, or dominate other forms of knowledge. The blush allows us to consider what it means when deductive knowledge clashes with received knowledge, or when a person's speech clashes with their non-verbal communications. I have suggested that the preoccupation of early modern English Literature with blushing reflects the scepticism of the age, which is characterised by the search for

what Othello terms 'ocular proof', and riven with doubt about the value of verbal testimony. The blush appears to offer the ultimate ocular proof — an frequently inconvenient involuntary rush of blood which is difficult to hide and difficult to falsify — yet in practice, writing about the blush calls into attention the processes through which non-verbal communications are interpreted and often finds those processes wanting. Even when the inside of the body comes rushing to its outside, that material communication remains subject to the same structures of power and linguistic limitations which can make verbal communication seem difficult or untrustworthy. However, an awareness of the gap between the inside and outside of the body does not *always* prompt a sceptical crisis about how one person might know and communicate with another. As the texts of this thesis show, early modern writers manipulated the gap between the inside and outside of the body to a range of ends. We have repeatedly witnessed how a blush might be prompted by one interior emotion, but function socially as a sign of something else, and how that discrepancy might be used creatively: by Shakespeare to create a pornographic rape narrative; by *The False One*'s Cleopatra to control Julius Caesar; and by Donne to encourage his congregation to greater holiness. Sometimes, the gap between signifier and signified, between inside and outside, between a blush's true source and its social meaning, causes extreme ontological or epistemic difficulties, but it is also frequently an opportunity for creativity, invention, and the exercise of power or control, sometimes by those who might otherwise seem disempowered.

There is a significant difference between blushes which are primarily in conversation with classical sources, and those in conversation with the Bible. Donne's sermons concede that the interior of another must always remain obscure, but his sermons are notably less anxious about the prospect of the unknowability of the other than some of the other texts, to the extent that he is able to advocate for useful public hypocrisy and deliberate dissemblance in aid of the holiness of the

group. Similarly, Hutchinson and Milton are able to imagine a time when the inside and outside of the body will be in perfect harmony. Christianity teaches a coming Revelation when bodies will be perfected, all unknown things will be known, and all hidden things brought to light. This hopefulness about the accessibility of knowledge — we cannot know yet, but we will know in the future — stands in stark contrast to the scepticism of texts which engage primarily with classical ideas about blushing. In those texts, the inside of the other is unknowable, and remains unknowable; the deaths of Adonis and Lucrece do not usher in a period of greater understanding, rather the end of their lives also represents the end of the possibility of knowledge. The tension between biblical and classical understandings of the blush recurs in Hutchinson's poem, which asserts that blushing was fit for both men and women, in contrast to Aristotle's dictum that only the young should blush.

In turn, Aristotle's dismissive approach to blushing differs starkly from how blushing is prized in some Latin sources as the ultimate demonstration of Roman masculinity. One of the most significant findings of this study has been its revelation that blushing lies at the heart of many different understandings of masculinity: from the sensual blush of Adonis, to the blush of shame which reflects the true *Romanitas* of the Roman man; to the devotional blush of Donne's sermons and Hutchinson's poem. The blush has more to say about the contradictory impulses of early modern masculinity, and I hope to follow up some of these leads in a project on blushing in early modern translations of Ovid's 'Salmacis and Hermaphroditus'. A further potential avenue for research is the relationship between the blush, honour, and masculinity in Revenge Tragedy. I began some work about the symbol of the forehead in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, which is conceived in that play as the place where shame is expressed both literally through blushing, and figuratively through the horns of the cuckold. Curiously, in that play, the shame brought upon the rapist by the

act of rape is expressed as having: 'Thrown ink upon the forehead of our state, / Which envious spirits will dip their pens into /After our death and blot us in our tombs'.[1] It would be interesting to explore the relationship between sexual violence, familial honour, and literary notoriety, which is familiar to us from *The Rape of Lucrece*, in which both Lucrece and Tarquin express their fear of how they will be written about and how readers will interpret them. These themes recur across Shakespeare's corpus, including in the History plays, which are replete with understudied blushes.[2]

The blush reflects a power struggle between the newly demarcated 'closed' body, whose interior remains inaccessible, and that body's reader, who is able to speak about the meaning of the body's non-verbal signs. The true interior of the body might remain hidden, but often it is not the truth which matters, rather the production of an interpretation which is accepted by others as true. In general, the dynamic between a blusher and their reader reflects the dominant gender, race, and class hierarchy of their society, which is to say that more powerful characters read and interpret the blushes of less powerful characters: men read women's faces; wealthy women read the faces of their servants; white characters deny that non-white characters can blush at all. When our expectations of that dynamic are challenged, as they are by Charmion when she reads Antony's blush in *All for Love*, it becomes a short-hand for cultural difference. In the second chapter, I began to suggest that the blush could be a key symbol in early modern race relations. The blush gives Europeans a way to understand their difference to non-Europeans because it combines physical appearance, moral inclination, and social behaviour, all of which might be understood as different types of shame. I hope to pursue a postdoctoral project about shame at the turn of the eighteenth

[1] Thomas Middleton, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, ed. Brian Gibbons (London: A & C Black, 1991; repr. 1996), I.ii.1-6.
[2] There are many, many blushes in the history plays. See *Henry IV Part I* II.iv.257-258; II.iv.259-261; V.ii.60-63; *Henry IV Part II* II.ii.4-6; 57-59; *Henry V* I.ii.324; V.ii.111; 213; *Henry VI Part I* II.iv.66; *Henry VI Part II* II.iv.48; III.i.98; III.ii.161-168; *Henry VI Part III* I.iv.46; I.iv.118-120; III.ii.51; III.iii.95-97; V.i.102-103; *King Henry VIII* II.iii.42; 72; III.ii.305-308; III.ii.353-354; *King John* IV.i.112-113; IV.iii.76; V.ii.153; V.v.1-2; *Richard II* III.ii.51; III.iii.64-69; *Richard III* I.ii.57; I.iv.132-133.

century, in which I will argue that it is this combination of shame — physical, moral, and social — which defines national and individual identity in England.

But for now, all that remains is for me to say that researching and writing this thesis has been an unambiguous joy. I remain fascinated by the blush, and by the way that it challenges us to embrace the incontrovertible *thereness* of our disobedient, inconvenient, lusciously material bodies. It has been challenging, at times, to write about a phenomenon that is so very much of the body, and which seems to invite a different kind of attention than the normal literary critical processes of close-reading and contextualising. The blush so often feels like the opposite of sharp thinking and carefully constructed argument. It gives the game away, ruining the serene façade of the academic body by telling what it understands without concern for our carefully constructed conventions of detachment and disinterest. I have found that both the blush and the act of academic research ask us to inhabit the space between ignorance and knowledge, or perhaps to be in both places at once: to recognise that there is much, much more that we can know, but also much about the interior lives of others which must remain obscure. I hope this thesis has made some things clear about the early modern blush, but I also hope to have allowed it to retain something of its strangeness, its unruliness, and its reluctance to speak definitively. I hope, most of all, that it will encourage you to consider anew the strange wonder of standing before another person and saying, without speaking: ‘you move me, in my very blood’.

Figures

Figure 1: Albrecht Dürer, *Adam and Eve*, 1504, drawing in pen and brown ink and wash with white corrections, 24.2 cm x 20.1 cm, The Morgan Library and Museum, New York.

Figure 2: Albrecht Dürer, *Adam and Eve*, 1504, engraving, 25.1 cm x 20 cm, The Metropolitan Museum, New York.

Figure 3: Hendrick Goltzius, *The Fall of Man*, 1616, oil on canvas, 104.5 x 138.4 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

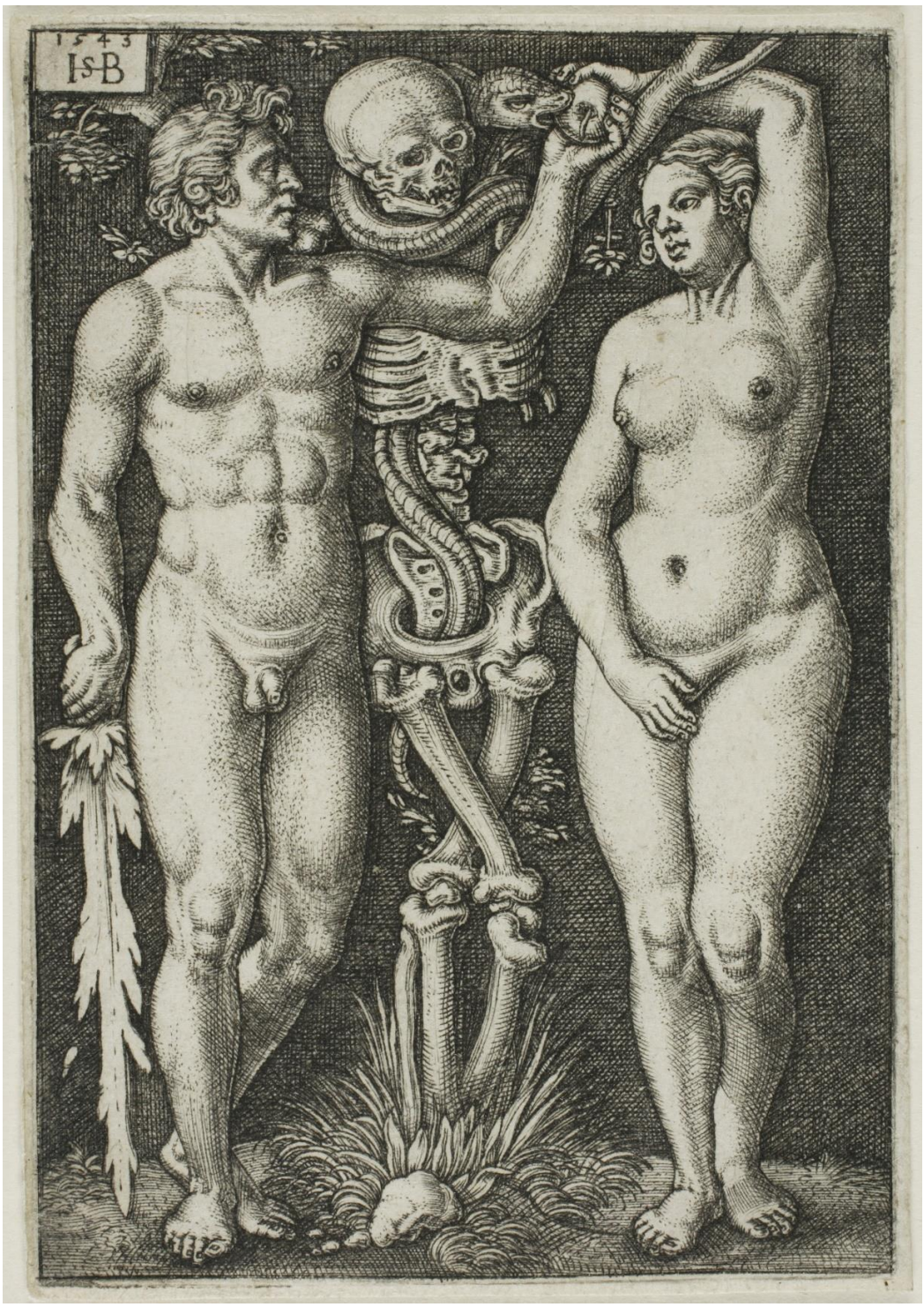

Figure 4: Hans Sebald Beham, *Adam and Eve*, 1543, engraving in black on ivory laid paper, 8.4cm x 5.8 cm, Art Institute Chicago, Chicago.

Figure 5: Peter Paul Rubens, *Venus in Front of the Mirror*, 1614-1615, oil on panel, 123 cm x 98 cm, The Princely Collections, Liechtenstein.

Figure 6: Hans Sebald Beham, *Eve Standing*, 1523, engraving, 8.2 x 5.3 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

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