The Fall of the Female Protagonist in Early Modern English Domestic Drama

by

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Abstract

My dissertation offers an innovative reading of three early modern domestic tragedies, *Arden of Faversham*, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and *Othello*, exploring parallels with the archetypal domestic tragedy of Adam and Eve through early modern commentaries on Genesis. Puritans, for whom marriage was godly, nevertheless expressed lingering discomfort about sexuality as fallen. While critics have asserted domestic drama does not follow a homiletic formula, I maintain the domestic tragedies use an early modern understanding of the marriage of Adam and Eve to inform and to convey the import of a new genre. My main concern is the fall of the adulterous wife in a dramatic and a moral sense. I argue the wife is made the primary transgressor in the plays and punished with death. In choosing these plays, I also attempt to account for the paradoxically sympathetic portrayal of the adulterous wife.

In my first chapter on *Arden of Faversham*, I attempt to reconstruct the scene of the crime, Alice's adultery and murder of her husband, Arden, and the Fall in the context of Faversham as a local producer of apples, with Alice as a scapegoat for Eve. In my second chapter on *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, I turn my attention to the metaphors of the rib and one flesh, and their implications for marital separation. Anne's adultery leads simultaneously to a breakdown in marriage and in the metaphor of one flesh. Through the smashing of Anne's lute and her subsequent starvation, the play suggests the one flesh view of marriage is insufficient in the face of the social problems caused by adultery. In my third chapter, I propose *Othello* as a variation on the treatment of the adulterous wife. Desdemona is killed despite being completely innocent. I examine references to Adam and blackness to argue the primary concern in *Othello* is not race, as critics have sometimes assumed, but Othello's lineal connection to Adam as a progenitor of sin. I hope to contribute to both feminist and genre criticism of the drama, changing the way we read the wives in the plays by showing how they rival the male protagonist in dramatically charged moments for the attention and sympathy of the audience.

For Brendon and Samantha

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Introduction

A Model for Marriage

Adam and Eve as the model for marriage and the agents of the Fall served as the prototypical couple of domestic tragedy. Domestic drama can be defined as a genre that enjoyed popularity in England during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, was characterized by being set at home instead of abroad, and was preoccupied with the everyday and those of middling status. Its concern was with the ordinary rather than the exceptional, the homely rather than the exotic. The plays under discussion were performed and published during the period between 1590 and 1610, a span of time known for a group of domestic tragedies referred to as murder plays.[1] I focus on three notable examples of domestic tragedy concerned with the adulterous wife with implications for the Fall in Genesis: the anonymous *Arden of Faversham* (1592), *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603) by Thomas Heywood, and Shakespeare's *Othello* (1604).[2] The aim of this dissertation is to examine the connection between Eve's Fall as discussed in commentaries on Genesis and early modern marriage manuals, and the parallel representation of the fall of the female protagonist accused of adultery in early modern English domestic tragedy. It is my contention there is a connection between Eve eating the apple and the pattern of the wife falling into adultery in the plays that, although tangible enough to an early modern audience through staging and symbolism, must be recovered for the modern reader. Wives in these tragedies are punished for their personal sin of adultery, whether actual or imagined, but also in a larger sense for Eve's transgression, and the plays suggest the Fall is to blame for the reality of marriage as

[1] A good point of reference for a discussion of the murder plays is Leanore Lieblein's "The Context of Murder in English Domestic Plays, 1590-1610." She defines them as a subset of plays "linking marriage and murder… more often than not through the provocation of adultery," a move which "enables the dramatist to juxtapose the emotional imperatives of passion and the communal judgements embodied in religion and the law," and she indicates such plays often drew on "actual murders" (181).

[2] Lena Cowen Orlin takes the canon of surviving domestic tragedies to include "*Arden of Faversham*, *A Warning for Fair Women*, *Two Lamentable Tragedies*, *1 and 2 Edward IV*, *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, *The Witch of Edmonton*, and *The English Traveller*," and she also allows *Othello* as a variation on the genre ("Domestic Tragedy" 371).

fallen. I also maintain opposing views about Eve's role in the Fall as primary transgressor or passive victim help to account for the fact playwrights portray the wives to some degree as sympathetic. Without exception it is the wife and not the husband, though variously implicated through his failure in his domestic responsibilities or harsh treatment of his wife's adultery, who is made to the bear the consequences of marriage as fallen, supporting the position of sermons and early modern marriage manuals that subjection within marriage was Eve's punishment for falling to temptation. At the same time, the wife is invariably represented sympathetically. Whether or not the wife is guilty of the adultery or murder, all are punished with death, in fulfillment of God's decree that tasting the apple would result in death. Critics have generally been intent on demonstrating the differences between early modern domestic drama and the biblical dramas of the earlier period. Though a few critics have seen fit to discuss Eve in relation to early modern tragedy, or to female characters more specifically, none have sufficiently explained the relationship between Eve's fall and the fall of the female protagonist in the domestic drama, or explored the symbolism of the apple as it concerns fallen sexuality in the genre. By recovering an early modern reading of the domestic tragedies informed by Genesis, I hope to continue to shift the focus to the wife as complementing man but also competing with him as the central figure in the drama of the Fall.

In the Beginning: Commentaries on Genesis

Commentaries on the book of Genesis proliferated in the early modern period. Gervase Babington, the Bishop of Worcester, compiled the first commentary on Genesis in English, entitled *Certaine plaine, briefe, and comfortable notes vpon euerie chapter of Genesis*, which appeared in 1592, the same year as the publication of *Arden of Faversham*. A second edition was issued in 1596, and it was reprinted numerous times into the seventeenth century. Babington uses Genesis to hold up Adam and Eve as a model for marriage and comment on the Protestant idea of marriage as godly. Babington takes the account of the first marriage in Genesis as offering "great testimonies, proofes, and arguments, of the

holynesse and goodnes of this diuine institution," making "mariage most commendable and honorable" (C2^{v}). He pits this lofty view of marriage against a distinctly Catholic privileging of celibacy over marriage, warning "the prohibition dislike or contempt of it" comes from "the deuill," for marriage was "most holy and honorable…euer since it was ordayned" (C3^{r}). The example of Adam and Eve's marriage, moreover, is shown to be not just an ideal but a pattern for all men and women to follow; thus, God did not say "it was not good for *Adam* to be alone, but for *Man to be alone*, thereby in wisedom inlarging the good of Marriage to man in general" (C3^{r}). For better or worse, Genesis is read in relation to marriage, but using Adam and Eve as the pattern for all people means there is sometimes an inability or unwillingness to engage in a discussion of the limitations of marriage as an umbrella for sanctioned sexuality or to attend to the problems of marital dissolution.

In a later example of the tradition of commentary on Genesis, William Whately records in his *Prototypes, or the Primarie Precedent out of the Book of Genesis*, which appeared in print in 1640, that Adam's sin was a yardstick by which a man or woman could compare their state. Moreover, Whately draws a comparison between the act of eating the apple and the sin of adultery. For my argument, the apple comes to symbolize fallen sexuality, whether in the form of adultery or adulterated marriage, in Genesis and the domestic drama, and to be conflated with murder. Whately encourages men and women to look to Adam as an example of their fallen, sinful state: "in *Adams* sinne let us all see our owne sinfullnesse, and our mortality and misery in his misery," but also a foreshadowing of their forgiveness: no man's sin is so great in contrast to Adam's that he cannot seek repentance (8). In addition to encouraging man and woman to see their own sin in Adam's transgression, Whately's text is startling for providing an association between eating the apple and fallen sexuality, ranking them on a continuum of sin: "For though the thing materially considered were but eating an apple, a plum, or whatsoever fruit it may be, yet that apple was as it were a Sacrament…and so the taking of that was a worse sinne then if it had been very actuall adultery or murder" (13). Whately's *then if it had been*, in

conceding eating the apple was not adultery or murder, has the opposite effect of establishing a mutually reinforcing relationship between the apple and adultery. In fact, eating the apple is worse than adultery or murder, which are the typical crimes depicted in domestic tragedy. Both of these points by Whately go directly to my argument about the depiction of marriage as fallen in domestic tragedy despite its Protestant valuation.

James Grantham Turner, in his influential study of how the trope of one flesh in Genesis impacted early modern views of sexual relations in marriage, indicates commentaries put a tremendous weight on Genesis to act as a touchstone for everything from marriage to the purpose of man's mortality: "Genesis must now announce the Messiah, expose the machinations of Satan, justify the subordination of women, channel the collective yearning for a vanished time of happiness, explain the origins of evil"; in short it must "throw light into every corner of the human condition. In particular, it must be consulted in order to understand the *agon* of individuals with their God, and the struggle of 'one flesh' and divided spirits that raged between man and woman. A subtle but slender fable of the origin of domestic troubles now gasps under a gigantic weight" (24). Genesis is made to contain a range of possible meanings of marriage inserted into the text by clerics and explored in marriage manuals. Genesis as a story about the beginning of domestic strife occupies a position as a fruitful source for the rise of domestic drama, particularly tragedy. In the plays, dramatists worked out conflicting ideas, first presented in the commentaries of Genesis, about the archetypal relationship between Adam and Eve and about the consequences for marriage in a fallen world.

Conflicting Puritan Interpretations of Marriage and Their Implications

Ideas of marriage espoused by Puritans were characterized by two diametrically opposed interpretations of marriage as simultaneously fallen and divinely ordained. The teachings of two Protestant Reformers on the Continent in particular, Martin Luther and John Calvin, were instrumental in setting the stage for Puritans in England with regard to the religious view of marriage as fallen. The

potential for marriage to become something other than a heaven as a result of worldly imperfections and desires is likewise comprehended in John Calvin's sermons on Ephesians (1577), for the fall separates man from God:

> This [alteration] is too bee seene every where in all things, and specially in marriage. For women ought too feele the fruite of their sinnes: and men feele ynough of it for their parte. For surely if Eve and Adam had continued in the ryghteousnesse that God had given them, the whole state of this earthly lyfe had bin as a Paradise, and mariage had been so beautified, that man and wyfe being matched toogither should have lived in such accord, as wee see the Angels of heaven doo, among whom there is nothing but peace and brotherly love, and eve[n] so had it bin [with us]. (Nnvii^{r})

And if Calvin had stopped there, this type of marriage, though rarely experienced by early modern couples, would have been idyllic enough, but he continues with the reminder of the more common lot befalling married persons: Then "as now when a man hath a curst and shrewd wyfe, whom he cannot weeld by any meanes: he must consider with him self, Lo heere the frutes of original sin, and of the corruption that is in my self. And the wife also on hir side must think, good reason it is that I should receyve the payment that commeth of my disobedience towards God, for that I hild not my self in his awe" (Nnvii^{r}). For Calvin, like in the previous example from Luther, marriage is connected to original sin: *while [man] should feele ynough of it for [his] parte,* the principle fault of Eve's disobedience lies with woman, and acts as further justification for her subjection within matrimony. Indeed, Calvin and some of his contemporaries insisted Adam's sovereignty over Eve predated her sin and the Fall, presupposing the inferiority of the wife.[3] According to Calvin, Eve's subordination was never in question, making the subjection of women "not a fall, but a restoration" (Turner 121).

[3] Calvin, it must be stated, vehemently resisted a reductive sexual interpretation of the Fall: "they childishly err who regard original sin as consisting only in lust, and in the inordinate notion of the appetite" (qtd. in Turner 157), which differs somewhat from Luther's poignant nostalgia about lost sexual innocence after the Fall.

Puritan teachings were informed by two opposing lines of thought: while mainline views of Puritan companionate marriage held godly marriage had the potential to overcome the effects of the Fall, there was within Puritanism a conflicting notion of marriage and hence sexuality as fallen, a glimpse of a world irretrievably lost. In reiterating these dual ideas, clerics sought to reconcile persistent notions of marriage and sex as a necessary evil even as they contributed to the rise of the ideal of companionate marriage to a new position of prominence and respectability. Sermons on marriage praised the joys of matrimony as a state close to God while they acknowledged the inevitable pitfalls of everyday married life. Puritans agreed marriage was ordained as a remedy for sexual desire by providing a legitimate and sanctioned outlet for sexual intercourse.[4] In Puritan tracts on marriage, however, the doctrine of original sin is shown to be linked to fallen sexuality but also seems to generate an early modern model of companionate, mutually forgiving marriage. What is glimpsed in Puritan texts and fleshed out in the drama is the belief that marriage is touched by adultery, betraying a fear that sex in its fallen state can never be disentangled fully from baser passions to exist as a godly coming together of spouses for rendering due benevolence. Nor can it act in a metaphorical sense as a union between Christ and his church.[5]

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[4] In taking a position for marriage as a remedy, Puritans echoed the Reformers. Calvin, in *The Institution of Christian Religion* (1561), stated marriage was ordeined for "remedie of necessitie, that wee shoulde not runne oute into vnbridled luste" (H3^{v}). Heinrich Bullinger declares in *The Golden Boke of Christen Matrimonye*, "God hath geuen and ordened mariage to be a remedy" against sin (xxi^{v}). Those who forfeited the lawful remedy left themselves open to the dangers of sexual promiscuity.

[5] The Puritan reaction to the stage as possibly encouraging sin, though complicated in recent years by critics, forms an important backdrop for understanding conflicting views of Puritan marriage. Peter Lake documents the tradition of anti-theatrical polemics, identifying the key players, Stephen Gosson and Philip Stubbes, along with the grievances against the theatre, and the theatre's defenders, Anthony Munday being one, and proposing "what was at s[t]ake was competition for an audience" (429). Moreover, the Puritan reaction to adultery as a serious sin, with some Puritans advocating death as punishment, has implications for the treatment of the adulterous wife in the drama, as I will discuss in Chapter Two. For instance, Heywood is one playwright who has been identified with Puritan sympathies. The historian Keith Thomas cogently demonstrates Puritans were perpetually dissatisfied with the light punishments for adultery; they urged stricter penalties for sexual sin, and he shows how the influence of this view culminated in the successful passing of the Act of 1650, which instituted death for adultery, though he shows it was not practical to enforce it (257-65).

Therefore, despite the fact Puritan teachings tried to salvage sex within marriage as God-given and good, there remained underlying anxieties about the dangers of lust and the inability of marriage to contain desire. Anthony Fletcher provides an opposing viewpoint in finding the Protestant view of marriage disseminated in the conduct books and sermons took a positive approach to sex, characterized by a "fierce insistence that a successful sexual relationship was an essential preservative against adultery," and by rejecting the Christian asceticism which denounced sexual pleasure as sinful (177, 179). In asserting Protestantism sanctioned wedded sexuality, Fletcher nonetheless overlooks the fact these texts about marriage sometimes fell into acknowledging sex as a result of the Fall, though permitted in marriage, and even conflated it with adultery. A contrasting position on godly marriage is expressed by Margo Todd, who questions the belief "marriage was seen by Catholics as a necessary evil and by protestants as a positive good" (116). She shows how Puritan views of marriage, which included the role of the woman in the godly education of her household (106) and her responsibility for her own salvation (113), originate instead with Christian humanists, including Erasmus and Vives. She attempts to corrects this misapprehension by insisting the "rational and spiritual equality of the sexes, as well as the elevation of marriage and the household as spiritual entities, are humanist, rather than puritan propositions" (116). One such humanist, Vives, writing on the potential for fallen sexuality in marriage, exhorts couples to a mindfulness of their conjugal duties, warning them not to refrain from sexual relations: "except it be by common consent to geue your selues to fasting or prayer, & that done, come spedely together again, least that Sathan throughe your *incontinencie* do tempt you" (emphasis mine) ($S2^{v}$). Vives' words give incontinency a place within marriage, presenting it as unlawful sexual desire. Luther is even more explicit about the potential for adultery to coexist with marriage as a result of eating the forbidden fruit: "it is a remnant of this bliss when through marriage we beware of adultery and avoid it" (1: 106). Is the adultery to be avoided in marriage between husband or wife as a result of

fallen sexual relations or an extramarital affair? Luther doesn't say, but the implication for adultery to exist in marriage in the form of corporeal desire or excess is there.

A closely related idea within Puritan writings alluding to the overlap between marriage and adultery is a concern that along with the idealization of love came the danger love could become an end unto itself; thus, sermons warned couples against letting love (or lust) become the sole object, worshipping love or the body in place of God. For the better nurturing of affection in marriage, Henry Smith exhorts his audience to remember love for God should take preference over married love in order to avoid idolatry: "it is necessary that they both love God, and as their love increaseth toward him, so it shall increase each to other. But the man must take heed that his love toward his Wife, be not greater than his love toward God, as *Adams* and *Sampsons* were, for all unlawful love will turn to hatred" (*Preparatiue* 56). Smith's point about Adam's love of Eve has applicability to Arden, whose fond love of Alice, at least in the sources, leads him to 'winke at hir filthie disorder," prolonging her sin and leading to his murder (Wine 149). Couples who put their love of their partner before God got it wrong and risked falling into sin—a sin to which Adam ultimately falls prey. Indeed, this error is seized upon in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, when Raphael reproaches Adam for expressing too immoderate a passion for Eve (VIII.565-94). Moreover, Smith's text offers further proof unlawful love can exist in marriage, resulting in a breakdown of marriage, and leading husbands and wives to commit adultery, or worse. In like manner, Puritan preachers, such as William Gouge, also impressed on the auditors of his sermons the "bitter and cursed fruits" of adultery such as the breaking of the marriage bond, violence against spouses, the loss of land and goods, and the birth of illegitimate children, promising unlawful desire would end in unhappiness through disappointed hopes or God's judgement (*Domesticall Duties* 220-21). Nevertheless, Gouge elides the fact marriage itself leads to the decrease of desire and is the very cause of the bitter fruits of adultery he claims are so damaging to the physical and spiritual welfare of the unfaithful spouse. In *The Honourable State of Matrimony Made Comfortable*, the author B. D. proclaims,

"self-love, and the cooling and decay of conjugal love, is the fundamental cause of all disturbances that are between *Husband* and *Wife*," and the conduct literature implies this diminution happens after marriage, if not as a direct cause of it (5). Further to this, Vives, extrapolating a point made by Cicero and applying it to marriage, confirms "all amitye and frendhsyppe shoulde decaye, yf a manne shoulde loue so, that he maye hate," exemplifying love gives rise to hate (M6^{r}). Both texts by Smith and Gouge point to the fact it is lawful desire in an intolerable marriage, not just the unlawful desire, which degenerates into hatred, and which leads spouses to engage in adultery and murder.

As Joy Wiltenburg points out in her provocative study of disorderly women as depicted in early modern pamphlet literature in England and the Continent, Protestantism held two conflicting views about sexuality in marriage as both good and tainted by the Fall. But perceptions of sexual activity outside of marriage were changing, becoming increasingly intolerant:

> the fallen flesh was so suffused with sin that sexual relations always tended toward evil desires. Only marriage could legitimize the dangerous sexual impulse; and with the establishment of marriage as the universal norm, all extramarital sexual activity was intolerable. It had always been considered sinful, of course, but post-Reformation Europe took this sin much more seriously. It could even be seen as the archetype of all sin; it was in the sixteenth century that artists began portraying the fall of Adam and Eve as a fall into sexuality. (16-17)

Wiltenburg solidifies an important link between the apple and sexual sin while helping to explain the connection between the dramatic and moral fall of the female protagonist. As extra-marital sexuality became the site of illicit desire, adultery became the current sin of choice for early modern playwrights to convey her downward trajectory. I would even argue the view of the Fall as sexual sin makes the fall of the female protagonist into adultery parallel in scope and action with Eve's. By portraying women's transgression as principally a sexual one, and highlighting its personal cost in domestic drama,

dramatists found one way to position the tragedy as one of consequence, even while they implied fallen sexuality originates in marriage.

In a related examination of how the Protestant movement developed in England and the Continent, Kathleen M. Crowther investigates how Continental Reformers used Eve to differentiate their values about women and marriage from Catholicism and disseminate their faith (105-06). Crowther is careful to qualify, however, Protestant views of Eve did not represent a shift from Catholicism, despite a sincere belief they did; rather, Eve was part of a larger Protestant project of promoting marriage, and helped to solidify women's roles in the period as "wife and mother" (138). Crowther's analysis is important in highlighting the central role of Eve in early modern constructions of femininity. In Protestantism, Eve bore the blame for eating the apple (114-15), and exhibited a dangerous sexuality that had to be contained (126); the solution was a subordinate position in marriage, supporting my view of Eve as an equal companion but also a scapegoat. Most recently, in a study of attitudes towards sexualities in Shakespeare's England, James M. Bromley shows that along with the ideology of Protestant married love came a suppression of alternative sexual practices: nonreproductive forms of sexuality in the period became illegitimized; thus, marriage became the legitimate outlet for sexuality and helped to define the end of sex as procreation (17). Bromley's narrative makes visible the tension between married and other forms of sexuality in the period, and suggests how the dangerous potential of sexuality was contained within marriage; it also outlines how reproduction came to define married sexuality. By all accounts, Puritanism sought to circumscribe sex within marriage, setting married sexual love against its opposite, illicit adultery or a range of sexual practices whose end was not procreation. Like the art which portrays the Fall of Adam and Eve into sexuality, the plays uphold the idea adultery can be seen as the archetype for all sin, and it remains skeptical about the ability of marriage to completely avoid the effects of sexual sin. In *Arden* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, adultery is the direct cause of the failure of marriage,

but it is symptomatic of a larger range of social problems resulting from an imbalance of power in gender relations.

Paintings of Adam and Eve proliferated in European art during the sixteenth century with the rise of Protestantism, which promulgated Adam and Eve as the first couple within the discourse of marriage. According to Wiltenburg, cited above, artists of the sixteenth century persisted in equating the Fall with sexuality. H. Diane Russell, in her comparison of visual representations of Eve in Renaissance and Baroque art, finds marked similarities between the works: "sexuality either as a cause or as a result of the Fall"; Eve as the bearer of the fruit, remarkable in some cases for her sensuality or qualities as a "*femme fatale*"; and Adam, despite his reason, "shown almost as an innocent victim" (113-14). Russell's interpretation of the artwork indicates how Eve and Alice can function as temptress through their alluring sexuality and by bringing death to their husbands. In the drama, sexuality in relation to the Fall cannot be clearly sorted into cause or effect. The problems of adultery plague marriage, as shown in the potential for Mosby to take Arden's place, Wendoll and Frankford's simultaneous occupation of the house and enjoyment of Anne, and Othello's desire to contain Desdemona's sexuality and possess her for himself. In illustrations of the Fall, Eve is identified as the primary transgressor, aligned with the serpent either by virtue of holding the apple or in the process of handing it to Adam. In most cases in these visual images, the Fall has not yet occurred; rather, the scene is proleptic, meaning the figures anticipate the moment Adam eats of the fruit, a Fall in perpetuity. However, the presence of the serpent alludes to the fact that in Genesis Eve has already partaken of the fruit before offering it to Adam. A striking example of the sexualization of the Fall, and subsequently Eve, exists in Lucas Cranach the Elder's oil painting *Adam and Eve* (1526), which depicts Adam and Eve before the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (Fig. 1).[6] Eve stands with one arm raised suggestively, her hand holding a lower branch of

[6] An important book on Cranach exists in the catalogue *Temptation in Eden* published by The Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery, which focuses on his various depictions of Adam and Eve and other work. In it, Susan Foister contrasts

the tree. In the iconographical tradition of the Fall, the private parts of man and woman are covered with leaves, which extend out from the base of the tree, simultaneously suggesting man's innocence and the potential for reproduction. The iridescent serpent is coiled ominously in the branches overhead, looking down at Eve. Eve's hair, coiled in ringlets, resembles the body of the serpent, and the color of her hair, a burnished red, matches the apples hanging from the tree. Eve holds the fateful apple—which has a single bite mark—out to Adam, who leans against the tree with one arm while he touches the apple with the other. The animals coexist in harmony, and their presence suggests Adam and Eve's nurture of the garden and the state preceding the Fall.[7] A close examination of the painting confirms the early modern belief Eve is tainted with sin, a priori, before she even eats the apple and brings about the Fall, but the Fall is also destined to repeat itself. In Cranach's painting, woman is predisposed to fall.

There is, finally, a sense in which marriage in Puritan texts, represented as godly, offering at least in theory mutual support for spouses, and through implicit parallels to Christ as the second Adam, who will come to redeem man from sin, can be seen as redemptive. Alongside the Puritan view of sexuality in marriage as fallen, early modern marriage handbooks and sermons adhered to the belief of the mitigating effects of marriage, sometimes referred to as the fortunate fall. In a theological sense, the fortunate fall meant that God, in the absence of the Fall, would not have had the opportunity to show his transcendent love for mankind through the redemption of Christ. By extension, the concept of the fortunate fall could imply godly marriage had the potential to redeem mankind from the effects of the Fall by suggesting the husband and the wife, side by side, could work together towards the hope of salvation. This is yet another a point of conflict in Puritan texts on marriage, for marriage the Reformers

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Cranach's development of technique and thinking between earlier depictions of Adam and Eve to the relatively later *Adam and Eve* of 1526, which "makes its focus Adam's choice in receiving the apple from Eve" (53-54).

[7] Additional important works in this style, for purposes of comparison with Cranach's, include Albrecht Dürer's painting *Adam and Eve* (1507) as well as his earlier engraving *Adam and Eve* (1504). In Dürer's painting consisting of two panels, Eve is about to pick the apple, and the serpent is coiled around the branch above while the adjacent panel shows Adam near another apple. As in Cranach's depiction, the organs of generation of both are covered by leaves. The action implied in the space between the two panels is supplied by Genesis and seems to intimate it is Eve who gives the apple to Adam.

had protested was not a matter of faith or salvation but an earthly condition. Philip Almond offers further clarification on the redemption following from the Fall: "When the Fall was seen as fortunate in…seventeenth century England, it is because there would have been no redemption without Christ" (197). Marriage in the plays at least as represented initially sets up the hope of marriage as an amelioration of the fallen condition. This idea is most vivid in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* with its matchless couple of Anne and Frankford as well as in the ideal love expressed between Othello and Desdemona. On the one hand, men were seen to save women through marriage based on their superior reason. This position is evident in Smith, when he explains the need of a woman to have access to her husband's direction for her spiritual amendment: "So he must not look to find a wife without a fault, but think that she is committed to him to reclaim her from her faults, for all are defectives" (*Preparatiue* 82). A wife recognizes her inferiority and receives instruction from her husband, and a husband patiently bears the infirmities of the wife. On the other hand, the same theology that held man was the superior sex acknowledged it was only through woman that man may be saved. In arguing for women, writers made reference to the coming of a Savior through Eve or the virtues of motherhood. In a discussion of the creation of woman, Thomas Adams observes "that from her might come that *Promised Seed*, which alone doth saue vs all," emphasizing God "gaue him by that woman a man to be his *Sauiour*" (1134, 1135). The plays hold out hope marriage can be saved, but these expectations are routinely frustrated in Alice's active pursuit of the destruction of her marriage, in Frankford's callous sacrifice of Anne to serve his own self-interest, and most ambiguously in the treatment of *Othello's* violence to his wife as a mark of his enduring love. As I intend to show, the plays ultimately cast doubt on the potential of marriage as a preparatory state to salvation, suggesting marriage is always affected by fallen sexuality and by death.

The Argument against a Homiletic Reading of Domestic Tragedy

There is a small but vibrant body of criticism devoted to the study of the genre of domestic drama, with a special interest in domestic tragedy. In Henry Hitch Adams's groundbreaking study of domestic tragedy, he identifies a homiletic pattern of "sin, discovery, repentance, punishment, and expectation of divine mercy" (7). Adams maintains domestic tragedy was "the dramatic equivalent of the homiletic tract and the broadside ballad," and was mainly didactic in nature (185). Though critics find Adams's definition of domestic tragedy eminently useful, they unvaryingly take issue with his premise the plays draw mainly on theology and sin for their meaning and import, finding his classification unnecessarily restrictive.[8] Comensoli, for one, reacts against Adams's characterization of domestic tragedy, asserting instead the plays "reconstitute" ideas by using "irony, paradox, and ambiguity," resulting in portrayals "not easily resolved by homiletic formulas," and concluding the domestic plays "counter homiletic structures by inscribing change and instability above order and continuity" (26). Richardson separates the morality play from the domestic play, determining "the homiletic intention that Adams saw as motivating the plays must therefore operate differently" (10). Orlin breaks with Adams as well over his uniform reading of the plays as reinscribing morality, choosing instead to call the domestic plays "impertinent" for questioning social and moral codes (*Private Matters* 246-47). Leanore Lieblein stresses the difference between the didactic intentions of the other accounts of the murders in popular literature, and the drama: "the plays while they neither alter nor shirk the morality of their sources elaborate the social context, examine motives, and suggest the complicity of the victim in a way which changes the audience's perception of events"; thus, Adams's model falls short because his "homiletic emphasis" leads to a "focus on the guilt and psychology of the murderers, rather than the culpability of the victim" a point of "equal stress in the play[s]" (181, 186). Dolan too channels the critical backlash

[8] For a full discussion of social mobility in early modern England, which set the stage for the rise of domestic drama with its ordinary protagonist, consult Ian Archer's *The Pursuit of Stability* (15-17) and Louis B. Wright's classic *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (128-30).

against Adams; for her the plays "attempt to restore the order threatened by wifely insubordination" but fail because of the "irreconcilable contradictions" in regards to "married women's status" in society and "anxieties surrounding intimacy" (*Dangerous Familiars* 13). In particular, she demonstrates accounts of the "murderous wife" struggled to reconcile the wife's "legal status" with her actual status (*Dangerous Familiars* 26-27). In some respects, Dolan's argument is analogous to my own, for I examine the disruptive force of female sexuality as it relates to the Fall to argue the plays portray the wife as a dangerous seductress, who is ultimately limited through her subordination to her husband, while questioning the problematic nature of the gender hierarchy.

By proposing a reading of the plays in the context of Genesis, rather than moving backwards to reinscribe a homiletic reading of the drama as an archetypal pattern of temptation, sin, and death, I use the contributions of more recent criticism critiquing Adams to argue the domestic drama does not retell the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis in the style of the biblical cycle plays, nor does it subscribe to narrowly defined categories of right and wrong to provide closure like the morality plays.[9] Instead, I show the writers of domestic tragedy took material from the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis, using it to generate content for the plays, but rewrote it to examine the problems endemic to early modern marriage along with their causes and effects. What results is a radically different story that focuses on the points of tension in the narrative, conflating eating the apple with sexual sin in its portrait of the adulterous wife, effectively altering the chronology of events in Genesis by disrupting, fragmenting, or forestalling the action, making sin a pre-existing condition before the Fall, deferring or prevaricating repentance, and in the case of *Othello*, reversing the gendered pattern of the Fall. The plays are not interested in simply reiterating warnings in sermons or conduct manuals about adultery or in punishing sin but in drawing out contested meanings of gender and the household.

[9] Lynette R. Muir draws attention to the thematic and symbolic importance in the biblical drama of "the temptation of Eve, central to all Fall plays" (69).

The Critical Framework: Where We Have Been

Comensoli's re-envisioning of domestic tragedy has been important for advancing my thinking about the potential for overlap between the plays and Adam and Eve, tracing as she does the domestic plays' roots in medieval drama. In the drama, Comensoli locates "transgression" in the "patriarchal household," where "tragic suffering arises from the protagonists' inability to abide by social codes governing civility and domestic hierarchy" (24).[10] Thus, Arden understands "marriage chiefly in terms of his role as master of the household and Alice's as helpmate," contributing to Alice's frustration with her subjection in marriage and to her adultery (84), a pattern which notably repeats itself in *A Warning for Fair Women* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, drawing attention to the struggle for autonomy between genders, as established in Genesis. In Comensoli's paradigm the household as the site of tragedy parallels the garden in Genesis, leading to the tragic suffering of the wife and to a lesser degree the husband. I have chosen to focus on the figure of the adulterous wife in the tragedies and her relation to Eve, who is frequently portrayed as the primary transgressor in the Genesis story. Comensoli demonstrates the domestic plays "have a preoccupation with the category *woman*" (24). The wife rivals the husband for attention in the drama, taking a position like Eve's central role in the Fall. The rise of the genre allowed for the sympathetic portrayal of the adulteress, perhaps for the first time on the English stage. The domestic plays were invested in fleshing out "femininity"; but while some of the plays were content to conform to existing notions of gender subjectivity, others "contest those definitions" (24-25). Comensoli's point is especially relevant since the defining sins in the drama, adultery and sometimes murder, are portrayed as feminine. Likewise, sources suggest Eve's sin is in some sense a sexual one. Comensoli's analysis helps account for the reason why sexual sin is taken up as the sin of choice in the plays. Female characters in the drama are represented as tainted from the start. Women are seen

[10] Studies of the early modern family, and the wife's place within it, figuring prominently in the criticism of domestic drama include Margaret Ezell's *The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family*," Ralph Holbrooke's *The English Family 1450-1700*, and Chilton Powell's older but still useful *English Domestic Relations: 1487-1653*.

misogynistically as daughters of Eve, doomed to follow her into adultery, and eventually murder. More pointedly, Comensoli objects to the "woman-as-victim" paradigm, which she feels negates the possibility for women to commit acts of resistance or "transgression," and ignores "gender-specific anxiety about social relations in the period" (25). In accounts of the Fall, Eve is portrayed inconsistently as agent and passive victim. I too contest the idea of the women as passive in the plays because it denies them agency to fall, diminishing some of their sympathy. The plays make the fallen female protagonist sympathetic, and the sympathy and the blame come from the same source in Genesis.

Dolan's work on the representation of domestic crime in the popular literature of the early modern period has been instrumental in showing how the "familiar" setting of the household, associated with murder and staged, could become "strange" (*Dangerous Familiars* 4). Despite this representation, the court records show "women…were more often the victims than the perpetrators of domestic violence," and I explore possible reasons for this shift in the drama (*Dangerous Familiars* 4). I extend Dolan's observation to examine how elements of the Genesis story, female desire and agency, transferred to the stage could appear both recognizable and strange, and be used to portray the effects of the Fall on marriage. In committing acts of petty treason by murdering their husbands, women like Alice posed a grave threat to the domestic and political order. Dolan's fleshing out of a cultural narrative of "petty treason," a crime which invests the domestic with political significance, forges a path for women's resistance, for it "acknowledges that wives…did not always cooperate; their subordination was *not* a given," opening up the possibility for the wife in the plays to exercise her domestic influence against her husband's interests or allow others to infiltrate the household to commit adultery or negotiate murder (*Dangerous Familiars* 24). In popular texts Dolan finds when women are portrayed "sympathetically, it is at the cost of ascribing them any agency"; on the other hand, when women are construed as "agents," it is as "violent transgressors," though other more "passive" acts of resistance were available, resulting in their representation as scapegoats (*Dangerous Familiars* 5-6). I attempt to expand the discussion of the

sympathy for the adulterous wife, showing it stems in part from Eve. Also important is Dolan's account of the circulation of accounts of domestic crime through the sale of "cheap" texts such as pamphlets and ballads or through popular culture, showing rural audiences as well as urban ones, including women, would have knowledge of similar crimes to affect their response or arouse their sympathy (*Dangerous Familiars* 6-9). In particular I am struck by Dolan's account of how adultery became conflated with murder in the period, chillingly preserved in the pamphlet by the minister Henry Goodcole, *The Adultresses Funerall Day* (1635) (*Dangerous Familiars* 38-41). This pattern of adultery leading inevitably to murder has helped to shape my argument. In the plays, marriage contains traces of adultery and leads to death, recalling Eve's role in giving Adam the apple in Genesis, and her responsibility for bringing death into marriage. Dolan proposes the murderous husband is presented as "an exception," and her characterization of *Othello* as a "palimpses[t]" has influenced my decision to explore Othello's fall as an inversion of the adulterous wife, whom I investigate in earlier chapters (14).

Orlin's seminal book on the genre aims to complicate the distinction between public and private in the post-Reformation period to show the private is bound up with notions of property (*Private Matters* 1). She has shown the domestic tragedies are engaged in satisfying a cultural "curiosity" by displaying the early modern household to public view, and her interest in reconstructing the scene of the crime in *Arden* influences my belief the crime is as much public through its associations with the social narrative of Adam and Eve as it is private by its origins in domestic trouble (8-9). Most provocatively, Orlin shows the potential for the "archives [to] be fiction" and vice versa (10). The implications of this hypothesis are visible in her rich reading of *Arden* in which she proposes Alice, who is largely absent in the historical narrative, is made the chief figure in the dramatic representation of the murder over the more likely suspect in the archival paper trail (19-20). Orlin's critical practice of reading against the grain supports my own thesis proposing Alice could have become a cultural scapegoat associated with Eve, an idea explored in the drama. Throughout, Orlin reads the plays with an eye to the oeconomic literature, which

defined the roles and "responsibilities" of the householder, who she maintains occupied a position of unprecedented domestic and political importance as king of his individual castle (2-3). The responsibility of the householder is particularly germane for her examination of "domestic ethic" in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*; Frankford, and as a result, Anne are caught up in "domestic virtue," privileging the ownership of things of the household ahead of the marriage (11, 138). Orlin concludes Franklin's close relationship with Wendoll exposes Anne to danger and makes him "responsible for Anne's fall" (171). Moreover, Orlin provides me with methodology as I read the plays alongside sermons, marriage manuals, and commentaries on Genesis to find cracks in gender ideology explored in the plays, pointing to the instability of marriage. Orlin, for instance, finds Frankford responds to the "threat" of the destabilization of the household by removing Anne (151). Similarly, Dolan intimates Arden's house is no longer a locus of conflict simply because it is empty (*Dangerous Familiars* 57). The barren landscape at the end of the drama is in line with my own thinking about the resolution of the plays resembling a sort of banishment or exile from a domestic ideal. This exile is symbolized by the largely empty house in *Arden*, Anne's banishment in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and Othello's status as a foreigner recalled to Venice, problematizing the stability of the household and evoking Adam and Eve's sorrowful expulsion from Eden in early modern depictions of the Fall.

Richardson like Dolan and Orlin focuses exclusively on the sub-genre of domestic tragedy; however, as opposed to the critics I have discussed previously, Richardson's approach incorporates material culture, and so is "partly that of the historian and partly that of the literary critic" (17). My main interest in her monograph concerns her attempt to "reconstruct" domestic space, and an early modern audience's reaction to it, in the theatre; for example, she points to Arden's stool and Frankford's bedchamber as objects or places which stand in for more than themselves, conveying a transgression of social or sexual boundaries (4). More specifically, she examines the "relationship between the spatial containment" of the house and the "dynamics of representation on a comparatively 'bare' stage" (6).

Richardson contends audiences brought with them to the theatre a wide range of domestic experiences; such experiences allow the plays to draw on the relationships existent in memory between space and objects dependent on "gender and status" while providing opportunities for the critic to reconstruct those relationships (17).[11] She argues for a process of "mimesis" and "particularity" whereby a listener of a sermon or a member of a theatre audience could, when presented with a representative framework, apply a concept to themselves, drawing a "comparison with experience outside the theatre" (10-11). Consequently, she infers concrete objects themselves were not invested with meaning until brought into relief with "the dramatic situation within which such things are placed" (14). I am most interested in an application of Richardson's theory as it relates to how spaces, objects, and meanings are used to recreate the physical household on the early modern stage. The bowl and spoon in *Arden*, the lute in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and the handkerchief in *Othello* begin as mere props but, once onstage, shape the spaces of the household, whether kitchen, parlour, or bedroom, and gesture towards set meanings around status and femininity, while helping to create sympathy for the wife. By contrast, the dislocation of these objects and their meanings are meant to call attention to "horrifically aberrant behavior," thereby ensuring the "conscience is awakened," bringing about an emotional response, and inviting a comparison with Dolan's point about the defamiliarization of common domestic objects (15).

The Place of Feminism

In my dissertation, I hope to make a contribution to feminist criticism of early modern domestic drama. Critics such as Catherine Belsey, Dympna Callaghan, Viviana Comensoli, Frances E. Dolan, Karen Newman, Lena Cowen Orlin, and Catherine Richardson have all done important preliminary work on female subjectivity in the drama, and shown how women resisted notions of prescribed femininity in the

[11] For an illuminating exploration of the ways early modern dramatists considered the feelings of their female audience members in performance, consult Richard Levin's "Women in the Renaissance Theatre Audience." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40.2 (1989): 165-74.

plays. My specific contribution to feminist criticism will be to show how women occupy a place of equal importance to men in the genre of domestic tragedy rather than subscribing to a view of woman as passive victim. I choose to focus on the tragedies, despite the fact the wives die at the end, because these plays offer the greatest potential for transgression in the form of adultery and murder but also because the wives use marriage in subversive ways to repair their fall, either in imagining alternatives to marriage, repairing a marriage, or compensating for an infidel or unfaithful spouse in a marriage. I also owe a debt to social historians Susan Amussen, Patricia Crawford and Sara Mendelson, and Keith Wrightson, whose attention to women in the period has helped me to shed light on the plays and to situate the experience of Alice, Anne, and Desdemona as wives in the larger structure of the patriarchal family. According to Amussen, it was not only the reality of insubordinate wives but the belief they could become so which led to a perceived crisis of order in the period between 1560 and 1640 (*Ordered Society* 123). In the same way, Amussen shows the household head was held responsible for the conduct of his wife, including her adultery, claiming "if the head of the household had done his duty, neighbors would not have had to step in," though her assessment differs from Orlin's slightly in considering social policing "a last resort" instead of a social necessity (97-98).

One feminist theorist whose work has been critical for formulating my thinking about Eve in the context of early modern domestic drama is Judith Butler. If, as Butler asserts, there is trouble about gender, that trouble begins with Eve in the Garden of Eden. Whereas the creation of Eve in the account in Genesis insists sexual difference is naturalized and eternal, Butler's analysis reveals it to be contingent and culturally inscribed. In Butler's feminist model, gender as behavioral and ultimately sex as biological are shown to be performative, reinforcing culturally constructed and condoned ways of knowing and being. In other words, sexual difference is revealed to be a cultural construct. According to Butler, there is slippage inherent in gender obscured by cultural norms and prescriptions that once recognized makes it variable: "Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various

acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts" (*Gender Trouble* 140). Gender is inscribed on the body by a corresponding system of signifying presences and absences which, when placed in relation to one another, create the impression of sexual difference. Any gendered identity other than a dyad of man and woman opens up a difference between sex and gender and is thus subversive because it overthrows the category of sex and compulsory heterosexuality (*Gender Trouble* 115).[12] The purpose of creating separate male and female identities, which is what the story of Adam and Eve in effect does, is to confine sexuality within what Butler describes as a heterosexual matrix and to prescribe sexuality in a way that confirms and explains the meanings and ends of biological sexuality as reproduction. Elsewhere, Butler argues that performing gender is either rewarded or punished by society: "Performing one's gender wrong initiates a set of punishments both obvious and indirect," conversely, performing one's gender well conveys the false impression a gender binary does in fact exist, culminating in social collusion to protect the established gender system ("Performative Acts" 279).

For her part, Butler maintains to adopt another gendered identity, other than the one corresponding to the sexed body, is subversive because it undermines the established categories of sex. God creates man and woman in his own image; however, at the same time, Adam declares Eve to be "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (King James Version, Genesis 2:23). If Eve—or woman—is different, it allows for a sexual compatibility and perpetuates the hierarchal gender system. The possibility woman might be fundamentally the same as man, as taken out of him, presents a different kind of threat, suggesting instead there is no basis for the gender binary and she may not be subject to his authority. Luther makes explicit the importance placed on sexual difference for the early modern gender hierarchy and the Protestant conceptualization of marriage: "the husband differs from the wife in no other

[12] Gender and sex, Butler asserts, are two separate categories: sex applies to one's sexual identity, gender to what culture prescribes as that sexed identity; thus, "The sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders" (*Gender Trouble* 10).

respect than in sex; otherwise the woman is altogether a man" (1: 137). His statement indicates the necessity of a culturally prescribed gendered identity but also hints at the instability of the binary.

In Genesis, sexual difference and reproduction precede the Fall. Genesis says of God's creation of man, "male and female created he them," and God's first commandment to Adam and Eve after their marriage is procreation, "be fruitful and multiply," though it is specifically suffering in childbirth which is Eve's punishment for eating the apple (1:27-28, 3:16). Likewise, in Protestant accounts of Genesis, sexual difference and reproduction are present before the Fall; Luther explains wistfully that before the Fall sex would have been an act of will rather than lust: "Procreation would have taken place without any depravity, as an act of obedience" (1: 104). In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, sexual difference and reproduction are also represented as preceding the Fall, in having Adam and Eve fulfill gender specific roles, and by introducing as positive the possibility of childbirth before Eve's sin. Nevertheless, as Philip Almond makes evident in his examination of understandings of Adam and Eve in the seventeenth century, it was acknowledged the Fall brought about a difference in sexual organs not only in regarding them as sinful but in their actual appearance: "Genitalia, both male and female, and human generation were a consequence of the Fall" (43). It is my position sexual difference is bound up most tightly in the drama with the introduction of sin, specifically the wife's adultery; in the depictions of the fallen wife I examine in the plays, sexuality is represented simultaneously as a cause and a result of the Fall in Genesis. The plays assume troubles brought on a husband by a wife, in effect any wife, but especially an insubordinate one, come as a result of Eve's original sin but also institute a second, dramatic Fall. To eat the apple, described as the forbidden fruit, at least in the drama, constitutes a subversive act in another sense by invoking sexual difference and the potential for human generation, locating both as sites of contested authority. Belsey concludes Alice's transgression, or her "crime," consists in "reopen[ing] the question of the implications of sexual difference" (*Subject* 148). I would add eating the apple with its sexual connotation also re-opens the question of the implications of sexual difference by making that

difference apparent on the body and in the social consciousness. Because Alice's sex and her gender do not match in a behavioural or a theatrical sense, she fails to conform to the social construction of gender norms for femininity, and her acts of adultery and murder, like Eve's eating the apple, are doubly transgressive.

A Reading of the Plays

My dissertation is organized around three emblems in Genesis that I interpret as holding special meaning for early modern constructions of marriage as fallen: the apple, the rib, and the curse. In Chapter One, I focus on the earliest surviving domestic tragedy, *Arden of Faversham*, and my interest is in setting up the scene of the crime, both the crime of Arden's murder and its implications for the genre of domestic tragedy, and the original crime of Adam and Eve's Fall in Genesis. Both events are connected with adultery and murder, and both implicate women in the Fall. Rather than portraying marriage as pre and post-Fall, the main idea in this chapter is that marriage already bears marks of the Fall, as evidenced by Alice and Mosby's adultery and the marital discord between Arden and Alice that dog the play from the beginning of the action. I trace a connection between the rural setting of *Arden*, Faversham, and the Garden of Eden, arguing that Faversham, Kent, a county known for their apples, would have been a recognizable setting for a recasting of the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis. In particular, I situate Alice as Eve in Faversham as the one who eats the apple and is punished as the primary transgressor, though at the same time I maintain she is presented with a limited degree of sympathy. At the centre of the chapter is the question of agency: how much agency did Eve have in the temptation, and did Alice have sufficient agency to sin? In making Alice an agent, albeit one who is punished like Eve for her transgression, I make a case for Alice as a prototype of a tragic hero in domestic drama. During the early modern period, Eve's act of eating the apple was linked in the Protestant discourse of marriage with sexual sin. Finally, the concept of land so important in the play,

both Arden's land connected to the Abbey of Faversham, and the plot of ground marked by his body after the murder, contribute to a portrayal of marriage as perpetually fallen.

In Chapter Two, I turn to an examination of Heywood's domestic drama, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. In this chapter my concern is with marital separation in the early modern period and its representation in the play. The rib becomes an important symbol in discussions of Protestant companionate marriage to convey the husband and wife as partners, but it also has misogynistic associations for women as a pain in man's side. I establish the marriage of Frankford and Anne sets them up as an example of the first marriage; seemingly formed for each other, they represent a domestic ideal modeled on Adam and Eve. This ideal, however, depends partly on Anne's status as an object of womanly perfection. The important work of the chapter consists of analyzing the social problems of dividing one flesh as represented in the marriage manuals and the drama. The metaphor of one flesh became emblematic of Protestant marriage, but the conduct manuals avoided the problem of what happened when that marriage failed and two had to be separated into one. Adultery posed a unique problem for marriage by introducing a third person into the union, distorting the idea of one flesh. I take the position that Anne's fall into adultery aligns her dramatically with Eve's fall. Anne becomes the epitome of the potential for the portrayal of the sympathetic adulteress in the drama. From the heart cut in two, to the division of material possessions, the play shows marital separation poses insurmountable problems for the model of one flesh. A particularly interesting symbol of one flesh, I propose, is embodied in the lute, which symbolizes Anne's body, and which Frankford sends after her when he banishes her to his manor as punishment for her adultery. Anne's breaking of the lute is a poignant symbol for the pressure brought to bear on female sexuality in Protestant marriage and for the relationship between man and woman in the Genesis story. Eve is created for Adam from his side. The lute, I show, has symbolic associations with the rib. Anne's decision to ultimately destroy the lute suggests she cannot exist apart from her husband. The end of the chapter takes up Anne's fasting as a

corrective for Eve's sin of eating the apple. Anne undertakes fasting as penance for her adultery; however, the play suggests neither fasting nor sexual abstinence are a sufficient replacement for marriage. In taking up the rib, one purpose of the chapter is to show how Protestant conceptions of marriage rely unduly on the sexual fidelity of the wife. In the course of the chapter, I discuss Milton for the impact of his divorce tracts, in addition to *Paradise Lost* and Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, to supplement my discussion of the one flesh model in Genesis and *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Thus, while I indicate Milton's fictional account highlights the difficulty of separating Adam and Eve in the aftermath of the Fall, I find *Taming* interesting as an analogue for Heywood's play about how to fashion a wife, comparing the example of the lute and suggesting Kate as a potential foil for Anne.

While the first two chapters focus on the adulterous wife, in the third chapter I shift my attention to the murderous husband. Unlike Alice Arden and Anne Frankford, Desdemona is innocent of the accusations of adultery levelled against her. Othello, which contains domestic themes, is not always included in discussions of domestic drama because it does not share all the conventions of the genre; particularly problematic for critics has been the question of whether Othello qualifies as an ordinary protagonist because of his position as a black general. Running through primary sources on Genesis is a perceived connection between Adam and blackness. Contrary to critics' expectations, the curse of Ham in an early modern context did not have to do with race. Instead, Othello functions as an everyman in the drama through an understanding of blackness as sin, or a blackness of the soul made outwardly visible. I maintain a distinction between the morality play and the domestic drama; in dramatizing sin as blackness, the play draws on representations of Ham to show marriage as touched by the curse. Desdemona, the innocent wife slandered by accusations of adultery, represents Shakespeare's variation on the theme of the adulterous wife in the genre, but Desdemona's faithfulness also engages with the wife's treatment of the infidel spouse. In texts on the Fall, it was surprisingly Adam and not Eve who is represented as the infidel. Similarly, it is Othello who is represented as the faithless spouse in the play.

The handkerchief has been the focus of a great deal of attention in the play for its associations with domesticity. Critical discussions of the handkerchief have been defined by its status as a talisman or domestic object. I seek to complicate the treatment of the handkerchief as a trifle by connecting it to discussions of Adam's sin in texts on Genesis expressed in similar terms. Finally, the murder of Desdemona bespeaks an early modern concern with the contamination of the marriage bed through adultery, and shares some similarities with Anne's appearance in her bed at the end of *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Othello's murder of his wife is not a matter of a fall back into a racialized identity as Turk but a lapse into original sin present in marriage. Moreoever, the bloodless sacrifice Othello offers suggests Desdemona's murder is an attempt to atone for Adam's Fall, one more in keeping with Catholic than Protestant doctrine. In making a connection between *Othello* and the curse of Ham, I strengthen the case for the inclusion of *Othello* in the canon of domestic tragedy while showing how it is an innovative variation on the theme of the adulterous wife. More interested in Adam than Eve, the play balances out early modern reactions to Eve by showing how Adam was perceived as sharing the blame for the Fall.

In conclusion, my dissertation attempts to account for the early modern perception of marriage as fallen alongside Protestant depictions of marriage as godly. Undertaking an analysis of the plays in the context of the Genesis story of Adam and Eve, I use the apple, the rib, and the curse of Ham to demonstrate the plays draw on older forms while reinventing them for an early modern audience. My focus on the adulterous wife in the drama is an attempt to reconcile the representation of the fallen wife, in a dramatic and archetypal sense, with the sympathy I believe she would have elicited from the audience. Though adultery was never condoned, the genre, nevertheless, makes possible the nuanced portrayal of the sympathetic adulteress on the stage. Shakespeare's portrayal of Desdemona takes this sympathy to an extreme by making her completely innocent of any wrongdoing. By drawing a connection between Eve in Genesis and its subsequent exegesis, and the wife in the domestic tragedy, I

attempt to add to feminist criticism of the plays and to our understanding of the conflicted portrayal of the wife in domestic tragedy by suggesting how she could compete with the protagonist for the audience's attention at moments in the drama. The treatment of the wife in the plays evokes Eve, whose role in the Fall (or after) set her up as rivalling Adam in importance but also as the primary transgressor.

Chapter One

Eating the Apple: Locating Alice and Eve in *Arden of Faversham*

Introduction

Most critics would agree that in early modern domestic tragedies dealing with marriage, *Arden of Faversham*, *A Warning for Fair Women*, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and in some cases *Othello*, with the addition of the closet drama *The Tragedy of Mariam*, the adultery, real or perceived, of the wife accounts for the dramatic tension and plays a facilitating role in the marital breakdown and deaths of the characters.[13] While Alice engages in adultery willingly, Anne Frankford and Anne Drury less so, and Desdemona and Mariam not at all, they all follow a similar trajectory from suspected or actual adultery to death. In explanations given for this propensity for adultery in drama of the household, priority is often given to contradictions within the institution of early modern marriage and to whether or not the wife has a choice to fall. Agency is considered critical to the plausibility and sympathy of the male protagonist in tragedy, such as *Othello*, yet this same agency is usually denied female characters in the drama, at least prior to committing adultery.

What has not always been acknowledged is that the determinant action of wives in domestic tragedy has something in common with a pervasive cultural narrative of domestic tragedy in the textual tradition, Adam and Eve in the book of Genesis. I have established in my introduction how Adam and Eve served as an exemplum for Protestant marriage. A compelling rationale for why marriage fails and wives fall into adultery in the plays can be found in the Genesis text. Turner puts forward that the Genesis story complete with its "transforming fruit has an erotic flavour," but he concedes the difficulty of recovering the nature of those sexual undertones so that "whether the fall refers to the discovery of

[13] Peter Ure defines the genre as one in which the primary interest is in "the relationship between husband and wife," focusing on marriage rather than murder, and he determines that these "tragedies would not have occurred if not for the aberration of one or other of the partners" (195). Though he excludes *Arden* and *Othello* from consideration based on his criteria (he allows Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*) and apportions the blame between the erring husband and the wife, he gives attention to the deterioration of marriage, but my concern is with the importance of the adulterous wife in the plays.

sex, or to a transgression that spoiled their innocent sexuality, or whether their crime of disobedience is conceived as only *analogous* to sexual pollution, is difficult to determine" (19). In placing the wives within a larger archetypal narrative involving adultery, death, and agency, I assert the domestic drama also aligns them with the temptation and fall of Eve, who eats the apple. This biblical allusion is important because it allows the adulterous wife in the plays to occupy a dual position as primary transgressor, or female protagonist, and potential victim of temptation. Thus, the portrayal of the wives and their sympathetic status depends on a larger rhetorical strategy in scriptural commentary and marriage handbooks defending or blaming Eve. Eve by some accounts, as being the first to eat, was considered the primary transgressor. In Genesis, Eve "tooke of the fruit thereof, and did eate, and gaue also unto her husband with her, and he did eate" (3:6). For eating first, Eve incurred the greater punishment; at the very least, her inordinate desire was used as justification for her subjection within matrimony: following Genesis, her desire was subject to her husband (Whately, *A Bride-Bush* (1617) 36).[14] After the Fall, God tells Eve, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16). God's declaration in Genesis, aside from its use to explain women's subjection in marriage, is notable for another reason. It legitimates sexual desire within marriage even as it implies a deterioration in sexual relations after the Fall, foregrounding sexuality as one cause, if not the cause, of domestic disorder. Using the account in Genesis representing desire as a disruptive drive which needs to be contained as the basis for innovation, playwrights work out the implications for fallen sexuality as the catalyst resulting in the deterioration of marriage in domestic tragedy.

[14] R. Valerie Lucas reinforces the importance of the Puritan sermon as a genre which established the centrality of marriage and promoted mutual affection between spouses for the Protestant Reformation against Catholic views of celibacy while at the same time perpetuating the patriarchal family system by promoting the subordination of women. The subjection of the wife within marriage was deemed necessary, she explains, because of Eve's transgression: "the presence of these unruly wives underlies the preachers' insistence upon absolute male authority as the only means to stem the tide of female insubordination" (232). Lucas's view of Puritan marriage supports a connection between Alice and Eve, and shows how Alice's insubordination is conceived of as a monstrous inversion, even as it shows that marriage is not sufficient to contain disorderly women.

Marriage, as it plays out in the domestic tragedies I examine, rather than acting as a preservative against sexual desire, as is suggested by Paul, who states it is better to marry than to burn, is shown to lead to a debased or corrupted sexuality as evidenced by the presence of adulterous desire inside as well as outside of marriage, and the problematic nature of sexuality, interpreted as resulting from the Fall.[15] As I will show, in the early modern period, the Fall of Adam and Eve became inextricably intertwined with sexuality: the Fall resulted in a deteriorated sexuality which extended to marriage. Though the link between the Fall and sexuality was present in the medieval period too, in the early modern period there is a renewed emphasis on reading the Fall sexually in part because of the necessity of a Protestant redefinition of marriage in opposition to the pre-existing Catholic stress on celibacy. This connection between the genre of domestic drama and perceptions of fallen sexuality in the Genesis story is especially strong I argue in *Arden of Faversham*, which features a wicked wife who engages in adultery and brings about the death of her husband, Arden, the first man of Faversham.[16] Moreover, the love triangle and ensuing conflict between Alice, Arden, and Mosby can be seen to invoke the fallen state of marriage and the archetypal story of Adam, Eve, and the serpent. Furthermore, the setting for the play in Faversham, recognized as the county of apples, provides additional persuasive evidence linking the play in a mnemonic sense to the figures of Adam and Eve. In this chapter, I set out to locate the origins of domestic tragedy, specifically *Arden*, in the context of the Genesis story, and, consequently, Alice as a type of Eve, by examining marriage as fallen in commentaries on Genesis, in marriage handbooks, and most importantly in the drama. The plays bring out the lingering anxieties and

[15] The Puritan view of the legitimacy of intimacy in marriage had its basis in Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians, chapter 7, verse 2 of the necessity of marriage as a means to avoid fornication.

[16] Arden occupied a position of some standing in the town and owned considerable property. He was "appointed the king's comptroller of Sandwich Port," and was "recognizably a king's man in Faversham" (Orlin, *Private Matters* 28, 31). In killing Arden, Alice and the conspirators went beyond petty treason, for they did not just murder a "husband and master; they also killed a representative of the crown" (Helgerson, *Adulterous Alliances* 26-27).

contradictions which persist even when Protestants assert (against the medieval Catholic valuation of celibacy) that Christian marriage is permissible and godly.

But while Eve is permitted to enjoy a period of happy, prelapsarian existence in Genesis, however contracted, the play suggests that Alice's marriage and the world she inhabits already bear marks of the Fall.[17] In an examination of the recurring motif of the loss of Eden within Shakespeare's plays, Catherine Belsey makes the compelling claim that "Marriage, which is a terrestrial Paradise, is after all inseparable from error, loss, and death" (*Shakespeare* 77). This view of marriage as inextricably connected with loss, I assert, has implications for a reading of *Arden of Faversham*, in that marriage is doomed from the start and, thus, tragic. The perception that marriage is somehow diminished in its earthly condition provides the context for a new kind of tragedy set in the household and supports my reading of Alice as a predecessor of the tragic hero. Most criticism of *Arden*, as the earliest extant example of domestic drama, has paid some attention to the importance of marriage, but no one has commented on the relationship between marriage and the Fall, and how it might complicate some of our assumptions about the play.[18] *Arden* draws on the story of Genesis to provide an early modern representation of marriage as fallen. In order to examine this assertion, I take up the first event of tragic significance in Genesis, namely Eve's eating of the apple, which I argue is symbolic of adultery and death. The apple would seem to set up a binary moral absolutism in which the act of eating the fruit, with its connotations of adultery and murder, is always wrong irrespective of the circumstances; I pursue a more provocative line of inquiry, questioning why Alice is allowed agency while at the same time offering an account of her sympathy. By contrast, the drama is not constrained, at least not initially, by a rigid moral

[17] Commentators on Genesis could not agree on the length of time which elapsed between Adam and Eve's placement in Eden and the Fall. Some were noticeably troubled by the implication that God's creation of Adam and Eve and the Fall could have been more or less concurrent events. As Turner explains, "It may have seemed cruel and absurd that the six days' work was destroyed in a few hours, or that the fall follows the creation of Eve almost immediately, but it was still easier to accept these difficulties than to explain why, after a longer stay, Adam would not have known his wife nor she have conceived" (28).

[18] For important examples of studies of marriage in *Arden of Faversham*, see Belsey, Comensoli, Dolan, Orlin, and Richardson.

code, working out as it does the tensions and ambiguities implicit in societal ideas of gender, status, and, in some cases, ethnicity. In its sustained depiction of marriage and the household, *Arden of Faversham* explores the parallel between Alice, Arden's adulterous wife and murderer, and Eve, emphasizing the link between the apple and sexual sin. To this end, I show how the anonymous dramatist of *Arden of Faversham* radically reworked the biblical story of Adam and Eve as a critique of Puritan companionate marriage. Within the play, marriage is tainted by the Fall so that it is touched by the apple, adultery, and death in a postlapsarian world.

A large part of the connection between the Genesis story and *Arden of Faversham* has to do with land, an idea I will return to later in the chapter. In Genesis, Eden is represented as an ideal location created for Adam and Eve to care for and rule over. This vision of land as Paradise is reflected in the description of Kent as a garden, a place known for its fruit, especially apples. After the Fall, however, Adam and Eve are cast out of Eden, the earth becomes cursed, and nature stops bringing forth its bounty spontaneously. It is Adam who is given the task of working the land, which steadfastly resists his efforts. This idea of Paradise giving way to a terrestrial world has an equivalent in early modern notions of land and property. In the sixteenth century, property ownership became increasingly important and allowed for the social mobility of the gentry. In addition, the practice of enclosure, which restricted access to sections of land formerly worked communally and gave ownership to individuals, meant land became more scarce. As a result, land served as an important marker of social status for men.[19] This economic view of land excluded those on the social margins: the poor, younger siblings, and women. Arden's wealth, in a point the play emphasizes and the source material supports, is possible because of his sizeable land holdings; as owner of the lands attached to the Abbey, he occupies a position of augmented social importance. However, the play problematizes the ownership of land by way of

[19] As Amy Erickson has demonstrated in her study of property in the early modern period, "an untitled man's social status was defined" most often "by his land ownership," and by "at least the late sixteenth century, the amount of land held was more significant than the type" (39-40).

Greene's disenchantment upon learning of Arden's newly acquired lands, Arden's spurning of the sailor Reede by refusing a small plot of land for the maintenance of his family, and the supernatural sign left by Arden's body on the ground, suggesting a view of land as fallen commensurate with the Genesis story. Representations of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden in the sixteenth century often depicted a progression of events marked by a happy, peaceful Eden, the temptation and Fall, and the expulsion, connecting land to marriage. In a religious sense, the idea of land as fallen is counteracted by the expectation of the restoration of the land, again common, as the site of Paradise. The placement of Arden's body—outside the garden wall—evokes the Fall as well as the curse on the ground itself. Alice's murder of Arden links her to Eve and her blame for the Fall while implicating marriage in the view of the land as fallen.

Alice in Faversham

Given that there are such strong links between Eve and Alice, it seems likely the play's local setting of Faversham in Kent, a region known for its production of apples, would have conjured up associations in the minds of the audience with the Garden of Eden as contained in the book of Genesis. The apple's connection to Faversham along with its symbolism in the Adam and Eve story in Genesis is used to make Alice responsible for Eve's sin. In order for this transference of meaning to take place, the theatre had to be capable of staging domestic space in multivalent ways. Catherine Richardson, remarking on the importance of a sense of place in domestic tragedy, and drawing on material culture, has coined a theory of memory for early modern theatre. She demonstrates the spatial arrangement and objects of the domestic environment had the power to tap into the imagination of the audience, a process dependent upon the relationship between "familiar location and outrageous action in a mimesis which contrasts the two," allowing the audience to both relate to and be distanced from the murder (15). Such a doubling of setting or "particularity of representation," with the dramatic setting recalling the condition and social associations of the material household, further impressed the moral message of the

drama on the consciousness of the audience (15). Similarly, Dolan has made the argument that in "representations of domestic crime" in pamphlets or plays the familiar could be made strange, adding to the "threat" in domestic tragedy (*Dangerous Familiars* 4). The potential for the domestic environment to contain the taboo act of murder relates in turn to the sensational reporting of domestic crime in the early modern period, especially domestic violence, spousal murder, and infanticide: the cultural appetite for domestic crime illustrates a taste for violence at the same time it confirms the necessity of condemning it as morally reprehensible. The setting of Arden's murder when placed alongside Alice's involvement in his death invokes the larger domestic environment of Adam and Eve in Genesis through the presence of the apple in Eden.

Moving outside the Faversham of the play, in this section of the chapter, I wish to trace a connection between the apple and what we know about the performance history of *Arden of Faversham*, and to explore its implications for a depiction of Alice as Eve. According to historians, a number of groups of players are known to have travelled to Faversham in the years leading up to the publication of Arden, notably a group with the Earl of Leicester between 1587 and 1588, and one with Lord Strange between 1591 and 1592 (Hyde 3). It is thought that the notoriety of Arden's murder piqued the interest of the anonymous playwright who then adapted it for the stage.[20] There is an undeniable regional quality to the description of Kent within the play, and a concern with its relation to London.[21] The actual historical murder of Arden as well as its notoriety makes it eminently suitable as the subject of domestic tragedy.

[20] Arthur Percival, the local historian of the town of Faversham, has suggested to me that it is not hard to imagine possibly "quite wrongly" that a troupe of Elizabethan players drinking in a tavern could have heard about the story of Arden and decided it had the makings of an excellent stage play. Percival's comment draws attention to the uncertainty of the authorship of the play and its production while it contributes to the construction of a fictional setting for the composition of *Arden*, emphasizing the circulation of the story and foregrounding the importance of the local for the play.

[21] Richardson has made a unique argument for a well-defined sense of place in *Arden* from Faversham to London, which is coloured by geographical detail, from the "well-worn path[s]" the characters use to travel by water or by road, to the oyster- boats that mark Faversham's local resources, the play is one in which "'Kentishness' implicitly influences the *movement* of the narrative, being held responsible for the temperament of its inhabitants" (emphasis added) (106-07).

The circular route the character Arden takes from Faversham to London leaves its geographical mark in the text and mirrors the news of the events of Arden's murder that travel between Faversham and London whether by word of mouth, in print, or as adapted for the theatre.

From the play's title page it is already clear that *Arden*, and Alice too, are linked inseparably to a particular place, Kent, and that their representation and reception relies on the audience's perception of the story they have heard of the historical murder, which had happened some years prior in 1551, and of Kent itself. If Eve is the mother of all living and the source of original sin in biblical accounts, Alice Arden, for early modern readers and audiences, came to serve as an example in kind as that wicked woman, guilty of the sins of sex, or adultery, and of procuring the death of her husband. On the now infamous title page, Alice is immortalized as the fallen wife: "THE LAMENTABLE AND TRUE TRAGEDIE Of M. ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM IN KENT. Who was most wickedlye murdered, by the meanes of his disloyall and wanton wyfe, who for the loue she bare to one Mosbie, hyred two desperat ruffins Blackwill and Shakbag, to kill him. Wherin is shewed the great malice and discimulation of a wicked woman, the vnsatiable desire of filthie lust and the shamefull end of all murderers" (2).[22] Besides localizing the play in Kent, the title page shows how Alice is held up as a type; her sins are female in kind, lust and murder, linking her to Eve's eating the apple and bringing death to Adam and mankind. Holinshed too persisted in preserving the story of Arden's murder in the public annals of history "for the horribleness thereof, although otherwise it may seeme to be but a priuate matter," and, like Eve, Alice is portrayed as a negative moral exemplum: "O importunate & bloudie minded strumpet!" (Wine 148, 154). The story of an unfaithful wife who falls into sin and brings about the death of her husband is a familiar one originating in Genesis. Yet it does not follow that Alice cannot retain some measure of sympathy, for the

[22] All citations from the play are taken from M. L. Wine's edition of *Arden of Faversham*.

title page is at odds with the project of the play.[23] Alice through her soliloquies is shown to be capable of feeling, at times more so than Arden. Trapped in an undesirable marriage, Alice is forced, from her perspective, to make an unthinkable choice. Like Eve, she is placed in a situation that compromises her reputation and exposes her to danger through the serpent, symbolized by Mosby, and though the audience cannot condone Alice's actions, they can sympathize with her motives.[24]

The title page, likewise, contains important information regarding the printing of the play: "Imprinted at London for Edward White, dwelling at the lyttle North dore of Paules Church at the signe of the Gun. 1592" (2). This sometimes overlooked detail about the printing history of the play locates *Arden* again in London, and is especially significant in light of the episode in the play in which Arden and Franklin take a turn around St. Paul's and an apprentice lets down a window on Black Will's head (iii.50 s.d.).[25] While being printed for sale at St. Paul's can hardly be said to be a distinguishing feature of *Arden* alone, the traces of London on the title page and in the scene described above help to recover the play's footprint in the city, and it is not hard to imagine *Arden* being sold at just such a book-stall.[26] St. Paul's Churchyard was of paramount importance to the book trade in London; it was where shop assistants posted title pages and where numerous books were on display to the throng of passersby coming from Paul's (Wine

[23] Belsey finds the direction of the action "contradicts the play's explicit project, defined on the title page" of presenting Alice as the wicked woman and the punishment of lust, and instead singles out marriage as a subject for critique (*Subject* 133).

[24] Dolan has shown the wife's murder of her husband in the popular literature "makes it possible for [her] to be at the center of a story" but that any attempt to delve into motives on the part of the author shifts sympathy: "for the more the reader engages with the wife the less simple the lesson becomes" (*Dangerous Familiars* 32).

[25] I would like to acknowledge the insightful and thought-provoking comments made by the participants at The Literary London Society Annual Conference at University College London, 2013, where a version of this paper was read, for drawing attention to the implications of the printing press and the demographics of the theatre audience in attempting to gauge the reception of *Arden of Faversham* in London.

[26] Helgerson is one who does comment on the relevance of this detail. The trace evidence of the print shop by St. Paul's, very like the one where Black Will and Shakebag hide in the play, is an indication of "specificity of place," for conceivably "the map of the play's action and the map that would have led a sixteenth-century buyer to a printed copy of the play overlap," but it is also evidence to his mind of an even more important "disjunction" between the urban London and the provincial setting of the play in Faversham (*Adulterous Alliances* 14).

48 n50). The story of Arden continued to captivate the public's imagination in print long after the murder itself in the popular literature that circulated in the form of gossip, pamphlets, plays, and even a seventeenth century ballad, helping to imprint Alice's adultery on the minds of the reader. However, if the title page is any indication, it was the public's continued fascination with the sensational crime of Alice's adultery and murder of her husband that ensured the enduring popularity of the play as domestic drama and created a market for its sale at the book stalls.

In tracing a route between the city and the town, my focus remains on the apple; specifically, how the local culture of Kent as the main producer and supplier of apples contributed to the portrayal and reception of Alice as Eve on the London stage. Kent enjoyed a reputation as The Garden of England, inviting a comparison ostensibly in name to the idyllic Garden of Eden.[27] For Londoners, Kent meant apples, making Faversham the ideal setting for a retelling of the Genesis story. The apple was grown, sold, and exported in Kent with more frequency than any other region in England during the 1590s. Kent's trademark was its fruit and exports, and it boasted an impressive variety of apples.[28] William Lambarde, writing in 1570, noted Kent was known for its woods "as well as its apples, pears, cherries, and plums" (Thirsk 84). The orchards instituted under Henry VIII increased in popularity from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, resulting in more land being set aside for the growth of fruit trees.[29] Apples and fruit from private gardens and orchards in Kent and other rural areas up until the sixteenth century were mainly used in the household production of preserves, cider, and desserts, but

[27] Edward Waterhouse in a legal work obliquely mentions trees planted to separate property were those that would prove a barrier and provide sufficient shade, including the "Apple, Pare, [and] Crabb, as in Hereford and Worcester shire, and in Kent the Garden of England" (377).

[28] The varieties of apples indigenous to Kent in the sixteenth century included London Pippin, Kentish Codlin, the Flower of Kent, the more generic Costard, and some types no longer known to be in existence such as the King of Apples, Pome Water, and Summer Pearmain. Some apples would have been transported to London by boat unless the orchard was unusually close by. Faversham itself was home to a number of apple orchards. I would like to thank Michael Austen at Brogdale for providing this material on the early history of apples in Kent.

[29] Henry VIII enlisted Richard Harris, his fruiterer, to plant an expansive orchard in 1533 in Teynham, Kent. The orchard in Kent prepared the way for the commercial sale and export of fruit in the region.

they could also result in profit by sale by the bushel (Mate 46). Rural towns, like the port of Faversham, were among the main suppliers of produce to the urban centre of London. Thus, the "clearest evidence for a concentration of orchards comes from areas within close reach of towns,—the hinterlands of Chichester and Rye and the wide swathe in north Kent, from Dartford through Teynham and Faversham, that could supply the London market" (Mate 192).[30] Exports of fruit to London reached their peak in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though it seems likely that Faversham exported fruit to London earlier, even though the records are incomplete.[31] By 1774 Edward Jacob can recount with familiarity "vessels employed in carrying wool, apples, pears, and cherries, to London and other parts, in the season" (66). J. H. Andrews has noted the importance of Faversham trade to London and explained the gap in the records: "There is known to have been a substantial traffic in fruit and faggots to London from Faversham, Milton and Rochester, but these commodities were hardly ever mentioned in the port books" (128). According to Paul Wilkinson, apples are not itemized on a list of the port's exported goods in 1443, but in the eighteenth century apples as well as other fruit routinely appear (83). One possible reason for this oversight is that apples were transported so often that there was no need to mention them. Significantly, a map shows that the Abbey of Faversham, the land settled on Arden, originally contained among its holdings a small orchard, probably containing at least some apples (Hyde 59). Orlin mentions in passing William Marshall had a claim to the "abbey's 'Apple Garden' when it was transferred to Arden" but at the time of Arden's death was not a tenant (*Private Matters* 51). Mate

[30] One particularly ripe example of the form this transport took is presented by Barbara Lewalski. Writing of Jonson's "To Penshurst" (1616), Lewalski shows how the poem praises Lady Barbara Sidney, wife of Robert Sidney of Penshurst, representing her as a "manifestation of the estate's natural fruitfulness," who was regularly occupied in sending fruit by the season, including "baskets of peaches, apricots, and grapes" to her husband at court in London ("The Lady of the Country House Poem" 265, 263).

[31] F. J. Fisher has identified London as an economic hub in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: "London was a symptom both of the expansion of English trade as a whole and of the concentration of that trade upon the Thames….they were also a centre of consumption where men expended the revenues which they had acquired elsewhere" (106). The author demonstrates the importance of the trade routes along the Thames and the movement of the gentry, ideas, and goods that occurred between London and outlying areas like Faversham. Coincidentally, it was this migration to the city which led to royal proclamations under Elizabeth I and James I for landholders to return to the country to care for their estates and render hospitality to the poor.

makes a pivotal connection between lands like the Abbey of Faversham and the production of fruit for my claim; she avers, "[t]he dissolution of monastic houses may thus have boosted the development of fruit farming" due to the propensity of private landholders "to treat the orchards as commercial assets, and not simply to satisfy the medicinal and dietary needs of their household or as a source of beauty" (192). The county of Kent, known for its fruit orchards and with its proximity to London, invited in popular culture an interpretation of the story of Alice Arden through the religious iconography of Eve and the apple, a connection plausibly perceived and developed by the playwright.

The audience for *Arden of Faversham* may have been familiar with such early accounts of the crime as recorded in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Stow's *Annals of England*, and the Wardmote Book of Faversham, in addition to the four printed editions of the play that appeared between 1592 and 1633. Wine observes that in the 1580s and 1590s theatre companies are known to have put on productions in the southern provinces, including stops in Faversham, and he muses, "it would be surprising if they did not take *Arden* on tour with them when it came into the repertoire, especially since it very early seems to have become Faversham's (and the local area's own) 'passion play'" (xlvii). Wine's categorization of the play as a *passion play* is remarkable for two reasons: it recognizes a link between *Arden* and the medieval cycle of passion plays depicting biblical events, including the Fall plays identified with specific towns such as York's *The Fall of Man* and Chester's *Adam and Eve*, and it supports my hypothesis that Alice could have functioned in a dramatic capacity as a sort of Eve figure.[32] In addition to the traveling performances, *Arden* would have been performed on the London stage, though from the lack of records we cannot be sure at which theatres these early performances took place. Judging by what we know about the composition of theatre audiences from travel between towns and London during this period,

[32] Comensoli, though she does not specifically discuss plays of Adam and Eve, identifies in the Noah plays in Chester, York, and Towneley, "Uxor as a prototype of Eve, however,…Uxor's popularity with medieval audiences" depends on a lack of divine retribution (40). This lack of divine retribution for Uxor exists in stark contrast to Alice whose punishment in the tragedy suggests the contemporary seriousness of her crime.

it is possible to infer a number of the audience members for the play in London would probably be from Kent, or even Faversham itself, either traveling to London on business or pleasure or permanently relocated to the city after growing up in the rural area. Such an audience would have felt an intensified identification with the subject matter and the setting of the play. The portrayal of nearby Faversham would have engendered sympathy on the part of the audience for its inhabitants and Alice herself, at least up until the murder of her husband.[33] By the same token, Faversham because it was rural and had ties to apples also meant that playwrights took some humour at its expense.[34] In another tangible connection between *Arden* and the apple, the presence of food, including apples, oranges, nuts, and of course ale for consumption at the theatre meant that a playgoer could conceivably munch on an apple, maybe even one from Faversham, while watching a restaging of the play. Cook notes the price of apples and nuts "was probably modest enough," but oranges were more expensive "because they were imported" (*Privileged* 197). Cook draws attention to the import of foodstuffs, notably fruit, showing apples were cheaper because they were local (*Privileged* 197 n88), some of them almost certainly from Kent.[35] Part of what I am arguing for is the circulation of the play and its story in a familiar setting, both neighbourly and archetypally, a particular kind of privileged spatial and endemic knowledge about the

[33] Andrew Gurr shows productions played across theatres, and audiences varied by the season as the aristocracy left the city, but he cautions against drawing conclusions about plays in the period based on a distinction between the public and private theatre before 1610: "To see the separate repertories in Harbage's term as 'rival traditions' before 1610, one middle class and the other aristocratic, is misleading" (148, 155). It is, therefore, more accurate to speak of a mixed London audience for *Arden*.

[34] I have encountered one pejorative portrayal of Kent in the drama in Thomas Dekker and John Ford's *The Sun's-Darling: A Moral Masque* (1656). Companions mock Raybright for his preference for Autumn and ripening fruit of the guildhalls with a derogatory reference to "this belly aking *Autumne*; this Apple *John Kent*, and warden of Fruiterers hall" (33). The dialogue identifies a season, autumn, and the apple with the geographical region of Kent while also employing the larger convention of contrast common in debates on city versus country.

[35] In James E. Thorold Rogers' early account of food prices in England, a 1564 entry under city shows three ducats for a "peck" (equivalent to a quarter bushel) of apples (577), but the price may have been marked up for resale at places like the theatre.

location of the crime and the nature of Kent's resources necessary to stage an early modern version of the story of Adam and Eve.

Alice resembles Eve, and the staging of her crime is also a return to the scene of the original crime of Eve's initiating the Fall in Eden. A literal reading of the play would suggest Faversham is a place which produces bad apples and death-dealing women. At this point, it would be possible to speculate that such an association between Alice and the apple is intended as a negative reaction to the growing commercial export of apples from Faversham rather than for local or domestic use or else stemmed from a dislike for the reputation Kent was garnering, in the wake of the growth of the orchards in the region, as rustic or quaint.[36] But to leave it there would be to ignore the small but influential contingent of Kentish audience members who would have had an intimate familiarity with the setting, and audience members more generally who would have recognized the symbolic resonance of the apple between the play and Genesis, or simply appreciated a good murder tale; both of these groups would have helped to ensure the continued popularity of the play. This is not to mention the adoption of the play in the provinces, in Faversham itself, and its cherished status as a local passion play, all of which I believe argues for a sympathetic portrayal of Faversham and, to an extent, Alice. It is tempting to surmise that the playwright may have even had a personal connection to Faversham, if not by birth then through personal knowledge of the region. If he did not hear of the story while visiting Kent as part of a visiting troupe of players, perhaps he was one of the impoverished gentry during the sixteenth century who was raised in Faversham but then relocated to London. Arden's story is transmitted from the countryside to the city through a trail of popular print and culture in texts that both precede and

[36] Circumstantial evidence for this point survives in the word Kentishman, or later Kentish man, which was used to refer to someone from the county of Kent. "Kentish." Def. adj. and n. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 10 May 2014. In addition to being from Kent, Kentish men, Samuel Pegge in his *Alphabet of Kenticisms* intimates, could refer to men who fought for Kent, for instance in Thanet (60). Having been a soldier at Boulogne in France is a distinction held by the notorious cutthroat Black Will (as well as Bradshaw) in *Arden*. Black Will was "a soldier from King Henry's French war, one of hundreds of marauders who terrorized the Kentish countryside in those years" (Helgerson, "Murder" 154). The character of Kent in Shakespeare's *King Lear* may be a more innocuous example of the way the qualities of the physical place and the inhabitant were thought to merge together.

postdate the play: *The Breviat Chronicle* in 1551; The Wardmote Book of Faversham in 1551; Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* in 1577 and again in 1587; John Stow's factual account contained in *Annals of England*, first appearing in 1592; and a ballad called "[The] complaint and lamentations of Mistresse Arden of [Feu]ersham in Kent" in 1631. An additional pamphlet now lost, *A Cruel Murder Done in Kent* recorded in 1577, which prominently features Kent in the title, makes the crime recognizable, and could have been an account of Arden's murder and a possible source for the play. What I can conclude with certainty is that the play, published in 1592 and performed on the stage earlier, solidified Alice's reputation as an adulterous wife who murdered her husband, and which further helped to put Faversham on the map.

The knowledge of place I am arguing informs a reading of the play, and which forms the basis for the connection between Alice and Eve, makes an appearance in the Genesis narrative as the site of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Just as surely as certain apple trees like the Codlin were identified uniquely with the physical geography of Kent, elements of the Tree of Knowledge in Genesis might be located in the play through Kent's association with the apple. A desire for knowledge from this particular tree is shown to be a contributing factor in some early modern readings of Eve's fall in Genesis, and helps to drive the sensational reporting of domestic crime in the period. Helgerson foregrounds Eve as a dramatic forerunner of Alice: "Eve and Mary, Bathsheba, Lucretia, and Chaucer's Alisoun lead the way for Alice Arden, Heywood's Jane Shore, Shakespeare's merry wives" (*Adulterous Alliances* 5). Helgerson, moreover, forges a connection between history and knowledge; thus, "to know Arden's story is to know more fully" not just the private but the public dimension of the murder, a fact not always acknowledged in sources recounting the events of the murder, like Holinshed ("Murder" 31). If to know Arden's story is *to know more fully*, Helgerson unconsciously links it to the Fall in another way, for an insatiable appetite for God-like knowledge, comprehending both good and evil, forms part of the motivation behind Eve's eating the apple. *Arden* in a sense is a fall into a morally corrupt knowledge of evil, which results in a

perversion of the happily married state by ushering in experience with adultery and murder. The drive to know Arden's story more completely is fueled by the sensationalist reporting of domestic crime adapted for the stage and accounts for the sustained interest in Alice's murder of her husband.[37] In addition, the play participates in the desire for knowledge in constructing the *meaning* of that Fall in the early modern period as at least in part a sexual one, for adultery leads to murder. Another critic who establishes a genealogical link between Alice and Eve is Orlin, who cites the main reason Arden achieved "mythic stature" was the symbolic resonance of Alice: "At the center was the agency of Alice. Alice served the cultural function of giving definition to the shape of domestic evil by marking its extreme" (*Private Matters* 68). While Orlin mentions Anne Sanders, Rachel Merry, and Jane Shore as Alice Arden's sisters, she surprisingly does not mention Eve as a mother, either in the sense of literary forbearer or source of women's original sin. Orlin's analysis of Alice's mythic meaning makes Alice equal to Eve and suggests Alice acts as a scapegoat for Eve's crime. It also gives weight to Alice's agency so important in criticism of the play, an agency which I maintain in my next section has connections to eating the apple.

Eating the Apple

One key issue within criticism of *Arden* has been the extent of Alice's agency and what, if any, dramatic or social purpose it serves. By way of parallel, reading *Arden* in the context of the Fall, Eve's consequential act of eating the apple has important implications for Alice's agency in the drama. If, as I am suggesting, Alice is to be viewed as a fallen daughter of Eve, does she really have a choice not to fall, or is her fate predetermined by the progression of events in the biblical text? Domestic drama is not after all biblical drama, nor does it follow a homiletic formula, but the analogous story of Adam and Eve does influence the characterization of Alice, even if the relationship is sometimes one of negative

[37] Comensoli indicates the impetus behind domestic tragedy was "contemporary reportage: the action is usually precipitated by a murder, the basis of which is an actual and recent crime recorded in a ballad, chapbook, chronicle, or pamphlet" (4). Keith Sturgess concurs domestic tragedy, with the exception of Heywood, relies on actual historical events; this "journalistic" function, he claims, sets domestic drama apart through its affiliation with the popular rather than great tragedy (8-9).

inversion. Though critics of the play usually point out it is Arden who occupies the position of protagonist, Alice is arguably the one who falls into adultery while Arden remains remarkably static.[38] It is Alice's autonomy, like the question of Eve's agency in readings of Genesis, which allows her to function as an embryonic female tragic protagonist in the drama, even if the trajectory ultimately propels her towards subjection under patriarchal authority and death.

In the criticism of *Arden*, it is Belsey who ascribes Alice the most agency, both in her bold resistance to marriage and her pursuit of a "free sexuality" as well as in her "defiance of absolutism" (*Subject* 134, 146).[39] In Belsey's view, Alice's appeal lies in her refusal to conform to the institution of marriage, represented "as an act of heroism"; consequently, her subsequent murder of Arden is likewise understood as "unauthorized heroism: a noble transgression of an absolute law" (*Subject* 146-47). Indeed, the same might be said of Eve's breaking God's commandment not to eat the apple, if viewed as an altruistic act for the greater good of mankind or to fulfill God's other commandments to "be fruitfull, and multiply, and replenish the earth" and to exercise "dominion," though eating is still a transgression of the law (Gen. 1:28). Some commentators undoubtedly were convinced childbearing would have occurred in Eden if not for the Fall, sex itself existing there in an unpolluted state. In any case, Eve and her defenders could not have failed to sense in some measure a contradiction between those

[38] Critics of domestic tragedy have with good reason identified Arden as the protagonist of the play based in part on the male pattern of tragedy and the patriarchal system, sometimes contrasting him with Alice. Dolan makes a distinction between protagonist and hero in the tragedy: "having achieved protagonist status by killing the master, Alice and Mosby do not themselves achieve tragic heroism" because of their subordinate status; as Arden's authority is also questioned, it is finally "a play with no hero" (*Dangerous Familiars* 79). Orlin insists the focus in the play is on the husband. The "protagonist's" place belongs to Arden; the tragedy originates from "his disastrous domestic misrule," setting him up as a "'tragic' hero" and supplying the cause of his death (*Private Matters* 97-98). Richardson makes the overt connection between the title of the play and Arden as the central character, referring to Arden as the "eponymous hero" (105). Belsey also finds the play by nature of its title to be "Arden's tragedy rather than Alice's," unlike the ballad, which makes Alice the "unequivocal subject of the narrative" (*Subject* 134). I am not negating their claims, but I submit the genre of domestic tragedy with its emphasis on the wife and the household allowed a woman to challenge man's position as protagonist, especially in light of the prototype for tragedy found in Genesis.

[39] For an earlier version of Belsey's argument, see her article "Alice Arden's Crime," which helped to open up new discussions about women in early modern domestic tragedy.

commandments and the one not to partake of the tree, or between the couple's childless and innocuous state and the satisfying of those commandments. That is to say, in the narrative of the Fall, Eve recognized, unlike Adam, eating the fruit was a necessary step, opening up the possibility of her act as a noble transgression of the type mentioned by Belsey in the form of Alice's flouting of the godly restrictions imposed by marriage. For Belsey, given that the alternative of love outside marriage Alice imagines does not yet exist, and because her behavior transgresses against social and moral codes, the only possible outcome for Alice is death. I agree with Belsey's premise that Alice's crime is fundamentally one against marriage, and that "at isolated moments" she has the opportunity to break out of gender restrictions (*Subject* 134) as the playwright alters the biblical story, critiquing marriage. But while Belsey locates Alice's dramatic and emotional power in her desire for free sexuality and her speech, I take the position the line between marriage and transgressive sexuality becomes blurred in the drama. Transgressive sexuality is seen to originate within marriage rather than existing in opposition to married sexuality; there is a sense married sexuality is not always materially, though it is professed to be morally, different from adultery because both in effect are remnants of a now defunct superior form of sexuality. I also take seriously David Attwell's caution against what he calls Belsey's proto-feminist reading, which he sees as dangerous for its exclusive focus on sexuality as a challenge of authority, and for its emphasis on Alice's one-dimensionality as a character (330-31). Though I too use sexuality as a lens through which to examine views on marriage in the play, I recognize an anachronistic application of sexuality has the potential to distort analysis of a text and its period for a specific political purpose. Instead, I wish to examine how Alice worked within and outside of the prescribed notions of femininity of her time.

Julie R. Schutzman's interpretation is somewhat different from Belsey's in scope, but she too persists in attributing a measure of agency to Alice. From the time of Arden's departure, Alice is able to avoid male surveillance, and is given the freedom to plan and carry out the murder of her husband; however,

once that murder has been carried out, her freedom is sharply "curtail[ed]," and she is punished for her failure to submit herself to patriarchal authority with death (292-93). Schutzman views the period of time leading up to Arden's death as one of relative freedom for Alice. In taking the position that Alice is initially invested with agency, and then qualifying that claim to show agency is ultimately denied her, Schutzman's analysis agrees with Belsey's assessment. In addition, Schutzman points out any "alternative endings depend upon Alice attaining her professed desire," or escaping responsibility, so her "punishment" is determined by the "genre" and "history" (293). I maintain Alice's agency is already restricted from the beginning of the play by the prototype of Eve, who chooses to eat the apple but is subject to the consequences of the Fall. And I would add Alice's punishment, in addition to being dictated by genre and history, is perceived of as a consequence of Eve's transgression in Genesis. Likewise, I see Arden's death as a crux in the drama, but unlike Schutzman, who understands it predominantly in terms of encroaching on Alice's agency and as the end point of tragedy, I construe death in the play as also proceeding from the events in the Genesis text. Eating the apple curtails Eve's agency and brings about death, both her own and Adam's. Thus, the play is not so much a meditation on Alice's agency to murder Arden but on the susceptibility of a wife to bring harm to her husband and on the limits placed on female agency in the context of the Fall.

Dolan modifies Belsey and Schutzman in bestowing, in her terms, limited agency upon women in *A Warning for Fair Women*. Thus, Anne Sanders is granted subjectivity to the end it allows her to be found guilty of a criminal offense and punished for her actions: "Whether emphasizing Anne's sinfulness or her criminality, the play presents Anne as an agent only insofar as she transgresses" ("Gender" 213). In the first half of the play, Anne is portrayed as a passive victim, manipulated by Anne Drury and Browne, but following her adultery with Browne and role as accessory in the murder of her husband, George Sanders, she becomes a moral agent responsible for her actions (210). This bifurcated representation of female agency in the drama is replicated in inconsistent accounts of Eve as passive victim or moral agent

in the Fall. Elsewhere Dolan states more generally that the narrative of the murderous wife contained in pamphlet literature and the drama resisted, on the surface, the notion women were "incapable" of agency (*Dangerous Familiars* 26). Such texts, nevertheless, persisted in representing the wife as agent as "criminal" because the possibility of female agency proved incompatible with woman's legal position, leading her actions to culminate in violence (*Dangerous Familiars* 27). The point I wish to draw from Dolan is the conflict between the cultural and dramatic possibility of women as agents and a legal necessity to define them as agents only when they commit a crime. In Dolan's view too, women's agency in the drama proves unsustainable. Like Belsey, Dolan is interested in a perceived link between women and domestic crime, suggesting Alice's crime goes beyond the personal to encompass the social, helping to account for the severity of her punishment. I am most interested in Dolan's construction of limited agency as it applies to Alice by portraying women as naturally sinful or inclined to commit a crime, linking the conventions of domestic tragedy and the accountability of Eve. In texts touching on the role of woman in the Fall, Eve, when the focus is not on her falling prey to the serpent, is given agency insofar as she tempts Adam to sin. My model of agency most closely resembles Dolan's, with two qualifications: first, the limitations imposed on Alice's agency are informed by a reading of Eve's perceived agency or lack thereof in the Fall, and second, Alice is punished not just for her crime but for Eve's as well so that she is doubly punished for a sexual transgression, her own adultery for seeking sexual fulfillment outside of marriage as well as Eve's adulterous desire which leads her to eat the apple in contravention of male authority.

Mary Beth Rose makes the argument about agency primarily one of genre (or sub-genre). Elizabethan tragedy was concerned with "a heroism of public action that highlights the protagonist's will to power, treating women and eros either as potentially destructive or as subliminally idealized, but always peripheral to the represented action of a play"; Jacobean tragedy, conversely, was characterized by "a heroism of endurance, rather than action, centering on private life, exploring sexual experience in

detail," and enabling women to act as tragic heroes (*Expense* 8-9). She sees a correlation between this rise of female heroism and the valorization of marriage in Protestant sermons and conduct books (9). I view Alice's dramatic autonomy as more complicated, not falling neatly into either category, and in some ways fitting better with Rose's characterization of Jacobean tragedy. From Rose's standpoint, the Elizabethan marginalization of women and eros helps explain the binary of female sexuality as idealized or destructive that is at the heart of representations of Eve, or the depiction of Alice, and the trope of the fallen woman. This unresolved tension around the temptation and the fall of the wife as conceived as eros is the focus of my dissertation. At the same time, the marginalization Rose describes is more complicated, as I am asserting the protagonist, or hero of public action, in some cases can be female. In addition, the Elizabethan as public, Jacobean as private distinction Rose establishes does not consider the defining private setting for domestic drama, the household nor the fact *Arden of Faversham* is concerned simultaneously with privacy and with sexual experience: the project of the play is to determine the extent of Alice's illicit sexual exploits and uncover her related involvement in Arden's murder at home. Alice, though she competes with Arden for the status of protagonist, acts as a tragic hero in her own right, an inherent part of Belsey's reframing of the play, through her challenge to marriage (*Subject* 134). Furthermore, *Arden* is among the first English plays to take a woman, particularly a housewife, as a central character, a fact which Rose's analysis elides.[40] Thus, Alice acts as a tragic protagonist in a way not accounted for by Rose's strict historical division of the drama. The genre of domestic drama makes Alice's heroism one of consequence, establishing the treatment of these themes for the Jacobean drama that would follow.

Alice is a focus of the dramatic action in a way that Anne Frankford and Desdemona are not. Alice is predetermined to fall, but she like Eve, who eclipses Adam, rivals Arden in importance in the tragic

[40] I am grateful to Comensoli for articulating this point about Alice's larger role in the drama to me. The fact Alice is among the first female characters to play a central role in the tragedy strengthens my point that Eve as the first woman to sin serves as a sort of model for Alice's disruption of the domestic sphere.

action. Though Eve is the basis for a misogynistic tradition that blames women for original sin, representations of the Fall cannot obscure the fact she also propels the tragic action. Eve is the one who eats the apple and suffers the brunt of the consequences, but she also exercises more agency than Adam, who is universally represented in sermons and artistic renderings as passive. Either in acquiescing to Eve or in repeating what has already gone before, his choice is decidedly limited. Literary representations of Eve, in imitation of Genesis, drew attention to Eve's Fall as a moment of dramatic importance, focusing on the conflicted moment when she stands before the Tree of Knowledge accompanied by the serpent and deliberates eating the fateful apple.

Amelia Lanyer reverses the tradition of Adam's passivity found in some sermons, drama, and visual depictions of the Fall. In her eponymous poem on Eve, "Eve's Apology in Defense of Women," which contains a reaction to Eve's eating the apple, she shifts the blame from Eve onto Adam. Lanyer's reapportioning of blame is important because it mitigates Eve's role as primary transgressor, and shows how women like Alice Arden could function as scapegoats for men. For Lanyer, Eve is blameless on the whole, in "Giving to *Adam* what shee held most deare, / Was simply good, and had no powre to see, / The after-comming harme" while Adam, with his superior knowledge, had the choice not to eat, but did (764-66). More damningly, in Lanyer, the act of eating the apple, along with the blame of incurring the consequences of the Fall, is settled upon Adam: "Yet with one Apple wonne to loose that breath….Bringing us all in danger and disgrace" (790, 792). Lanyer softens Eve's weakness to "too much love," and turns the tables to suggest that any ill in Eve has its root in Adam, as she is made from his rib (801, 809-10). Lanyer's defense of Eve does an admirable job of attempting to exonerate her but to do so must renounce some of her agency; in Lanyer's account of the Fall, it is Adam who has the most choice, not Eve. By contrast, the act of eating the apple in *Arden* is given to Alice, but any attempt to make Alice an agent is connected to the murder and so mitigates her sympathy, ultimately distancing her from the audience.

Babington's commentary on the episode of eating the apple in Genesis endeavors to make Eve a passive victim: "*When she had eaten, she gaue to Adam*. She was deceyued, and so was *Adam*….*Eue* meant him no harme, and yet she hurt him because she was wrong her selfe" (D1^{r}). Babington's account in which there is an absence of female agency is not compatible with the extent of Alice's agency as presented in the play, unless it is limited to the end after the murder when Alice loses agency, but it suggests that any role for Eve (or Alice) besides passive victim is to assign criminal agency. Babington's record of the event shares something in common with Lanyer's by making Eve the wronged party, but while Lanyer permits Eve some agency, eating to gain "knowledge" (797), Babington strips away any individual motivation Eve might have for eating the apple, leaving her an innocuous conduit of temptation. By removing from her the intent to act and the knowledge of wrongdoing, he in effect denies her agency: the passive voice makes it unclear who—the serpent or someone else—does the deceiving. Eating the apple is identified with sin, but Babington removes some of its sting. Arguably, Babington recognizes and wants to pre-empt the subversive power of Eve's choice (he makes Adam passive too). Though Babington is sympathetic towards Eve's plight, his sympathy in effect denies Eve the power of the agency to sin in the Genesis story. As it applies to the treatment of the Fall in *Arden*, if Alice is simply tempted by the serpent, figured in Mosby, into committing adultery and murder, she is denied the agency to sin and cannot act in a capacity as a tragic protagonist.

Another place when we would expect Eve's agency to come into play in early modern depictions of the Fall occurs in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In Milton's account, emphasis is put on Eve's ability to reason, debating eating the apple in terms that highlight freedom and agency. Eve's ability to weigh her choice and its consequences prefigures Alice's statement to Mosby regarding the relationship between her agency and Arden's death: "Might I without control / Enjoy thee still, then Arden should not die; / But, seeing I cannot, therefore let him die" (i.274-76). Though expressly commanded not to eat the fruit, Eve recognizes there is room for agency: "For good unknown, sure is not had, or had / And yet unknown, is

as not had at all" (IX.756-57). Eve's statement in Milton clarifies the point that good or happiness is only knowable in opposition to bad, sorrow, or pain. Consequently, Eve's musings imply good and bad can only be experienced through agency, or, more profoundly, that choice generates the distinction between good and bad, and anything else is relative. Rather than representing Eve as simply being deceived into eating the fruit by the serpent, Milton makes Eve's eating the fruit the product of agency, seemingly realizing that without choice the Fall loses some of its tragic grandeur, and Eve some of her pathos. Likewise, without agency, Arden's murder becomes less significant as more provincial and less archetypal, and Alice is divested of some of her pathos by losing her motivation for murder. It could even be said that the embodiment in the drama of Alice's agency gives rise to Alice as representative of the bad wife because she exists in stark opposition to the good wife, who is faithful and invested in her husband's well-being. Alice, nevertheless, retains sympathy because she drives the dramatic action by orchestrating the murder plot, and perhaps more closely resembles in a rudimentary form what would later, in the eighteenth-century, become the anti-heroine.

The portrayal of Alice in *Arden of Faversham* is defined by these same conflicting notions of female agency. The play does not dramatize Alice actually eating the apple like Eve, yet the parallels to Genesis are there. Alice memorably aligns herself with Eve in the climactic closet scene, which is made to resemble an analogous temptation in the Garden of Eden. In fact, Alice's solicitation of Mosby begins with a poignant allusion to ripened fruit replete with archetypal associations: "Is this the end of all thy solemn oaths? / Is this the fruit thy reconcilement buds?" (i.185-86). The reference to the closet is also a recognizable moment in the play when adultery is seen to take place in the same location as marriage, whether a bed in Arden's imagination (i.37-43) or a closet in Alice's memory:[41] Alice attempts to play on

[41] The closet referred to a gendered space; it was a "A small side-room or recess for storing utensils, provisions, etc.; a cupboard." "Closet." Def. 3b. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 14 May 2014. The fact that Alice and Mosby are locked in the closet suggests it is a space over which Alice would have held a key and exercised control. For a similar discussion of the closet in *A Warning for Fair Women*, see Comensoli, who associates the closet with Anne Sanders' domestic authority and possessions (93).

Mosby's affections and sharpen his purpose by reminding him of an oath they swore to end Arden's life. Alice indicates she is the one who sequesters Mosby in the closet, making her an active participant and linking the closet with an intimacy carried on in a private enclosed space of the household under the cover of night; unobserved by Arden, Mosby and Alice can converse in secret while the confinement and seclusion of the closet also implies sexual consummation:

> Remember, when I locked thee in my closet,
> What were thy words and mine? Did we not both
> Decree to murder Arden in the night?
> The heavens can witness, and the world can tell,
> Before I saw that falsehood look of thine,
> 'Fore I was tangled with thy 'ticing speech. (i.191-96)

Dolan makes the startling claim that especially for women in the popular literature in the early modern period adultery is conflated with murder, for "the play so closely associates desire, affection, and violence that the murder plot becomes the consummation of Alice and Mosby's affair" (*Dangerous Familiars* 55).[42] The dialogue presents another relationship at work as well in the archetypal tempter and the tempted, originally taking place in a similarly enclosed location, the Garden of Eden. Alice positions herself as Eve, and Mosby as the serpent, with Alice deceived as she thinks unknowingly by Mosby's persuasive speech into committing the twin sins of adultery and murder. The closet, as related

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There is also a possible allusion to the closet in another domestic drama, *How to Choose a Good Wife from a Bad* by Heywood (1602), when Mistress Arthur in a scene of domestic bustle directs a servant to get fresh linen from her trunk ($F4^{v}$-$F5^{r}$).

[42] Whigham compares the cavity of the closet to Alice's body. Her language in the passage "implies as well the physical consummation of sexual intercourse (itself oathlike, as when marital)… resembling a clandestine marriage *per verba de praesenti*," and Whigham goes on, like Dolan, to relate the uniqueness of this vow to the agreed upon condition of Arden's murder (81). Whigham's analysis demonstrates how adultery becomes fused once again with marriage in the play; in mimicking the marriage ceremony, and by making a pact of murder the basis of the union, the closet scene emphasizes the link between sexuality and death.

to the improper use of space and connected with adultery, is a taboo site. Like the secret sexual encounter in the closet, the apple is designated as forbidden.[43]

Though Eve's disobedience consisted in part of listening to the serpent, there are also suggestions that her sin was of a sexual nature, metaphorically in giving ear to the serpent, or in some traditions literally engaging in sexual relations with the serpent. Turner provides evidence in commentaries on Genesis that Eve's transgression was somehow a sexual one, either in coupling with the serpent or otherwise acting as a sexual accomplice to Satan, which persists in texts on Genesis as diverse as Rabbinical and Christian ones (156). Thomas Taylor reinforces the impression that Eve too easily gave audience to the serpent's words, and that listening to the serpent was part of her seduction: she "should not have lent her eare to the serpent," as the devil "easily seduceth those that are willing to bee seduced" (*Christs Victorie* 422). Similarly, the success of Milton's serpent in tempting Eve is dependent on his crafty speech, or "his words replete with guile," and there is an implied connection there too between the words which enter through Eve's ear and the sexual act: "in her ears the sound / Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregned / With reason" (IX.736-38). Eve's act of listening to the serpent's words can be perceived as a sort of conception; indeed, the visual images of the Fall emphasized the serpent in relation to Eve's ear.[44] Alice in entering into the closet with Mosby willingly and giving ear to his words is tempted to sin, but the text implies she also colludes with him by conspiring to bring about

[43] Richardson attends to the importance of enclosed spaces of the household in *Arden*. The dislocation in space and time in the closet scene "suggests that we imagine the couple in the physical space of the closet, but the temporally unlocated memory indicates a metaphorical reading which links this smallest household space with Alice's body" (109). According to Richardson, the arrangement of domestic space triggers memory in the theatre, along with the struggle for control of that space, making the household an ideal setting for adultery and murder. I am arguing that the scene could also conjure up a further metaphorical reading of the temptation scene in Genesis.

[44] For a discussion of how Eve's giving ear or listening to the serpent functioned as a sort of aural conception, see Kent R. Lehnhof's very interesting article on *Paradise Lost*, in which he advances the argument that Satan in the form of a toad attempts to penetrate Eve's ear, simulating the sexual act, and impregnate her with "seeds of sin," and, further to this, Lehnhof suggests that Eve's dream is an imitation of earlier scenes depicting Mary with the angel Gabriel in the Annunciation (51).

the fall of Arden. In the clandestine encounter between Alice and Mosby as related by Alice, illicit speech and illicit sexual relations become tangled in the private, enclosed space of the closet.

In Alice's recollection, Mosby ostensibly assumes the serpent's role and she is the one beguiled, the innocent Eve. Alice singles out Mosby's *falsehood look*, and insinuates she succumbs to temptation because she is *tangled* by Mosby's *'ticing speech*. By referring to being ensnared by Mosby's speech as something in the past, Alice associates her adultery and the murder plot as though with a time after being tempted and eating the apple. Yet the flashback also has the curious effect of making the adultery coterminous with marriage because the memory is dislocated and it isn't clear when the affair began. The similarity between desire in marriage and adultery is bolstered by the sources, which detail that Alice's attention to Mosby began around the same time as her marriage to Arden.[45] In addition, the overlap between husband and lover is blurred in Mosby's stated intent upon Arden's premature departure to London to "play [the] husband's part" (i.638). In her accusatory speech directed at Mosby, Alice intimates that at some unspecified point in the past "Arden to me was dearer than my soul—And shall be still" (i.197-98). In the triangle, Alice positions Arden at least temporarily as Adam, or the faithful husband, and accuses Mosby of trying to separate them through art. As with Eve and the apple, Dolan's analysis of how adultery collapses into murder in depictions of the adulteress exposes the way that illicit desire and death are intertwined. Just as Arden's death is the *consummation of Alice and Mosby's affair*, death is shown to be the end result of Eve's eating the apple, an act portrayed in similar terms to adultery as a sexual sin. Aside from the closet scene, Alice invokes the serpent in other places as well; in

[45] In Stow, the marriage of Alice to Arden is immediately followed in the next line by the mention of her attachment to Mosby, and his account also substantiates the protracted nature of the affair: "notwithstondynge for some dyslykynge he had of hir, he fell out with hir, how be it she beynge very desyrows to be in favowr agayne with Mosby, sent hym a payre of sylvar dice, by one Adam Fowle dwellyng at the Flowre de Luce in Feversham. Aftar this he resorted to hir agayne and would very often tymes lye at Arden's howse. In so moche that within the space of ij yeres aftar they wer made frinds he had to do with Mistris Arden" (Hyde 117). As the pretext for the estrangement scene cited above between Alice and Mosby, and the reason for Mosby's visit, the inclusion of the silver dice sent care of Adam Fowle makes it apparent the play is working from a historical timeline of events, so it stands to reason that the play also exploits for dramatic effect the overlap in both space and time in the sources between Alice's marriage and her affair.

one instance, she likens her willingness to risk her life for Mosby's love to the "traveller" who "looks" into the eyes of the "basilisk," and later she compares Arden's arms to the "snakes of black Tisiphone," which "sting me with their embracings" (i.214, xiv.144-45).[46] By Alice's own admission, however, she is implicated in the joint bond with Mosby, making her complicit in her own temptation and in Arden's death.

Mosby offers an alternate interpretation of events, identifying Alice as the serpent, who he must kill to ensure his own safety:

> But what for that I may not trust you, Alice?
> You have supplanted Arden for my sake
> And will extirpen me to plant another.
> 'Tis fearful sleeping in a serpent's bed,
> And I will cleanly rid my hands of her. (viii.39-43)

Mosby's soliloquy recalls Belsey's astute observation that the play hints Mosby's control of Alice would be no different from Arden's, only more "deadly" (*Subject* 144). As Belsey explains it, the wife's place in the liberal-humanist family, a system symbolized in the new union imagined with Mosby, results in less freedom for the wife; Belsey likens this development to "flattery and death," by which she means that the wife's "standing improves (though always in subjection to her husband) but at the cost of new and more insidious forms of control" (*Subject* 145). Belsey's analysis suggests the need on Mosby's part for stealth and deception in stealing away Alice's agency, simultaneously reinforcing through her critical language his ties to the serpent. Similarly, Dolan observes of Mosby's anthropomorphizing of the serpent that "it looks as if husband and wife, man and woman, cannot *both* be subjects in the same

[46] Wine's gloss helps to shed light on the snake imagery in these lines. In mythology, Black Tisiphone was the avenger of crime, "especially crime against kin"; depicted with snakes and a whip, she was thought to "awak[en] remorse by *stinging* the conscience," a fact which Wine sees as ironic.

bed" (*Dangerous Familiars* 55).[47] When Alice enters, Mosby continues the serpent imagery, albeit with an important inversion from Alice's earlier accusation in the closet scene. Drawing on a misogynistic tradition, Mosby identifies Alice with the serpent, and suggests it is women who possess the ability to charm men with their enticing speech:[48]

> Ah, how you women can insinuate
>
> And clear a trespass with your sweet-set tongue!
>
> I will forget this quarrel, gentle Alice,
>
> Provided I'll be tempted so no more. (viii.145-48)

The power of Alice's persuasive speech, in mending a quarrel but also in permitting her to deceive Arden and Mosby, is seen as both alluring and dangerous, and affords a comparison between Alice and the serpent. Moreover, Mosby's qualification in *provided I'll be tempted so no more* is a more direct allusion to the serpent and temptation connecting Alice's honeyed speech with the serpent in the Genesis story.

The fact that Alice uses poison to try to kill Arden makes for a fitting plot device for domestic tragedy but is also noteworthy because of the 'poisoned' apple relative to Eve in the Genesis story. The venomous serpent in Genesis, whose presence I have just finished discussing in the play, and its

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[47] This struggle for agency between the husband and the wife is exemplified in Edmund Tilney's *Flower of Friendship*. In order to pre-empt adultery, he says a husband must be first in his wife's affection, or "not be contented onely with the Spouses virginitie, but by little and little must…steale away hir priuat will, and appetite"; otherwise, the disprized husband "holdeth his life in continuall perill, his goodes in greate jeoperdie, his good name in suspect, and his whole house in utter perdition," recalling Arden's predicament (B6^{r}). He gives the example of Adam, who loved Eve so entirely that he ate the apple at her behest and died, but as Tilney's primary purpose is promoting marital love, he overlooks the problems posed to the gender hierarchy stemming from Adam's capitulation to Eve (B6^{v}). Coincidentally, Tilney mentions Tiberius Gracchus who, when he discovered two serpents in his bed, killed the male first, after being told it meant he would die before his wife (B6^{v}). The example is striking in light of Mosby's comparison of his quasi-marital relationship with Alice to a serpent in the bed and his decision—to kill her first—which suggests no true love exists between them as well as a cultural awareness of the ongoing vying for control in early modern marriage, for, as Mosby recognizes, only one of them can live. This point about competing agency will have implications for my discussion of Alice's murder of Arden later in the chapter.

[48] Eve is conflated with the serpent in the ecclesiastical and dramatic tradition. In the medieval cycle plays, the Chester *Adam and Eve*, put on by The Drapers, featured a serpent with a woman's face and snake's tail, suggestive of woman's relation to the serpent and even her complicity in the Fall (Walker 25). Lynette R. Muir also notes that some of the medieval dramas of the Fall make use of a serpent with a female face in the depiction of Eve's temptation (69).

juxtaposition with the apple in artistic and literary reconstructions of the Fall helps to create the impression of the fruit as also being infused figuratively with poison.[49] The apple of Genesis, associated with weighty choice, and, eventually, the enormity of the Fall, provides a powerfully symbolic precedent for the trope of poisoned food provided by the wife both in terms of the social anxieties it aroused and the literary representations it produced. Eve is typically identified as the treacherous wife in interpretations of Genesis for being the one who gives the death-inducing apple to Adam. By comparison, Dolan shows that poisoning food in early modern accounts of domestic violence is gendered female: "In administering poison—the early modern housewife's method of choice…wives manipulate their husbands' dependence on them for physical sustenance"; in other words, the wife misuses her responsibility to nurture her household, secretly inflicting harm instead (*Dangerous Familiars* 30).[50] It is Mosby who first introduces poison as a possibility by telling Alice he has commissioned a painter, Clarke, to paint a "poisoned picture" (i.278).[51] Alice, however, soon appropriates poison herself as the quickest means to ensure Arden's demise, but plans instead to conceal it in his food: "such as might be put into his broth, / And yet in taste not to be found at all" (i.280-81). Through her relationship to poison, Alice is undeniably associated with the kitchen, cooking practices, and domestic utensils in the scene as well as with the potential for the deceitful wife to harm her husband.

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[49] Andrew Willet in *Hexapla in Genesin* also alludes to the presence of poison implicit in the Genesis story. Discussing why Eve gave the fruit to Adam, Willet points out the misconception Eve did "forbeare to eat of the fruit, supposing it was poyson, and so present death" (40).

[50] Dolan consults court records to show there were some wives who allegedly tried to poison their husbands: Anne Hampton puts poison in her husband's food, Anne Welles poisons a batch of "sugar soppes" before feeding them to her husband, and Elizabeth Caldwell takes care to poison one of her husband's favorite foods, "oaten cakes" (*Dangerous Familiars* 30). Laura Gowing also shows wives inherently posed a domestic danger and some at least attempted to poison their husbands (204).

[51] Schutzman comments on the significance of the poisoned portrait for Alice's agency. According to Schutzman, "For Alice, the portrait represents an image of herself over which she has no control. Created by another, the spectacle displayed in the painting has the potential to murder the 'real' Alice," and Alice takes measures to regain control and plan the murder as she sees fit (309).

Though Arden suggests to Franklin that they "strain to mend [their] pace" in order to catch Alice "unawares" in the kitchen "playing the cook," the preparation of food remains elusively offstage, beyond the view of the audience and the other characters (xiii.72-73). Alice's cooking and the threat it embodies seems all the more potent given the fact that Arden and Franklin are returning from the previous all-male hospitality enjoyed at Lord Cheney's at the Isle of Sheppey (ix.112-14). Arden's anxiousness to see what Alice is cooking goes somewhat against the grain of the advice in the conduct literature for the husband not to meddle unduly in the wife's household affairs while also dramatizing how such practices potentially exposed the husband to danger, as Arden is ultimately unable either to observe or regulate the actions that take place within the female space of the kitchen and thus prevent his poisoning. Once Arden is at home, Alice disingenuously adopts the demeanor of the caring wife, when she tells Arden to sit before his breakfast is cold, when she calls for a spoon to taste of the broth herself, and when she spills the broth on the ground to avoid detection (i.360, 386, 367 s.d). In the play, Alice, who oversees the preparation of the broth, also has the opportunity to poison it, and she is present when it is served to Arden.

Besides her association with domestic implements, Alice demonstrates her culinary knowledge when she describes the powder to Mosby after the fact as "too gross and populous," preferring "some fine confection" (i.425, 423). As a result of the off-taste of the broth, Arden does not consume enough of the poison, and he is able to escape immediate danger, divulging his intention to take mithridate "to prevent the worst," a specious antidote (i.383). Alice shows herself capable of adopting deceit to avoid detection, bolstered by Mosby's observation when they are alone that Alice's act was "cunningly performed" (i.419).[52] Indeed, Alice conceals the thing that she is by distancing herself from the stereotype of the wife who poisons her husband, shrewdly accusing Arden of harshness instead: "You

[52] Dolan finds in the play as a whole Alice is engaged in "enacting the abused wife in order to secure sympathy and avoid blame for her adultery, her open defiance of her husband, and, eventually, her act of murder" (*Dangerous Familiars* 52).

were best to say I would have poisoned you," and using "purge," in the sense of defending her innocence, though the act of purging could also suggest voiding poison from the body (i.369, 373). My reading of Alice's attempt to poison Arden's broth would accord with Dolan's assessment that women in the drama are allowed agency only insofar as their acts are construed as criminal and to be punished. Alice offering the poisoned broth to Arden bears a striking resemblance to Eve, who offers the poisoned apple to Adam; in both instances women are associated with poisonous food, suggesting the wife's ability to injure her husband. The connection in Genesis between Eve and the poisoned apple lends itself in the prototype of Alice to the development of the wife who poses a mortal danger to her husband through a seemingly benign environment within domestic tragedy.

Both Alice and Mosby try, at intervals, to portray themselves as the innocent Eve beguiled by the serpent to eat the forbidden fruit: Alice in order to deflect responsibility for her actions, and Mosby in an effort to wrest power from Alice. Moreover, the introduction of poison in *Arden* helps define the play as domestic tragedy and also links Alice to Eve through the means of the wife posing a danger to men, particularly through food. In the end, Alice Arden's fate is predetermined, first by history and then by genre (tragedy) but also by the Genesis text. The imagery of the temptation scene—complete with the serpent and the poisoned apple—highlights the importance of Alice's agency; like Eve, Alice in an Eve-like world cannot choose not to fall. At the same time, though Eve has no choice but to fall, Alice chooses her fall willingly, even if she is powerless to choose the consequences of the events she has set in motion. Alice implores, "Nay, Mosby, let me still enjoy thy love; / And, happen what will, I am resolute" (i.218-19). Especially when read in relation to Mosby's previous incredulous interjection, "Thine overthrow? First let the world dissolve!" (i.217), the exchange becomes reminiscent of the heady pride Adam and Eve experience after they eat of the fruit in Milton (IX.1009-1011), conveying cosmic significance, as in the change in the earth after mortal sin, and a steely determination to fly in the face of earthly and divine consequences. In early modern commentary on the Genesis story, it becomes

difficult to discern whether willfulness in woman comes before or after the Fall. Comensoli's reading of Alice's affect, meaning her state of mind or the desires driving her action, also has implications for agency: Alice's forceful speech strikes a transgressive note, one that marks a new direction in the drama for women in the tragedy by going against "a rigid system of male dominance which denies agency and freedom to women," especially to married women (89). Alice makes herself a prototype of the tragic hero in action parallel, though not equal, to Arden's.

Adultery and/as the Forbidden Fruit

The image of the apple encouraged topical associations with the Genesis narrative, including Eve, implicated in some accounts in a capacity as seducer, and temptation through the presence of the serpent. In addition, in interpretations of the Genesis text, the apple as signaling corporeality, indicative of the Fall as equivalent to sex or the Fall bringing about a change in the body's sexual function, becomes emblematic of the taint or corrupted fruitfulness of married sexuality. In the Wardmote Book of Faversham, Alice's transgression involved indulging a forbidden appetite: "Alyce thesaid Morsby did not onely Carnally kepe / in her owne house here in this towne / Butt also fedd her [*sic*; i.e., him] w^{t} dilicate meates" and, further to this, her husband "Ardern did well knowe and wilfully did pmytt and suffred the same" (Wine 160). The carnal appetite it would appear is tied up in an archetypal association between forbidden food and sexual desire. On one hand, adultery in the source is identified with rich, dainty food, and by extension is represented as not fit for the body, prompting a comparison between Alice and Eve, who gives the apple to Adam. On the other hand, the fact that Alice carries on illicit relations with Mosby in the house in combination with Arden's enabling of the affair places adultery squarely in the realm of marriage and the household. The residual taint or corrupt fruitfulness of married sexuality resulting from the Fall is also evident in Protestant doctrine, which exalted married love and at the same time depended on the regulation of sexual desire within marriage. Notwithstanding, *Arden* is decidedly more pessimistic than the Protestant sermons and conduct books

about the distinction between sexual desire in and outside of marriage, emphasizing instead that marriage is tainted by adultery, either by the fallen nature of desire or by the glorification of love as a God.

Alice's diminished feelings for Arden show that conjugal love, though it may have been perceived as divinely ordained and lawful under the Protestant rehabilitation of marriage, has the potential to deteriorate into hatred, leading Alice to shift her affections to Mosby:

> Sweet Mosby is the man that hath my heart;
>
> And he [Arden] usurps it, having nought but this,
>
> That I am tied to him by marriage.
>
> Love is a god, and marriage is but words;
>
> And therefore Mosby's title is the best. (i.98-102)

Throughout her affair with Mosby, Alice draws on a rhetoric of idealized eros in Puritan marriage, which held love up as an end unto itself. Thomas Becon in *The Golden Boke of Christen Matrimony* sets marriage apart as "an hye, holy, and blessed order of life," which originated with God in Paradise (1-2). In similar language, Bartholomeus Battus praises marriage, instituted by God in the "terrestriall Paradise," as the "most excellent state and condition of life" to which one could aspire (4^{v}). Alice models her adultery after its more palatable counterpart, married sexuality. Along with the stiff penalties for extramarital sex came an increased consciousness of it as a forbidden object, and thus tempting, fruit. Alice transfers this Protestant idealization of married love to Mosby, using it as justification for love outside of marriage. Though, according to Belsey, the play ultimately condemns Alice's view of "free sexuality" in favour of marriage, Alice's description of love is more complicated than has originally been thought (*Subject* 134).[53] In particular, Alice's belief that love does or should take precedence over the

[53] In Sybil Truchet's estimation the play presents a critique of the religion of love, reflective of the medieval courtly code revived in the early modern period and popular in the drama of John Lyly; elevating love to "a divinity is presented as a serious moral problem in the play" because it leads Alice to flout God and the consequences of

bond of matrimony draws on Puritan marriage ideology by giving expression to its most extreme implications while at the same time posing a threat to marriage by pointing to the inability of marriage to contain desire.

Similarly, the adulterous desire Alice harbors for Mosby, which she imagines supersedes her past feelings for Arden, is shown to deteriorate from passion into bitter dislike in a movement that mirrors the discord in marriage following Adam and Eve's eating of the fruit and that of Alice's own legitimate married love. When it is convenient, Alice dismisses marriage as a matter of no moment and believes she can refashion marriage into anything she wants. Consequently, Whigham observes that the violent passion present between the pair of lovers is polarized between love and its inverse, hatred; thus, "Alice and Mosby's erotic struggles explore relations to marriage as both hated and desired" (65).[54] Rather tellingly, the first interaction we get between Alice and Mosby is not a rendezvous between lovers of the type imagined by Arden consistent with his knowledge of the "love letters passed" between the pair and their "privy meetings in the town" (i.15-16). Instead, Alice and Mosby participate in an unauthorized variation of her original marriage to Arden, symbolized by the ring now transferred to Mosby: "on his finger did I spy the ring / Which at our marriage day the priest put on" (i.17-18).[55] In turn, adultery is plagued by some of the same problems shown to be intrinsic to marriage. In their first rencontre Alice

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breaking the sacred covenant of marriage (41). Comensoli observes further to this that Alice's resistance is subversive: "Alice's rejection of female subordination gives voice to a radical discourse of desire" (88). I would add that the radical discourse does not just exist outside of marriage but within it as well.

[54] Belsey argues that Alice's radicalism consists of her attempt to redefine early modern marriage by choosing love, even though her relationship to Mosby makes her subject to a new form of oppression (*Subject* 144). Whigham proposes Alice and Mosby aim to "reinvent" marriage, despite the fact Alice first tries to hurl herself away from it (78). Dolan writes that historical accounts render "murderous wives as deconstructing the institution of marriage by their violent attempts to remake it to suit themselves" (*Dangerous Familiars* 45).

[55] Whigham singles out the ring as "a symbol of marriage," more specifically of Alice's "married chastity," referencing reports in sources that Alice and Mosby had entered into a repetition of marriage vows by taking the sacrament together in a church in London (84-85). For example, Whigham cites Holinshed, who avers Alice "had made a solemne promise to [Mosby], and he againe to hir, to be in all points as man and wife togither, and therevpon they both receiued the sacrament on a sundaie at London, openlie in a church there" (Wine 153-54).

accuses Mosby of a change of affection reminiscent of Adam and Eve's eating the forbidden fruit, supporting the view in sermons like the example from Henry Smith that the fruits of giving into the illicit passion of adultery were misery: "Is this the end of all thy solemn oaths? / Is this the fruit thy reconcilement buds?" (i.185-86). By exposing how adultery resembles marriage, both manifestations of the same disruptive desire, the play is at pains to show the emphasis placed on love whether in marriage or adultery can turn unlawful and sow the seeds of hatred, resulting in bitterness and strife.

Underlying Arden's account of his domestic troubles with Alice is an assumption about woman's natural disposition as unruly and female sexual desire as intractable, which recalls the position in debates about Eve that woman's willfulness preceded the Fall and was a precondition of marriage:

> But she is rooted in her wickedness,
> Perverse and stubborn, not to be reclaimed;
> Good counsel is to her as rain to weeds,
> And reprehension makes her vice to grow. (iv.9-12)

In application, Arden finds his wife recalcitrant, first to counsel and then to reproof; more alarmingly, as the comparison to vegetation illustrates, not only does counseling Alice prove unsuccessful, it has the opposite effect of increasing her insubordination. The relationship of marriage, which prior to the Fall was spontaneously generative and fruitful, has been reduced in Arden's description to an unprofitable union producing noxious weeds. Moreover, the difficulty Arden encounters asserting his authority in the household indicates the woman given to man to be his companion is no longer obedient and submissive but willful and rebellious.[56] In a parallel to *Paradise Lost*, even before the separation scene, Eve confides

[56] In another example of vegetative language in the play, Randall Martin takes up the example of Alice's urging Mosby to give over the affair, "Let our springtime wither. / Our harvest else will yield but loathsome weeds (viii.66-67)" (20). In a proposed reading of the play that accords well with the idea of generation implicit in vegetation, Martin sees one of the fruits of adultery which is alluded to but never appears outright in the play is the distinct absence of an heir for Arden; thus, "One possible danger of Alice and Mosby's affair is that it will produce a child of illegitimate or dubious paternity" (20).

to Adam that the garden daily outgrows their capacity to care for it, namely "grows, / Luxurious by restraint" and "with wanton growth derides, / Tending to wild" (IX.208-9, 211-12). Milton's description marks the potential for earth and marriage to coexist imperfectly even in Paradise, or most positively, that on earth there exists a remnant of Paradise in a companionate marriage where both partners labour together to fill their God-given, gender-specific roles. Conversely, in *Arden*, rank growth in a garden or a wife is perceived as unnatural and must be curtailed.[57] But the presence of growth before the Fall implicit in the play and reappearing in Milton suggests the pernicious seeds of adulterous desire are not confined to relationships outside of marriage. The root cause of the trouble Arden experiences with his wife is not exclusive to the intrusion of adultery but is in like measure attributed to women's role in instigating the Fall and its deleterious effects on marriage.

Besides evidence of vegetative language in *Arden*, there are more direct allusions to Adam and Eve and the forbidden fruit that point to the problems of misplaced ambition intertwined with sexuality. For instance, we get something akin to a Tree of Knowledge in Mosby's speech when he realizes the effects of his adultery and contemplates his inevitable descent:

> My golden time was when I had no gold;
> Though then I wanted, yet I slept secure;
> My daily toil begat me night's repose;
> My night's repose made daylight fresh to me.
> But, since I climbed the top bough of the tree
> And sought to build my nest among the clouds,
> Each gentle starry gale doth shake my bed

[57] In another important garden metaphor in drama, Hamlet compares Denmark to "an unweeded garden / That grows to seed; things rank and gross / Possess it merely" (1.2.135-37). The overrun garden describes not only the murder of Hamlet's father by Claudius as an act that has "the primal eldest curse upon't, / A brother's murder" (2.2.37-38), referring to Cain's murder of Abel, but the marriage bed, with Hamlet's loathing of his mother's willingness "to live / In the rank sweat of an enseamèd bed," whereby he implicates Gertrude's sexuality, or all sexuality, as stained by sin (3.4.82-83).

And makes me dread my downfall to the earth. (viii.11-18)

Mosby's reverie might appear to place him as another Adam in Eden, much like Alice's actual husband, Arden. In addition, Mosby's description of a succession of *daily toil* bringing a night of sweet *repose*, followed by another day of work anticipates the image in Milton of Adam and Eve's healthful labouring in the Eden, and would seem to set up Mosby's former existence as prelapsarian in nature. By contrast, the import of Mosby's soliloquy suggests the difficulties he experiences come as a result of a postlapsarian state as well as from fallen sexuality. By employing the central metaphor of the tree with its possible association of the forbidden fruit, Mosby divulges his anxiety that the anticipated social outcomes from his affair with Alice have been frustrated or not come to fruition.

The problem as Mosby represents it manifests itself as ambition, making Mosby more like Satan, especially Milton's Satan, than Adam—a relationship reinforced through Alice's earlier identification of Mosby with the serpent. To put the matter more precisely, Mosby is a composite of both Adam and Satan, exemplifying acquisitiveness and the possibility of anarchy. The imagery of the tree effectively implicates Mosby in original sin, in seeking to build his nest in the clouds among the gods, or even to become one himself. On the contrary, Mosby finds that his ascent to the top of the tree requires constant vigilance, fear of punishment, or even death.[58] Incidentally, Adam and Eve are usually criticized in early modern texts for eating the fruit in an attempt to become as gods. Mosby's melancholy account of climbing the tree and the isolation he experiences once he imagines himself near the apex illustrates how in the cultural consciousness social ambition is inextricably connected to sexual ambition. In this case, aspiring to a higher social position as landed gentry is linked in turn with accusations of sexual impropriety, either in taking property not his own, Alice, or in engaging surreptitiously, similar to select

[58] Orlin articulates that the image of Mosby climbing the tree and seeking to make a nest in the sky, along with his sense of foreboding about an imminent fall, symbolizes Mosby's "ambition" that begins with "usurp[ing]" Arden's position as husband. The troubles that follow from adultery are dwelt on in Mosby's realization that after Arden, Mosby must continue removing the others—"Greene, Michael, Clarke, and, finally, Alice"—that stand in the way of his retaining Arden's seat (*Private Matters* 93).

perceptions of Eve, in adulterous relations to obtain knowledge and power and bring about Arden's demise. Mosby's central motivation of social and sexual ambition is in keeping with what is considered to be Adam and Eve's cardinal sin in Genesis, even as Mosby acknowledges the end result he faces for giving place to his forbidden desire, not unlike the forewarning about the fatal effects of eating the apple, is most likely death.

What is more, the tree with the possible allusion to the forbidden fruit suggests Mosby, like Alice, already inhabits a postlapsarian world even before he experiences the foreshadowed Fall. For Whigham too, the image of Mosby climbing the tree is essentially one of "upward sexual mobility" (108). Whigham equates Mosby's longing for an earlier time to a sort of "pastoral nostalgia; in other words, he feels he has no choice but to go forward. And the goal is similarly withered: Alice is now a nameless place, 'danger's gate.' All pleasure seems unreachably past; only process survives" (108). I would complicate Whigham's claim by suggesting it becomes difficult to fully disentangle past from present; fallen sexuality is fundamentally implicated in relations between men and women so that it becomes impossible to distinguish the cause of the Fall from its effect. While it is possible to read in Mosby's speech the classical trope of the golden age, there is another Christian reading that exists in tension alongside it.[59] The root of man's fallen condition the passage suggests is a tainted sexuality, associated by turns with Mosby's adultery with Alice or with Arden's marital relations with Alice, and conveyed in a manner which recalls Adam and Eve's initial tasting of the fruit. Mosby's overreaching recalls early modern interpretations of the appetitive man in Genesis, but in Mosby's version the fall he anticipates has not yet occurred.

[59] In her study of the trope of the golden age in Renaissance poetry, Isabel Rivers helpfully compares the golden age to Eden, and shows Renaissance authors sometimes incorporated the two. In the Christian tradition, "earthly paradise is thus set in the present as well as the past; it can be recovered" (10). Such works often staged "attempts to recover Paradise" despite a recognition that Paradise "as a physical place, the heavenly Paradise, will not be recovered till the end of the world" (11). This view corresponds to Puritan views of marriage, which held that marriage in its perfect state could not be experienced on earth as a result of the Fall, but which looked forward to its possible restoration in heaven.

The dangers arising from treating love as a God, and the deterioration in affection that occurs as a result, which distinguish the Puritan discourse of marriage, are dwelt on once again in the quarrel scene.[60] Alice enters solemnly with a prayer book, earnestly repents her adultery, and expresses a heartfelt desire to return to her former life as Arden's honest wife. The lovers eventually reconcile, with Alice turning her prayer book from a sacred text into a secular love token, offering to deface the book onstage in what amounts to a shocking display of blasphemy. She assures Mosby that the prayer book, originally a marker of female piety, will become a symbol of their illicit union:

> I will do penance for offending thee
>
> And burn this prayerbook, where I here use
>
> The holy word that had converted me.
>
> See, Mosby, I will tear away the leaves,
>
> And all the leaves, and in this golden cover
>
> Shall thy sweet phrases and thy letters dwell;
>
> And thereon will I chiefly meditate
>
> And hold no other sect but such devotion. (viii.115-22)

Alice initially proposes burning the prayer book, which gives way to the prospect of an even greater act of profanation, tearing away its leaves and replacing them with Mosby's love letters.[61] The heresy here exists not just in desecrating the prayer book but in making it a shrine to love. Alice states her intent to

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[60] MacDonald P. Jackson has recently proposed on the grounds of new linguistic and stylistic analysis that at least the quarrel scene of *Arden of Faversham* was written by Shakespeare (270). An argument for Shakespeare's authorship of the play was introduced in his thesis. Macdonald stresses that Alice's "repudiation of Scripture is enacted in vivid stage image as she tears pages" from the book, represented as an act of "sacrilege," and he highlights the importance of this successive, climactic altercation between the lovers as "Alice's last chance for redemption" (252).

[61] Elizabeth Williamson, calling attention to the prayer book's dual use as a sign of piety and a stage prop, details Alice's "misuse" of the prayer book; though her vow to replace the pages with love letters paints her as "unscrupulous" and at odds with Protestantism, the actual burning of the prayer book is one thing that the play "is not willing to stage" (392-3). The real threat, she concludes, emerges as Alice "discards her prayer book as a stage prop that no longer has any value" (393).

do *penance for offending* Mosby, making him into an idol or God. Likewise, Eve makes an idol of the Tree of Knowledge, worshipping it as a source of knowledge instead of God. Whereas Eve's adulation of the forbidden tree is only implicit in the original Genesis story, "and when the woman saw, that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise" (3:6), in *Paradise Lost*, Eve's thought process is more overt; she praises the tree in the highest terms: "O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees in Paradise, of operation blest / To sapience," and promises obeisance, saying "Not without song, each morning, and due praise / Shall [I] tend thee, and the fertile burden ease / Of thy full branches" (IX.800-802). Alice in a manner approximating Eve's misjudgement makes love her religion, turning it into an object of meditation, and swearing to Mosby that she will permit no other faith, pledging her devotion to her lover instead of God.

The presence of the prayer book—a godly book in itself and the source of the Protestant marriage service—in Alice's performance suggests that the idealization of married love within established Protestant doctrine taken to its extreme could itself constitute a form of idolatry. Alice's use of the prayer book juxtaposes two tenets within Protestantism: the idealization of (married) love, exhibited in the appearance of the prayer book, and the insistence that putting the love of one's spouse before God was a sin. Although *Arden of Faversham* stops short of allowing Alice to deface the prayer book, her willingness to do so constitutes a form of sacrilege.[62] Moreover, Alice's deferred promise to Mosby that she will substitute love letters for homilies is an indication that she has placed her faith entirely in the powers of love. The presence of the prayer book acts as a powerful symbol of Protestant idealization of married love, and suggests rather radically the possibility for love to become a god exists in adultery as well as in marriage. Present in Genesis, and stressed in the commentaries, like Whately's cited in the

[62] Another domestic tragedy that features a prayer book and bears mentioning is *A Warning for Fair Women*. Just prior to being executed on the scaffold, Anne makes a full confession and repents her crimes. She produces "a booke / Of holy meditations" by the Protestant martyr John Bradford, which she bequeaths to her children (xxi.2702-03). Here I side with Comensoli, who reads in Anne's speech a subversive element: Anne rejects a concept of agency that relies on "gender, class, and status," (97) over Williamson, who concludes that the threat Anne and Alice pose is subsumed by asserting the power of the prayer book and by their deaths (388, 393).

introduction to this chapter, was the divine judgment that Eve's particular punishment for eating the fruit was woman's subjection to male authority, binding woman to man: "thy desire shall be to thy husband" (3:16). While the pronouncement would seem to apply strictly to marriage, eating the forbidden fruit, a sin normally laid to the charge of woman, and her subsequent desire for or under man, establishes the pattern of adultery. That is to say, it presupposes woman's attachment to man inside of marriage but also ensures the possibility of a desire that transgresses the bounds of marriage, not for one man but for men in general, is written into and explained by Genesis.

Alice's comments to Arden present sexual decay following from the Fall as one possible reason for the deterioration of married love over time. Decay, a process conspicuously absent in a prelapsarian state, only occurs in the natural world after the Fall. Though spoken to conceal her relief about Arden's departure to the Isle of Sheppey to dine with Lord Cheney, Alice's plea nevertheless alludes to a prior time when she remembers being happy in her marriage to Arden:

> The time hath been—would God it were not past!—
>
> That honour's title nor a lord's command
>
> Could once have drawn you from these arms of mine.
>
> But my deserts or your desires decay. (x.13-17)

Alice's description evokes as it were the first flush of marriage, ripe with the pleasures of affection and intimacy, but implicit in her accusation is an awareness that desire in marriage is doomed to decay over time. According to Comensoli, Alice's description of the marriage refers to a "former, more pleasureable time" and shows her "lamenting the devolution of married love into a union that is now 'but words' (i.104)" (87-88). In fact, this degeneration of married love to indifference or loathing is a pattern which has been shown to repeat itself in the play.[63] Alice and Mosby's relationship, we are assured, is destined

[63] In addition to the discontent experienced by Alice and Arden in their marriage as a result of the decline of love and Alice's adulterous liaison with Mosby, conflict resulting from sexuality is manifest at other social levels as well.

to follow the same path as her marriage to Arden. Their passionate love breaks down over the course of the play (indeed in a single speech) into verbal arguments and the threat of violence. In both marital and extramarital settings, sexual relations usher in a period of bitterness and strife, which can be viewed as a result of the primal judgement on woman's sexuality: it is always tied to and also subordinate under man.

It would be misleading to say that the play does not ultimately recognize a fundamental social and sexual difference between Arden, the husband, and Mosby, the adulterer. Though at times Arden and Mosby seem to collapse into a single identity of sexual partner of Alice for dramatic effect, in the end they remain separate entities, though both as a result of the fallen nature of sexuality present in marriage and extending to adultery are punished with death. There is an imperative that adultery though it may appear temporarily attractive and permissible in the parameters of the theatre is morally wrong and must be punished. It is possible for adultery to achieve this level of dramatic tension in the tragedy because it exists in opposition to the legitimate, socially sanctioned alternative, marriage. The Mayor of Faversham will later instruct the conspirators in the murder plot, Alice, Mosby, Susan, and Michael, to "Leave to accuse each other now, / And listen to the sentence I shall give" (xviii.26-27). The irony is not lost on Garrett A. Sullivan that once the murder is a fait accompli the "final scene shows us the conspirators, all members or guests of Arden's household, bitterly divided, and in the Mayor's words 'accus[ing] each another' (*AF*, 18.26)" (54). The mayor's words recall Adam's attempt in Genesis to deflect blame for eating the fruit onto Eve, "the woman whom thou gauest to be with mee, shee gaue me of the tree, and I did eate," and Eve's reaction in turn to blame the serpent, just prior to God's judgment (3:12). The mayor's statement also bears a resemblance to the recriminatory "mutual accusation" exchanged by Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*, and highlights the social and sexual decline that follow from eating the forbidden fruit and the dangers of giving in to carnal lust, which for Milton is

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For example, the desire for Susan, Alice's servant, leads to fighting between Arden's man, Michael, and the painter, who have both been promised Susan's hand (x.70-73 s.d.).

firmly ensconced in marriage (IX.1187). The Fall is shown to lead to deterioration in relationships and the physical world, bickering between Arden, Alice, and Mosby, to disturbances in the social order of husbands and wives or servants and masters, and Arden's death. The fruit that is thought to be sweet, once tasted, proves to be bitter. The play insists that marriage is tainted by adultery: both, it turns out, are manifestations of a fallen sexuality, an inescapable consequence of the story of Adam, Eve, and the serpent in Genesis. Even though the play ultimately punishes adultery and reaffirms marriage by apprehending those responsible for Arden's murder, it portrays sexuality as a powerful force, one which even marriage cannot fully contain.

After the Fall

The taint of the forbidden fruit discernable in Puritan depictions of marriage and adultery extends to the natural world, which goes through a material change after the Fall. At the end of this chapter, I consider what happens to marriage after the Fall, and connect postlapsarian marriage to a deterioration in property relations and the depleted condition of land through Arden's death. Arden's death invokes the curse on the land, both as it is introduced in Genesis by way of punishment for Adam's sin, and as it recurs later with Cain's murder of his brother, Abel. Incorporating the disgruntled tenants who wish ill on Arden, the bleeding corpse hidden in the recesses of the household, the movement of his body to the field, and the print left in the grass, the play draws on a narrative of land as fallen and its implications for marriage. The exile of Adam and Eve into a terrestrial existence characterized by sorrow and pain is an event that surfaces in marriage manuals and commentaries on Genesis as the initiation of tribulation in married life. At the same time, the motif of exile addresses social problems of land relating to conflict-ridden practices of enclosure and the accumulation of private property, which are figured in the drama in Arden's estimable holdings in and around the Abbey made possible by the dissolution of the monasteries. In studies of the play, critics have repeatedly drawn attention to the role of Arden's

cupidity in his death.[64] The hand Alice bears in Arden's death in turn links her to a decline in the land, though she admittedly has no vested interest in owning Arden's property but in possessing Mosby. Alice's antipathy towards Arden's economic pursuits is visible in her complaint to Mosby: "My saving husband hoards up bags of gold / To make our children rich" (i.220-21).[65] The inordinate desire for money or land, the latter a sought after commodity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries because of its value as capital, results in marital strife. *Arden* appropriates the exile of Adam and Eve treated in Genesis to create a dramatic portrait of fallen marriage as determined by the land. Approximating Eve, the wife in the play is suggested as the cause of the curse on marriage and the land, though she in return is bound to her husband for maintenance. By extension, the imprint of Arden's body recalls the promise of Adam's death, symbolizing the mark left by the apple and the detrimental effects of the Fall on the land which plague marriage.

An excellent discussion of the importance of surveying and land to deciphering the meaning of Arden's body in the play exists in work done by Sullivan. In his examination, Sullivan demonstrates that near the end of the sixteenth century the perception of land was undergoing a "shift" from a feudal-like

[64] Studies of the play have invariably maintained a difference between the historical Arden and the dramatic one, agreeing that the latter is represented more sympathetically. At the same time, critics have pointed out the play complicates Arden's culpability in his own fall by portraying his actions, his cupidity and mismanagement of the household or Alice's adultery (or both) ambiguously, though none absolve Alice of her responsibility in the crime. In Comensoli's view, Arden's cupidity in the form of his appropriation of monastic land and his greed mitigate any sympathy the audience might feel for him as a victim (91). Dolan finds the epilogue in alluding to Arden's avarice contradicts the play's characterization of Arden, marking him ultimately as both a "collaborator" and a "victim" (*Dangerous Familiars* 76). Belsey agrees the "two [conflicting] versions of Arden—as loving husband and as rapacious landlord—coexist equally uneasily in the play" (*Subject* 132). Lieblein draws attention to Arden's vanity: "while the dramatist thus initially reinforces sympathy for the wronged husband, he takes other measures to qualify it" (184). Orlin argues the personal attacks on the dramatic Arden, including "charges against him of greed and corruption, like the more preposterous ones of miserliness, whoredom, and intended uxoricide, enter the play almost exclusively as unsubstantiated accusations by self-interested collaborators in the murder" (*Private Matters* 64). And Sullivan contends the implication in the epilogue of Arden's culpability in the murder is not explained by the dramatic Arden, only by the historical Arden's morally ambiguous practices related to surveying and land (243).

[65] Attwell imputes the marital conflict between Alice and Arden in part to "different orientations to property," elaborating as follows: "for Alice, Arden's preoccupation with wealth and position is tedious. She does not wish to participate in securing and passing on the family patrimony" (339). Martin sees Alice as "ridiculing" Arden's attempts to provide for "notional" children as a way to artificially "prop up his credentials as a gentleman" (17). Whigham determines Alice in her spite imagines passing on Arden's wealth to her heirs with Mosby (83).

system characterized by social responsibility on the part of the lord for tenants, to a purely "economic relationship" devoid of an "ethics of ownership" (234, 231). This alteration is brought about in part by landlords' attempts to consolidate land as well as by their extended absences in London, practices exemplified in Arden's denial of Reede's prior claim to the plot of land and in Arden's neglect of his household affairs while in London with Franklin, respectively (247). According to Sullivan, Arden is murdered because he fails to fulfill his "responsibilities" not only as a husband but also as a landowner (247). Critics have systematically noted a relationship in the opening scene of the play between the letters patent bearing the king's seal for the Abbey lands, which Arden receives from the Duke of Somerset, and the love letters passed between Mosby and Alice; however, it is Sullivan who observes, "the problem is not that Arden sees Alice as merely a piece of property to be stolen by Mosby, but that Arden's relationship to the land is intertwined with his relationship with his wife" (244).[66] This is an important point because it suggests that fallen land can be traced back to the wife, perhaps going as far back as Genesis. Sullivan continues, "Alice's lack of love for Arden takes the material form of undermining the stability of his estate" (244). I would add it is Eve's disobedience which results in Adam's loss of sovereignty over Eden, meaning it is possible to see Adam reduced from a landlord overseeing the Garden and its inhabitants to a tenant working the land for his support (Gen. 1: 26). Indeed, Sullivan concedes the potential for land in *Arden* to be read in terms of the Fall, but he leaves some stones unturned.[67] This relationship between marriage and the land bears further examination,

[66] Other critics comparing the letters patent granted to Arden by the Duke of Somerset and the love letters that circulate between Mosby and Alice have reached similar conclusions. John M. Breen observes the deeds for the land resemble the 'mandate' for his wife Arden later demands of Mosby, drawing attention to the fact Arden has married a woman of higher social standing than himself (14). Helgerson makes the argument the letters work against the assertion of the murder in Holinshed as a private matter ("Murder" 25-26). Richardson, likewise, juxtaposes the public letters patent with the private love letters, but she notes Arden's knowledge of the love letters "does not generate action" (105). Whigham reasons Arden takes offense that Mosby would presume to acquire either land or Alice, looking upon them as "similar categories, it seems" (76).

[67] According to Sullivan, Mosby "compares his relationship with Alice to 'sleeping in a serpent's bed' (*AF*, 8.42), an image that deepens the language of estate or domestic economy by offering a glimpse of the land read in terms of the Fall. As has often been noted, the expulsion from Eden marked the birth of the need for agricultural labour,

and Sullivan's study lays the groundwork for my discussion of land in *Arden* as representative of fallen marriage. Indeed, Sullivan has argued convincingly that the "truth" concerning Arden's death "refers not only to the homicidal machinations that lead up to his murder, but also to a certain relationship between the killing and the land" (231). Further to this, Breen, remarking upon the ecological and providential significance of the placement of Arden's body, indicates "the absence of a burial spot for Arden suggests that the land cannot accommodate him" (19). If Sullivan and Breen are correct about the relationship between Arden's body and early modern notions of property, and I venture to state they are, then the outline of Arden's body marks the land as the site of man's death and banishment. I would even take Sullivan and Breen's analysis one step further to contend the print of Arden's body on the ground earmarks land as the cause of all murder as illustrated in Genesis: the death of Adam incurred indirectly by Eve, and Abel slain by Cain.[68]

Franklin's epilogue, which reports the providential sign left behind by Arden's body on the ground, reinforces the uneasy relationship between marriage and death as punishment for the Fall. Franklin's description of the site of Arden's body marks the land as barren and simultaneously as a site of exile while suggesting marriage as the cause of death through its connection with original sin. Franklin's somber relation of the miraculous sign visible in the grass connects Arden's murder permanently to the land:

> Arden lay murdered in that plot of ground

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and estate practices…are necessary in a postlapsarian world….Mosby's solipsism marks a fall from even the conscientious pursuit of these practices" (n54).

[68] Belsey establishes her own brilliant comparison between *Hamlet* and the Genesis story, arguing for a relationship between sibling rivalry and the first murder in the texts. In both cases, the body cries from the grave for justice, either in the form of Abel's blood on the ground or Old Hamlet returning from purgatory as a ghost, not unlike my own reading of Arden's blood, which stains the floor, and his body, which haunts the margins of the play (*Shakespeare* 132-39). Moreoever, she shows the apple reappears in images of Cain, tying him to the Fall (*Shakespeare* 134-36). My argument is less for sibling rivalry, though violence is contained in the family as mariticide rather than fratricide. I too maintain a relationship between murder and the story of Cain and Abel in the drama, but I extend it to explore how early modern notions of land as fallen impact marriage in *Arden*.

Which he by force and violence held from Reede,

And in the grass his body's print was seen

Two years and more after the deed was done. (10-13)

Arden's murder is seen to come about because of a dispute about property, arising from the dissolution of the monasteries, of which Arden's own home, Faversham Abbey, was a part. Franklin's epilogue establishes a causal relation between the curse Reede places on the land and Arden's death. Reede's curse parallels God's curse on the land after the Fall, with Arden's death acting as both sign and fulfillment of that curse. God tells Adam, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voyce of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree…cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorow shalt thou eate of it all the dayes of thy life" (Gen. 3:17). The terrestrial landscape is referred to as well as "the field," and included with the curse is the reminder, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou returne" (Gen. 3:18-19). The curse on the land is replicated in marriage, namely occasioning toil and *sorrow* in mortality. Incidentally, the nature of the curse for Adam denoted by the barren ground suggests the fruitfulness of the earth being transferred to Eve's womb, representative of woman's punishment of suffering in childbirth. In Holinshed's account of Arden's murder, it is significantly Reede's *wife* who is made the instrument of the curse: "Reads wife not onelie exclaimed against him, in sheading manie a salt teere, but also curssed him most bitterlie euen to his face, wishing manie a vengeance to light vpon him, and that all the world might woonder on him. Which was thought then to come to passe, when he was thus murdered, and laie in that field from midnight till the morning" (Wine 159). Marriage, represented here by the wife—either Reede's cursing wife or Arden's murdering one—occasions the Fall. In the case of Adam and Eve, the curse is a consequence of Adam listening to his wife, resulting in the fallow ground and the eventual return of Adam's body to the earth; insofar as it regards Arden, the wife is once again implicated in the curse, for it is notably Reede's wife cursing the remnant parcel of land and prognosticating Arden's death.

The movement of Arden's body from the household, formerly the seat of domesticity, to its resting place designated as the field shares similarities with the imposed exile of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden in Genesis. The land has already been connected memorably with death when Arden expresses his shame at his wife's adultery, which he says "makes me wish that for this veil of heaven / The earth hung over my head and covered me" (i.13-14). Arden's desire to be *covered* in the earth could be read as an allusion to Adam's remorse and desire to hide himself from God following the Fall, and even as a foreshadowing of Arden's own burial.[69] In Holinshed, Arden's body is carried out behind the Abbey, and through the gate (they had to first find the key), before being placed on the opposite side of the "garden wall" in an adjacent field which backed onto the church (Wine 156). On the numbered map of the Abbey land, at least as it was partitioned prior to the Reformation, we can see quite clearly the path of Arden's body as it was carried from the hall, into the orchard, through the inner gate-house, and finally laid on the ground near the Abbey Church outside the walled enclosure.[70] In fact, it is interesting to note that on at least one occasion, and as recently as 1992, a performance of *Arden* has taken place in the garden behind the historical property of Arden's house in Faversham, highlighting the house's proximity to the orchard (Helgerson, "Murder" 17). The placement of the body, in addition to the relative location of the garden and the existence of the walled enclosure, meant Arden could have

[69] Attwell, responding to this passage, remarks only "that a cuckold should represent his agony with such metaphysical weight is curious," and he turns to his larger concern with Arden's middle-class status and notions of property (343). Ian McAdam ascribes Arden's above statement to a failure of his manliness in Protestant terms (58). Shutzman interprets Arden's mood more literally: Arden's desire to be covered in the earth "grimly and recognizably foreshadows his inevitable fate," understood as the print of his body on the ground and his burial (290). While I agree with McAdam the weight of Arden's statement quoted above lies in religion, specifically Protestant ideals, and with Schutzman that the earth is suggestive of burial, I submit the remorse has more to do with the Genesis story, recalling the moment when Adam and Eve wish to hide themselves from the divine gaze (3:8). It is also possible to read in this passage pathetic fallacy, complete with the earth sympathizing with man.

[70] The numbered map referenced here is reproduced in Hyde's exhaustive collection of primary sources relating to Arden (59).

symbolized Adam in powerful ways, as being quite literally cast out of the Garden.[71] It is possible this landscape was deliberately invoked by the playwright, who may have known of the Abbey, or heard about it even if he had not visited it in person, to develop the theme of the Fall for dramatic effect.

Immediately prior to the removal of Arden's corpse from the counting house to the field, Michael reports to Alice, "the mayor and all the watch / Are coming towards our house with glaives and bills," with *glaives and bills* being glossed by Wine as broadswords and halberds (xiv.340-41). Michael's pronouncement seems to me to contain an oblique allusion to Genesis. When Adam and Eve are cast out of Eden, God hastily dispatches "at the East of the garden of Eden, Cherubims, and a flaming sword," and this is done "lest he put foorth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and liue for ever" in his sin (Gen. 3: 24, 22). Thus, the mayor and his watch participate in conveying the land's fallen condition directly after Arden's death. The mayor and his men perform a crucial social function in the play, that of conscientious local authorities who swiftly respond to enforce justice as a deterrent to crime. Richardson distinguishes the mayor in *Arden* as a figure indicative of justice: "The mayor is the representative of an omniscient justice which cuts across the criminal's supposed distinction between public and private action" (124). The *omniscient justice* described by Richardson intimates the all-seeing eye of the divine epitomized by God's inherent knowledge of the sin committed by Adam and Eve. As a result, the policing provided by the mayor aligns him with Genesis and suggests an attempt in the drama to restore order to the imperiled household, the inhabitants of which have broken an immutable law.

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[71] It is impossible to invoke an early modern discourse of land, or a biblical one of Eden, without also invoking the image of enclosure. Wine acknowledges *Arden* is written in the context of "enclosures of small farms by large landowners" (lxii). Sullivan mentions the relevance of enclosures to the play's problematizing of land "stripped of…social meaning" (245). Keith Wrightson demonstrates Kent had a long history of enclosure, which in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries took the form of consolidating land for the gentry; it was "sometimes accompanied by the eviction of unco-operative tenants," and the loss of land rights came at a great cost to small-scale tenants (133). In one town in Kent landholdings frequently consisted of "less than five acres" or of "a cottage and garden" (175). There were some enclosure riots in rural areas in the sixteenth century, "involving the destruction of hedges and fences erected to restrict access to former common pasture land or to divide former common fields into compact, consolidated farms" (173). On the one hand, in a social sense, enclosure indicated a loss of common land, on the other hand, in a religious context, the absence of enclosure could be identified with the reclamation of land consistent with the ushering in of Paradise.

Though the arrival of law and order is a time when my argument may seem to take a distinctly homiletic turn, in *Arden* the harbinger of protection arrives too late and cannot forestall Arden's death, attesting to marriage as irrevocably damaged.

Once Arden has been killed, his body recedes into the domestic environment, much like the bloody dishtowel and the knife used in the murder. What the play only infers on this point can be supplied by historical sources like Stow's reporting the recovery of the murder weapons by the mayor and the watch in a tub beside the well outside the house (xiv.387; Hyde 121). Franklin confronts Alice with the evidence that confirms her complicity in the murder: "Know you this hand-towel and this knife?" (xiv.383). It is worth pointing out that Alice's knowledge of the murder and her domestic knowledge would appear to be the same: the wife and the household are implicated in murder by association. Alice explains the evidence against her by once again reverting to cooking, asserting the hand-towel and knife were used in preparing a pig for supper (xiv.388).[72] In another example, Alice dismisses the bloodstain on the floor as "a cup of wine that Michael shed" (xiv.402). After Arden's murder, domestic objects lose their innocent, fruitful associations and uses, becoming tainted by associations with the Fall, not unlike the land. Just as I argue that marriage can contain the seeds of adultery, the household rush can conceal evidence of the murder. A few studies of the murder scene in *Arden* have implications for the domestic environment as fallen. I have already discussed Dolan's theory that the domestic setting could become "strange" (*Dangerous Familiars* 4). Of the play's detailed account of the search of Arden's household for clues that will reveal the identities of the murderers, Orlin observes, "By representing a criminal investigation during which the townsmen trace rushes found in a murdered householder's shoes to his own parlor floor and then discover a bloodstain on his accustomed seat, the play embodies a house

[72] As Patricia Fumerton indicates, butchering a pig for eating in the Renaissance could be a messy and exhilarating household task: "it was common practice to stick a knife in its side and watch it hurl itself around in agony until it finally collapsed through sheer exhaustion and loss of blood" (1). This method of culinary preparation fits with the excuse given by Alice for both the knife and the blood. According to Fumerton's "new new historicist" lens, "transgressive behavior often found expression *within and through* everyday practices and representations" (6, 12). It follows Alice's transgressive act—murder—is an aberration of the everyday, licensed act of housewifery.

yielding up its secrets to observers" (*Private Matters* 8-9). Richardson, likewise, ties the importance of the rush to the household: "covered by rushes, the patch of Arden's blood which marks the floor is the contrasting pair to the print his body makes in the grass behind his house. A guilty stain, poorly concealed and readable to all with intimate knowledge of the house, is set against the public spectacle of the miraculous image of absence" (125). Arden's body is reduced to a domestic object, like the bloody dishtowel or even the fallen apple that leaves its mark on the grass. The hand-towel and the knife outside the house along with the blood within it supply concrete evidence of what was suspected all along—and established by Eve in Genesis—the wife's role in the murder.

Arden's blood leaves an indelible stain on the floor that no amount of scrubbing can remove. When the servant, Susan, gets a pail of water to wash away the blood, she states, "The blood cleaveth to the ground and will not out" (xiv.255). Alice views the permanent mark left on the ground by Arden's blood as a sign of her guilt, explaining the phenomenon to Susan this way: "because I blush not at my husband's death" (xiv.259). Alice and Susan's attempt to wash the blood from the floor is an important marker of *Arden* as domestic tragedy, both in representing household work onstage and in tying that work to husband-murder. Wendy Wall shows blood and butchery were a familiar sight in the early modern kitchen, which routinely contained the carcasses of slaughtered animals, problematizing "domestic ideologies" and the wife's role within them by associating her (as well as other members of the household) with violence (192). Therefore, Wall holds the household posed a threat through its inhabitants "wielding kitchen knives," including the wife but also the servant (201). Significantly, both Alice and Susan brandish knives (the men have swords) in the frontispiece to the 1633 quarto, depicting Arden's murder at the 'game of tables'. Moreover, Mark Burnett denotes female servants presented a danger of violence, enacted upon the social system or on personal grounds, through their knowledge of the household (127-28). Lastly, Richardson contributes washing away the blood is a "perversion" of domestic work and the social hierarchy between mistress and maid by having both women "scrubbing

together" (122, 124). Through their household work, women in the domestic tragedies are linked causatively to violence. Alice's inability to remove the stain suggests either her sluttishness (in the sense of housework or adultery) or the fact that the blood is imbedded in the ground for another reason: because in Genesis domestic violence derives from the land. Any attempt to wipe away the stain, thus, proves futile.

Nor can the stain be hidden indefinitely by the rushes scattered on the floor, for the rush in Arden's slipper and the footprints in the snow lead back to the house. The story of Cain and Abel and the mark of Cain inform my reading of Arden's body. For Cain, Genesis reminds us, was a tiller of the ground, and the murder of Abel occurs during an argument located "in the field" (4:8). Abel's blood like Arden's after him "crie[s]" up "from the ground" for vengeance (4:10). The blood marks the precise spot in the house where Arden was murdered but is also constitutive of death issuing from the first murder, with the blood seeping into the ground as a testament against the respective murderers. The mayor cries, "Look in the place where he was wont to sit.-- / See, see! His blood! It is too manifest" (xiv.400-1). Cain's murder of his brother results in a curse resembling Adam's, for the earth resists his labours, and he is forced into exile. The Lord tells Cain, a "fugitiue and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth" (4:12). The earth rejects Cain in a similar way to how it ultimately rejects Arden's body. Two things are worth noting about the mark of Cain as it applies to Arden. In connection with the curse, God places a mark upon Cain, and the mark is intended to prevent any who find him from killing him (Gen. 4:15). Cain is said to be marked in his forehead, sharing some similarities with the mark of the cuckold present in *Arden*. Arden expresses the deep shame he feels at Alice's adultery, an emotion which produces a distinctive physiological response analogous to Cain's countenance:

> Her faults, methink, are painted in my face
>
> For every searching eye to overread;
>
> And Mosby's name, a scandal unto mine,

Is deeply trenchèd in my blushing brow. (iv.14-17)

The disgrace Arden experiences is marked or *trenchèd* on his *brow* in the sense of being "gashed or cut," according to Wine (58 n17). The ignominy of the mark of Cain is transformed in the domestic tragedy into the stigma of adultery. No such providential mark ultimately protects Arden, though it may arguably be visible in the repeated frustrated attempts to murder him, but it does not prevent him from being butchered by members of and guests in his household.[73] Rather, Arden's body appears to fully take on properties of the mark of Cain in the sense of a warning only after his murder, when people are led to wonder at the miraculous sign in the field. The rushes along with the impression of the body on the ground work to connect Arden to Cain, and convey Arden's death as an effect of the degenerative relationship between man and the land after the Fall, which finds its most violent expression in murder.

Furthermore, Michael's intention to kill his brother for the farm at Bolton so he can marry Susan bears a marked resemblance to the story of Cain and Abel. He states without compunction, "I will rid mine elder brother away, / And then the farm of Bolton is mine own" (i.172-73). I have not dealt with the subplot separately up to this point, but Michael's reference to the farm at Bolton is significant for my claim that the deterioration of land in the play has its origin in Genesis. Michael asks, "Who would not venture upon house and land / when he may have it for a right-down blow?" (i.74-75). Genesis relates, "when they were in the field,…Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him" (4:8). Michael's plan to kill his brother for his property represents an inversion of Cain's killing Abel in the field because of jealousy. Attwell and Breen tie Michael's determination to acquire land alternately to violence or his desire to marry Susan, reinforcing the reciprocal relationships I am suggesting between

[73] Some critics have acknowledged the providential narrative at work in the plot of *Arden*. In escaping multiple murder attempts in the play, Arden seems to be protected by divine providence up to a point, and the play ends with the discovery and punishment of the murderers. Chief among these critics is Wine, who discusses the providential theme in his critical introduction but also emphasizes the chinks in the armor by establishing the play's resistance to the homiletic pattern: while "it is true Providence forsakes Arden" when he turns his back on Reede, it does not follow we "sense any justice in his murder, only the evil of the murderers. Arden dies unenlightened about any of his 'sins,' and the 'justice'" fails to spare Bradshaw and Susan (lxxiv).

the land and death but also land and marriage. Thus, Attwell intimates that Michael understands the importance of owning land as a step towards the social and economic status that would allow him to marry Susan (337). In comparison, Breen states Michael is willing to kill his brother to gain land, which would allow him to leave service (15). However, I would point out in this case the playwright noticeably makes Michael the younger brother to problematize early modern laws of primogeniture. Neither Attwell nor Breen make reference to the possible allusion in Michael's speech to Cain and Abel or the implications for primogeniture. The possibility of marriage and the potential for social unrest stemming from problems of inheritance are tied to the land, but the land is perpetually fallen so that the beginning and end of earthly unions are marked by death.

When confronted with the bloody spectacle of Arden's body, Alice, who persists in invoking the marital bond by calling him "sweet husband," ceases to think of earth and turns her thoughts to heaven in preparation for her own death as punishment for committing petty treason (xvi.3). She implores Bradshaw, "Leave now to trouble me with worldly things, / And let me meditate upon my Saviour Christ, / Whose blood must save me for the blood I shed" (xviii.10-11). At first glance, her words seem to express penitence, spoken as they are in a public forum as a confession obtained by a judicial authority, but the confession is also coerced:

> Forgive me, Arden; I repent me now;
> And, would my death save thine, thou shouldst not die.
> Rise up, sweet Arden, and enjoy thy love,
> And frown not on me when we meet in heaven;
> In heaven I love thee though on earth I did not. (xvi.7-11)

Alice's speech before her death has sometimes been read as a shift in the drama, an indication of repentance and of seeking God's divine mercy. Comensoli is one critic who pointedly questions the sincerity of Alice's repentance. In the aftermath of the murder, Comensoli asserts the play "prevaricates

about Alice's repentance and eventual redemption; although Alice shows some contrition for her crime, her remorse is not entirely credible since it closely follows her arrest," a development which Comensoli takes as "signalling authorial uneasiness with homiletic closure" (92). While I agree the play resists homiletic closure, I read Alice's speech somewhat differently. In calling Arden husband and anticipating their meeting in heaven, Alice insists marriage will survive death, despite her infidelity, and her earlier assertion that marriage is "but words" (i.101).[74] Alice's petition registers a belief about what happens to marriage after death, more specifically the declaration in the New Testament looking forward to a time when marriage will become obsolete: "they neither marry, nor are giuen in marriage, but are as the Angels of God in heauen" (Matthew 22:30). Alice's speech suggests she will love Arden in heaven, and includes an exhortation to the absent Arden to *enjoy thy love*. Conceivably, Alice anticipates a future time when marriage will be dissolved and she and Arden can love each other in a purified way as redeemed Christians rather than in the sexual, compromised bond of husband and wife.

The metaphor of Christ's marriage with his church implied that marriage transcended this mortal life, even suggesting that such an incorporeal bond found its fullest expression in an immortal existence. The preacher Thomas Adams, speaking with conviction of the eternal bond between Christ and the church, stated assuredly, *"I will betroth thee vnto me for euer;* sayth God. This marriage-bond shall neuer be canceld; nor sinne, nor death, nor hell shall be able to diuorce vs" (232). In his mind, sin, death, or even hell lack the power to separate a righteous man from dwelling with God in heaven. John Donne in his sermon to King Charles explicating the first chapter of Genesis, which details the creation of Adam and Eve, reinforces death makes possible the eternal union of God and man: "no sinne of mine shall divorce or separate me from him [God]: for that which ends the secular marriage, doth not end the spirituall;

[74] McAdam sees Alice's speech as problematic in a religious sense as well but for different reasons: The "irony of the freshly bleeding corpse is that if Arden's 'speaking' blood suggests Christ or the Word, it is here evoked or called forth by Alice as (criminal) mediator, and thus both husband and wife become translated through crime and suffering into a state of ambiguous Christhood (underlined by her desire to die in his place). Only in this horrific sense is the word made flesh" (62). Alice's paradoxical role here as *(criminal) mediator* fits with my reading of the contradiction between Alice's murder of her husband and her overreaching Christlike statement.

not death: for my death doth not take me from that husband; but that husband…I do but go [to] by death" (20-21). Death initiates another type of marriage by joining Donne with God, who is figured as the husband. Donne's exegesis persists in contrasting the temporal marriage with the spiritual one; though death terminates secular marriage, it gives way to a more refined spiritual bond.

The fraught dynamic of early modern marriage as well as the hope it could evolve into something more spiritual, albeit through violence, is taken up by Dolan. Dolan finds early modern marriage involves a struggle between two partners for mastery and of necessity escalates into violent behaviour. In Dolan's biblical exemplum of choice, Delilah poses a physical threat to Samson because of her proximity in the household (her cutting of Samson's hair also resembles Alice's poisoning as an inversion of the wife's domestic duties of cooking and physic); in other words, the marriage relationship begets violence:

> When identity is understood as separation from others, and marriage requires union, then there is a conflict between one's identity as self and one's identity as partner. That conflict produces violence, whether figural or enacted. This violence takes the form of one spouse annexing or eliminating the other, even if only metaphorically, or much less often, the two forming a corporate self that excludes and forsakes all others. An extreme consequence of this way of thinking is that one spouse imagines the other's death as the condition of her psychic and spiritual survival or salvation. Wing's description of an evil wife in 'coppi-hold' creates an urgent hope for the wife's death. If 'during life there is no end of date or expiration of her evill,' then her death becomes the only means by which her husband can escape, can *be*. (*Marriage and Violence* 52)

Dolan's explication of Wing's discussion of the wife *in coppi-hold*, a term applied to land held by tenants for the term of the owner's life, can be compared to the aforementioned titles Arden receives from the Duke of Somerset pertaining to the lands of the Abbey of Faversham, and by extension to his marriage.[75]

[75] Erickson discusses the meaning of copyhold land as distinct from the other two types: by definition "only freehold was real property, unlike today when real property means any land or house. Copyhold land was held of the manor, either 'at will' of the lord or lady or according to the established customs of the manor. Land was

Alice's body as land or property belongs to Arden for the duration of his life. In the end, Arden is murdered because of adulterous lust, or a desire to possess more than one's due, subscribing to the view of women's bodies and land as things to be desired and possessed. That Alice belongs to Arden until death is a point driven home by Arden's irrepressible melancholy about Alice's adultery and, alternately, Franklin's theoretical scenario, rendered in optimistic terms: "she will amend, and so your griefs will cease; / Or else she'll die, and so your sorrows end" (iv.22-23). By way of comparison, the Abbey lands are fixed upon the historical Arden until his death; after his untimely demise, they succeed to Cheney as trustee for Arden's daughter, Margaret.[76] Dolan's reading imagining the death of a spouse in the context of property law anticipates the death of the evil wife, which for my purposes allows Arden to *be*.

Conversely, when the gender dynamic of violence is reversed, as it is in the play, Alice sees Arden's death as the precondition of her autonomy. Ironically, the relief Franklin believes Alice's death would engender is offset by Alice's determination to bring about Arden's death.[77] For Alice, Arden's death is figured in Dolan's terms as *the condition of her psychic and spiritual survival or salvation*.[78] In murdering

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leased for a term of years (usually twenty-one or forty) or for lives (generally three—that is, lasting…the lives of three named individuals" (23-24). However, Erickson does allow for the possibility of copyhold land to "be disposed of during the owner's lifetime" in the absence of any other "arrangement" (27).

[76] Hyde records in meticulous detail what happened to Arden's property after his death as well as to the movables and any property belonging to Alice and the other conspirators in the murder (104-106). Arden's holdings were quite substantial, and everyone wanted a piece of the economic pie; consequently, there was some disagreement about what could rightfully be seized by the town of Faversham and what belonged to his heirs, not satisfactorily resolved by the courts until years after Arden's death. On this point, Orlin finds the town had a vested interest in Arden's death; after the murder, they "seized" Arden's land and goods (in addition to the assets of the accomplices), a move which his daughter contested years later (*Private Matters* 62).

[77] The danger posed by the murderous wife to her husband is captured in John Rainolds's tract arguing for divorce for adultery with remarriage for the wronged husband. Rainolds asks, "And how can he choose but live still in feare & anguish of minde, least shee add dru[n]cke[n]nesse to thirst, & murder to adultery: I meane least she serve him as *Clytemnestra* did *Agamemnon*, as *Livia* did *Drusus* as *Mr*^{s} *Arden* did her husband?" (88). Rainolds does not cite Eve as an example of a woman bringing death into marriage. I am grateful to Sean Benson for making me aware of this reference to the play.

[78] Dolan's explanation of the death of the spouse in the discourse of early modern marriage and violence, when death is imagined as freedom, stands in sharp contrast to Schutzman's theory discussed previously, maintaining

Arden, Alice attempts to negotiate a release from a corrupted physical relationship of marriage as a way of achieving her own salvation in a psychological if not a spiritual sense. Alice's contrived murder of her husband is startlingly at odds with Donne's introspection on death as the means to join himself to a spiritual spouse, Christ. The play throws doubt on the doctrine of the potential of marriage to overcome the effects of the Fall because Alice, as the type of Eve, is the one who has murdered her husband.

In a luminous collection of essays on reading the medieval in early modern England, Gordon McMullan and David Matthews stress the need to see the continuities and changes between the periods. They attest the early modern period did not engage in a reductive "rereading" of the medieval; rather, the early modern was "constructed through or in negotiation with the medieval," as both "differen[t] from" and "acknowledg[ing] its fundamental dependence upon" the medieval treatment of texts and ideas (6). More than just a rehashing of the biblical story and biblical cycle drama of Adam and Eve, I have attempted to show how *Arden of Faversham* is a sometimes radical rewriting of the Genesis story within an early modern framework of shifting ideas about marriage.[79] The main argument running through this chapter has been that marriage despite an attempt to rehabilitate it in Puritan doctrine as a godly estate was shown to be fundamentally tainted by the Fall, and became conflated with adultery. *Arden of Faversham* portrays marriage in relation to the Fall, developing symbolic associations between the apple in Faversham and the Genesis story, and promoting a representation in keeping with a unique understanding of the Fall as adultery and tasting of the forbidden fruit. After the Fall, the deterioration in the land extends to marriage, visible in the fallen domestic environment as the place for murder, and the field as the site of the print of Arden's body. The play offers a re-examination of and has a sustained

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Alice experiences relative freedom during Arden's absence, which is curtailed after Arden's death, as Alice becomes the object of the gaze (310). But both critics seemingly agree in early modern marriage there is only room for one subject, the husband or the wife, causing some unhappy spouses to take matters into their own hands.

[79] That a playwright would rework medieval ideas for an early modern audience seems likely in the context of the grammar-school curriculum, which encouraged varying classical form and content.

interest in the story of Adam and Eve, changing it so that it remains relevant to early modern ideologies of gender and the household.

Early in the chapter, I claimed the portrayal of marriage as fallen in the play, and its roots in the account of the Fall of Adam and Eve in Genesis, forces us to re-examine some of the assumptions we hold about Alice and her agency. A reading of Alice in relation to Eve shows Alice is punished for her own sins of adultery and murder but also for Eve's transgression of eating the apple, itself understood in the period as a fall into sexual sin. One significant implication arising from this reading is Alice is doomed from the start; compromised in her agency, she is associated with Eve, a relationship I maintain contributes to Alice's tragic status in the drama. The playwright remarkably for the genre attempted to portray Alice sympathetically, although in a limited sense. In its depiction of Alice as a literary descendent of Eve, the play makes Alice a sympathetic figure to an extent, one who misguidedly endeavors through her affair with Mosby to restore marriage to its prelapsarian state, even if she ultimately eats the apple and becomes the primary transgressor, this time through Arden's murder.

Chapter Two

Taken from His Side: Adam's Rib and the Problems of Adultery in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*

Introduction

While early modern commentators disagreed about whether Eve's creation from Adam's rib indicated the wife's position as equal partner with, inferior to, or, in some cases, superior to her husband, even Puritan descriptions of companionate marriage held that the wife was of necessity both in a scriptural and political sense subject to her husband's authority.[80] Upon seeing Eve, Adam declares her to be part of him saying, "[t]his is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man" (Gen. 2:23). Crowther has determined Eve was an important figure for the Reformation, but one whose role was ultimately more concerned with disseminating Protestant ideals than with promoting real or imagined equality of women within marriage (104-06). Marriage manuals, thus, used Genesis to try to set out the proper relationships between husbands and wives based on Adam and Eve, with the husband as the head and the wife as helpmeet. Though employed in a conventional sense in relation to the head and foot in tracts on marriage, there were, nevertheless, competing interpretations of the rib, namely the wife as man's bosom companion, a pain in his side, or a rottenness in his bones, which indicate writers in the Protestant Reformation wrestling with the notion of fallen woman while allowing the wife a position consistent with the Puritan model of companionate marriage. At the same time, the emphasis on companionate marriage meant there was very little discussion of what to do if marriage broke down. This model of marriage presupposes man and wife are one flesh; one point of tension that has not been attended to sufficiently, but which is cause for concern in the conduct literature, is the problem of

[80] For important studies on Puritan love and marriage, see especially R. M. Frye, "The Teachings of Classical Puritanism on Conjugal Love"; William and Malleville Haller, "The Puritan Art of Love"; Edmund Leites, "Duty to Desire: Love, Friendship, and Sexuality in Some Puritan Theories of Marriage"; and Belden C. Lane, "Two Schools of Desire: Nature and Marriage in Seventeenth-Century Puritanism." For a comparative discussion of Protestant marriage, see Anthony Fletcher, "The Protestant Idea of Marriage in Early Modern England."

dividing one flesh. Clearly there was disagreement about the extent to which two separate people imitating the ordinance of the first marriage could become one flesh, and whether anything, including adultery, separation, or divorce, could sever that bond once it had been formed in a legally and spiritually binding covenant.

This chapter examines the important religious symbol of Adam's rib, including some iconography, with its implications for marriage and the difficulties of dividing one flesh in Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603), specifically relating to adultery and the problems it posed to marriage. Heywood's treatment of Anne reveals the idea of the wife as companion used to support Puritan marriage as in tension with other variations of the rib's meaning in the Genesis story, for example the perception of the wife as bent or crooked. In his play, Heywood explores the variant meanings of the rib as well as the rib's attendant problems within early modern Puritan texts on marriage and commentaries of Genesis. Anne is in a sense an equal companion and fallen, and her adultery in the absence of divorce results in a separation of the couple. From the marriage celebration of the young couple, Anne and Frankford, who become one; and Anne's adultery, which threatens to divide two into one; to the lute, with it symbolic associations with the rib; and finally Anne's starvation, which portrays fasting as an unsuccessful attempt to breach the gap of separation imposed by adultery, and which serves as a punishment in kind for her Fall, the play is concerned with the issue of one flesh. By using the metaphoric allusion of the rib, the play illustrates the dual sense in which Anne is taken from Frankford's side, first in creation and then by separation, suggesting that if woman is formed from and for man, she cannot subsequently be taken from him without it resulting in a loss of her identity and, ultimately, her death, thus pointing to a breakdown of meaning caused by adultery and separation in the discourse of Puritan companionate marriage. Moreover, the use of the rib helps to explain how Heywood is able to portray Anne as a

sympathetic adulteress in domestic drama to a degree not possible in other examples of drama.[81] At intervals, I also compare *A Woman Killed with Kindness* to Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* to show how marriage and its dissolution is an early modern dilemma being worked out in other texts. *The Taming of the Shrew* is concerned with the rib as it relates to the process of forming a wife into a suitable companion, while *Paradise Lost*, itself a version of the Genesis story, one which contains interesting images of adultery and separation, fleshes out the ideal—and near rupture—of companionate marriage; in addition, Milton's tracts on divorce help to point to inconsistencies in theories of companionate marriage and contextualize Heywood's drama in the larger contemporary debate about divorce.

The creation of Eve from Adam's rib proved a helpful analogy for Puritan ministers; the husband was formed in the image of God, the wife in the image of man, and each sex had its own divine purpose: the husband as the head and the wife as the dutiful member. Hence, Calvin, writing on Genesis, declared the synecdochal function of the rib was such that woman became a reflection of man; to look on her was "to knowe himselfe, as by lokeing in a glasse: and Heuah [Eve] in like manner, willingly to submitte her selfe unto the man, as taken out of him" (*Commentarie* 75). These gender roles were affirmed by biological differentiation of male and female and brought together through the image of the rib and mutual companionship. Thomas Gataker preached that "*the Husband is the superiour*, and *the wife the inferiour*; that *the husband is as the head*, *the wife as the body or the rib*" (*Marriage Duties* 7-8). John Dod and Robert Cleaver likewise explained God fashioned Eve out of Adam's rib "that she might walke joyntly with him, vnder the conduct and gouernment of her head…conioyned in like affection & good will" (N8^{r}-N8^{v}). Whately emphasized the mutuality suggested by the rib, of God's intention for Eve to

[81] Relevant examples of the adulteress on the early modern stage include Beatrice-Joanna in Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's *The Changeling*, Bianca in Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women*, Annabella in John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore , and Vittoria in John Webster's *The White Devil*. The notable exception is, of course, Desdemona in *Othello*.

obey her husband and be "helpefull to him," and Adam's to love her and place her at his side "as in a manner his equall" (*Prototypes* 4). Henry Smith, praising the married state, wrote this explanation:

> To honour mariage more yet, or rather to teach the maried how to honour one another, it is saide, that the wife was made of the husbands rib: not of his head, for *Paule* calleth the husbande the wiues head: nor of the foote, for he must not set her at his foote: the seruant is appoynted to serue, and the wife to helpe. If she must not match with the head, nor stoope at the foote, where shall he set her then? He must set her at his heart, and therefore she which should lie in his bosome, was made in his bosome, and should bee as close to him as his ribb of which she was fashioned. (*Preparatiue* 10-11)

In addition to conveying the impression of androgyny, Smith promotes the ideal of a husband and wife side by side, of one mind and heart, with the husband sheltering the wife in his bosom; however, a two headed body joined at the side could also have a more monstrous connotation in the figure of the hermaphrodite. The positive version of Smith's description can be found in Milton's vision of a prelapsarian Adam and Eve arm and arm, its inverse in iconography of the Fall which shows the serpent entwined in the ribs of a skeleton, usually portrayed as Adam's. The ideal in Puritan marriage was a limited partnership, but a wife that exercised too much autonomy, or who committed adultery, resulted in a monstrous body with two heads, and risked upsetting the divinely ordained hierarchy.

The rib was used to express the ideal of the husband and wife side by side, as separate but complementary creations, but conduct literature was careful to qualify this claim by stating she was not his equal, leading some critics to take the stance that Puritan marriage was not so revolutionary as has been supposed.[82] Woman being created from the material of Adam's rib and after man was admittedly a

[82] On the wife as unequal partner in marriage, Susan Dwyer Amussen remarks that Puritans had the added difficulty in conduct literature of outlining "an unequal partnership between spiritual equals," and this resulted in a dynamic where the "husband had to be the head, but to recognize the practical and spiritual importance of the wife; he could not have too much power" (46-47). Lawrence Stone, documenting the shift to the nuclear family, suggests the "Protestant sanctification of marriage and the demand for married love itself facilitated the

secondary creation. In the manner of her creation, woman is derived and differentiated from man; likewise, the wife is to be separate from her husband, but not so autonomous, the handbooks and sermons suggested, as to subvert his authority. As William Perkins explains this seeming contradiction in the conduct literature, "A couple, is that wherby two persons standing in mutuall relation to each other, are combined together as it were in one. And of these two, the one is alwaies higher, and beareth rule, the other is lower, and yeeldeth subjection" (*Christian Oeconomie* 10). The husband and wife are unequal companions, with the latter placed in relation to his side but also his foot, so the lower of the two is invariably the wife. At the same time, Perkins divulges two cannot in reality become one through marriage, a fact which will become increasingly important for my discussion of adultery. Despite the fact Gouge became unpopular with some parishioners for preaching the necessity of the wife's subjection to the husband's authority, in reminding the wife to accept "a place of inferiority, and subiection," he allows her a position second only to her husband, "yet the neerest to equality that may be: a place of common equity in many respects, wherein man and wife are after a sort euen fellowes, and partners" (*Domesticall Duties* 356). He allows her the appearance of equality, but he denies her any actual power apart from her husband. Like Gouge, Richard Brathwaite gives weight to the wife's subjection by nature of her ductility: "the *Subject* [material] whereof she was made, begot not in her a *crookednesse*, but *pliablenesse* of nature: ever ready to *bend* her will, and apply her affection to the mould of Man," reverting to the view of woman as an ancillary creation (4). Thus, Puritan divines found in the rib a useful representation for companionship but stopped short of investing the wife with full equality.

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subordination of wives. Women were now expected to love and cherish their husbands after marriage and were taught that it was their sacred duty to do so" (*Family* 202). For her part, Kathleen M. Davies has argued Puritan advice on marriage does not differ in promoting the equality of the wife, but in questioning sexual abstinence in marriage as a pathway to "grace," and arguing for divorce with remarriage under limited "circumstances," distinctions which have relevance for my later discussion of adultery and separation (78). David Underdown hypothesizes that the crisis of disorder between 1560-1640 is affected by Puritanism, which "reinforced rather than weakened patriarchal authority," even as it allowed the wife a "role" in the "moral" education "of the household," forcing "a new relationship between spouses" (136). As regards Milton, Mary Nyquist engages in a revisionist reading of Milton's divorce tracts and *Paradise Lost* to argue they cannot be used to support, anachronistically, "equality" between husband and wife (102).

Fletcher concludes authors of early modern conduct books were not willing to place women on equal terms with men, either because it threatened the patriarchal structure of society or because of a reading of Genesis which insisted on women as "inferior" (175). Analysis of the Puritan discourse of marriage does not fully account for the appearance of the rib as a Protestant emphasis on Genesis to explicate marriage, explaining the wife's role in relation to man as equal and inferior, though it does support my later contention that the conduct literature opens up the problems of dividing one flesh, and points to the problems of Anne's starvation.

In addition to its application in Puritan companionate marriage, however, the rib was infused with an alternate, misogynistic sense, which bespoke a distrust of women located in the Fall as misshapen and treacherous to man. There are in actuality two versions of the creation story, which are in effect merged in the book of Genesis, though they are presented sequentially: the Priestly (P) narrative, in which Adam and Eve are created independently of the same raw material, and the Hebrew, Jahvist (J) narrative, when God creates man first and then uses Adam's rib to form Eve.[83] It follows not all early modern commentators were as optimistic about the prospect of the rib suggesting equality between husband and wife. The crookedness of the rib was sometimes used to argue for woman's crooked nature, or as painful to her husband. Keeble explains the usefulness of the rib for early modern constructions of gender: "in the subsequent creation of Eve was found evidence of woman's secondary status (115: III.§3), in the rib proof of her crooked nature (9), in the story of the Fall reason to blame her for all the ills of humankind, and in the curse placed upon her, as in Adam's naming of the beasts before Eve's creation, evidence of her intellectual inferiority and her subordination to man" (1). The rib also appears prominently as a rhetorical convention in the controversy about woman in the period, in Joseph Swetnam's *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Inconstant Women* to indicate a "froward nature,"

[83] N. H. Keeble in a discussion of the two creation narratives, including early modern perceptions of Adam and Eve makes the following statement: "Like their predecessors, however, seventeenth-century commentators paid far more attention to the creation of Eve from Adam's rib in the latter than they did to the simultaneous creation of male and female in the former" (1).

"for a ribbe is a crooked thing, good for nothing else, and women are crooked by nature," (B1^{r}) and in texts defending women against Swetnam, such as Esther Sowernam's *Esther Hath Hang'd Haman* and Rachel Speght's *A Mouzell for Melastomus*. To be sure, a few texts, some of them ostensibly by women, held that Eve at least in some respects might be considered a superior creature to Adam because she was created last, or of purer material: "for man was created of the dust of the earth, but woman was made of a part of man after that he was a liuing soule," but they appeared in fewer numbers (Speght 10). An important catalogue of allusions to the rib in the misogynist vein exists in Edward Gosynhyll's satirical *The Schoolhouse of Women*, which includes the author's observation that ribs, when rattled together, sound like the clatter of women's tongues, and reiterates the folktale that God was forced to make Eve from a dog's rib after it ate Adam's rib, explaining women's shrewish behavior (B4^{r}-C1^{r}).[84] John Donne, in his sermons, sees in the account of the rib a fondness for the wife on the part of the man that leaves him vulnerable; Eve is taken "out of *his side*, where she weakens him enough" (*Fifty Sermons* 15).[85] Donne's allusion nicely illustrates the paradox in the analogy of the rib: the woman intended to be man's companion also takes some of his strength, prompting a comparison between the wife and Eve or Delilah.

Milton, writing later in the seventeenth century, would find his own purposes for and interpretation of the image of the rib: in the divorce tracts to argue that God never intended marriage to become a hardship or solder a couple together when incompatibility would divide them, and in a more nuanced application, in *Paradise Lost* to symbolize alternately wedded love and the ideal partnership of the sexes and a set gender hierarchy, and I will return to a more detailed examination of Milton's treatment of the rib in relation to exegetical tradition in *Paradise Lost* later. Nyquist argues the latter, intimating Adam's

[84] Francis Lee Utley in an older concordance to the rib in the earlier part of the early modern period includes a useful catalogue of the various misogynistic senses of the rib (256).

[85] Along the same lines, Huston Diehl explains the destabilizing power of love in the Protestant Reformation in his examination of iconophobia and gynophobia; adoring a beloved is seen to lead to man's peril, particularly in Stuart drama, a point he applies to *Othello* (156-81).

narrative of God taking the rib from his side to form Eve, though occurring after man's own creation, does not position woman as God's best creation but instead, by privileging the husband's voice over God's, the text reinscribes gendered subjectivity (105, 117). Nyquist's reading of Milton is consistent with Puritan representations of the rib in the conduct literature, and helps to explain how the rib employed in constructions of equality could also persist in reinforcing the inferiority of women. For now it will be enough for me to mention that in *Paradise Lost* Adam in a moment of postlapsarian despair bewails the creation of woman as something resembling a divine mistake:

> a rib
>
> Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
>
> More to the part sinister from me drawn,
>
> Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
>
> To my just number found…. (X.884-88)

First, Adam draws on misogynistic tradition, referring to the rib as crooked, bent, and as taken from his sinister side. In biblical tradition, the rib was said to be taken from Adam's left side, from between his fifth and sixth ribs, or nearest his heart, symbolizing affection but also vulnerability (Fig. 2). The position of the rib accords with Donne's statement about woman physically and emotionally weakening man. Second, Adam expresses the opinion of the rib in question as superfluous; he does not need it, in fact is better off without it, implying that Eve, and the creation of womankind, is unnecessary. Finally, he asks why the world could not be peopled with men, dismissing the importance of marriage and God's commandment to multiply and replenish the earth (X.892-93). Adam's conjecture of a world without woman, wherein procreation is achieved by some other means, is perceived as short-sighted and foolish by Milton and, consequently, the reader, and is corrected as Adam turns to God and comes to realize what it means to be one flesh.

The First Marriage

Protestant ideas of marriage conflicted with earlier, Catholic teachings about marriage, notably marriage as a sacrament.[86] Protestants tried to remake marriage in their own image; one way to do this was by framing marriage in terms of the Genesis story. Within Catholicism, priests had stated marriage was counted among the seven sacraments; as a sacrament, marriage became arguably an ecclesiastical matter rather than a civil one, a spiritual union in addition to a physical one, making it the equivalent in theory if not in practice of taking the host in communion, and connecting it with Christ's body and blood. As a result of these associations of sacrosanctity, in Catholicism marriage was considered inviolable.[87] Luther, on the contrary, in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, takes the position marriage is a mystery and not a sacrament, allowing for at least the possibility of divorce (36: 3-126).[88] In his treatise on divorce, Erasmus Desiderius of Rotterdam, also a Reformer, presents evidence against marriage as a sacrament; reviewing ecclesiastical texts, he fails to find a place where it is explicitly named as one of the seven sacraments, concluding if marriage is not a sacrament, it can be broken. Puritan Reformers still insisted on marriage as godly, but that godliness was attributed to the couple working out their salvation before God rather than to its status as a sacrament. The Protestant emphasis

[86] Alan Macfarlane records marriage in Protestantism, rather than acting as a sacrament, or "a symbol of Christ's relations with his Church," comprised "a covenant or contract between two individuals" (224). See also Davies on the implications of this view of marriage for adultery: "If matrimony was a covenant, and not a sacrament, then adultery" in theory "destroyed the basis of the contract, and it was therefore dissoluble" (74). In a related argument, Stephen Greenblatt in a cogent new historicist reading of *Hamlet* has shown the Host and its literal meaning was contested in the Reformation between Catholics, as regarding a dialogue about whether a person (or a mouse) partaking of the Host could actually be considered to be eating Christ's body and blood, and Protestants, who favoured a more spiritual interpretation ("Mousetrap" 146-48).

[87] The doctrine of the sanctity of marriage and the Pope's refusal to grant divorce in the sixteenth century becomes the basis of Henry VIII's break with Rome and the formation of the Protestant Church in England. After Catherine of Aragon, Henry VIII goes on to marry an unprecedented five additional wives, including Anne Boleyn, also accused of adultery, and mother of Queen Elizabeth I.

[88] An additional source is Calvin's *The Institution of Christian Religion* (1561), which also took the position marriage was a mystery. Stating Catholics err in calling marriage a sacrament, Calvin upholds Paul's opinion, teaching the joining of Adam to Eve was "not of the fleshely conioynyng of man and woman, but of the spiritual mariage of Christe and the Chirch. And truely it is in dede a great mysterie, that Christe suffred a ribbe to be taken from himselfe, whereof we might be shapen" (159^{r}).

on marriage and love as duty was especially important with preachers seeking to align themselves against a Catholic order which favored celibacy (Haller 237-38), and this concern with defining marriage anew against Catholicism I maintain is carried into the drama.[89]

One idea introduced in Protestantism but not present in Catholicism was marriage as one flesh, which reinforced the centrality of the marriage covenant even as it denied its earlier status as a sacrament. The concept of one flesh had its origination in Genesis: "Therefore shall a man leaue his father and his mother, and shall cleaue unto his wife: and they shalbe one flesh" (2:24). Marriage manuals recited the scriptural commonplace in Genesis of one flesh, with one flesh taken to mean sexual union, and the sanctioning of that union in marriage; however, one flesh was primarily employed as a metaphor symbolizing the near bond between husband and wife. As Gouge describes the distinction, one flesh does not consist in a carnal sense but in the sense of proximity: they "should be so neere one to another" (*Domesticall Duties* 112). In a seminal study of the trope of one flesh in Milton, Turner explains its exegetical and symbolic significance: "Genesis sanctions 'wedded love' and is in turn made comprehensible by it. In this dialectic, as it was realized by divines and preachers in the generations before Milton…, the sexual experience of marriage became not just a survival but a re-enactment of the original 'ordinance' of Genesis, bringing the Holy Spirit into the act of love itself; the text was, as it were, reinserted into practice" (7).[90] The phrase *bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh* was thought by commentators to have been included as part of the first marriage (Nyquist 122). Genesis became in a very literal sense a model for marriage, as shown through the numerous commentaries on the story of Adam and Eve and the marriage manuals that sought to explicate its meaning. For my

[89] Heather Dubrow in her study of the form of the epithalamium, a celebratory marriage poem, indicates it counteracted Catholic notions of marriage: "A Renaissance audience may well have seen in the antiquity of marriage a compensation for and displacement of its potency as a sacrament" (125).

[90] Turner's influential book remains the most comprehensive analysis of one flesh in the early modern period; though his specific focus is on Milton, he draws from a wide range of sources. I am indebted to Turner's work for my own study of *A Woman Killed with Kindness*.

purposes, I am interested in how the Genesis story and the early modern emphasis on one flesh become a model for marriage in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. I examine how Genesis is a text *reinserted into practice*, to borrow Turner's phrase, in the marriage of Frankford and Anne: their union is made to mirror the original marriage, positioning Anne in relation to Eve, and foreshadowing her Fall, but also presaging the difficulties posed by the metaphor of one flesh in marriage and the problems attending the early modern resistance to divorce in England.

A Woman Killed with Kindness is widely considered to be Heywood's most accomplished domestic tragedy. The play contains two plots; the main plot involves the marriage of a country gentleman Frankford to his wife Anne, Anne's affair with Frankford's friend Wendoll, Anne's exile to a nearby manor and self-imposed starvation, and Frankford`s eventual forgiveness of Anne before her death. The subplot concerns Charles Mountford and his sister, Susan, Charles's rash act of murder, his imprisonment by his enemy Acton, and Acton's love for the chaste Susan, which results in a marriage offer and Charles's release. Two works of literary criticism pay special attention to the play's formulation of Puritan companionate marriage. Orlin locates the breakdown of a classical ethic of friendship in a "competing" ideal of heterosexual companionate marriage; the metaphor of one flesh worked "precisely *because* it was fundamentally hierarchical," for, she goes on to explain, "[t]he 'one' into which the two combine is by definition he who bears rule; the woman can never be anything other than a lower 'other,' cannot really threaten (as can a male friend) to be another 'one' (or other I)," opening up the limitations of one flesh for marriage (*Private Matters* 166, 179). Paula McQuade, examining the play in the framework of early modern English Protestant casuistical thought, complicates this reading by asserting the play constitutes "a critique of female subjection within marriage" because it "prevents both men and women from acting as responsible moral agents"; in matters of moral judgment, the wife deferred to her husband's authority, resulting in a lack of opportunity for women to exercise moral agency and inculcating a responsibility on the part of the husband to attend to the moral education of

his subordinates ("'Labyrinth'" 233). I find McQuade's analysis especially compelling, and it helps to shape my own view of Anne as a sympathetic adulteress.

It is fitting that a play about marriage begins with a marriage celebration; as commemorating the making of the couple and initiating the couple's life together, the act of joining man and woman echoes the first marriage performed by God in the Garden of Eden. As Turner confirms, Genesis itself was looked to as a glass for marriage, but it was the source of manifold disagreements regarding the "nature of marriage, the role of sexuality and the essential nature of woman" (120). In holding up Genesis to Heywood's play, I examine how Anne and Frankford's marriage reflects these contradictions about women's role in marriage. *An Homily of the State of Matrimony* (1562) laid out the beginning and ends of marriage, being "instituted of GOD, to the intent that man and woman should liue lawfully in a perpetuall friendship, to bring foorth fruite, and to auoide fornication" (Rickey and Stroup 2: 239). Described in this way, temporal marriage offers mutual companionship in addition to its potential to act as a remedy for the Fall: to provide society, to allow for procreation, and to sanction an outlet for sexuality. Gataker recommends a wife look into the scriptures, including Genesis, as though into a mirror to see if she is a wife in deed (*A Good Wife* 13). Heinrich Bullinger in his sermons establishes a direct relationship between the marriage rites of Adam and Eve performed and blessed by God and the marriage practices of the Protestant Reformation, admonishing couples who entered into the marriage covenant to follow the example set by Adam and Eve: "The Lord verilie did presently in the beginning blesse the first marriage of oure parentes Adam and Eue, and did himselfe couple them in wedlock. Whervppon, the Church of God hath receyued a custome, that they which ioyne in marriage before they dwell together, doe come into the temple of the Lord, where…they are ioyned together, and blessed by the minister of God in the name of God himselfe" (231). Bullinger's comparison establishes the public marriage ceremony as it is conceived under Protestantism is an imitation of the marriage in the Garden of Eden, and the minister in his ecclesiastical capacity stands in for Christ. If every man is Adam, then

every woman is Eve, every wife predisposed to fall to temptation. Included in marriage is a reminder of the fallen condition and potential for separation and death.

The French engraving by Jean Duvet, dating from between 1540 and 1555, is one of few depictions of the marriage scene in Genesis from the early modern period: at the centre is God, who joins the hands of Adam and Eve in holy matrimony and blesses them (Fig. 3).[91] As Russell points out, Duvet was actually a Protestant artist working abroad, but he did artwork commissioned by Catholics, and this engraving notably incorporates conflicting Catholic and Protestant iconography of marriage (115). God, dressed in clerical robes, in one example of papal imagery—he wears the miter, fanon, cassock, and quite possibly a papal ring on his left hand, but no shoes—officiates at and witnesses the marriage. On the ground by Adam, and barely distinguishable, is what could be an apple with a single bite missing. Correspondingly, at the foot of Eve is a serpent-like creature, ominously foreshadowing the Fall, serving as a reminder of Eve's sin in succumbing to temptation and her punishment for eating the fruit. My intention in analyzing this engraving is to draw attention to the apple, which is positioned in relation to Adam, and the demon to Eve; moreover, the apple's intrusion on what is an epithalamium of marriage antedates the Fall later in Genesis, supporting my argument in the previous chapter about marriage as fallen, but the engraving also provides evidence for Adam and Eve as emblematic of Protestant marriage. An inscription on the engraving reveals it to be an illustration of the events of the first chapter of Genesis. Louis Réau remarks this image and ones like it symbolize a larger marriage, the joining of Jesus Christ and his Church (82). It is a connection increasingly important for the Protestant Reformation's representation of marriage. The first marriage was thought to be a type of the second marriage, a metaphorical union with Christ, who is also called the second Adam, with his Church. The insistence on Adam as a type of Christ emphasizes the importance of marriage as an ordinance while at the same time linking it to salvation through Christ,

[91] The engraving of the first marriage discussed here can be contrasted with Dürer's engraving of Adam and Eve in relation to the Fall; both depict the fated apple and draw a relationship between Eve and the serpent, but Duvet's engraving places the apple in relation to Adam rather than Eve.

impinging on the Protestant position of marriage as an earthly thing as opposed to a sacrament. Russell ties Duvet's scene back helpfully to the creation of woman and Adam's initial acceptance of Eve as his companion: "In terms of the institution of marriage, it is also related to Genesis 2:24. God has created Eve from Adam's rib and brought her to him, and Adam has called her 'flesh of my flesh'" (114). It is precisely this topical overlap between the first marriage and one flesh which provides the rationale for my argument that Heywood explores the implications of the Genesis story for the Puritan emphasis on one flesh within his domestic drama.

While the engraving functions in its own right as an illustration of an important event in Genesis, the original marriage, it could just as easily serve as a frontispiece to Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. In the play, the public celebration of Anne and Frankford's marriage succeeds the private solemnization of their vows in church; standing before the minister, who joined their hands as man and wife, they are emblematic of the first couple joined in the sight of God. The celebration of the wedding is reminiscent in several respects of Duvet's engraving. Sir Francis pointedly references marriage as a holy ceremony performed in the sight of God: "By your leave, sister—by your husband's leave / I should have said—the hand that but this day / Was given you in the church, I'll borrow" (i.6-8).[92] Sir Francis's allusion requesting Anne's hand as a dancing partner recognizes her marriage, and deliberately invokes the marriage ceremony previously performed at the church. Frederick Kiefer observes, "characters call upon the Deity to witness the creation of their most important bonds—marriage and friendship. And they ponder apprehensively God's response when those links are broken" (84). Also of significance is Kiefer's comment about the friendship between Frankford and Wendoll taking on "an almost sacramental quality" (85), which would seem to conflate it as well with Catholic notions of marriage as a sacrament. Anne's transition to wife signalled the transfer of duty and affection to her husband, and suggests the dual conflicting meanings of the rib in the conduct literature. She is an equal companion

[92] All quotations from the play taken from Brian Scobie's edition of *A Woman Killed with Kindness*.

with her husband, and yet she is also subordinate to him, and the audience may have seen them, figuratively at least, taking on the roles of Adam and Eve.[93] Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, indicates how the giving of a wife's hand in marriage was understood in terms of its scriptural precedent in Genesis. It is God, acting as the priest, and as symbolizing the father, who joins them together. Andrewes expands, "She [Eve] first entred into Gods house, then into *Adams* house; she first took God by the hand, and then *Adam* by the hand. And this Marriage must be our example," leading him to his overarching point that the intent of marriage is the "unity" of one flesh (*Apospasmatia* 234). The act of giving Anne's hand becomes a metonymy for marriage, but it also contains within it through the implicit comparison to Genesis the commandment to be one flesh; in giving Anne to Frankford, the stage is set for the Fall to occur in a domestic setting.

Anne is initially praised as a paragon of female beauty and virtue, containing all of the qualities and graces appertaining to the female sex. In short, she is the sort of woman that all women should be modeled after: "She's beauty and perfection's eldest daughter," prompting a comparison to the first woman, Eve, mother of all living (i.23). Patricia Meyer Spacks points out Anne, who appears to be the ideal woman, falls prey to adultery: "Here is a woman who seems all that a woman should be; she is revealed as all that a woman should not be, false to her marriage, to her religion, to herself," (323), a description which is equally applicable to Eve, who is presented to Adam as a suitable wife, and sins by eating the apple, bringing about the Fall. Milton in his first divorce tract, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, warns men not to be deceived by a pretty face or outward appearance when choosing a wife, merely "honouring the appearance of modestie, and hoping well of every sociall vertue under that veile," for though the husband (as he hopes) find his wife chaste, he may be sorely disappointed in her intellect, at which point he finds himself trapped in a union without further recourse (8). Anne, in

[93] Orlin offers a related reflection on the events of the wedding celebration which opens the play, stating they were largely symbolic for women; unlike Frankford, "Anne's essential political status is undisturbed by marriage, for she has merely transferred the direction of her duty from a brother to a husband" (*Private Matters* 142).

deferring to her husband immediately following her wedding, shows she has taken on the role of wife encouraged in the Protestant approach to Genesis, that of a reflection of her husband. Anne states complacently:

> His sweet content is like a flattering glass,
>
> To make my face seem fairer to mine eye,
>
> But the least wrinkle from his stormy brow,
>
> Will blast the roses in my cheeks that grow. (i.33-36)

In addition to highlighting the charms of the female sex as physical beauty, Anne's speech is a variation on Calvin's description of marriage as a glass, wherein the husband looking at the wife sees a reflection of himself.[94] *A Looking Glasse for Maried Folkes* includes advice for wives nearly identical to Anne's response; the wife confides, if he looked sad, "I put vpon me a sad countenance also, and lookt heauily; for euen as a looking glasse if it be a good one, doth shew the countenance of him that glasses himselfe in it: So it beseemes an honest wife to frame herselfe to her husbands affection[n]" (D1^{v}). Sir Francis shows his approval of Anne's shift to reflect her husband, modeling an understanding of women's subjection within marriage arising from Eve's fall. He recognizes Anne must present herself as a loving and submissive wife, and he registers at least some surprise at her sudden transformation: "Godamercies, brother, wrought her to it already?" (i.42). His words suggest the need to mould the wife into a suitable companion, a process symbolized by the curve of the rib in the conduct literature.[95] However, I would submit *wrought* also possesses the sense of made from, as in "[s]haped, fashioned, or

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[94] McQuade draws attention, however, to the problem projecting the wife solely as reflection of the husband creates: "pleased by praise only if it pleases her husband and judging herself fair only if he finds her so, Anne reveals that she has 'yielded' both her desire and her capacity for judgement to her husband" ("'Labyrinth'" 241).

[95] McQuade specifies the word *wrought* "suggests unnatural bending and twisting" by which "Sir Francis implies that no woman, not even his 'docile' sister, naturally accepts her change in status but must be forced, by violence if necessary, to embrace her subjection," an interpretation with implications for my reading of *Taming of the Shrew* ("'Labyrinth'" 241).

finished from the rough or crude material; cut," such as the action implied in building Eve up from the matter of Adam's rib.[96]

Sir Charles's praise of Anne as a fit companion, formed as though intended for Frankford, can be better understood in the context of the Puritan application of companionate marriage to the Genesis text:

> She doth become you like a well-made suit
> In which the tailor hath used all his art,
> Not like a thick coat of unseasoned frieze,
> Forced on your back in summer. She's no chain
> To tie your neck and curb you to the yoke
> But she's a chain of gold to adorn your neck.
> You both adore each other, and your hands
> Methinks are matches. There's equality
> In this fair combination. (i.59-66)

Anne is Frankford's complementary other half; put another way, she is only half a creation, and is made whole by her husband. The tailor who is mentioned in the passage is the eternal tailor, God, whose creation of man requires all his skill, and who patterns man after his own image, and woman after man. Just as heavy fabric is for winter and light for summer, Charles suggests the marriage is seasonable. Anne is compared to a golden chain around Frankford's neck, drawing attention to marriage as a blessed state, as well as to the wife's ornamental function while the yoke is suggestive of the image frequently depicted in the conduct literature of a pair taking up the marriage yoke, going together. The statement

[96] "Wrought." Def. 2. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 29 June 2013.

you both adore [adorne][97] *each other* suggests that in marriage each gender has specific, God-given roles; the man created for reason and labor, the woman as helpmeet and for childbirth. The *equality* Charles so frankly admires in Frankford's choice of a marriage partner is reminiscent of Puritan companionate marriage, for the husband and wife are to enter into a partnership but with the husband as the head. The hands of Anne and Frankford, which Charles declares to be matches, recall the clasped hands in the marriage ceremony, symbolizing Adam and Eve's hands joined by God. But the marriage ceremony also invokes the original purpose of marriage as set out in *An Homily of the State of Matrimony* (1562) as mutual companionship and as a remedy for the Fall.

Sir Charles crowns his encomium of marriage by wishing the couple well: "Consort and expectation of much joy, / Which God bestow on you, from this first day / Until your dissolution" (i.70-72). The phrasing, while celebrating the particular marriage of one couple, Frankford and Anne, also lends itself to apply to marriage more generally as instituted by God from the beginning, or *this first day*. By contrast, *dissolution* refers to the undoing of the marriage bond; and though it does foreshadow Anne's adultery and the separation of the couple, in the broader context of the marriage ceremony, it would seem to suggest marriage until death of one or the other of the spouses undoes the physical bond. Heywood's choice of the word *dissolution* in this scene has not occasioned much commentary.[98] It is important to recognize, however, dissolution also carried a very specific sense in the period of the dissolving of a union, and in divorce tracts of the period more specifically in discussions of whether or not divorce could be obtained for adultery.[99] As a result, I would argue the use of the word at the wedding ceremony needs to be problematized further. Sir Charles's blessing would make the *dissolution*

[97] This amendment is suggested in Scobie as a variant from Q3.

[98] David Cook comments Sir Charles's praise has "the ring of a marriage speech" while also alluding to "the tragic possibilities which we know are imminent" (370).

[99] "Dissolution." Def. 6. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 8 October 2012.

of the new couple's bond whether through adultery or death inevitable; the word hangs in the air, foreshadowing Anne's fall and inviting a comparison to the events of Genesis. Sir Charles's comment locates the play in the fiery debate about divorce for adultery in the conduct literature and divorce tracts of the period, though not in actual legal practice during this period, at least in England. It is this exchange about the application of one flesh to arguments for divorce, with its excess of meaning, which forms the basis for the next section of my chapter.

The treatment of the marriage performed in the sight of God just prior to the beginning of the play recalls the first marriage and sets up all marriage as implying a subsequent Fall, one symbolized by the figure of the fallen woman, Anne. Moreover, the problems of becoming one flesh are represented in Anne and Frankford, as the match requires one person—the wife—to become subsumed in her husband, and it is precisely this lack of agency which, arguably, leads to her fall. The rib, as discussed earlier, while it was sometimes represented as purer material for the formation of woman, was also plagued by associations of crookedness; a wife was also prone to weakness and to inducing a pain in her husband's side. God creates woman from Adam's rib and presents her as a fit companion, but woman, who is meant as a comfort and a helpmeet for man, is irreparably doomed as the cause of sin and the Fall. Adam expresses this paradox when he blames Eve: "the woman whom thou gauest to be with mee, shee gaue me of the tree, and I did eate" (Gen. 3:12).

Adultery and the Problem of Dividing One Flesh

Adultery poses a distinct problem for Puritan representations of marriage. It is likely, in fact, that adultery became under Protestantism what marriage was for Catholicism, the lesser alternative to containing sexuality, earlier through celibacy and later through marriage. Though adultery admittedly presented a problem for Catholicism too, it is more problematic for the former, in part because it expressly goes against the mandate in Genesis to be one flesh, and, as we have seen, sexuality sanctioned by God is an integral part of marriage as it was reconfigured under Protestantism. As the

chief duties of marriage are according to Whately chastity and due benevolence, adultery inhibits both by defiling the marriage bed and by discouraging the lawful coming together of husband and wife; in short, it breaks up the marriage. On another level, if marriage becomes, within Protestant doctrine, a symbolization of Christ's marriage with the Church, adultery presents a formidable obstacle here as well; if the bond between husband and wife can be dissolved by adultery (and for other reasons), what does that mean for the bond between Christ and his Church? The creation of Eve from Adam's rib was interpreted as a type of the Church out of Christ (Augustine, *City of God* 898; Perkins, *A Golden Chaine* 291). While the scriptural precedent for divorce for adultery existed in Moses, its precise meaning was ambiguous—was divorce acceptable or merely tolerated, and did Christ permit divorce only for adultery or for other causes as well? Moreover, the legal power of adultery to dissolve marriage was less certain and remained, especially for England, a subject of debate throughout the seventeenth century.[100] In England, when adultery was brought before the church courts, those courts favored separation, not divorce.[101] On the extreme end of the spectrum, Puritan texts advocated the death penalty for adulterers (presumed to be female, as with the woman taken in adultery); however, forgiveness was endorsed as the Christian response for a repentant spouse. Though a law proposing death for adulterers was introduced in the *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*, a bill begun under Henry VIII and still

[100] Whately in *A Bride-Bush* (1617) famously took the position that adultery and desertion constituted grounds for divorce and, if desired, allowed at least the innocent party to remarry; he reversed this view in a later version (1623) after being called before the Chancery Court. Tracts on both sides of the divorce debate proliferated in the period. For texts against remarriage after adultery with death for the adulterer, see Edmund Bunny, *Of Divorce for Adulterie, and Marrying Againe* (1610); John Dove, *Of Divorcement* (1601); John Howson, *Vxore Dimissa Propter Fornicationem* (1602); and George Joye, *A Contrary (To a Certain Man's) Consultation That Adulterers Ought to Be Punished with Death* [?1549]. John Rainolds in *A Defence of the Judgment of the Reformed Churches* (1609) favoured divorce for adultery with remarriage for the man. For a more sympathetic view of adultery, advocating for divorce for adultery and remarriage for both parties, see Erasmus, *The Censure and Judgment of Erasmus…Whether Divorcement Standeth with the Law of God* [?1550].

[101] Stone indicates adultery resulted in separation, sometimes effected by presentment in the church courts for separation with no remarriage (*Road* 3, 141). Martin Ingram presents evidence that the church courts between 1560-1640 upheld marriage, avoided annulment and separation, and "continued, and in some ways intensified, their traditional attack on…adultery" by punishing offenders with penance (73).

circulating during Elizabeth's reign, which sought to introduce Protestant Reform to replace Catholic laws on marriage and bring England into alignment with Continental Protestantism by legitimating divorce in specific cases, it was never enforced. Adultery was often singled out in primary texts as the chief cause of divorce; this should not be taken as evidence that adultery was widespread, but rather that adultery, the sole justification for divorce scripturally if not legally, acted as a forum for uncertainty about the status of marriage at a time when the authority over marriage (church or court) was contested and the divorce debate was underway. According to Torri L. Thompson, asking whether divorce was legal or not is the wrong question: "the disorder resulting from marital dissolution has been insufficiently taken into account by those who investigate domestic politics because they focus on the fact that divorce was not technically legal, rather than looking at Early Modern perspectives regarding its occurrence" (ix). If Thompson is correct, and I suspect she is, there has been too much attention to the legal issues of adultery as a cause for divorce in Heywood's play and not enough on fleshing out the cultural problems posed by adultery, something I intend to do in this chapter.

Whately catalogued the perceived evils of the sin of adultery for the home and the state categorically when he wrote adultery led the offender to "neglect their publick couenant, wrong their yoke-fellow, scandalize the Church, pollute their bodies, and aduenture their soules to damnation" (*A Bride-Bush* (1617) 3). No one can accuse Whately of sugar coating the matter; indeed, his description establishes the seriousness of the sin and its punishment, along with its disruptive potential for both the wronged spouse and the Church, which cannot be seen as condoning adultery. In particular, in his text on marriage, he teases out some of the problems of the one-flesh model. In an image that conveys the difficulty of extracting one partner from the other after they have become fused together, he asserts adultery divides the couple as surely as it should divide the body from the soul (*A Bride-Bush* (1623) 4). Of Whately's position on death for adulterers, Thompson remarks, "[b]ecause marriage was believed to be civilization's cornerstone and the disorder of adultery threatened the entire community, not

surprisingly, Whately supports capital punishment" for offenders (308). After all, if spouses were not living or sleeping together, or were admitting a third party into the union, it violated the commandment to be one flesh. If one flesh is at least in part a sexual definition of marriage, then the basis for community in marriage rests on fallen humans prone to sin sexually. More importantly, his text makes clear if adultery wasn't a pervasive problem, it raised questions about the Church's position on marriage. Writing on the refusal of conjugal duties occasioned by desertion or adultery, Whately's questions draw attention to the instability of marriage in the period and its inadequacy as a metaphor for the relations of the sexes, and, moreover, man's relation with God; in the absence of marriage, there is an absence of meaning: how can marriage then function as a means of preventing adultery, and "how else should they be called one flesh?" (*A Bride-Bush* (1623) 15). The questions open up a gap between marriage in doctrine, uniformly held to be one flesh, and marriage ending in separation or divorce, for which there was no corresponding metaphor. If marriage is not absolute, how can marriage be God's defining ordinance for man and woman or support a universal application of the meaning of marriage in Genesis? In the brief preface acting as a retraction, Whately asks, "for who can doubt" whether a spouse cannot, having "secretly" committed adultery render conjugal relations? (*A Bride-Bush* (1623) Ff2^{r}). His rhetorical question fuels doubt and manifests uncertainty about the potential of marriage to act as a sanctifying union if it can be thus polluted. Contrary to Protestant constructions of marital relations, slippage between partners shows sexuality has the power to make two one flesh, irrespective of marriage.

Perhaps no other issue in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* has generated as much critical commentary as Frankford's treatment of Anne's adultery as cruel or kind. As a result, most of the discussions of adultery in the play have focused, at least overtly, on adultery as a cause for divorce, with the discussion of social problems attending adultery as a subordinate concern. One of the limitations of this approach to the play is it does not consider the range of problems—social, economic, and sexual—that adultery

posed for Puritan representations of marriage, and the conflicting ideas about adultery in the play, some of which are introduced in the primary texts above. David Atkinson sees Frankford's treatment of Anne's adultery as "temperate"; Frankford in protecting his "honour," reveals his "intention is also primarily to punish his wife" (22). Laura G. Bromley finds that Frankford's judgement of Anne taken in adultery is in fact kind when read in relation to the domestic conduct literature of the day; he cannot obtain a divorce from Anne, but neither can he be seen as condoning her adultery: "Given the alternatives," Frankford takes the "moderate" course of action (268). Jennifer Panek, on the other hand, finds Frankford's punishment of Anne deplorable; she emphasizes handbooks preached forgiveness for a penitent spouse, making Frankford's sentence unnecessarily harsh, and forcing Anne in effect to kill herself (363, 373). Nancy A. Gutierrez gives more attention to problems resulting from divorce and, helpfully, finds middle ground on the play's position on adultery: Frankford's solution to the dilemma of his wife's adultery represents a "mean" between retribution and leniency, and is indicative of the uncertainty surrounding adultery, namely "is adultery to be treated harshly, as a crime worthy of capital punishment, as the Puritan radicals desired; or is adultery, if not a lesser offense, at least a sin that is forgivable?" ("Irresolution of Melodrama" 278-79). In her assessment, the various "responses" of the husband, wife, and friend to adultery "demonstrate the ineffectuality of the family in reestablishing the order it has violated," and it is this difficulty which directs my own analysis ("Irresolution of Melodrama" 278). Most recently, Erin Miller and James H. Forse have sought to move the critical discussion beyond adultery, proposing the play is more about marriage than it is about adultery, and that the purpose of adultery is to show Frankford's failure as a husband. His punishment of Anne is wanting in primarily two ways: first, he fails to forgive her adultery as a good Christian, and second, he is guilty of desertion by sending her away (264, 266). Still the authors' use of adultery to label Frankford a bad husband seems reductive, and serves to repeat the division of the earlier criticism. Though I tend to agree with Panek that a literal reading of the marriage handbooks seems to support Frankford forgiving Anne for her sexual lapse,

given her remorse, portraying Anne sympathetically and critiquing Frankford, I would argue, like Gutierrez, the play's representation of adultery is more complicated than a cut and dried case of forgiveness or punishment. It seems to harbour some Puritan sympathies, given the confusion over and range of responses to adultery, and with its vested interest, visible at isolated moments, in pushing one flesh to its logical extreme. Though some critics have noted evidence of companionate marriage in passages in the play, no one has explained those problems satisfactorily as arising out of the Puritan application of the story of Eve's creation from Adam's side and the separation posed by adultery.

Adultery was perceived as a social problem precisely because it threatened the family, the building block of society, and by extension the order of the commonwealth. Adultery raised the possibility of illegitimate heirs and was considered a form of theft. An adulterous wife exposed her husband's children to the stripe of bastardy or risked carrying an illegitimate child that then had to be cared for out of the husband's estate. Macfarlane has shown a man was required to provide for any offspring produced during the marriage; what is more, adultery constituted "theft of the exclusive and monopoly rights in a partner's sexual and companionly services" (242). Such problems help to explain why female adultery was subject to harsher censure. Thompson confirms that the problems of adultery were primarily social: "it is more likely that the real issues at stake were heirs, property, and inheritance" (xxi). Joye in his tract urging death for adulterers repeatedly compares adultery to theft, largely due to problems of inheritance, and alleges it will lead to the destruction of the commonwealth; adultery is the worst kind of theft because it is a man's wife, not his goods (B7^{v}), and it leads to other social disorder, such as murder. In addition to the alleged social problems resulting from adultery, Stone outlines the precarious economic position of a wife when full divorce could not be obtained, for adultery or for other reasons, and her only recourse was a separation:

> All the income from her real estate was retained by her husband, as well as all future legacies which might come to her. All her personal property, including her future earnings from a trade

> and her business stock and tools, were liable to seizure by her husband at any moment. She was unable to enter into a legal contract, to use credit to borrow money, or to buy or sell property. All her savings belonged to her husband. And finally all her children were controlled entirely by their father, who was free to dispose of them as he wished, and to deprive their mother of any opportunity ever to speak to them again. (*Road* 4-5)

The economic problems of adultery or separation can be summarized under coverture; because husband and wife are one in the husband, she forfeits her rights and most of her property, a status that does not change with separation because it does not dissolve the union. Thus, while separation undoubtedly benefited the husband financially, it rarely benefitted the wife. Such are the economic perils of separation, particularly heavy for the wife, and it is a stark picture indeed of the situation facing Anne Frankford.

The sexual problem of adultery is simply stated; it consists in giving one's body to a stranger, or sharing one body between two different sexual partners. Whately denounced the perverted desire that led men or women to seek "strange flesh," and to "receiue vnto the vse of their bodies any besides themselues, whom God hath coupled together, and sanctified one for another" (*A Bride-Bush* (1617) 3). As James M. Bromley has illustrated, non-marital intimacy in the early modern period comes under attack as being against English nationalism; marriage became a way of mapping "in bodily terms" and for domestic interests of maintaining order in the household and the state "international political and economic relations" (127). It is possible to infer from these findings that adultery came to be denigrated in part because of its associations as foreign or "other" sexuality. In an early modern system which restricted state and church sanctioned sexual relations to monogamy, sex can only be between two, and so is inextricably linked to the social and the economic problems it creates. By exceeding the parameters of one flesh, adultery contributes to a perceived moral deterioration of the commonwealth. In what

follows, my focus will be on the sexual problems posed by adultery as they relate to the Protestant notion of one flesh and the limitations of that metaphor for marriage.

Part of the problem of adultery, if it could even be said to dissolve marriage in practice at all, was the difficulty of dividing one flesh, literally as a bond formed by God, and figuratively in the imagery of one flesh tied up in representations of marriage. Could you part asunder what God had joined together, and how was such a severing of two into one even to be attempted? Bunny, a Calvinist, argues strenuously against divorce for adultery. He demonstrates even if adultery precludes a wife from being one flesh with or "vnder" her husband (a point which he does not stipulate), it in no way mitigates the husband's responsibility for his wife; therefore, the bond continues undissolved (92). Here, Bunny supports the thinking in Whately's forced retraction: even after joining herself to another, the wife can continue to be one flesh with her spouse. Gouge, taking the position adultery breaks marriage, explains it is "because in adultery they make themselues one flesh with a stranger….Now this neer vnion can be but betwixt two" (*Exposition* 5). From Gouge, it appears there is an economy of marriage, a one to one correlation in keeping with an understanding of marriage as the fulfillment of the commandment to be one flesh. And Milton extends the problem still further, arguing for divorce for disaffection as well as for adultery, pointing out the logical flaws in one flesh: "For if they who were once undoubtedly one flesh, yet become twain by adultery, then sure they who were never one flesh rightly, never helps meete for each other according to the plain prescript of God, may…be concluded still twaine" (*Tetrachordon* 47). According to Milton, one can be two even within marriage: adultery divides one heart and body into two separate persons while in the case of incompatibility two were never one to begin with, straining the limits of one flesh. Fletcher has suggested that readings of Paul on the idea of one flesh were not always so literal (179). In other words, it was in the public interest to disregard the model for social order or to protect the injured spouse, but I would contend the symbolic idea of one flesh, too, suffered from the damaging effects of adultery, placing marriage as the defining metaphor of God's relation with man on a

shaky foundation. If adultery could undo marriage, it threatened the holiness of marriage and the distinction upheld between Protestantism and Catholicism. As these texts clearly indicate, Puritan ministers tried to reconcile the commandment to be one flesh with the social reality of adultery; whether in living in separate residences, or in the theoretical prospect of divorce, the separation of one flesh remains incomplete.

Heywood's *A Woman Killed with* Kindness by portraying Anne's adultery acts out some of the problems of one flesh without fully resolving them, suggesting the confusion surrounding adultery and divorce, particularly responses to the ideal of one flesh, in the seventeenth century. Far from capitulating to the antithesis of good or bad husband (or the good or bad wife) the play resists such dichotomies, opting instead to explore complexities surrounding adultery and its ramifications for the directive in Genesis to be one flesh. In a speech shortly after his marriage, Frankford catalogues his marital comforts, and among them he lists pleasures of the mind and body of an aesthetic sort:

> Touching my mind, I am studied in all arts;
> The riches of my thoughts and of my time
> Have been a good proficient. But the chief
> Of all the sweet felicities on earth,
> I have a fair, a chaste, and loving wife,
> Perfection all, all truth, all ornament. (iv.7-12)

Frankford's soliloquy raises problems within the one-flesh model of marriage. He perceives the mind as internal while his wife, Anne, is described as external, or as ornamental, as we saw earlier with the wedding. The imagery diverges from the ideal of one flesh in the marriage manuals, and points to the difficulty of two bodies becoming one. Frankford's description of Anne, here and elsewhere, suggests he sees her as accoutrement, preventing the two from fully becoming one. McQuade stresses in this respect Frankford mistakes Anne's worth by seeing her as purely ornamental, for she "is not a person

with whom he can develop a lifelong relationship but a decorative object, whose beauty and sexual purity embellish his own worth" ("'Labyrinth'" 242). Though I would submit it is not a problem unique to Frankford but reflective of a larger contradiction in the advice on marriage to be one flesh. As they were conceived in early modern thought, pleasures of the mind were essentially male and hedonistic. This discourse is set against the domestic handbooks, which instill the necessity of being one mind and body. The idea appears as early as Agrippa in his text praising matrimony, which beautifully and poetically expresses the union of the minds as it should exist in the relationship of husband and wife: "eyther of theym is the same that the other is, in one agreable mynde two bodyes, in two bodies one mynde and one consent….one fleshe, one minde, [and] one concorde" (Biii^{v}-Biv^{r}). Thomas Becon adopts it also, in an earlier version of the *Golden Boke of Christen Matrimonye* wrongly attributed to Heinrich Bullinger, advising one body cannot be of two minds, for if "[h]e knowledged that she was one body wyth hys, then must it follow also, that she had lyke mynd hart & wyll. For neuer one body hath two co[n]trary wylles, but one body hath one wyl" (E2^{v}). In *Matrimoniall Honovr*, D. R. promotes "between couples, one judgement, one mind, one heart, one soule in two bodies" (188). Milton places the highest value on the mind; while he portrays the ideal in *Paradise Lost*, its inversion appears in the divorce tracts. In the latter he describes what happens when there is no like-mindedness between partners, expounding there can never be a union between the spouses "where no correspondence is of the minde; nay instead of beeing one flesh, they will be rather two carkasses chain'd unnaturally together" (*Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* 35). Whatever the expectation of being of one body or mind with a spouse in the conduct literature, Frankford's description of his marriage shows he and Anne have not become, nor can they ever be, one. Though Puritan marriage espoused the ideal, two bodies of one mind, early modern social order necessitated there could be only one will, and it belonged to the husband.

The lack of motivation attending Anne's fall has proved troubling for critics; some have resolved that the reason for Anne's fall is not important while others have attempted to smooth away the

difficulties.[102] Several critics who directly locate Anne's fall in her gender, and one who does so indirectly, are of special interest to me. Spacks asserts Anne "falls, without visible struggle, to the first temptation offered"; moreover, she finds Anne's fall is predetermined: "because she was a woman, and it is the nature of women to fall" (323). Comensoli, meanwhile, also finds an explanation for Anne's fall in her gender "because she is a woman": her "transgression" is not a "conscious choice," she exhibits the female sins of "vanity and lust," and is made vulnerable by her "corrupt feminine understanding" (80). Informing my argument is Diana E. Henderson's analysis of Anne in a Christian framework. According to Henderson, the play shows indications of Heywood transferring the Christian Fall into "realistic drama"; Anne's fall and punishment are represented spatially in a dramatic and religious register as a descent from heaven and as an exile from a physical and spiritual home, and resolved in a symbolic return to home and salvation (277-78). I, like Henderson, claim Anne's fall is related temporally and dramatically to Eve's fall, but I am more concerned with how it lends Anne sympathy by depriving her of choice in the matter. Her two descents, in the plot from a virtuous wife to an adulteress, and in tragedy from sin to death, mirror each other, but it does not follow Heywood makes her unrelatable. Other critics have also commented on the pattern of sin and repentance in the play. Scobie asserts based on Heywood's other writing, notably his *Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts of Nine of the Most Worthy Women in the World*, that the dramatist portrays Anne in a limited sympathetic way (ix). Michael Wentworth has memorably pegged Anne as a "reluctant sinner"; according to Wentworth, Heywood is not so much concerned with "how Anne fell" but "that she fall," allowing Heywood to impress "the inevitability of sin and the subsequent rehabilitation of the individual sinner" (154). Though

[102] For some representative examples of approaches to Anne's fall, see the following critics. David Cook identifies Anne as the tragic protagonist of the play, locating her fall as one of "moral sensibility"; Wendoll's proposition is "her first encounter with passion" in a "calmly affectionate marriage" (357). John Canuteson positions Anne's "sudden fall" in relation to the homosocial bond between Frankford and Wendoll: The "betrayal of a friend" he determines "is the moral issue" (130-31). Rick Bowers suggests Anne yields to Wendoll based on her inexperience, and that in the intimate scene we sympathize with the couple (299-300).

Wentworth does not specifically identify Anne's gender as prerequisite for her fall, he does determine she "remains an essentially sympathetic figure" in spite of succumbing to temptation (154-55).

According to exegetes of Genesis, there is no reason for Eve's fall; not unlike Anne, Eve falls because she is a woman, the weaker of the two sexes, and it is in the nature of woman to fall. Protestant Reformers disagreed as to the exact commencement of Eve's inferiority. Luther maintained before the Fall Eve enjoyed perfect equality with Adam, and only became subject to his authority as a consequence of her Fall, arguing if there had been no fall, there had been no change. Contrary to this position, Calvin held Eve was of necessity subject to Adam predating the Fall, from the time of her creation from Adam's rib, although he did allow for woman in the manner of her creation to be more excellent (Turner 106-07). In the seduction scene, both Anne and Wendoll employ the language of one flesh. Wendoll, debating within himself, describes his relationship with Frankford as one of "heart[s]…joined and knit together," imagery usually reserved for marriage (vi.50). Wendoll, in an attempt to persuade Anne to agree to the affair, states, "I am bound unto your husband and you too," suggesting a marriage among three people. Anne, for her part, attempts to convince Wendoll of the seriousness of the offense he is contemplating. Frankford considers Wendoll as part of his own body: "Even as his brain, his eye ball, or his heart" (vi.114).[103] Anne shows she prizes her love of her husband as something interior to her being: "as precious / As my soul's health" (vi.140-41). Anne is left without an argument to refute Wendoll's logic: "What shall I say? / My soul is wandering, and hath lost her way" (vi.149-50). The metaphor of one flesh makes Anne and Wendoll not two but one, and nothing remains but to consummate the union.

One man for one woman, or monogamy, though constructed under Protestantism to legitimize sexuality within marriage and define its end as procreation is shown not only to be natural but divinely

[103] In Wall's reading of the play, such corporeality suggests domestic and gastronomical flux: "ingestion" and the visualization of "'strange flesh'" result in violent images of body parts and disjointed limbs; it is Nick's job to act as the all-seeing "'eye,'" watching Wendoll, who is identified as the intruder, to prevent the "dissolution" of the household (206-07).

ordained. The doctrine of one flesh following the design of marriage of Adam and Eve presupposes a correlation of one man for one woman. Smith teaches the creation of one man, Adam, and one woman, Eve, is set up as a model for the intended exclusivity of marriage: "God did create but one Woman for the man, he had power to create mo[r]e, but to shewe that he woulde haue him sticke to one, therefore he created of one ribbe but one wife for one husbande" (*Preparatiue* 16). This theory has its antithesis in adultery because a third is shown to exceed the bond of marriage, intended for two only.[104] In addition, Dolan has found popular literature "push[es] the logic of coverture to suggest an economy of marital subjectivity that leaves room for only one subject" (*Dangerous Familiars* 36). As Belsey eloquently puts it, in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* "desire exceeds marriage" ("Desire's Excess" 95). Whately's conjectural scenario in which a spouse committed adultery secretly and then returned to marriage, which appears in his retraction, indicates a fear one flesh could become monstrously distorted through the third party, or even that adultery could, occurring simultaneously with marriage, go undetected. Wendoll tells Anne, "the augmentation / Of my sincere affection borne to you / Doth no whit lessen my regard of him," further assuring her, "not the light of one small glorious star / Shall shine here in my forehead to bewray / That act of night" (vi.143-45, 147-49). Wendoll's proposition disrupts the marital economy of one husband to one wife, and suggests a secret arrangement where Anne is Frankford's wife by day but joined to Wendoll in an illicit union at night. He persuades her into breaking her marriage vow by suggesting an extension of the marriage, not a discontinuation of it: "Your husband is from home, your bed's no blab" (vi.163). Anne misgives "My fault, I fear, will in my brow be writ. / Women that fall not quite bereft of grace / Have their offences noted in their face" (vi.154-56). Anne's

[104] Vives instructs marriage "ca[n]not be betwene thre or foure, but betwene two onelye" (B7^{r}). George Whetstone protests marriage is for "two bodies in one flesh, and no more" (Xii^{r}). Smith voices his approbation against three in marriage: "*They shall be two in one fleshe*, not three, nor foure, but onely two" (*Preparatiue* 17). Gouge likewise hints adultery is a breach of a union intended for two: "For the adulterer maketh himselfe one flesh with his harlot. Why then should he remaine to be one flesh with his wife? *Two* (saith the Law) *shall be one flesh*: not three," [the same applies to the wife], and his why opens up possibilities similar to Whately's, for a wife can in fact hide her adultery from her husband (*Domesticall Duties* 218). D. R. emphasizes man and wife are to be one flesh but "not two, not three, not joyned to this harlot, that Adulterer" (164).

fall conveyed in sexual and dramatic terms connects her with Eve; Anne is tempted by Wendoll, the devil, and falls, reticently, to temptation.[105] However, we should notice the marriage of Anne and Frankford continues as before: no visible sign of Anne's fall marks her, and it is only when Nick makes his report that Frankford's suspicions are aroused. The living arrangement between Frankford, Anne, and Wendoll defies Gouge's claim the near union can only exist between two, at least in the time preceding the inevitable discovery and punishment of the wife and friend's adultery.

This problem of ensuring the division of one man and one woman is further played out in the realistic domestic drama of Heywood through staging. Frankford, Anne, and Wendoll all occupy one house, collapsing the husband and the lover into one, and confronting the problem that the wife—the stereotypical adulteress—could be one flesh with more than one person. The arrangement of bedchambers shows this overlap to great effect, as Anne alternately occupies the same bed with Frankford and Wendoll, a point emphasized by Frankford's frequent absences from home. Richard Rowland points out Frankford's remarks after he feigns a headache and breaks up the card playing scene are ambiguous. Frankford speaks aloud, "'My selfe good night' (I.208). Anne is in the process of retiring for the night too, and the text alone cannot tell us whether Frankford is addressing her, in an ironic reminder of the supposed indissolubility of husband and wife, or Wendoll, who has taken his place in every sense and has actually come to be the 'present *Frankeford*' Anne had once proposed (C3^{v}; VI.79)" (122). Frankford attempts to reassert his control over the people and spaces of the household: "Wife, prethee wife, into *my* bed-chamber" (emphasis mine) (viii.208). Through the doubling implicit in the staging of household space, Heywood's play pushes the one to one correlation, showing how one flesh

[105] Henderson reads Wendoll's speech in the seduction scene as resembling the serpent's enticing speech in the account of the Fall (280). Gutierrez also interprets Wendoll as "a devil figure," bringing about Anne's adultery and later repentance ('*Shall She Famish'* 43).

can occur between two men and one woman, and pointing to the possibility that sexuality cannot be contained within marriage.[106]

When Frankford leaves on pretense of business, Wendoll declares his intention to take advantage of Frankford's unlooked for absence: "I am husband now in Master Frankford's place, / And must command the house (xi.89-90). Like Mosby with Arden, Wendoll takes Frankford's place as head of household and with his wife, drawing attention to the triangle of adultery existing in both plays. He insinuates continuing the affair: "My pleasure is / We will not sup abroad so publicly, / But in your private chamber, Mistress Frankford" (xi.90-92). And his statement "I'll be profuse in Frankford's richest treasure" highlights Anne's vulnerable position as economic and sexual possession (xi.116). Frankford's plan to enter the household at night highlights the impossibility of actually catching the lovers in *flagrante delicto*, or in the act of committing adultery.[107] In a moment of heightened dramatic tension, Frankford pauses before the door, contemplating the potential for adultery to be concealed in the household. The marriage bed, the sacred site of husband and wife, has become the site for another, adulterous union:

> But this, that door that's bawd unto my shame,
>
> Fountain and spring of all my bleeding thoughts,
>
> Where the most hallowed order and true knot

[106] I should acknowledge at this point there are queer implications for my reading of the domestic arrangements in Frankford's house. The wife separates the two men spatially and erotically in the household, but Wendoll does, as I have mentioned, occupy Frankford's bedchamber, and both men merge in a sense as Wendoll joins the union. For a reading of the potential for homosexual tensions in the play see Margaret B. Bryan, who reads Frankford's instructions to Wendoll as "repressed homosexual" desire, "a substitution of her for himself in the illicit relationship" (15-16). While I do not always agree with Bryan's reading, in that it strains the text, I do find value in her approach, which places marriage in relation to other early modern dynamics. A more recent and compelling reading of the homoerotic register of the play, and its performance, exists in Rowland. He claims the language between the two men is not friendship; rather, it is "the language of marriage, but distorted, partly by the kind of religious mania with which John Donne was conflating the images of a lover and of Christ in the exactly contemporary 'Holy Sonnets', and partly by the relentless use of the male possessive pronoun" (130).

[107] Iago in a contemporaneous iteration of this problem conveys to Othello the difficulty of catching Desdemona and Cassio in the illicit sexual act: "It is impossible you should see this / be they as prime as goats as hot as monkeys" (3.3.407-08).

Of nuptial sanctity hath been profaned.

It leads to my polluted bed chamber… (xiii.10-14)

Though Frankford claims the rooms in the household as his, he indicates it is Wendoll who occupies them, leaving him an outsider in his own household (Orlin, *Private Matters* 149). He returns to report he has "found them lying / Close in each other's arms, and fast asleep" (xiii.43-44). Frankford, forced into the position of an observer of adultery in his own house, draws attention to the presence of a third party in the marriage union. By placing the members of the love triangle in one household, Heywood confronts the overlap between marriage and adultery when marriage is defined solely in terms of sexual union rather than as a coming together of body and mind. In having Frankford gaze upon the sleeping pair, the play shows adultery does not automatically break the marriage bond, and the household may actually obscure its discovery.

Anne's immediate response to being taken in adultery is to convey a sense of horror at what she has done and to express remorse, not only for the pain she has caused Frankford but for endangering her own salvation, while expressing a just sense of her punishment:

Though I deserve a thousand thousandfold

More than you can inflict, yet, once my husband,

For womanhood—to which I am a shame

Though once an ornament—even for His sake

That hath redeemed our souls, mark not my face

Nor hack me with your sword, but let me go

Perfect and undeformed to my tomb. (xiii.95-101)

R. W. Van Fossen reads this plea as evidence "Anne expects death" (xxxi). However, I suggest the play draws attention to the gap between the death penalty for adulterers espoused by Puritans, something the play and the courts were unwilling to enforce or stage, and the actual punishment of exile, which

Anne deems "a mild sentence" by comparison (xiii.173). Anne "expresses a conviction that her infidelity warrants her death….and demonstrates an affinity with attitudes to adultery and its appropriate penalty which were largely characteristic of Puritan thought" (Atkinson 24). There is no death, however, for adultery, no matter how much Anne devoutly wishes it, or Frankford may think she deserves it; forgiveness becomes a spiritual but also a legal necessity.

The result is the drama draws attention to the fact adultery does not, as Whately claims, have the power to divide the couple as surely as it divides the soul from the body. It does not result in death for the adulteress, as a strict interpretation of scripture would dictate, or effectively even sever the marriage, given the absence of divorce. Neither does Whately's allowance for the forgiveness of the remorseful spouse explain Frankford's decision to thrust his wife from the household, meaning Frankford is not following Whately's advice, but it does represent the early modern practice in which adultery separated spouses for a time until they could be reconciled (Gowing 194-95). In this scene Anne is made sympathetic through parallels to The Woman Taken in Adultery in the Bible and depicted in the N-town play, who is not punished with death, though some Puritans had proposed a similar punishment.[108] This implied comparison invites the audience to contrast Frankford's treatment of Anne with Christ's forgiveness.[109] Heywood's play, however, emphasized how adultery subverted one flesh, first by showing a wife could become one flesh with someone other than the person to whom she is legally and lawfully wedded, and then by presenting an obstacle to cohabitation in Anne's separation. A lack of cohabitation, the marriage handbooks clearly stated, "frustrat[ed]" the command to be one flesh

[108] Joye, in his tract on adultery, represents the extreme Puritan view; citing Moses as a precedent, Joye claims adultery is a threat to the commonwealth and advocates adulterers be stoned ($A5^{v}$-$A6^{r}$). Thompson notes texts on adultery were "concerned to reconcile the Mosaic death penalty for adultery with Jesus's merciful interaction with an adulteress (in John 8:11)" (83-84).

[109] Comensoli first makes the connection between Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* and the N-town play, taking the position that Anne's reaction to her discovery, specifically her vanity, makes her a foil to the Woman Taken in Adultery while reflecting the earlier play "reveals the 'unkindness' of Frankford's choice of punishment" and the "necessity of mercy and forgiveness" (79, 81). Elsewhere Miller and Force cite Gouge to support the view Frankford should forgive Anne as Jesus forgave the adulteress (qtd. in 266).

(Whately, *A Bride-Bush* (1617) 4). Gataker, who extends the logic against divorcing an infidel spouse to other causes, including presumably adultery, wrote "*if cohabitation be of God*, *then* the contrary vnto it *separation is of Satan*" (*Marriage Duties* 39). Though adultery is a scriptural cause of divorce, it is at odds with the Protestant idea of one flesh in Genesis.[110]

From his reaction, it is evident Frankford feels Anne's adultery, with its double sting of sexual shame and conjugal ingratitude, just as deeply, if not more so, than she does, or at least that he feels he should be the principal person affected by the consequences:

> Spare thou thy tears, for I will weep for thee;
> And keep thy countenance, for I'll blush for thee.
> Now I protest, I think 'tis I am tainted,
> For I am most ashamed, and 'tis more hard
> For me to look upon thy guilty face
> Than on the sun's clear brow. (xiii.85-90)

Present in Frankford's speech is a clear tension between who feels, or is allowed to feel, the painful effects of adultery most, the offender or the offended, the husband or the wife. Indeed, as I argued with *Arden* and earlier in this chapter, this is another place where there is only room for one person in a marriage in the drama, and the mark of the cuckold both shames and implicates the husband.[111] Donne, in a biting epigram, illustrates how the ignominy of adultery stamped itself on the husband as well as the wife because the two were one flesh:

> Thy wife being not her own with thy limbs she,
> Fool'd Cuckold, doth commit Adulterie.

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[110] Separation from an infidel spouse was sometimes employed for purposes of analogy in the debate about divorce for adultery. I will return to the treatment of the infidel spouse in the conduct literature in my chapter on *Othello*.

[111] In *Arden*, Dolan maintains "the play holds the cuckolded husband responsible for his wife's adultery and insubordination" (*Dangerous Familiars* 36).

Being, then, one flesh, and thou her Head, tis fit

The Hor[n]s, in Justice, on thy Brow should fit. (*Paradoxes* 1.5-8)

The monstrousness of adultery is apparent in the poem in the tangled limbs. The wife's adultery leads the husband to be complicit with adultery through the mark of the cuckold because he is supposed to be her head. Though adultery taints the union, it does not per force dissolve it, resulting in a deformity. Frankford's description shares some commonalities with the cuckolded husband in Donne's epigram. Frankford disputes Anne's right to cry or feel embarrassed over her adultery, refusing Anne's role as victim and her remorse. Rather, Frankford claims the greater share of sympathy is due to himself, the wronged husband, as though competing with Anne for the sympathy of the society and the audience. The parallel actions of crying and blushing make the body of the husband the extension of the wife, as in Donne where the wife's limbs metaphorically become the husband's. The similarity in phrasing suggests Frankford is referencing the cuckold. While in Donne, the scorner suggests the horns should rest on the husband's brow, in the play, Frankford cannot look upon Anne's face, comparing it to *the sun's clear brow*. Yet the mark of the cuckold transfers to Frankford, the husband, because her shame will be reflected on his face. Indeed, Frankford's feelings of shame recall Arden's fear, which he discloses to Franklin, that Alice's adultery will be visible on his brow (iv.17). The imagery employed by Frankford also reverses the metaphor in the conduct literature: "The husband must be like the Sun in his House, the Wife like the Moon; what light she gives, must be borrowed from him" (de Mello 10).[112] As Donne's allusion illustrates, both Donne and Frankford are drawing on the same cultural association between the sun and the cuckold, which emphasizes the shared shame Frankford experiences as the result of his wife's adultery.

[112] An example of this use of sun and moon imagery occurs in *The Taming of the Shrew*, when Kate says "But sun it is not when you say it is not, / And the moon changes even as your mind. / What you will have it named, even that it is" (4.6.20-22).

At its crux, the problem of adultery in sexual terms becomes not whether adultery justifies divorce but whether Anne can recover from her fall, and how one flesh breaks down in the face of adultery. Anne describes herself as cut off from Frankford as surely "[a]s Lucifer from heaven. To call you husband! / O me most wretched, I have lost that name; / I am no more your wife" (xiii.82-84). Anne recognizes adultery has stripped her of her roles as wife and mother: "O me, base strumpet, / That having such a husband, such sweet children, / Must enjoy neither" (xiii.133-35). Gutierrez notes Anne, after losing her titles of wife and mother, is "bereft of God's grace. The typological and the social interpretations merge in the picture of Anne as a fallen woman, the daughter of Eve" ('*Shall She Famish'* 43). Barbara Baines compares Anne's sin to Eve's in terms of its finality: "Both Anne and Frankford are acutely aware that her transgression constitutes an irrevocable loss. They can, to some extent, through repentance and forgiveness, repair the ruin, but the Edenic domestic world is forever gone. Anne's transgression alters temporal reality as permanently as the original Fall that it mirrors" (95). Indeed, Frankford expresses a desire to reclaim Anne from "her first offense," though he deems it "impossible," connecting her fall at once to Eve and portraying the fall of the female protagonist as markedly a fall into sexuality (xiii.62, 64).

The portrayal of Anne as a *reluctant sinner* has its precursor in the biblical figure of Eve and in drama, as I have argued, in Alice Arden. It is is made possible by the new genre of domestic drama, with its attention to the wife and by Protestant doctrine, with its emphasis on companionate marriage. The sympathetic adulteress, unthinkable before, is not a figure represented onstage until the seventeenth century. Though Puritans to varying degrees engaged in anti-theatrical fervor, Puritans' objections towards the theatre were based on the premise that the plays acted as a negative moral exemplum, encouraging sin. By the 1590s, however, Puritan attitudes to the theatre had shifted, with some allowing for its role "as suitable recreation" as well as "its power as a medium of shaping public opinion," if not for moral improvement (White 173). Heywood as an actor with Puritan sympathies stressed the morality

of the theatre, which would include depicting adultery as providing opportunities for repentance and improvement.[113] Gutierrez in defining Heywood's stance on Puritanism, as a sect at once within yet in tension with Protestantism, observes Heywood's use of the word "Puritant" in the seduction scene insists on a link between Anne's fall and the original fall, thereby aligning the play with sin and redemption "in both its individual and typological forms—a Christian who has sinned against God, and Adam and Eve who committed the first sin in Paradise" ('*Shall She Famish'* 43). In the case of the adulteress, Heywood defends her depiction in the drama: "Women likewise that are chaste, are extolled by vs and encouraged in their vertues" while "the vnchaste are by vs shewed their errors" (*Apology* G1^{v}).

Standing alone on the stage in her smock after Frankford has retreated to his study, Anne is the focus of action and emotion; addressing the women in the audience, Anne makes a heart-wrenching plea:[114]

> O women, women you that have yet kept
> Your matrimonial vow unstained,
> Make me your instance: when you tread awry,
> Your sins like mine will on your conscience lie. (xiii.142-45)

Richardson reads Anne's aside as dramatically charged: "The staging is powerfully evocative of her translation from Frankford's wife to a negative moral exemplar, a spectacle of guilt and shame" (169).

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[113] Accounts of Heywood's ties with Puritanism are varied. Arthur M. Clark, an early biographer, identified Heywood as becoming more Puritanical over time (193-94). More recent critics have been cautious about identifying Heywood as strictly Puritan. Allan Holaday described Heywood as Anglican and royalist (193). Baines agrees Heywood was Anglican (7). Gutierrez concludes Heywood's *A Woman Killed* is thus "both product and participant in the making of the Puritan value system" ('*Shall She Famish'* 50).

[114] For an alternate reading of this scene, see Orlin's discussion of the importance of Frankford's withdrawing to his study for male autonomy: "If the study similarly produced Frankford's judgement, and if (as I propose) his judgement valorized his agency, then the study authored him as an apparently determinate male self" (*Private Matters* 188). The study allowed for introspection provided "by four walls, a door, a lock, and a key" (188). In this way, Frankford's study can be compared and contrasted with Alice's closet in the previous chapter, also locked, and which I argued allowed her privacy to commit adultery. Here, I argue the attention on Frankford, removed from the audience's sight, is offset by the focus of Anne, who is left onstage.

Be that as it may, the audience sympathizes with Anne in this metatheatrical moment;[115] though she has sinned, she is penitent, even if her concerns at this moment are more for her physical than her spiritual welfare.[116] Orlin contends that in the moments of standing alone onstage in her smock before the audience Anne is first given a "voice" (*Private Matters* 174). Indeed, when the servants enter immediately following Anne's soliloquy, it resembles the household conclave described by Stone in cases of adultery which took the form of a "private trial attended by the family solicitor," pursuant to separation (*Road* 3). I would argue the role of the family solicitor is here represented in the figure of Cranwell. The servants cry, "O mistress, mistress, what have you done, mistress?" (xiii.146), and Anne retorts, "See what guilt is: here stand I in this place, / Ashamed to look my servants in the face" (xiii.151-52). While Anne's adultery certainly makes her a negative moral exemplum, in this moment of profound mental anguish, and as a spectacle of pity, Anne rivals Frankford as the centre of tragic action.

Indeed, Dympna Callaghan has outlined a pattern of female tragic action, showing if man erred, the error started with an act or an omission of an act by a woman, who was the source of all transgression. In this paradigm, women commit an initial transgression and follow it through until death, a pattern "which serves to undermine" the male protagonist (*Woman* 62). The tragic pattern emerges from the Genesis story: Eve, as the source of all transgression, and man's sin as originating in the fault of woman (*Woman 52, 64*). Such a paradigm helps to explain the trajectory of Anne's fall—this time into adultery. Callaghan's female pattern disrupts the traditional male pattern of tragedy by being less linear and more circular, lending Anne more dramatic importance, if not in choosing the unconventional punishment for her adultery, exile, then in following it through to its conclusion, death. Henderson's reading fits nicely

[115] Richard Levin presents striking evidence early modern theatre companies considered their female audience in staging their performances. Plays acknowledged the female audience in four ways: moral edification, emotional sensitivity, in weighing their preferences, and "as an increasingly significant component of the market" for printed plays (169-73).

[116] Comensoli remarks Anne's concern is for her physical appearance rather than repentance (79). Wentworth claims Anne "fails to perceive the actual nature of her moral offense and the proper Christian means of retribution" (n13).

with Callaghan's female version of tragedy. Henderson notes "Anne uses figures of movement to describe her fall" consistent with a visual representation of Christian fall and salvation, and that motion involves a circular element as well because her journey begins and ends with home (286, 278). Another feminist critic, Theresia de Vroom, has proposed an exhilaratingly resistant reading of Anne in the play; according to de Vroom, Anne's "adultery is a flawed but singularly feminine act of heroism" (119).[117] Anne's adultery constitutes autonomy, allowing her "to behave as her own agent, to act outside of her marriage, to be the subject of her own life"; by extension, her exile represents "the most extreme perversion of independence" (126-27). So de Vroom agrees with Callaghan in promoting a reading that would place woman or Anne as an alternate protagonist of the plot. Though de Vroom's argument has a boldness and a feminist sheen that make it attractive, it has its limitations. If in one sense Anne's agency is resistance, in another it is reflective of passivity; after all, Anne does not actively seek out an affair with Wendoll, nor does she embark upon the exile by choice but under duress. Scobie finds Anne a curious mixture of morality and restraint: "Yet Anne, who barely acts except submissively enjoys more of our sympathies than Beatrice- Joanna who strives (benightedly to be sure) in order to control her own destiny. She is never a willing sinner, and never seems in any real doubt as to which course she would follow were she allowed any real choice" (xxiv). Taken collectively, Anne does not seem to resist marriage in the same way or to the same extent that Alice Arden does, so I would modify de Vroom's claim slightly to suggest Anne's adultery constitutes resistance for the culture as a whole, against the pressure placed on one flesh to define marriage, without being considered an individual act of resistance, and I pursue this idea in my next section. In this way, dividing one flesh becomes problematic

[117] For another equally thought-provoking study of the female "hero" in early modern English tragedy, see Lisa Hopkins, who maintains the rise of the female hero in the drama (of which she allows *A Woman Killed with Kindness* to be an early example) is a shift that occurs largely when we see "women contesting the images offered of them rather than being merely constrained by them" (1, 6). According to Hopkins's criteria, Anne is a prototype of such a female hero.

because though Anne can act in a sense as a tragic protagonist, she cannot exist dramatically in isolation of her husband.

Frankford's assumption that he can divide himself from Anne through a simple reallocation of assets shows a misunderstanding of one flesh. Frankford's speech does indicate, however, a thorough knowledge of the division of property; Anne has the right to her moveables of clothing, jewelry, and furniture. His instructions over property are minute, separating his own belongings from her own: "Take with thee all thy gowns, all thy apparel" (xiii.160). He tells Anne to take those things which belong to her: "Choose thee a bed and hangings for a chamber; / Take with thee everything that hath thy mark, / And get thee to my manor seven mile off," with the mark referring to her name and the blot of adultery (xiii.164-66). He later itemizes other such personal items in searching the household to ensure an equitable division of possessions: "I would not have a bodkin, or a cuff, / A bracelet, necklace, or rebato wire" (xv.7-8) He also allows her a share in the household servants, showing a willingness to split them equally to assist in the maintenance of two different households: "Choose which of all my servants thou likest best, / And they are thine to attend thee" (xiii.171-72). He further offers the service of his tenants to provide Anne with wagons for her household stuff, and he also gives her a carriage to transport her to her new home (xiii.168, xvi.5).[118] Also reflective of the economic problems of adultery, and following hard upon his division of marital property, is Frankford's explicit directions about what Anne no longer has the rights to:

> I charge thee never after this sad day
> To see me, or to meet me, or to send
> By word, or writing, gift, or otherwise
> To move me, by thyself, or by thy friends,

[118]Ann Christensen finds in the business of dividing up material goods an indication that such items were owned by "the provider" (337).

Nor challenge any part in my two children.

So farewell, Nan, for we will henceforth be

As we had never seen, ne'er more shall see. (xiv.175-81)

As far as Frankford's understanding of the matter of Anne's adultery, he has discharged his obligation and the transaction of separation is now complete.[119] It was possible to separate under such an informal agreement outside of the courts in cases of adultery, but Stone's account cited earlier of the economic plight of the separated wife without recourse to divorce should give us pause: wives were left with very little, and what they did have could be seized by the husband; moreover, any children were left in his care (*Road* 4-5). Orlin asserts Frankford in his decisive act to separate Anne from his household restores his own domestic interest because he realizes "the house he had settled with her is separable from her; and that in reclaiming the house he can redeem for it and for himself domestic honour" (*Private Matters* 151).[120] On the contrary, Frankford's mistake lies in supposing he can separate her from his household at all, or at least with such neat precision as he pretends to do. The conduct literature concedes the physical or symbolic difficulty, at times conveyed in almost mathematical terms, of separating two once they have become one flesh. Whether in the literal sense of property or in a metaphorical sense as an excess of meaning, something always remains behind.

Just as Eve is created of a rib from the side closest to Adam's heart, and Smith emphasized the proper place of the wife was in the bosom of her husband, Frankford emphasizes adultery is a betrayal of the instruction that husband and wife should be of one heart. Whately wrote in his expanded sermon on marriage in 1623 that for love to exist in marriage "their hearts must be vnited as well as their

[119] Miller and Forse read in this treatment of Anne a censure of Frankford, a failure to fulfill the duties of companionate marriage: "Frankford is performing his husbandly duty to 'prouide for his wife so long as she shall live,' but that is the extent of his 'kindness'" (265).

[120] Christensen submits the play depicts "the inauguration, establishment, dissolution, and reconfiguration of a household" (329). Her characterization of the dissolution of the household alludes to while it does not acknowledge as such the meaning of dissolution of marriage following from adultery in the conduct literature. At the same time, it problematically assumes a reinscribing of the household that I negate.

bodies" (*A Bride-Bush* 31). Frankford first questions how "friends and bosom wives prove so unjust?" (viii.83). Frankford asks Anne if his treatment of her was in any way lacking: "Did I not lodge thee in my bosom, wear thee here in my heart?" (xiii.114-15). His dismissal of Anne is perfunctory: "It was thy hand cut two hearts out of one" (xiii.186). While his manner may seem somewhat cold to modern sensibility, and presumes an unproblematic division of one into two, his imagery suggests a union plagued with adultery is no union at all. Yet Frankford's description of two joined as though one heart conflicts with Wendoll's earlier, more violent image of cutting hearts when he contemplates committing adultery with Anne: "to rip thy image from his bleeding heart….or rend his heart / To whom thy heart was joined and knit together" (vi.46, 49-50). Interestingly, Wendoll's struggle over his feelings for his friend's wife acts out the scriptural injunction often contained in works on adultery that "whosoeuer looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). As Heywood disturbingly shows, the bond of one flesh in discourses of companionate marriage was one relationship competing against other possible alternatives of allegiances such as friendship or kinship. Employed in its sense either as a covenant or a mutually beneficial union, repetition of the instruction to be one flesh is no guarantee the marriage will be a happy one, or even continue indissoluble when confronted with infidelity.

As I have attempted to show, Heywood's depiction of adultery resists a simplistic portrayal of Anne as the fallen wife. Though the type of the adulteress is admittedly at work at moments in the play, Anne is after all to some extent a negative moral exemplum, Heywood treats Anne sympathetically. In the focus on Frankford's treatment of Anne, what is largely missed in the criticism of the play is a discussion of the problems adultery posed for marriage. Because the absence of divorce was still an inexorable, and polarizing, problem for marriage in the seventeenth century, *A Woman Killed with Kindness* is forced to elide the issue of divorce for adultery, focusing instead on the problems and tensions attending it, resulting in temporary estrangement over marriage, separation over divorce. The

commandment to be one flesh remains in force, but if the wife is to be *bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh*, adultery and separation disrupt Puritan models of Eve's creation from Adam's side as a metaphor for marriage, drawing attention to her dual role as both companion at his side and the source of man's discomfort and pain. Thus, any separation is to cut one into two. As I will show, Anne's unconventional punishment suggests the play is more interested in working out conflicting ideas present in primary texts on marriage and its dissolution than in proposing any resolution to the problem of adultery.

The Lute

The inclusion of the lute in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* has historically been praised by critics on artistic grounds; it acts as a symbol without sacrificing realism or driving the play into pathos. The importance of the lute consists in giving insight into characters' feelings, mainly Anne and Frankford now that they are separated, but Wendoll and the servants too, without relying too heavily on sentimentality for effect. In Ure's reading, the lute demonstrates Heywood's skill as a playwright, and exhibits a near perfect correspondence between the thing and what it represents, and so constitutes a unique achievement in the domestic drama: a "perfect control of stage effect and timing, and a complete reconciliation between character and theme—that is, we are enabled to feel with Frankford's sufferings and yet contemplate the firm development of the moral tale of the broken marriage" (202). Comensoli has argued for the visual significance of the lute and the bed on the stage in signifying Anne's relinquishment of status (82-83). I share an interest in the materiality of the lute, both as stage property and as emblematic of failed marriage. Other critics, too, insist the lute is more reflective of Anne, usually in the sense of a renunciation of earthly things, or as foreshadowing her self-imposed punishment of starvation.[121] I believe the lute tells us more about Anne than it does about Frankford, both as her

[121] Barbara Sebek reads Anne's relinquishing of the lute as foregoing earthly pleasures, and finally life, as her decision to starve herself shows (66). Laura G. Bromley shows the lute symbolizes Anne's resolve to give up life's joys followed by her actual life (273). Bryan sees in the destruction of the lute a prefiguring of Anne's starvation (14). For Christopher Frey and Leanore Lieblein, Anne's decision to smash the lute suggests her later self-imposed starvation (49).

possession and as a symbol in early modern European texts and culture of the woman's body. Few critics, however, have gone beyond a superficial analysis of the lute in the play. One exception is Cecile Williamson Cary, who examines the lute as part of a larger progression from earthly to heavenly harmony in the couple's marriage, and while I question her conclusion, I agree with her impression of the lute as conveying discord in their marriage.[122] A few critics, notably Comensoli and Cary, have called attention to the importance of the lute as a crucial step in Anne's repentance process. I think it is a point which has not received as much emphasis as it deserves, and makes Anne more of a sympathetic character despite her fall into adultery (82; 120-21).

I intend to draw on the lute as representative of Anne and the female body more generally, in addition to its implications for fallen sexuality, showing how the lute symbolizes marriage, which is made to bear the weight of sexual relations as interpreted through the creation story in Genesis. The lute, a stringed instrument consisting of a pear-shaped body, a narrow neck, and a peg board, the more elaborate displaying a carved rosette on the front, represents the problems associated with the open female body. The rounded back of the lute was constructed of between 9 to 39 pieces of wood called ribs, which were joined together, sometimes showcasing alternating patterns of two or more types of wood (Fig. 4). The pegboard, located at the top of the neck and bent at a perpendicular angle away from the body, could be made of wood or bone, and a few were customized with heart-shaped pegs. The lute as a signal of wealth and status was the sign of the education and accomplishments of a gentlewoman. The rib God used to create Eve was said to be taken from the side nearest Adam's heart, but, as has been stated, the choice of a rib from his left side could also intimate the sinister nature of the threat posed by woman to man. The lute represents the idea of the female body as open, and so is suggestive of Anne's adultery. What is intended in the lute is an allusion to the rib, or the creation of woman from

[122] Cary concludes the reconciliation of Frankford and Anne is happy; I see the ending of the play (and the marriage) as more problematic, a point I will return to later in the chapter. Christensen, like Cary, remarks the lute is indicative of "harmony and discord," ultimately reading it as a material good supplied by Frankford to Anne, one which highlights the problem of the wife as commodity (n23).

man's side; consequently, it also embodies the perception of all women and female sexuality as essentially fallen. In addition to its association with creation, however, the rib for Heywood connotes the problems attending separation.

At the wedding celebration, Anne's ability to play the lute is seen as a sign of her as a grace to womanhood and her suitability as a wife: she can "teach all strings to speak in their best grace" (i.20). But her fitness as a companion, Sir Francis makes clear, is dependent on her obedience and chastity; she "must needs prove / Pliant and duteous in [her] husband's love," as compliant as the strings on the lute she plucks (i.40-41). After Anne's adultery, the discovery of the lute, which Nick finds "flung in a corner," attests to Anne's lingering presence onstage, in the home, and in Frankford's thoughts even after her departure (xv.12).[123] Frankford's memory of Anne playing the lute makes reference to a happier time in their marriage, but after her adultery the lute becomes a reminder of her betrayal and disgrace:

> Her lute! O God, upon this instrument
> Her fingers have run quick division,
> Sweeter than that which now divides our hearts
> These frets have made me pleasant, that have now
> Frets of my heartstrings made. (xv.13-17)

The happiness Frankford experiences in his marriage, and the viability of the marriage itself rely on Anne's closed sexuality, on the two being one flesh. Once Anne has committed adultery, effectively putting an end to their marriage, her instrument has lost its value, and he sends it after her. That the lute evokes Anne onstage is evident in Frankford's parallel statement when he dispatches it: "Of her and hers I am once bereft" (xv.24). Frankford puns on frets in the sense of troubles in marriage, and the division he indicates Anne has worked through her adultery suggests a division of hearts as well as of bodies. Van Fossen sees in the discovery of the lute an indication of the "total isolation" of Frankford

[123] David Cook observes Frankford mistakes in thinking that in removing Anne's possessions from the house he can erase her memory (362).

(xl). Indeed, Frankford's melancholic reflection in the subjunctive mood, "To be a widower ere my wife be dead," draws attention to the paradox of his situation (xvi.30). The estrangement of the couple is one which only adultery, as cause for separation but not divorce, can bring about. The death of the wife, figured here in Anne's exile, in addition to foreshadowing Anne's actual death, works to resolve this paradox dramatically by allowing for Anne's removal from the marriage.

As woman is created from man's rib, in returning the lute Frankford suggests Anne is no longer part of him. And yet, how can man leave a companion formed of his own flesh or take back the rib used to form her? In *Paradise Lost*, subsequent to Eve's fall, Adam contemplates an existence without her but then relents:

> So forcible within my heart I feel
> The bond of nature draw me to my own,
> My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
> Our state cannot be severed, we are one,
> One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself. (IX.955-59)

The separation between Frankford and Anne is all the more striking and disturbing when contrasted, as I believe it would have been, with the biblical account of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve are commanded to be one flesh, and their subsequent punishment requires they stay together for mutual help and comfort: he in work, and she through childbirth. Though Eve does not commit adultery by sexually betraying Adam, as Kristin Pruitt has explained in her analysis of Milton's rendition of the events of Genesis, Eve's act can be understood as a "metaphoric indulgence in adultery. Thus, in eating of the forbidden fruit at the serpent's behest, Eve is faithless both to God and Adam" (*Individual Soul* 74).[124]

[124] The separation scene in *Paradise Lost* is itself the subject of a smaller body of criticism. Diane Kelsey McColley takes issue with the view propounded in criticism that the Fall is inevitable, challenging Eve's separation is not the product of willfulness but "based on free will" (113). For McColley as well then, separation, at least in Milton, is not a problem but a necessary step in the retelling of the Genesis story.

While Adam in Genesis and in Milton's version suggests he cannot be separated from Eve even after her fall because she is taken from his side, the symbolic resonance of the lute in Heywood emphasizes how after her adultery, Anne, who is meant to be with man, is taken or separated from Frankford's side. The play suggests both Frankford and Anne suffer unnecessarily as a result of the pressure brought to bear on female sexuality as a basis for interpreting marriage. This pressure manifests itself in other places in the literature too. Milton is one who explicitly questions the pre-eminence given to sexuality in Puritan discussions of marriage: "but he who affirms adultery to be the highest breach, affirms the bed to be the highest of mariage, which is in truth a grosse and borish opinion, how common soever; as farre from the countnance of Scripture, as from the light of all clean philosophy, or civill nature" (*Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* 17). Milton's views on divorce were not accepted even by Puritans, and his support of divorce is admittedly self-interested, but a Puritan doing a critical reading of scripture would have to admit he was right. Turner to brilliant effect shows how the reliance on ideas like one flesh put a tremendous weight on Genesis to act as a touchstone, but, as a result, it led to contradictory interpretations which were never really resolved (24).

While travelling to her new home, Anne is stopped on the road by Nick, who gives her the lute. Instantly recognizing it, she says, "I know the lute. Oft have I sung to thee; / We both are out of tune, both out of time" (xvi.18-19). As Lieblein and Frey have aptly noted, Anne's personification of the lute shows her awareness that it functions as "an extension of her body" (49). Though I am emphasizing the tragic mood of this scene, I should concede the potential for the lute, in its capacity as an open instrument, to simultaneously provide opportunities for comic farce in the drama, for instance in Nick's bawdy retort to Anne, "[w]ould that had been the worst instrument that / e'er you played on" (xvi.20-21). As an extension of Anne, the lute also portrays her as an extension of Frankford while giving added weight to the sincerity of her repentance: "My lute shall groan; / It cannot weep, but shall lament my

moan" (xvi.31-32).[125] Anne's belief in the power of tears of remorse, her own, her servants, and presumably those of the audience, to whom she is an object of pity, to "wash [her] spotted sins," in addition to her reaction to Wendoll, who in her "repentant eyes seems ugly black," could make reference to the materials used in constructing the lute, notably ebony and ivory (xvi.31, 112). For instance, ebony and ivory often appeared offset on the necks of lutes to striking effect, or could be used for pegs. Thus, Heywood shows how Anne undergoes a powerful cleansing process of repentance, making an otherwise inward change on her soul outwardly visible on her body through the presence of the lute. After she has finished her dirge, Anne directs Nick to "break this lute upon my coach's wheel" as her "farewell / To all earth's joy" (xvi.72, 75). When Anne breaks the lute, the significance of her act goes beyond breaking a mere musical instrument or even an anticipation of her starvation, though her servants will later report "she is as lean as a lath," or board (xvii.36). Because the lute was made of sections of wood called ribs and edged with bone, by breaking the lute she also obliterates the symbol of man's union with woman, the rib of which she is fashioned, and one must painfully become two. As a result, in the act of breaking the lute, Anne becomes an agent, separated from Frankford, but her agency is limited by the choices available to her: starvation and death. At the same time, breaking the lute means a singular loss of identity for Anne; if she is not flesh of his flesh, what is she? Without the husband she is created for, who is figured in the lute, there is no place for her in the narrative contained in Genesis: she ceases to exist.

As critics have noted, the lute suggests the renunciation of Anne's sexual sin and becomes suggestive of her later starvation, but its potential to symbolize woman reinforces it is Anne, the wife in the patriarchal society, who takes the fall and is made to pay the ultimate price for her moral faltering. Spacks observes of the characters who show moral lapses in the play, "only one, Mistress Frankford, is

[125] In an important aside on the role of music in the play, Rowland proposes the appearance of the lute in this scene contains resonances of the Orpheus myth in Ovid, for example, playing it could elicit tears from listeners and "command trees and stones" (126).

punished—for she is the only one who fully recognizes and repents her own failure" (330). As Spacks's comparison makes clear, it is ultimately not just Anne's gender which results in her harsher punishment, for Susan, who Spacks argues is a moral foil for Anne, is less than honorable in planning to defraud Acton and then in acquiescing to the marriage (329). For Spacks, Anne's adultery is a serious sin, but it is, ironically, her contriteness which results in her death and accounts for the tragic conclusion of the action. In smashing the lute, her prize possession and the symbol of earthly pleasures, Anne shows she understands what is required of her by the patriarchal culture and the genre, namely death, and she brings it about, making her not only a victim but also an agent. Comensoli's analysis of the lute is most helpful in a reading of the fall: "Anne's apostrophe to the lute clarifies the 'loss' (xvi.28) attending her fall: the transgressive wife has sacrificed not only the 'joy' of matrimony (xvi.74) but also civility and refinement, values symbolized in Renaissance iconography by the playing of a musical instrument" (83). Anne's fall is reminiscent of Eve's in two ways: in incurring a loss of status, this time as Frankford's wife, and in succumbing to (sexual) temptation as the weaker sex, but the question in Anne's case becomes whether that loss is repairable, or more precisely if marriage can overcome the effects of her sexual transgression. The resolution of the play suggests it possibly can, but the haunting imagery of the lute as a reminder of the inevitability of sin attending the joining of man to woman tends toward a more fatalistic interpretation. In breaking the lute, Anne expresses her understanding of the broken state of her marriage; the woman formed from Adam's side is now separate from him, but removing the rib which made them one causes the destruction of her own body, which is fittingly figured in her starvation. Although female sexuality was perceived as inherently fallen, primary texts insisted on it as the basis of marriage in interpretations of Genesis. In emphasizing Anne's fall as a sexual one through adultery, Heywood portrays Anne's sin as a type of Eve's transgression, treating her sympathetically, but at the same time making her solely responsible for that fall. In the process, he shows not only the tragic results of the expectations placed on women's sexuality but how the fate of mankind, re-construed in

Puritanism as marriage, rests in the balance. While Eve brings about the Fall, Anne's marriage is supposed to transcend it, but in Heywood's rendering it tragically falls short.[126]

Both Frankford's ode to the lute and Anne's playing on it and method of disposing it draw in interesting ways on early modern methods of lute-making and its connection to marriage and one flesh. An adhesive was needed to hold the ribs of the lute together; though in some cases wooden nails were used, glue was often the material of choice. Not surprisingly then, early modern conduct books regularly referred to glue as the material that bonded couples together, and stressed the problems that resulted when those bonds failed to set. Gataker impressed upon his parishioners that a husband or wife under God's ordinance should be "a perpetuall companion," even "*glewed vnto* thee inseperably" (*Marriage Duties* 31). Even so, the same texts referring to glue as an essential ingredient in the success or longevity of marriage pointed to cracks in the metaphor as it applied to marriage, either in the form of confusion over what the glue consisted of or how long it could be expected to last. Milton, never one to shy away from the instability of marriage or the controversy on divorce, critiqued the wisdom of trying to "glue an error together which God and nature will not joyne" (*Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* 11). And elsewhere he went so far as to state the business of one flesh seemed an hopeless matter: "'tis not to say, they shall be one flesh, for they cannot be one flesh. God commands not impossibilities; and all the Ecclesiastical glue, that Liturgy, or Laymen can compound, is not able to soder up two such incongruous natures into the one flesh of a true beseeming Mariage" (*Tetrachordon* 17). Though Milton is writing specifically about incompatible couples, as he somewhat crabbedly makes clear in the divorce tracts, often that incompatibility is not known until after marriage, making concord in marriage at best a matter of chance, and questioning the glue of marriage to hold any two individuals together indefinitely. In effect, Milton suggests the glue supplied is not sufficient to keep marriage intact, exposing the

[126] Though it is not my intention to argue for a reductive reading here, it is possible to see in Anne elements, if not always consistent ones, of the promised Christ who will overcome the Fall. Christ is figured in the rib coming out of Adam's side, but in this case the marriage, which joins Christ to the church, does not bring about the hoped for redemption.

weaknesses of the one-flesh model. In Erasmus's satirical dialogue on wives, a woman, Eulalya, explains why love "breketh betwene man and wife" early in marriage; too often "whyle the glew is warme, they soone fal in peces, but after y^{e} glewe is ones dried vp they cleue togither [s]o fast as anie thing" (*Mery Dialogue* A5^{v}). The curing process of wood begins at the surface of the bonded joint before hardening at the middle. Texts on marriage and early modern personal experience would suggest the marriage bond began as an outward joining of two bodies, symbolized by the rib, but gradually strengthened, moving inward to the heart until they became inseparable. When joining separate pieces or types of wood, compared here to fusing two separate individuals in marriage, the glue must be given time to cure if the object is not to break into pieces, the fate of Anne's lute. Erasmus's text gives the impression that young couples, like the Frankfords upon Wendoll's arrival, were more susceptible to marital discord.[127]

The dilemma about the dependence on women's sexuality for cultural and religious representations of marriage was not an isolated incident in Heywood's drama. It was being explored in other literary texts too, as I have attempted to show with Milton. It is also a theme explored from a different angle in Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*. Katherine, who is a less than willing prospective marriage partner in the play, is courted aggressively by Petruchio. In wooing and marrying Kate, Petruchio's behavior supports the view of the wife as inferior, created after Adam, and bent by the husband into a suitable companion. The fact she is created from his rib is indicative of her crooked nature but also of her potential for malleability. However, as an examination of the marriage texts make clear, this process of the husband asserting his authority and bending or—less commonly—breaking the will of his wife was a painful one for the wife, with the potential to lead to, if not condone, marital violence. Calvin sets the

[127] The use of glue as a metaphor for one flesh in marriage is apparent in texts later in the seventeenth century. Edward Reyner points to a lack of patience, or anger as the primary cause that will undo matrimony and "dissolve the glue of affection that made them cleave together, and separate them, and make of one, two" (29). Lady Mary Chudleigh, offering the welcome addition of a female perspective, responds sarcastically to another male author's use of the by then rhetorical commonplace, "*when two boards are first glued together*" the joint is vulnerable, but once the "*Glue be hardened, 'twill not be an easy matter to disjoint or sever them,*" as suitable for "wooden [u]nderstandings" (39).

stage for the inclusion of this idea in Protestant doctrine in his *Sermons* (1583): "For when a man taketh a wife it is good and requisite that he forme & fashion her, that is to say, that he teach and accustome her so to liue as they may agree both together al the time of their life" (843). Likewise, Vives in his counsel to husbands shares the assumption that a woman, if she be young, may like "waxe be fashioned & formed, to what soever a man will fashion her vnto" (J6^{r}).[128] Gataker makes the woman the willing recipient of the man's efforts to fashion her: "to know her place and her part; and to fashion her minde and her will, her disposition and her practise accordingly" (*Marriage Duties* 10). Needless to say, Kate refuses to buy into the patriarchal demands of the culture. She resists Petruchio's courtship and initially spurns his offer of marriage. In this play, the lute functions as a symbol of the female body and teachability, helping to further elucidate the use of the lute in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*.

Kate's unwillingness to learn the lute, especially when compared to her more receptive younger sister, Bianca, makes her a difficult student and, the play suggests, a poor potential wife:

> BAPTISTA. Why then, thou canst not break her to the lute?
>
> HORTENSIO. Why no, for she hath broke the lute to me.
>
> I did but tell her she mistook her frets,
>
> And bowed her hand to teach her fingering,
>
> When, with a most impatient devilish spirit,
>
> 'Frets, call you these?' quoth she, 'I'll fume with them,'
>
> And with that word she struck me on the head,
>
> And through the instrument my pate made way. (2.1.145-52)

The desire on the part of the men for Kate to learn to play the lute, and its dismal result--the tutor with his head stuck in the offensive instrument—represent another example of the lute employed as comic farce. Kate's eligibility as a companion depends on her education and her chastity, both symbolized by

[128] In *A Warning for Fair Women*, Anne Drury believes Anne Sanders, a young wife, "may be tempered easily like wax, / Especially by one that is familiar with her" into committing adultery with Browne (iii.448-49).

the lute. Furthermore, in breaking the lute, Kate exhibits her desire to remain in control of her body and her sexuality. While Kate and Anne both break lutes, Kate over the tutor's head, and Anne on her coach's wheel, Kate does it in defiance of female norms and to retain control of her sexuality whereas Anne does so in an attempt to recover marital chastity, or more subversively, as a rejection of a model of female sexual purity as a standard for marriage. Though Anne is decidedly not a shrew—she proves a model of wifely obedience and chastity until her adultery—both plays comment on the methods of training a wife, and are engaged in turning over the matter of how to best deal with an unruly or unfaithful wife.[129] In comparing Heywood's play with Shakespeare's, Anne then seems more like a foil for Kate, resembling Bianca in her passivity and willingness to act in accordance with men's demands. After he has married Kate, Petruchio must decide what to do with her. Petruchio declares his intention to tame her:

> This is a way to kill a wife with kindness,
>
> And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humour.
>
> He that knows better how to tame a shrew,
>
> Now let him speak. (4.1.189-92)

His reference to killing a wife with kindness suggests the play's potential to act as an analogue to Heywood's later work in title and content. Both plays deal with Petruchio and Frankford's treatment of their intractable wives though one play ends comically, the other tragically. Valerie Wayne, in her analysis of the practice of refashioning the shrew in drama, determines, "Petruchio's means of establishing this relationship are not brutal, but they are decidedly coercive" (171). While the end of the play makes it unclear whether Kate has indeed been tamed or is simply acting the part of the dutiful

[129] Underdown, who examines the taming of the scold, indicates the seriousness of female insubordination: "Like scolds and witches, women who defied the authority of their husbands, whether in sexual behaviour or household governance, and the even more culpable husbands who feebly tolerated this, threatened the entire patriarchal order," leading to "shaming rituals like charivari" (127).

wife, one thing is clear: she has learned the value of fashioning herself to reflect her husband and of making herself agreeable in at least appearing to comply with his wishes.

The lute exists side by side with another image of companionate marriage in the scenes following Anne's exile, the turtle dove. Wendoll's description upon seeing Anne mournfully playing her lute is equally rewarding when read as a justification for companionate marriage in the Genesis story, and relies on animal imagery common within early modern iconography through the pair of turtle doves:

> O God, I have divorced the truest turtles
> That ever lived together, and being divided
> In several places, make their several moan;
> She in the fields laments, and he at home. (xvi.47-51)

Rowland makes a startling observation about the passage in relation to marriage: Wendoll is presented in the tableau "as a seduced listener—he is concerned that Anne's grief may make him run 'frantick' (1.76)—in thrall to a lament concerning the perils of both marriage and parenthood" (127).[130] Scobie glosses the reference to the turtle doves, explaining it as follows: "The fidelity of the turtle dove to its mate was proverbial," citing Tilley (n48). The turtle doves are used to express the idea that a pair, Frankford and Anne, have been separated from each other as a result of Anne's adultery. The two have been *divorced* and *divided in several places*, suggesting the establishment of two separate habitations. The separation of the two birds is painful, and even considered unnatural. Richardson sees the allusion to the turtledoves as a commentary on the breakdown of marriage: "Their separation takes away the pain of physical proximity which has been transferred from would-be-lover to husband by Anne's adultery, but it substitutes it with the grief of division, a fundamentally unnatural state for a married couple" (166-67). Intended to be a pair, one is left incomplete without the other, and each mourns the

[130] Christensen remarks that the gender roles are reversed, Anne is in the fields, and Frankford is at home, but she connects it to travel; I see a reference to Adam and Eve in the division of labour (339).

loss of its mate. However, proverbially it was the female turtle dove who mourned the male, making Anne the one who rightly mourns Frankford. The turtle dove impressed the point the wife was faithful to her husband and never took another mate, making Anne's adultery all the more jarring. On that note, her playing the lute, which is startlingly reminiscent in its musicality of the bird's song, in conjunction with her repulsion of Wendoll suggests she has returned to being Frankford's faithful wife in deed if not yet in name. Furthermore, the turtle doves were thought to be separated from each other only by death. Playing her lute in between two houses, and having lost her identity as Frankford's wife, Anne's song connects her to a tradition of the madwoman singing before death, sometimes figured in the swan.[131] Anne, rejected by her mate, Frankford, shows she no longer has a reason to live, and the audience is meant to understand she is going off to her death. The fate of the lone turtle dove is supplied by Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* when, after bringing about the reunion of Leontes and Hermione, who is accused wrongfully of adultery, says she will go off to die alone:

> I, an old turtle,
>
> Will wing me to some withered bough, and there
>
> My mate, that's never to be found again,
>
> Lament till I am lost… (5.3.133-36)

In the text, *lost* in this speech is glossed as dead. Read in this way, Anne's song far from her home and situated appropriately in nature becomes a lamentation for her lost mate, Frankford, and serves in a very literal sense as her swan song.

We can find corresponding references to the turtle dove in Puritan sermons, which further explain how they were used to symbolize marriage. In *Heptameron of Civil Discourses,* Whetstone exemplifies the Puritan stance on marriage not as a necessary preservative from evil but as a goodly estate in itself,

[131] In *Othello* Desdemona tells Emilia of Barbary, her mother's maid, who is forsaken by her lover and goes mad with grief: "She was in love, and he she loved proved mad / And did forsake her. She had a song of willow. / An old thing 'twas, but it expressed her fortune, / And she died singing it" (4.3.26-29). The song properly foreshadows Desdemona's death at Othello's hand.

giving the turtle dove as an example of the worship of marriage visible everywhere in the natural world: "Fowles of the Ayre (I meane) the he and the she, cupple together, flie together, féede together, and neast together. The Turtle is neuer merie after the death of her Mate" (C4^{r}). The turtle doves are domesticated: made a couple he/she, they eat together, build their nest together, and grieve when the husband or the wife dies. When naming the animals, Adam first realizes he has no mate, prompting God to create Eve (Gen. 2:18-20). Smith ties the turtle dove more explicitly to Genesis, drawing likewise on the story of creation:

> *It is not good to for man to be alone*, as though he had said, this life would be miserable and irkesome, and vnpleasant to man, if the Lord had not giuen him a wife to company his troubles. If it be not good for man to be alone, then it is good for man to haue a fellow: therefore as God created a paire of all other kindes, so he created a paire of this kinde We say that one is none, because he cannot be fewer than one, he can not be lesser than one, he can not be weaker than one....like a Turtle, which hath lost his mate,…so had the man bin, if the woman had not bin ioyned to him. (*Preparatiue* 24-25)

Marriage becomes the organizing principle for nature and God's intent for man and woman. The turtles are a pair; by this logic, they cannot be *lesser* (or *weaker*) *than one*. This proves doubly so for Anne because of the law of coverture since the wife becomes subsumed in the husband.[132] In investing the turtledoves with meaning, both Whetstone and Smith rely on the power of origins to support a Protestant interpretation of marriage as part of the natural order. Whetstone makes use of the book of nature, viewed in Protestant terms as an analogous manifestation of God's word, to explain the turtledoves in the natural world as a type of God's intent for marriage. Smith turns to Genesis to

[132] Stone plainly states what coverture meant for the wife: "By marriage, the husband and wife became one person under law—and that person was the husband" (*Family* 195). Erickson describes the legal and economic restrictions imposed on wives by coverture: "Under common law a woman's legal identity during marriage was eclipsed—literally covered—by her husband. As a 'feme covert', she could not contract, neither could she sue nor be sued independently of her husband" (24).

demonstrate God created the first husband and wife for each other; the husband or wife alone is like a turtle without a mate. There is also a fleeting reference to a pair of birds in *Paradise Lost* that are driven apart; Adam interprets this event in the book of nature as an omen of the Fall and the separation of impending death (XI.182-207). Crowther explains the link as it existed in Protestant thought between the book of nature and the creation and Fall of mankind: "Like the Bible, nature was a text that needed careful interpretation. However, probing into the 'secrets of nature' also had sexual connotations that linked the quest for knowledge to the Fall of Adam" (7-8). It is worth mentioning the word *secrets* had an additional sense as a euphemism for genitals.[133] Marriage was a source of meaning for human relations but could not be probed too deeply as a result of the position of marriage as a mystery and the forbidden nature of the knowledge of sexuality. To invoke nature, thus, is to invoke the creation of woman and the fall she engenders. The allusion to the turtledoves portrays the separation caused by adultery as unnatural, and is a foreboding sign of death.

The lute sequence in the play is more important than has been realized in part because of the unrecognized allusion to Adam's rib. Anne's lute is a reminder of woman's creation out of man's side, and connects her tangibly to Eve. Like Eve, Anne falls to temptation, and her fall is connected with her sexuality and her status as the weaker sex. Unlike Eve, Anne's fall causes her to become separated from her mate, forcing her to break the representation of the rib as the symbol of becoming one flesh. Through the associations of the rib, Heywood represents how woman is *taken* from man's side, in Genesis through the act of creation, and in the play through the act of adultery. Marriage, at least in Heywood's tragedy, is unable to overcome the effects of the Fall. When Anne breaks the lute, she becomes an agent, but in doing so she cannot avoid shattering herself. Heywood uses the lute as a mournful tribute to broken marriage while at the same time questioning the emphasis placed on female sexuality as a result of Puritan stress on one flesh in marriage, both as it related to the rib and to sexual

[133] "Secret." Def. 1. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 20 June 2013.

purity. The glue meant to hold marriage together fails, and both the couple and the symbol of that union, the lute, are shown to break under the pressure.

Anne and the Apple

The punishment Anne enforces on herself for her adultery is starvation. As a refusal of food, it is a mode of punishment particularly suited to Eve's transgression of eating the apple. Caroline Walker Bynum has established a link between fasting as repentance and original sin because it "kept the rule of abstinence that Adam had violated in paradise," and she cites the writings of Maximus of Turin: "What the first man lost by eating, the second Adam recovered by fasting" (35). But, as Walker later points out, historically and religiously the practice of fasting had more significance for women than for men, providing compelling evidence for a reading of Anne as Eve. While Catholicism relied on fasts as an outward manifestation of holiness and a form of repentance, Reformers sought to define Protestantism against Catholicism in part by their position on fasting. As a matter of faith, Luther taught there was no basis for fasting within Protestant theology, for salvation does not come by works but by the grace of God alone: "neither single life nor mariage, neither meate nor fasting do any whit auaile. Meate maketh vs not acceptable before God. We are neither y^{t} better by abstaining, nor the worse by eating" (27: 138). Luther's statement echoes Calvin's sentiment regarding fasting being a "woorke indifferent" (*Harmonie* 199). Luther's commentary on Galatians insists food and marriage, though they fulfill physical desires, are not good or bad in and of themselves. In Protestantism, faith takes precedence over works. Luther establishes fasting is not a means of salvation and, by implication, neither is marriage.

Milton takes the Protestant position on fasting one step further. In arguing for divorce, he maintains marriage is itself a condition above fasting; while physical appetites can be curbed, the innate desire for companionship cannot:

> As for that other burning, which is but as it were the venom of a lusty and over|abounding concoction, strict life and labour with the abatement of a full diet may keep that low and obedient

> anough: but this pure and more inbred desire of joyning to it self in conjugall fellowship a fit conversing soul….This is that rationall burning that mariage is to remedy, not to be allay'd with fasting, nor with any penance to be subdu'd.
>
> (*Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* 9)

Milton divides the burning marriage is designed to overcome into two types: a physical burning, manifesting itself as sexuality of the type described by Paul, and a purer, rational burning, resulting in a companionship of like minds and souls conceived as a union of two into one. In any case, Milton meets Paul halfway by claiming fasting can suppress sexual desire but cannot overcome the other purpose of marriage as he imagines it, being conjugal companionship. This need for conjugal companionship is represented in Genesis and *Paradise Lost* in Adam's desire for a fit companion and God's decision to fashion Eve from Adam's rib.

Such Protestant views on fasting shed new light on Heywood's treatment of fasting in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Most critics have attempted to explain Anne's fasting, but few have commented on its relation to marriage beyond its role in helping to effect reconciliation with her husband, Frankford. Bryan proposes because there is no food in the actual play—we see characters preparing to eat or coming from the table, but not the act of eating—we come to accept Anne's starvation as the "culmination of the food symbolism throughout" (10). Atkinson indicates Anne wishes to "pay for her former physical indulgence by physical abstinence," and though he identifies suicide as a more serious sin than adultery, he finds nothing in the play to undercut an assurance of Anne's salvation (25). Panek shares the view starvation is meant to act as a recompense in kind for adultery, but "since its underlying principle is to atone for physical indulgence through physical abstinence, it is, on an emotional level, peculiarly unsuited to Anne," who has sinned for the most part unwillingly; in attempting to substitute works for grace, she shows an independence fundamentally at odds with Protestant theology (372). Other critics, notably Gutierrez, have attempted to differentiate between Anne's fasting and

mainstream Protestant thought. Linked to Puritan practices of exorcism, Anne's fasting is meant to atone for her husband's inadequate punishment for her sin, and is used to "purify her soul" ('*Shall She Famish*' 48-49). Gutierrez ascertains Anne's death constitutes both "religious salvation and political resistance" ('*Shall She Famish'* 50). Similarly, Ure finds Anne's starvation, intended as a response to her husband's kindness and as reparation for sin, is a way to "rid herself of the debt by an act of contrition that proceeds far beyond Christian penitence" (199). Frey and Lieblein have shown the spectacle of the starving body connects Anne to the female saint, "insist[ing] upon Anne's fasting as a physical act with physiological consequences" (46). Comensoli, like Gutierrez, interprets Anne's fasting as a "purification of the soul," finding significance in Anne's emaciated body, which she argues becomes the focus of the audience's gaze (82-83).[134] I see Anne's fasting less as resistance and more as penance enacted in kind for an expiation of sin, her own adultery and Eve's original sin. In the link within Puritan discourse between marriage and meat, the emphasis is on abstaining from sex or food for reasons of spiritual purification. If as Luther states, however, *we are neither [the] better by abstaining, nor the worse by eating*, there is an inherent contradiction; we are no better in the absence of sex, raising the problem in Protestant writings of sex as fallen, or worse for eating (the apple), discounting the consequences of the Fall everywhere apparent according to Protestant readings of Genesis and nature.

The fasting enforced on Anne, the play suggests, cannot substitute for marriage. That Anne intends her fasting as recompense for the sin of adultery, or an overindulgent appetite, is evident in the resolution she delivers in the presence of her servants, which resembles a vow of abstinence:

> I never will nor eat, nor drink, nor taste
>
> Of any cates that may preserve my life.
>
> I never will nor smile, nor sleep, nor rest,

[134] The issue of Anne's fasting and her agency has divided critics. Comensoli and Panek see Anne's fasting as passive (82; 372-73) while Frey and Lieblein view Anne's starvation as a "manifestation of her agency and resistance" (47). For Gutierrez, it is both ('*Shall She Famish*' 50).

But when my tears have washed my black soul white

Sweet Saviour, to Thy hands I yield my sprite. (xvi.103-07)

Anne's choice of fasting as her method of repentance and means of bringing about her death recalls the point in ecclesiastical texts about fasting as the inverse for the lapse in Paradise caused by eating, and Turin's opinion that Christ's fast cancelled out Adam's sin. As Patrick Collinson has shown, traditionally, fasting meant "abstention from food *and, for that matter, sexual intercourse*" for the purposes of repentance (my emphasis) (51). Appearing on the stage in her bed, Anne asks, "Blush I not, brother Acton? Blush I not, Sir Charles? / Can you not read my fault writ in my cheek? / Is not my crime there?" (xvii.55-57). The flush she fears is visible in her cheeks would suggest sensuality, but the *blush* is also a reminder of the perpetual shame brought upon womankind by mother Eve. Significantly, shame does not appear in the Garden of Eden until after Eve has fallen prey to the serpent and eaten of the fruit. Adam and Eve see they are naked, make themselves aprons, and hide from God (Gen. 3:7-10). Similarly, in *Paradise Lost* after Eve eats the forbidden fruit, she is "with shame nigh overwhelmed" (X.159). The crime Anne refers to is surely in a literal sense her adulterous act, yet in the framework of the Genesis story, Anne suffers the consequences of Eve's original sin of overindulgence by eating the apple. Charles assures Anne, "sickness hath not left you / Blood in your face enough to make you blush" (xvii.58-59). The *blush* to which Anne would refer, or the sign of her shame, has been suppressed by fasting, supporting Milton's view that spare feeding could suppress sexual appetite.

But Anne also expresses doubt about the effectiveness of fasting in expunging sin by concealing rather than erasing it: "Then sickness like a friend my fault would hide," she tells Charles (xvii.60-61). Her words suggest she is unable to judge the effects of her fasting, either because fasting for salvation might counteract the Protestant position stating faith alone guaranteed salvation, or because fasting is unable to overcome the effects of original sin. Yet Anne's act of taking the work of salvation upon herself (rather than referring it to Christ) might be interpreted as blasphemous by Catholic and

Protestant standards alike. In her thoughtful analysis of the dénouement of the play, Comensoli asserts the bed puts the focus on Anne and her repentance while also displaying the starved female body: "At the critical moment when Anne repents her sin and is pardoned by Frankford, the bed functions as the central visual icon" (83).[135] Charles comforts Anne, saying, "your husband hath forgiven your fall" (xvii.110). In my reading the fall is representative of Eve's transgression and the fall of the female protagonist, and so fasting may at first appear to be a means of overcoming that fall. Gutierrez observes Anne's plight "recalls the myth of the fall," but even though Anne takes it upon herself to make amends for the fall on her own, the "wrongness of her choice is not at all realized by her husband, nor by the community of the play" ('*Shall She Famish'* 49). There is much in Gutierrez's analysis which coincides with my own reading. Fasting is shown inexplicably in the play to be one possible means to salvation, and its extreme, starvation, a corrective for Eve's eating of the apple. Nevertheless, though Anne's personal fall is forgiven in the play, she is held disproportionately responsible for Eve's fall. As the erring wife and the tragic protagonist, Anne bears the scriptural and dramatic weight of Eve's sin, and is ultimately unable to atone for Eve's sin of indulging a forbidden appetite or to escape her punishment.

Anne undertakes fasting ostensibly as a method of reconciliation with her husband, Frankford, but this assumption deserves further scrutiny. Bynum has demonstrated fasting in the Middle Ages presented an alternative to marriage, either in the form of monastic orders or resistance to marriage and the sexuality it imposed (225-27). One notable example is Elizabeth Cary, whose refusal of food functioned as a form of political and domestic resistance (Frey and Lieblein 50). What may come as a surprise for the modern reader and critic alike is the way Anne uses fasting as a means of compensating

[135] Callaghan explores the concept of what she calls "dead centres" in the resolution of tragedy where the "silent, dead and female" body becomes the focus of the scene and "undermines notions of [male] transcendence," allowing female characters to overcome Eve's sin (*Woman* 90, 96-97). Belsey in her discussion of portraits depicting women's deathbeds in the period finds the man is at the "centre" while the wife is placed "in relation to her husband" and his "consciousness" so that she "has no independent being, no fixed and single place on the canvas which matches the solid presence of her mourning husband" (*Subject* 151). The same might be said of Anne, whose importance is eclipsed by Frankford in the deathbed scene after her death, and yet the staging of the bed and Anne's starved body vie for the sympathy and attention of the audience.

for intimacy in a strained marriage. Anne's fasting is a means of circumventing Frankford's orders preventing contact by getting him to visit her: "Is my husband come? My soul but tarries / His arrive and I am fit for heaven" (xvii.61-62). Anne is keen her fasting be accepted by her husband before she dies: "Pardon, O pardon me! My fault so heinous is / That if you in this world forgive it not, / Heaven will not clear it in the world to come" (xvii.86-88).[136] Her statement contravenes the official Protestant position against a relationship between her marriage, which is reinstated through fasting, and obtaining salvation. When Frankford arrives to validate Anne's fast and be present at her deathbed, his language is also reflective of marriage: "God pardon them / That made us first break hold," recalling the joining of hands symbolized in the marriage ceremony and externalizing the blame for adultery (xvii.81). The adultery that separated them in life, he intimates, is by her fasting repealed, and will have no power to divide them in death, which is imagined as a new marriage of sorts in heaven: "Though thy rash offence / Divorced our bodies, thy repentant tears / Unite our souls" (xvii.107-9).[137] Frankford reinstates Anne's roles of wife and mother, and marries a new Anne: "My wife, the mother to my pretty babes, / Both those lost names I do restore thee back, / And with this kiss I wed thee once again," echoing the marriage ceremony (xvii.115-17). Anne's response is to ratify the marriage bond has been reinstated: "Once more thy wife dies thus embracing thee," but the embrace goes beyond a token of affection, showing Anne's frail state and the high cost she has paid to keep her marriage intact, suggesting instead a failure of marriage (xvii.122).[138] After Anne dies, Frankford mourns the marriage is short-lived and no

[136] Wentworth makes a point of stating, "Anne's primary concern, upon her husband's arrival, is to secure his pardon, the very possibility of which had earlier seemed out of the question" (159).

[137] Frankford's speech before Anne's death shares similarities with Alice's speech after Arden's murder. Both spouses attest to the power of marriage to survive death and look forward to a continuation of a spiritual bond in heaven; however, the possibility remains they may do so in order to assuage guilt or for the purposes of obtaining sympathy or repentance in a public setting.

[138] For another approach to the failure of marriage in the play, see McQuade. She radically proposes the resolution of the play "depict[s] a spousal murder, only with the genders reversed," by having "a husband who wills the death of his errant wife," thereby "linking adultery and murder in new and unexpected ways to challenge the patriarchal assumptions of [the] audience" ("'Labyrinth'" 250).

longer fruitful: “New married, and new widowed; O she’s dead, / And a cold grave must be our nuptial bed” (xvii.123-24). The radical thing here is not that Anne’s fasting effects a reconciliation between spouses by allowing Anne to atone for her adultery and obtain Frankford’s forgiveness but that her fasting is allowed—or made—to substitute for marriage in the interim.

The resolution of the play recalls Milton’s cautionary statement on fasting in *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*: While it can be effective in suppressing sexual desire, it is inadequate to replace the society of marriage, which is *not to be allay’d with fasting, nor with any penance to be subdu’d*. I would argue the play reinforces Anne’s fasting, initiated at the time of the separation from her husband and taking place in his absence, is not a suitable substitute for marriage. It can subvert the first purpose of marriage, as a remedy for sexual desire in stifling that desire, but it cannot fulfill the second, namely the need for companionship, for Anne cannot perform conjugal fellowship alone. In this respect, fasting acts in contravention of marriage and punishes Anne, who is made to enact the penance required by separation. Cary unproblematically praises the marital harmony inscribed by the resolution of the play: “as Anne dies embracing her husband, the concord between them” resembles “heavenly music,” but the embrace as the sign of Anne’s impending death is bleaker than Cary’s analysis would allow (122). Wentworth, if somewhat ironically, makes the observation that at the end of the play Anne “becomes, if only in death, a ‘perfect wife…meek and patient’” (161). Henderson’s reading of the play in relation to the Fall, as a pattern of progression from exile to repentance, shares something in common with Gutierrez’s assessment, and I think is more accurate than Cary or Wentworth. Henderson asserts the contracted nature of the reunion makes it “incomplete, taking place not at home but in exile. We may believe in the soul’s ascent but not see it; what we see onstage is death and separation” (289). The focus on death and separation is deliberate on Heywood’s part: it conveys an unease about fasting compensating for marriage, a tenet more in keeping with medieval than early modern, Catholic than Protestant notions of fasting. And yet, as Gutierrez and Collinson go to great pains to illustrate, Puritan

sects were sometimes using fasting in ways that would become resistant to church authority (‘*Shall She Famish’* 50; 51-52). While accepting Anne’s repentance as such, the play’s depiction of Anne’s death champions the importance of companionate marriage. Though Anne’s fast controls sexual desire, past and present, it cannot bring about a reconciliation in the absence of death.

Food is positioned in relation to marriage again in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. Its appearance before the Fall, during the dinner scene with Raphael, supports the Protestant view espoused by Luther that abstinence from food (or sex) does not result in spiritual purification. Milton has Adam and Eve immediately engage in sexual relations following their marriage, and their lovemaking is spiritual as well as physical. This positive portrayal of wedded sexuality accords with Milton’s view cited in the above-mentioned divorce tract that marriage fills a corporeal and intellectual need. In addition, in *Paradise Lost*, appetite for food is approved of because the midday meal supplements marriage by allowing for rest and conversation. The preparation of the meal by Eve for Adam and Raphael, according to Ann Gulden, far from diminishing Eve, enhances her importance by depicting a female knowledge of domestic oeconomy, “preparation,” and “storage,” allowing her to apply heavenly principles on earth: in her relationship with “nature and sense of order, she has access to a major source of wisdom” (138, 140). Eve’s act of eating the apple in Milton’s account and Genesis becomes the natural progression of Eve using her branch of knowledge—domesticity—to gain spiritual knowledge. As Milton clearly represents in this text, fasting does not take the place of marriage, and spirituality does not depend on the absence of food. Through Raphael’s presence and the atmosphere of the dinner scene, rather, food is shown to feed marriage.[139] The companionate marriage Milton describes in the divorce tract, which cannot be supplanted by fasting, is personified here through Adam and Eve. While in the divorce tract

[139] In the moments leading up to the separation scene, Adam reiterates the idealized version of the relationship between marriage and food imagined by Milton: “Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse / Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow, / To brute denied, and are of love the food” (IX.238-40).

Milton seems to suggest appetite for food can be suppressed, in his fictional account of companionate marriage, eating proves inseparable from marriage.

The correspondence between marriage and food in Puritan discourse in the form of fasting does make a brief but important appearance in *Paradise Lost* as well, when Eve considers abstinence and suicide as possible remedies for the Fall. Though Eve does not explicitly mention fasting in a physical sense, what she does propose is analogous because it denies the body's biological desire for sex rather than food. In particular, Eve loathes the thought of passing the curse on to their progeny: to "bring / Into this cursed world a woeful race" subject to misery and death (X.984). Her solution is startlingly unorthodox given the knowledge Adam and Eve have received from God while in the Garden of Eden about procreation; she tells Adam, "Childless thou art, childless remain" (X.989). In other words, she suggests they "abstain / From love's due rites," and yet she acknowledges abstinence is "difficult" and frustrates the reasons for which marriage was ordained, namely companionship and childbearing (X.992, 993-94). Sexual abstinence then is viewed by Eve as a corrective for eating the apple; she indulges one unlawful appetite and attempts to expiate her sin by suppressing a lawful one. Or else, if abstinence seems too "hard" a fate, she proposes embracing suicide as a means of cheating death: "Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply / With our own hands his office on ourselves" (X.992, 1001-02). Adam cautions against a suicide pact as "self-destruction" (X.1016). Proposing some "safer resolution," he instructs her against the evils of "violence / Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness" as signs of despair, itself a damning sin, distancing them further from God (X.1029, 1041-42). In Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, the Duchess is encouraged disingenuously by Bosola not to give in to despair: "Oh fie! despair? remember / You are a Christian," (iv.i.74-75) to which the Duchess replies, "The church enjoins fasting: / I'll starve myself to death" (iv.i.75-76). Here, the church's seemingly Protestant (or more likely Puritan) support of fasting is juxtaposed with the awareness of starvation as a sin by linking it with despair and suicide.

Adam seeks through reason and hope to dissuade Eve from such rash attempts by reminding her of the serious penalty for self-slaughter and the promise that by her will come the promised seed who will crush the serpent's head (X.1031-32). It is clear from Adam's reaction that neither abstinence nor suicide is an ultimately desirable or acceptable form of repentance. As Stanley Fish explains this theoretical exchange in *Paradise Lost*, "Eve's remedies are rejected because they would eliminate occasions for grace"; thus, the consequences of Eve's eating the apple are not overcome by "reason" but trust in God (275, 284-85). Similarly, Pruitt finds Milton's treatment of the trajectory of the Fall in *Paradise Lost* moves Adam and Eve towards an outcome based on unity rather than separation, faith alongside reason (*Individual Soul* 71). Adam's response demonstrates Eve's understanding and her plan are fundamentally flawed, and sets him up as the superior creation by virtue of his role as patriarchal head, instructing his wife in morality and doctrine to arrive at a more rational and doctrinally sound resolution. By the same token, Anne is deprived of the moral and spiritual counsel provided to Eve by Adam, leading her to impose her own form of punishment in the absence of hope, which, according to Panek, is tantamount to "suicide" (373). In the absence of moral guidance for Anne, there is a possible indictment of Frankford for his failure to do what the handbooks instruct is a husband's duty.[140] Adam's response to Eve demonstrates fasting in the sense of sexual abstinence as a form of penance or a means of circumventing procreation within marriage will not serve as recompense for the Fall. True salvation only comes from fulfilling the measure of their creation and, ultimately, through Christ's atonement.

In discussions of Anne's fasting, critics have tended to interpret it in one of two ways, either as an act of resistance or a passive resignation. My analysis has tended toward the latter, arguing it causes Anne to gradually disappear. *The Taming of the Shrew* serves as a contrasting test case for my analysis of food and marriage in Puritan tracts and Heywood's play. Starvation is also an integral part of Petruchio's strategy to tame his wife, Kate. Petruchio reveals the desired end of his method is to tame his shrew:

[140] This view of Anne's starvation as suicide, resulting in damnation for Anne is contested by Gutierrez ('*Shall She Famish*' 49).

"My falcon now is sharp and passing empty; / And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged, / For then she never looks upon her lure" (iv.i.171-73).[141] Hawks, coincidentally, also play an important role in the subplot of *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. At the wedding, Charles challenges Acton to a match to fly their hawks at Chevy Chase, and the match is later won by Sir Charles. The outcome of the match depends upon the hawk's unflinching obedience to its master. In the context of *The Taming of the Shrew*, the presence of the hawk match in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, gains added importance when juxtaposed with the marriage celebration of Anne and Frankford. It may suggest the importance of the husband as master, who is to train his wife to be obedient to his command; moreover, the hawk is carefully trained so as to have no appetite of its own. The connection between hawking and marriage has not always been acknowledged in criticism of Heywood's play.

Abstinence in Shakespeare's play goes hand in hand with fasting, for Petruchio states his program for his new wife:

> she eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;
>
> Last night she slept not, nor to-night she shall not;
>
> As with the meat, some undeserved fault
>
> I'll find about the making of the bed;
>
> And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster…. (iv.i.178-82)

Ironically, Petruchio is not eagerly consummating his marriage but is "in her chamber, making a sermon of continency to her" on the wedding night (iv.i.164). Even if starving a shrew had become somewhat

[141] Sean Benson has examined the hawking metaphor in Shakespeare's plays, including *The Taming of the Shrew*. He is one critic who has recognized Petruchio's speech as a topical reference point for Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Benson sees Frankford's "banish[ing]" of Anne registering compliance with falconry manuals, which "forbi[d] the killing of one's bird," and he further singles out Heywood's play as "the only early modern play with an entire scene devoted to a hawking contest" ("'If'" 204-05).

stereotypical by this time,[142] the convention was a relatively new one in the drama. It helped to perpetuate the religious and cultural perception of starvation as gendered feminine; by depriving a wife of food you could control not only her tongue and physical appetite but suppress her sexual appetite as well. When Petruchio summons Kate during Bianca's wedding feast, she, unlike her sister and the widow, comes dutifully, suggesting Petruchio's denial of food has been the means of producing tacit wifely obedience. According to Candido, understanding Petruchio's course as one promoting overall health "can shed fresh light on his blunt cruelty"; by engaging in a "joint" fast, the couple eschew the moral emptiness of Padua and express their commitment to salubrious living based on a "moderate diet" (108-09). In this play, fasting is shown to solidify marriage; unlike the joint fast carried out by Petruchio and Kate, which produces positive results, Anne's fast is undertaken alone, and taken to its extreme form—death. And yet, even though I have just finished arguing for Anne's starvation as inherently passive, I will maintain there is a sense in which it is unexpectedly resistant to prevailing early modern notions of gender. While Kate resists the patriarchal hierarchy, and thus is better at perpetuating it, Anne embraces the system excessively. Through the pathos inherent in Anne's starvation and suicide, Heywood shows the prospect of women as completely subservient, an exaggerated reading of Eve's subjection in Genesis, and takes it to an extreme which is neither desirable nor sustainable.

While Anne's fast is shown to have probative value as a means of assuring her repentance and a societal importance by bringing together members of the community and solidifying Frankford's bond with Acton, it results in a sense of loss not accounted for at the play's close, and not just in the sense of the death required for tragic closure. The hasty, patched up business of Anne and Frankford's marriage

[142] Joseph Candido discusses the practice of taming a shrew in the culture and Shakespeare's play of the same name. He provides evidence the theme of taming shrews went back to animal symbolism of the shrew and hawk, and to early European folktales; thus, it is proverbial, but Shakespeare makes some innovations on the theme (105). Candido also draws attention to something often overlooked in a rush to judgement about Petruchio's methods: "he subjects himself to exactly the same physical deprivations he inflicts upon his wife" (105).

leaves something to be desired. Heywood's play, if not always consciously, participates in contemporary discussions of fasting in relation to marriage. The distinction between Catholic and Protestant notions of fasting was not always as clear as the Reformers could have wished. Despite Luther's claim, fasting did sometimes, in moderation and under careful Church regulation, serve the purpose of repentance. The juxtaposition of meat and marriage in Protestant texts points to a tension between Catholic and Protestant notions of fasting as an alternative to marriage and inferior to marriage, respectively. Anne's fast, which she undertakes to obtain repentance for sexual sin and as punishment for eating the apple in paradise, most importantly forces the wife to try to make amends for the Fall. In Protestant rhetoric, the parallelism between meat and marriage helped to convey a tolerance for eating and marriage intended as a corrective for fasting and celibacy under Catholicism, but it did so without fully reconciling the contradictions surrounding Eve eating the apple. As the reference in Milton's divorce tract reminds us, fasting was not perceived within Protestantism as a fit replacement for marriage. When Anne eats the apple by committing adultery, her fasting is enjoined as punishment for indulging an unlawful sexual appetite, and she starves to death.

In the end, Anne Frankford is not Alice Arden or the Duchess of Malfi nor is she Eve or Katherine, and the treatment of her sexuality differs in degree as well as in kind. Throughout, Anne is represented sympathetically despite her adultery. She repents, and the audience is made to feel her repentance is genuine, but her death means the resolution of the play remains problematic. My primary contention has been that the imagery of the rib, with its competing interpretations, manifests itself in a range of ways in Heywood's drama. The symbolism of the rib is rooted in Genesis in the myth of creation but also, somewhat uniquely for Heywood, in the threat of separation and adultery's implications for the one-flesh model of marriage. Anne and Frankford's marriage is illustrative of a larger project to remake marriage as Protestant, against the Catholic notion of marriage as a sacrament, and so resembles the institution of marriage with Adam and Eve in Genesis. Indeed, Protestantism encouraged a connection

between the marriage ceremony in Genesis and the public ceremony in the Church, and stressed that in giving Eve to Adam, God asserted the authority of the husband over the wife. Anne and Frankford's marriage aspires to the ideal of companionate marriage espoused in the commandment to be one flesh but is unable to overcome the contradiction presented by a reading of the wife's subjection in Genesis. The parallels between Anne and Frankford and the first marriage lead me to what in many ways is the main point of the chapter: Marriage handbooks were troubled by what I describe as the implications of dividing one flesh; thus, any division of one into two remained incomplete due to a lack of divorce, with adultery resulting in separation. The play's treatment of Anne's adultery confronts some of the problems inherent in dividing one flesh. It suggests the one-flesh model of marriage could not preclude adultery or ensure exclusive rights to sexual partners, for a spouse could be one flesh with more than one person. Nor, it bears out, did adultery, as was claimed, automatically break the marriage bond. Because one flesh was mainly a metaphor, any separation resulted in a breakdown of the Protestant meaning of marriage. The lute sequence further develops the symbolism of the rib, in form, as connoting open female sexuality, and in the manner of its construction, consisting of curved pieces of wood called ribs. Heywood uses the lute to symbolize broken marriage; when Anne breaks the lute, she breaks the symbol of man's union with woman, but Anne cannot exist apart from the source of the rib which gives her meaning. Imbedded in the lute is a cultural critique of the pressure brought to bear on female sexuality as the basis for interpreting marriage. The lute in *The Taming of the Shrew* shows how Katherine resists the male control of that sexuality in a way Anne does not, although Anne's masochism is its own form of resistance.

Finally, Anne's fasting is important not solely because it helps to bring about a reconciliation with her husband but as representative of a larger parallel that existed within Protestant discourse between meat and marriage. In Catholicism, fasting had clear connections with penance and with convent life, but though Protestant doctrine held neither meat nor marriage was requisite for salvation, moderate

fasting sometimes served the purpose of repentance. Milton urges most strongly that fasting was not a suitable substitute for marriage, both in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* and in *Paradise Lost*. Yet, in Heywood's play, Anne is forced to substitute marriage with fasting in order to achieve salvation. *The Taming of the Shrew* shows Shakespeare engaging with the same question of taming a wife, only with a different outcome, by suggesting fasting and sexual abstinence strengthen marriage. By introducing the importance of the rib and its relation to the Genesis story in Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness,* I have tried to show how it contributed to a depiction of the perils of separation and allowed for the innovative sympathetic portrayal of an adulteress on the early modern stage. Some critics have maintained *A Woman Killed with Kindness* ultimately shies away from engaging in a sharp critique of the societal mores of its time.[143] Separation threatened to break down the Protestant metaphor of marriage as one flesh, as Whately's crisis of conscience in *A Bride-Bush* would suggest. By working out the range of problems adultery posed, Heywood indicates adultery put enormous pressure on the metaphor of one flesh and on female sexuality in marriage to contain that meaning; in this way at least, he is breaking new ground.

[143] Comensoli, contrasting *A Woman Killed with Kindness* with *Arden*, concludes Heywood "resists a radical scrutiny of early modern ideologies of the family, civility, and private life" (84). Henderson calls it "an ideologically conservative play"; in upholding the "values of its time," *A Woman Killed with Kindness* relies on "traditional genres (tragedy, the morality play, homily)," opting to use "contemporary techniques in language and stage usage" (291).

Chapter Three

"Man's First Disobedience": Reversing the Gendered Pattern of the Fall in Shakespeare's *Othello*[144]

Introduction

Othello and Desdemona's marriage like Adam and Eve's is at first a happy one, indicative of the domestic ideal.[145] Even so, both Othello, the outsider, and Desdemona, the ideal wife, meet similarly tragic ends, suggesting marriage is fallen. My exploration of *Othello* is informed by the problems of the curse for marriage attendant on Genesis in another related story, that of Ham and his descendants. In this chapter, I offer *Othello* as a variation on the treatment of female adultery and Genesis presented in the previous two chapters, and on domestic tragedy more generally, while making a contribution to *Othello* criticism by suggesting the curse is less about blackness than it is about sexuality. Firstly, the play shifts the focus from the wife to the husband in order to explore the fall of the male protagonist. Like Adam, who in discussions of the Fall is portrayed as the archetypal sinful man, Othello represents for the audience an everyman who falls into sin. Nevertheless, the wife still suffers the consequences of the Fall; thus, Desdemona, in facing accusations of adultery and through her murder, is punished for Eve's sin. The foreign setting of the play and the absence of any actual adultery result in a different sort of domestic tragedy. While some critics have failed to see Othello as an ordinary hero because of his blackness, Othello's blackness is a commentary on the biblical curse of Adam but also its extension in Ham. Othello's exotic status would not have been at the forefront of the audience's experience; instead, they would have understood Othello primarily in the context of commentaries on Genesis as a dramatic type of Adam, or an everyman with a blackened soul. In this chapter, I examine the curse and its implications within the play: for Othello as Adam blackened by sin, Desdemona as the wronged Eve, the

[144] I take the quotation for my title from the first line of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (I.1).

[145] On Othello and Desdemona's early marriage as reflective of the Protestant ideal of companionate marriage, see David Bevington, who states, "their marriage is arguably, for a brief time, the most rich and compatible in the Shakespeare canon" (222-23).

handkerchief as a trifle, resembling the apple as the cause of the Fall, and the murder as a misguided offering to atone for the consequences of sin.

Primary sources on Adam provide compelling evidence that the curse and blackness in an early modern context are not just about race as skin color but are connected to readings of Genesis.[146] Blackness, these sources suggest, come from Adam and result from sin. More attention has been paid to early modern commentary on the curse as it relates to Cain and Ham than to Adam. Early modern religious texts on the Fall rely on an association between Adam and blackness. John Calvin writes matter of factly in his *Sermons* (1577) that men "are of the cursed race of Adam" (77^{v}). Using similar language, the Protestant clergyman Bartholomew Chamberlaine asserts, "we are blacke in *Adam*" (B8^{r}). In the words of the seventeenth century preacher Ralph Robinson, "the image of the old *Adam* is by nature as deep, and as black, and broad in every one of our soules, as it was in the soule of *Judas*, *Cain*, [or] *Saul*"; he unequivocally declares, quoting Psalms 14:3, that "*they are altogether become filthy*" (189). The transgression of Adam then has the potential to make his posterity black by nature.

For each extrapolation of the curse to blackness, there is an equally or more compelling explanation for the curse as entailing fallen sexuality. Adam is cursed metaphorically with blackness, as early modern religious texts repeatedly indicate, for eating the forbidden fruit, and faulted with bringing his posterity into sin. Furthermore, for Adam, the act of eating the apple is linked with adultery through unlawful desire. Likewise, Ham, in a repetition of the Fall, engages in illicit sexual relations on the ark; his sons Cush and Canaan are cursed with servitude, and in some accounts Cush with blackness, a consequence explained in some sources by Ham's wife's 'longing' for black.[147] This longing for black is suggestive of Desdemona's own desire for Othello, a black man. In a related story of origins regarding the cause of

[146] It was in the seventeenth century at the suggestion of Luis de Urreta, a Dominican theologian, that the location of the Garden of Eden was first thought to be in Africa (Almond 72).

[147] Karen Newman, in an influential reading of race in *Othello*, describes Best's account of Ham's indiscretion as "a second fall," a tainted sexuality which results in black offspring (79-80).

Ham's curse, the servitude or blackness of Ham's sons is construed as punishment for Ham seeing his father, Noah, naked in his tent, which some interpreters equated to Ham having incestuous relations with his mother.[148] I see Ham's curse as a gendered inversion of the curse of Eve, a curse on men, which goes back to Adam.[149] Though blackness sometimes enters into the discourse of the curse, it is not the blackness of race I am concerned with as much as the blackness resulting from fallen sexuality or sin. Readings of *Othello* have focused on blackness as emblematic of later constructions of race to the exclusion of other plausible explanations for Othello's tragic fall, and as justification for questioning the play's classification as domestic tragedy. The central story of *Othello* is not one about an exotic African Moor in Venice but the one closer to home, in Genesis, of Adam and Eve and a fundamentally fallen sexuality. In arguing for Othello's blackness as more indicative of fallen sexuality than ethnicity, and grounded in the Genesis story of Adam, I present a case for Othello as domestic tragedy. The focus on marriage and murder indicates Othello's blackness is the result of his sin, and not the other way around.

In the largely unresolved early modern debates in England about the cause of skin color, of particular interest were Africans; two main reasons were given for blackness, one was geographical in nature, the hot climate, and the other was biblical, the curse of Ham, though neither was accepted outright.[150] This dual explanation of blackness is mirrored in Ham; thus, while Ham's name meant hot and dry, blackness also manifest itself in his posterity. In Leo Africanus's well-known account, he speculates that "the sunne is not the sole or chief cause of their blacknes," other hotter countries boasting skin of various hues, "so

[148] For a discussion of the place of Noah in the larger Genesis narrative and its relation to the curse of Ham, see Don Cameron Allen and H. Hirsh Cohen. Allen explains how Ham's sin of looking upon his father naked was thought to bring about the curse; one theory was that Ham "castrated his father," another was that looking on his father "is to have incestuous relations with one's mother" (77-78). Cohen, likewise, discusses the significance of Ham's "looking" upon his father naked in his tent (13-16).

[149] In Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1603), the condemned character Constabarus, picking up on the sexual implications of the curse, links the curse of Ham to women, Mariam excepted: "Cham's servile curse to all your sex was given / Because in Paradise you did offend" (4.6.341-42).

[150] Also attesting to the interest in Africans is Elizabeth I's Proclamation to Expel Blackamoors in 1601 and the visit of the Turkish Ambassador to the English court in 1600, around the time of the play.

that the cause there of seemeth rather to be an hereditarie qualitie transfused from the parents, then the intemperature of a hot climate," though he concedes the sun may be a contributing factor (36). Africanus resolves then that the cause for blackness resides in the blood.[151] For blackness, as George Best's well-documented account makes clear, manifests itself in progeny through a black father despite a white mother:

> I my selfe haue séene an Ethiopian as blacke as a cole brought into England, who, taking a faire Englishe woman to Wife, begatte a Sonne in all respects as blacke as the Father was, although England were his natiue Countrey, & an English woman his Mother: whereby it séemeth this blackness procéedeth rather of some naturall infection of that man … and therefore we can not impute it to the nature of y^{e} Clime. (29)

According to Best, blackness originates from "an infection" and not from the climate, and from the man, not the woman. These reasons, climate and the curse of Ham, appear side by side once again in Richard Hakluyt's travel literature, but he like Best leans toward the scriptural explanation. As a direct result of Ham's engaging in sexual intercourse on the ark, his son "and also all his posterity after him should be made black and loathsome," leading Haklyut to state from his firsthand experience as an enthusiast and collator of English explorers' travel narratives "that the cause of the Ethiopians blacknesse is the curse and naturall infection of the blood, and not the distemperature of the Climate" (52). Thus, both Best and Haklyut talk of blackness by participating in a language of disease as *infection*, and depend in their respective explanations of blackness on the account of Ham, suggesting one cause for the curse as sexual deviancy. Evidence of blackness and sexuality intertwined in the play appears in Iago's reference

[151] Rosalind Jones, comparing Africanus's work to Othello, is struck by the similarities: they are both Africans who come into contact with slavery but more important are "the reproachful indictments given by both Leo and Othello against their European counterparts," culminating in "an intense struggle between the European-Christian and the African infidel throughout both works" (277).

to Othello and Desdemona "making the beast with two backs," suggesting sexuality, even married sexuality, is corrupted and bestial (1.1.113).[152]

Despite the fact that neither the curse of Ham nor the climate was seen as offering definitive evidence for blackness, the pervasiveness of the story of Ham presents the possibility it was sexuality, and not just blackness, which was cause for concern. These accounts accord with the philosophical and moral text *Anthropometamorphosis*. The author criticizes other cultures for changing their appearance into something not intended by God or nature, stating the opinion blackness comes from Adam. Blackness, though at first cosmetic, may have, with the assistance of the "[c]limes," become hereditary; he disseminates the belief skin color is a "spermaticall part traduced from Father to Son," reaffirming the perception the curse also transfers from father to son (469). The tincture of the skin once again positions race in relation to a curse originating from the father, one proceeding from Adam's (or Ham's) sin. At one point, Desdemona refers to the climate in relation to Othello's skin color but stops short of drawing a simple case of cause and effect: "I think the sun where he was born / Drew all such humours from him" (3.4.29-30).[153] Though *Othello* draws at isolated moments on climate and the curse as causes for blackness, it ultimately dismisses both theories, focusing on a debased sexuality as an underlying cause of blackness.

I believe there is evidence in early modern texts to suggest the Fall was interpreted in gendered terms, being the fault of Eve or, less often, of Adam in the style of domestic manuals. While Eve is blamed for being the weaker sex, Adam is chastised for cursing his posterity. In a careful survey of the curse as contained in the story of Cain and Abel in the dramatic tradition from the sixteenth century to

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[152] All quotations from the play are cited from the Norton edition of *Othello*.

[153] Compare this line to that of The Prince of Morocco, the African suitor of Portia, in *The Merchant of Venice*: "Mislike me not for my complexion, / The shadowed livery of the burnished sun, / To whom I am a neighbour and near bred" (2.1.1-3). While Morocco cites his proximity to the scorching sun as the cause for his dark complexion, Pechter notes, Desdemona acts "as though African heat evaporated those bodily fluids ('humors') that produced jealousy (Desdemona reverses conventional belief about Africans as hot-blooded.)"

the twentieth century, Honor Matthews finds there were two conflicting stories of the Fall of man, distinguished by the gender of the transgressor: "The fall in the Garden of Eden follows the eating of the apple of love; the fault is sexuality and it is directly laid to the charge of the woman. In the second story [that of Cain] the fault is aggression and it is committed by a man" (13). My first two chapters on *Arden of Faversham* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness* have examined the former scenario, eating the apple as adultery and the woman as the primary transgressor, and in this chapter I expand my analysis of Genesis to consider the male version of the Fall through the imagery of the curse.

A focus on race in studies of *Othello* has obscured its importance as domestic tragedy, or as a story about fallen marriage.[154] Othello is not cursed with blackness as an African but because he represents Adam, and the blackness is meant to symbolize the mark of his original sin. Blackness did not yet have a fixed pejorative meaning relating to race in the seventeenth century as it would later, in the eighteenth century. David M. Whitford has completed an exhaustive study of the curse of Ham in the early modern period; he makes the claim the most familiar source to readers would have been a Christian one by the theologian Chrysostom, writing in the third and fourth centuries and regularly published in the sixteenth century, and not the one in the Talmud, which does specify dark skin as Ham's curse (25-26).[155] Correcting other accepted works of criticism, Whitford stresses the more prevalent source did not make reference to the curse as race at all. Running contrary to modern expectations of early modern views is an absence of blackness in accounts of Ham: "Chrysostom does link Canaan's curse to servanthood. Chrysostom does not mention Ham's skin color in either homily" (26-27). So blackness in this account is

[154] For works privileging blackness in *Othello*, consult Ania Loomba's *"*Sexuality and Racial Difference," S.E. Ogude's "Literature and Racism: The Example of *Othello*," and Martin Orkin's *Othello* and the 'Plain Face' of Racism*."*

[155] Winthrop Jordan's influential study of blackness throws more weight on the Talmud in the early modern period, which places him at odds with Whitford, as an explanation for why Ham was "smitten in his skin," and for why it applied to Canaan, also perceived as black: "When the story of Ham's curse did become relatively common in the seventeenth century it was utilized almost entirely as an explanation of color rather than as justification for Negro slavery and as such it was probably denied more often than affirmed" (18-19).

not related to race, but it does correspond to a view of fallen sexuality through Ham as deriving from the curse because Ham finds his father naked. Also of importance to my argument about the implications of the Genesis story is Whitford's point the curse of Ham in Genesis chapter nine was increasingly used in the seventeenth century to justify European practices of slavery; a common version of the Latin Vulgate read "Cursed be Canaan, a slave of slaves he shall be to his brothers" (6). In fact, Robert C. Davis has documented a burgeoning trade of white, Christian slaves, numbering in the thousands, by Muslims during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries along the Barbary Coast (6-7). Remarkably, he notes, "it was also likely to be religion or ethnicity, not race, that determined who would capture and enslave whom" (9). Similarly, Whitford finds there is little evidence to prove a link between the curse and blackness existed in texts from the period: "the association between the color black and the curse of Ham is often assumed and rarely proved. Molded by contemporary discussions of race, modern scholars search for a connection that simply was not there" (20). I take Whitford's analysis about the pervasive nature of the Genesis text as support for my argument that Genesis and the curse formed a powerful framework for understanding sexuality more so than race in domestic tragedy. But I also extend Whitford's approach in important ways to show how blackness is introduced into accounts referring to Adam's eating the apple and placing his posterity in bondage. Like in early modern accounts of Ham, Adam's blackness does not have to do with race; on the contrary, it has to do with fallen sexuality.

In addition to implications for gender, fallen sexuality, and servitude, the curse in the early modern period also had a specific religious resonance of the blackened soul, and was used to separate the Christian from the unbeliever.[156] Though some early modern writers and explorers speculated about whether the complexion could turn black from the sun, the religious application was the soul could become darkened through sin. James Andreas, Sr. remains the only critic to date who has attempted to

[156] Kim F. Hall remarks that Genesis becomes an important text for early modern meaning making regarding exploration and religion: "with its emphasis on separating light from darkness, [it] becomes a critical subtext both for gathering materials in foreign lands and for the ideal of conversion" (95-96).

undertake a sustained study of the curse in relation to *Othello*. The exile status shared by the Jew and the African recalls Ham, who saw his father Noah's nakedness and was cursed. "Ham's sin" Andreas makes the point "was considered to be not only sexual but transgressive and incestuous" and was at the root of how Cush supposedly came to be black (174). By linking Africans and Jews through Ham, who inhabited Africa, and whose sons were cursed to servitude, Andreas, like Whitford, sees in the curse of Cush a way to biblically "justify" the rise of "slavery" (174). Andreas emphasizes, however, the play ultimately reinforces Othello's status as an outsider and an infidel by nature, showing that while his "religio[n]" can "change," his "color and ethnicity" are fixed, "mark[ing] his 'race' for perfidy and…treachery" (171). While Andreas emphasizes the curse as originating with blackness because the curse for him results in ethnic or religious difference, Whitford would deny this association between the curse and race. Andreas's comparison is useful in indicating how blackness could be employed to powerful effect in a religious discourse of the infidel. Andreas notes Othello cannot change the color of his skin, but I would venture that more importantly the soul of any man as a result of Adam can become blackened by sin. Othello's fall mirrors Adam's, and it is as much Othello's internal as his external blackness which links him with the infidel.

In order for Othello to act as an everyman, it is necessary the audience be able to identify with him despite the fact he is a Moor; otherwise, the effectiveness of the tragic protagonist is lost. Older studies on the subject of Africans in England around the time of *Othello* stressed their small numbers as well as their outsider status.[157] More recently, critics have begun to question those views to assert Africans were more numerous and occupied a wider range of social positions in England in the time than was previously thought, both leading up to and including the early modern period. One of the critics who has

[157] There are some older studies that helped draw attention to the presence of blacks in England as well. Eldred Jones indicates "opportunities for seeing Africans in London grew as the [sixteenth] century wore on," and Shakespeare would have been familiar with them (*Othello's Countrymen* 12-13). Ruth Cowhig writes that "the sight of black people must have been familiar to Londoners. London was a very busy port, but still a relatively small and overcrowded city, so Shakespeare could hardly have avoided seeing them" (7).

done the most to challenge previous views is Onyeka, who has undertaken a meticulous study of those he terms 'blackamoores' in Tudor England. Finding fault with what he deems the inaccurate account of English merchant Thomas Sherley, who claims "All the Blackamoores in England are regarded only for the strangeness of their nation and not for their service to the Queen," Onyeka, studying parish records, finds enough evidence of records of births and baptisms to suggest those in Britain must have come into contact with black people on a fairly regular basis (39). The term blackamoore, moreover, he finds was used to refer to skin color, geographic region (as in Barbary or barbaryen), and also sometimes to religion, whether Muslim or Christian (35-39). The overlap between geography and race is interesting for the character of Barbary in the play, suggesting both a black maid and one from the region of Barbary. Thus, Barbary refers to both her skin color, black, and to her place of origin as Africa, along the Barbary Coast. This historical fact along with the tradition of the "*popular* image of the black man" on the English stage in the period between 1550-1688, despite the fact a black character would have been played by a white actor, suggests the African was not strictly a foreign concept to English people or theatregoers (Tokson xi).[158] The black man in the drama is allowed moments of nobility but only in relation to the superiority of the white man and conversion to Christianity.[159] In drawing on shifting criticism about the presence of blackamoores in England as well as on the audience's experience with Africans, I hope to recover something of the original audience's reaction to *Othello*. Othello as a black general would not have been so far removed from an English audience that they could not sympathize with him or even see themselves in him at times. Blackness goes beyond race as skin color to suggest religion, country of

[158] For an excellent study of the phenomenon of the portrayal of the black man in English drama during this period, see Elliot H. Tokson.

[159] Tokson's analysis of the drama leads him to remark that "a black man could on rare occasions turn out to be a decent human being, but only if he reached a consciousness and an acceptance of Christian ethics and white manners" (135).

origin, and the sinful state of the soul. In fact, the portrayal of Othello as the black Adam depends on this set of interrelated meanings.

In focusing on Adam rather than Eve, or the husband rather than the wife, *Othello* is a variation on domestic tragedy, notably in presenting a gendered reversal of the Fall. Othello is the tragic protagonist who falls prey to accusations his wife is adulterous and commits spousal murder while Desdemona is portrayed as the innocent victim. The absence of adultery is what sets it apart from other plays I discuss. In the archetypal crimes of (supposed) adultery and murder, Othello is also connected to Adam's sin of eating the apple and the curse he passes on to his posterity. The curse is a way to shed light on representations of Adam's sin in primary texts as well as to offer an alternate reading of Othello's blackness. Othello's sin, which connects him to Adam, is a compelling explanation for his blackness that has not been explored by critics.

Othello as Adam

In this section, I examine how Othello in his blackness is made to symbolize Adam's original sin, presenting a reversal of the Fall in domestic drama, with man functioning as the tragic protagonist. Critics of *Othello* have been divided on the weight that should be given to race in considering Othello, a black general, as a tragic hero. Traditionally, the hero of domestic tragedy was conceived of as a person of non-aristocratic status.[160] Sean Benson has persuasively argued for *Othello* as a different kind of tragic figure. Addressing the reaction of some critics who balk at the idea of Othello as a tragic hero, Benson indicates Shakespeare complicates the ordinary protagonist in his vision of the cosmopolitan tragic hero: "tragic stature goes well beyond social class to include categories such as race, ethnicity, and religion" (*Shakespeare, Othello and Domestic Tragedy* 144). Like Benson, Eldred Jones subordinates a

[160] In Adams's original study of the genre, he identifies the new type of protagonist as the drama's most important distinguishing feature: "The common man as hero, then, is the essential feature of domestic tragedy as the term will be employed here" (1). In Adams's view, however, the middle class hero is unsuitable as a subject of tragedy: "the idea that the hero is a miserable sinner is incompatible with the appreciation of tragic grandeur" (188-89), establishing the view of domestic tragedy in the critical tradition as, in Comensoli's terms, "lesser tragedy" (15).

consideration of race to genre. As a result, Jones supports a more universal reading of Othello; Shakespeare represents the eponymous tragic hero as "a distinct individual who is typified by his fall, not the weaknesses of Moors, but the weaknesses of human nature" ("*Othello*—An Interpretation" 40). Emily C. Bartels also determines race is a contributing factor in the portrayal of Othello, but not in the way we might expect; she insists Shakespeare exposes the early modern tendency in drama and descriptions of Africa of exoticizing the Moor, of "demonizing the Other as a means of securing the self" ("Making" 454). By contrast, in Loomba's view, critical readings of *Othello* have historically underemphasized race; a reading of Othello as black, she maintains, is essential to arriving at an accurate assessment of his character and dramatic function. She makes a distinction between Othello's worldview and his place in the larger cultural milieu of the Eurocentric play: "Othello must act on behalf of all men (including, ironically, Brabantio), thus 'transcending' his colour to become, in his view, a sort of everyman; difficult because it is still the signifier of all that is desirable to Othello, and all that he cannot have, reminding him that he cannot be everyman" (182). Loomba's position would seem to contradict my own claim that Othello as reminiscent of sinful Adam is meant to represent an everyman figure to the audience; however, while I grant with Loomba that the play foregrounds blackness, and that color functions as an important physical marker of race, I believe blackness can be both skin color and morally symbolic of man's sinful state. Still, Loomba and I agree Othello is in some sense an everyman, even if Loomba persists in thinking he is a failed everyman. Common to this subcategory of criticism is a recognition of Othello to some degree as an outsider, in part because of his race, but I agree with Benson, Jones, and Bartels that race does not automatically exclude *Othello* from consideration as an everyman, nor from the inclusion of *Othello* in the small but unconventional canon of domestic drama.[161]

[161] M. R. Ridley's definitive description of *Othello* as "the nearest approach which Shakespeare made to a 'domestic' tragedy" has reverberated in criticism of domestic drama (xlv). Critics have mostly followed Ridley's lead, sharing the view that while *Othello* is not a pure domestic tragedy, it demands attention alongside other

In my approach to Othello as a prototype of the tragic hero, I seek to make a contribution to dramatic criticism by showing readings of black as ethnicity in the play have tended to be anachronistic in privileging race over religion, leaving out the importance of a consideration of Genesis and the curse to our understanding of *Othello* as domestic drama. Skura stresses at the time of *Othello* black did not have a single meaning; it was comprised of two discrete senses, and texts also drew on the "conflict" between them, namely "black skin, black heart" (309). The relationship between the two senses is more suggestive of synecdoche—black heart stands for black skin. The dual senses of black as "a person of Sub-Saharan African" or other "descent" and a moral sense of "deeply stained with dirt; soiled, filthy, begrimed" can be illustrated by Othello's statements, "Haply, for I am black," and "now begrimed and black / As mine own face," respectively; though they play off one another, the senses of black as ethnicity and black as stained exist independently (3.3.265, 3.3.388-89).[162] My analysis seeks to augment Skura's historical explanation of the color black as referring to outward and inward conditions, skin and heart, to indicate blackness in *Othello* is dependent upon an understanding of theological interpretations of Adam's sin.[163] Building on my exploration of the importance of representations of Eve

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examples of this type. Lena Cowen Orlin notes *Othello* is "often mentioned in discussions of the genre, as Shakespeare's nearest approach to the form" ('Domestic Tragedy' 371) while elsewhere acknowledging it as atypical by drawing attention to Othello's foreign setting (*Private Matters* 248). Frances E. Dolan admits *Othello* does not always "fit" the mold of domestic tragedy (*Dangerous Familiars* 111). Viviana Comensoli, while she does not include it in her monograph on domestic tragedy, considers *Othello* as a sort of domestic tragedy. Natasha Korda classifies *Othello* as an example of 'domestic economy' alongside such other Shakespeare plays as *Measure for Measure*. By way of contrast, Catherine Richardson insists *Othello* falls outside the parameters of domestic tragedy (199-200).

[162] "Black". Def. 1 *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 10 December 2013. Also, Orkin in his analysis of these lines indicates that Shakespeare's depiction of Othello differs from the stereotypical racist one; thus, though "residual racism" exists in the world of the play, as "the color black still attaches to the concept of evil," he sees "a separation of the sign black from…essential goodness or evil" (173-74).

[163] A reference to the black heart survives in letters purportedly written by a Turkish spy, identified as Giovanni Paolo Marana, which were translated into Italian and English in the later seventeenth century. They contain the miraculous ancient conversion experience of Muhammad, notably from Arabia and revered as a Muslim prophet. In it, the author relates the visit of the angel Gabriel to Muhammad as a child, wherein "the *Angel* open'd his *Breast* with a *Razor* of *Adamant*, and taking out his Heart, squeez'd from it the *Black Contagion*, which was deriv'd from *Adam*: And having put the Child's Heart in his Place again, he bless'd him, and retir'd to the *Invisibles*" (260).

for the fallen wife in Protestant discussions of marriage and in domestic tragedy, I examine the implications for the representation of Adam as husband. Seemingly independent from that of Cain or Cush, the curse of Adam is treated as an extension of the biblical curse. Unlike Ham, for whom no convincing link between the curse and blackness exists in early modern sources, Adam's blackness is repeatedly invoked by authors drawing on Genesis to explain man's fallen condition and the mark Adam leaves upon his posterity.[164]

Othello by virtue of his black skin is made the central protagonist in the Fall, not because of fears of miscegenation but because it links him to Adam and the blackness of original sin.[165] Thus, I extend Benson's hypothesis Shakespeare complicates the tragic protagonist by presenting in the non-aristocratic Othello elements of "race, ethnicity, religion, and social class," effectually altering the characteristics of the genre (*Shakespeare* 118). *Othello* represents a gendered reversal of the pattern of domestic tragedy, which previously tended to focus on the adulterous wife and cuckolded husband. Further to this, Comensoli concurs that unlike plays of the early sixteenth century, those of the later

[164] Crowther complicates this division by suggesting identification with Adam and Eve as contained in religious texts during the Protestant Reformation did not fall strictly along gendered lines. In Lutheran depictions of Adam and Eve and marriage, she holds, "Adam represented Christ; it was Eve who stood for all faithful Christians, men as well as women. Accordingly, Lutherans often used the figure of Eve to comment on the nature of human beings generally, not just women, after the Fall" (100). Crowther's examination of the treatment of Adam, however, nevertheless, touches on the emergence of Adam in the period leading up to the sixteenth century as "a paragon of virtue…held up as an ideal to [all] men," suggesting a corresponding link between Adam and gender, even while Lutherans acknowledged him as "an unattainable ideal" (103). Though Crowther resists a mutually exclusive reading of Eve as wife and Adam as husband, she concedes Adam and Eve helped to reinforce gender roles (110-11). I take Crowther's point about sin collapsing into the feminine, but I would point out Crowther's interpretation does not address the curse and blackness in relation to Adam, only indirectly through Cain; thus, it does not account for discussions of the sinful Adam or his relation to blackness in the examples I examine.

[165] Miscegenation as racial mixing in the early modern period has been problematized by critics. Karen Newman has argued for miscegenation as a fictionalized construct, exhibited by xenophobic characters such as Iago: "Othello fears Desdemona's desire because it invokes his monstrous difference from the sex/race code he has adopted and implicates him in femininity, allying him with witchcraft and an imagined monstrous sexual appetite," eventually leading him to coalesce to a view of "blackness… as loathsome" exhibited in travel literature, by Venetian males, and internalized by the audience (86-87). Kim F. Hall has shown that the modern concept of miscegenation or "racism" did not exist in the seventeenth century (n9). Likewise, Leslie Fielder has contributed that miscegenation is a misconception in the early modern period and does not apply to *Othello* (172). Lara Bovilsky has suggested miscegenation, namely the prospect of Othello's race and the possibility of Desdemona mixing with blackness, was "imagined," a "fear" used to solidify familial and social "bond[s]" (65).

sixteenth century and beyond, such as *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1607), shift unaccountably from the wife to the murderous husband, and among those she includes pamphlets and plays of the same period studied by Dolan (98-99). Likewise, Orlin records "a shifting in the first decade of the seventeenth century to a focus on transgressive and murderous husbands in the drama" and other works (*Private Matters* 238). *Othello* constitutes an amplification of this dramatic trend because Shakespeare experiments with the formula of domestic tragedy by introducing race as a means of shifting responsibility from the adulterous wife to the erring husband. *Othello* is not just the story of a marriage but the story of the archetypal marriage, drawing on the link between Adam's blackness and sin established in sermons, marriage manuals, and commentaries on Genesis to examine the husband's culpability in the Fall in the Genesis narrative and in the paradigm of tragedy.

In a number of Protestant texts addressing the Fall, authors take up Adam as representative of the sinful natural man, an enemy toward God from his birth, establishing at the same time the religious tendency to portray the curse of Adam in relation to blackness. Ralph Robinson, in a striking example I quoted in my introduction, shows how blackness was tied up in religious rhetoric intended to awaken in man an awareness of his sinful state and peril of his soul: "The image of the old *Adam* is by nature as deep, and as black, and broad in every one of our soules, as it was in the soul of *Judas*, *Cain*, [or] *Saul*," resulting in a "filthy" race (189). According to this theological explanation of blackness, the curse is visited upon all of Adam's posterity, not just those of African descent, and goes beyond anything visible on the physical body so that it is imprinted on the innermost reaches of the soul. The old Adam is the natural man, whose counterpart is Christ. Christ can save man from the effects of sin, not from Adam's transgression but their own. I strive to introduce a counter narrative of blackness that is more universalizing, examining the idea prevalent in these texts that all can become black through sin. This reading is actually more compatible with shifting early modern ideas about race as ethnicity and more fitting for the subject of domestic tragedy, making Othello as a tragic protagonist more relatable to an

English audience. Othello's black skin is admittedly an indication of his race but also an outward manifestation of a more general state of sinfulness. It is as an embodiment of the natural man symbolized in Adam that Othello is made an object of loathing but also of sympathy to the audience.

This trope of blackness, besides its use in religious commentary on man's fallen condition, also had ties to dramatic representation through the application of blackface. Surviving evidence indicates blackface was sometimes used in cycle dramas and was especially common in nineteenth and early twentieth century productions of *Othello*.[166] It seems reasonable to assume blackface was used in early stagings of *Othello*. Virginia Mason Vaughan confidently asserts "there is no reason to doubt that Richard Burbage wore blackface for the role" (*Performing* 93). Brabantio's disbelief, expressed to Othello, that Desdemona would take refuge in "the sooty bosom / Of such as a thing as thou" evokes a sense of the technique of black face but also points to a recognition of the accumulation of blackness on the soul as sin (1.2.70-71). Through employing the metaphor of taking off Adam and putting on Christ, authors found another way to physicalize sin. For example, a book of prayers by Bartholomew Robertson contained a plea to that effect, referring to the soul as mirroring the skin or garments on the outside: "Strip vs therfore out of the olde corrupte *Adam & cloath our soules with thy righteousnesse*" ($T1^{v}$). The act of stripping or, conversely, putting on garments recalls the stage practice in plays and masques of using cloth to represent skin color (even Adam traditionally changed garments in the drama after the Fall). It is interesting no record of blackface for Adam in plays of the Fall survives, but Adam's post-lapsarian self-aversion along with the recognition in Genesis that Adam is as the dust of the earth, paint him as a sinner. Though *Othello* is decidedly not a morality play, the fact sin is portrayed as

[166] Annette Drew-Bear points to references to the "blackening of the damned souls' faces" in the Drapers' records for the Coventry pageant in the 1560s and 1570s as early evidence of face painting (33). Virginia Mason Vaughan identifies charcoal as a blackening agent used in mystery plays, with additional development of material techniques in the early modern period to depict the Moor (*Performing* 11). Eldred Jones traces black-face "back to the English medieval mummers play" (*Elizabethan Image* 41), and elsewhere lists soot among the substances to darken the skin of actors (*Othello's Countrymen* 120). Ian Smith, taking his cue from Jones, asserts blackface went beyond applying substances to the skin to the "fabrication of blackness from textiles and leathers" (10). In a striking example of blackface, Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* featured Queen Anne and her ladies with ebony faces and black gloves.

externalized blackness helps to substantiate a reading of Othello as evocative of the old Adam that must be overcome.

The first allusion to the curse in the play is not about blackness, as we would expect in a play predominantly concerned with racial difference, but relates instead to social status and comes from Iago. In his complaint to Roderigo, Iago frames the cause for the disparity in the play as "the curse of service" (1.1.32). On its surface, the curse of service describes the early modern social hierarchy of master over servant, for as Iago shrewdly recognizes, the success of the social hierarchy is dependent on economic scarcity: "We cannot all be masters" (1.1.40). In her exploration of the political register of the play, Pamela K. Jensen has suggested Iago's bitterness about his military disenfranchisement is in part based on status; thus, his desire for revenge is ultimately spurred by the unfair social system in Venice which denies value to soldiers, treating them as hired mercenaries, and rewarding civility over valor (161-62). Similarly, Bartels finds Iago's grudge is not attributable "to racial or gender difference that proves the Moor an inferior outsider but to a political status that makes him an authorizing insider and that threatens to keep Iago" bound to service ("Making" 450).

In addition to referencing the unequal social system of Venice/England that stems from the Fall, the curse of service depends on an understanding of the biblical story of Ham, in which Ham, as punishment for going against God's directive to abstain from sexual relations on the ark, is told his sons Canaan and Cush will be cursed with perpetual servitude. However, Iago is notably a white ensign and not a black slave; therefore, the ostensible explanation of the curse as blackness through Ham's sexual excess presented in commentaries on Genesis and travel narratives like Best's does not hold up in the play. Here, it is inverted to white slave and black master, with Iago serving under Othello. Incidentally, Iago's description recalls the contemporaneous historical practice already mentioned of Christian slaves kept by Muslim masters of the type examined by Davis. The curse of service invoked by Iago proves the curse in the play is just as much or more about upward social mobility than it is about race.

While I see the curse informing Iago's sense of his position as inferior officer to Othello, recalling Canaan and Cush cursed with servitude, the real importance for the curse in the play is not social status but sexuality or marriage. Both Bartels and Newman have made the case hegemonic treatments of race and gender in texts or from characters purporting a xenophobic or misogynistic perspective mutually reinforce female desire and blackness as Other ("Making" 453) or "monstrous" (75). The initial perception of Othello and Desdemona's interracial union as problematic exhibited by Iago or Brabantio, and destined to end in tragedy, carries the implication of all marriage as cursed. Othello's repudiation of the marriage state upon insinuations of Desdemona's alleged adultery is tinged with the belief marriage and desire always deteriorate as a result of the Fall:

> O curse of marriage!
> That we can call these delicate creatures ours
> And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad
> And live upon the vapor of a dungeon
> Than keep a corner in the thing I love
> For others' uses.
>
> (3.3.270-5)

Othello's description of marriage as a curse has bearing on my argument about marriage as fallen in *Arden of Faversham*, though with some differences. While in Arden's case the adultery is literal, in Othello's it is purely conjectural. Benson makes the point that Othello, unlike "John Frankford, Thomas Arden, and George Sanders," is not a victim of deception but "would like to envision himself as a wronged cuckold, the protagonist of his own domestic tragedy," and in the process "manufactures his own tragic status" (*Shakespeare* 113).[167] The problem of marriage represented is not exclusively that of the union of black Othello to white Desdemona; in other words, it is not simply an exemplum of the

[167] For the early modern view of Adam as the cuckolded husband, see Turner (168).

warning contained in marriage manuals to marry one of your own degree and background. Support for the play critiquing marriage can be seen in two further examples: Cassio's unfavorable opinion of marriage, and the verbally, if not physically, abusive relationship between Iago and Emilia. The reason for the curse of marriage goes back to the institution of marriage in Genesis, and thus the curse is not relative to skin colour but to the overarching explanation about marriage as fallen in the story of Adam and Eve. In this self-fulfilling narrative, Othello, who believes himself to be undone by his wife, becomes a type of Adam—the tragic protagonist or fallen husband.

Othello's determination that the end result of his misfortune is that he must now "loathe" his wife invokes the language of the curse as well, with black skin being the mark of loathing. The accusations against Desdemona as unchaste along with Othello's own susceptibility to suggestions of married sexuality as impure have changed the love he initially feels for his wife into hatred and disgust (3.3.270).[168] Richard Mallette contends at this point Othello incorporates the discourse of blackness as a mark of the sinner, falling of his own choice: "He now convinces himself he is among the reprobate, a justly damned sinner….Although he does not yet know it, Othello has sunk deep into the process of damning himself, by his own choice" (401).[169] In a parallel statement, Iago confides to Roderigo that the "food that to him [Othello] now is as luscious as locusts shall be / to him shortly as bitter as

[168] Greenblatt argues it is precisely Othello's immoderate desire for his wife which allows Iago to tempt him into committing murder ("Improvisation" 251). Later studies of *Othello* have been fundamentally shaped by Greenblatt's new historicist approach. Greenblatt's analysis is based on a Protestant understanding of sex as fallen in marriage: Othello kills Desdemona and himself because of a Christian mandate against adulterous desire, not because he is black. Loomba, however, has criticized Greenblatt's reading, asking "Why should Christianity, an adopted religion for Othello, inform his psyche more fundamentally than the blackness which pervades every aspect of his history and identity?" (181). Loomba's position seems at odds with Othello's self-identification as a Christian. Nevertheless, she explains Othello "begins to subscribe…to a Christian patriarchal view of woman as deceiver and sinful" but as a result of his blackness (181).

[169] Maurice Hunt critiques the reading that Othello does not resist Iago's web of lies but instead "chooses to lapse into sin" as going against the Protestant doctrine of predestination; that is to say, he objects to the idea that Othello could have chosen differently because it obscures the fact that Othello's choice is limited (368-69). I disagree with Hunt because while the play draws on the language of predestination, if Othello is damned and predestined for hell, it refutes his status as an everyman.

coloquintida" (1.3.345-46). Coloquintida is appropriate for my reading of *Othello* in the context of the Genesis story and the curse occasioned from the Fall precisely because it is described as a bitter fruit.[170] In fact, Pechter glosses the coloquintida mentioned in this line as a "sour apple." The perceived connection between eating the fruit and fallen sexuality I have already argued is central to Alice's decaying desire and murder of her husband in *Arden*. Such a surfeit, Iago insinuates to Roderigo, is related to Desdemona's choice of Othello as a black man, causing her to stray outside of marriage for sexual fulfillment while Othello in his mind is forced to remain in a hellish marriage. The fabrication of Desdemona's adultery has the power to make marriage a curse for them both. On the importance of chastity in marriage and its potential as a remedy for the events of Genesis, D.R. explains marriage is intended for a blessing: "to the [c]haste, eve[n] a curse is turned to a blessing: The sorrowes of conception and birth, turne to the salvation of the pure and Chast…wheras the blessing of marriage turneth to a curse to the other," meaning in the case of adultery (171). As a reading of *Othello* and the commentary on Genesis suggests, the primary curse on marriage is sexual.

In another reference to Genesis, Emilia's invocation of the serpent's curse is a reminder this is a play about the fallen condition of marriage, suggesting sexuality is the real cause of the Fall. Emilia sharply counsels Othello against giving credence to slanderous reports about Desdemona engaging in an affair with Cassio:

> If any wretch have put this in your head,

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[170] The coloquintida was native to Italy and Spain, notable for the play's setting, Venice, and was only imported to England. It was a gourd-like plant bearing round fruit and known for its bitterness, but it could also be used in a metaphorical sense to convey bitterness. "Coloquintida." Def. 1. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 6 December 2013. William Turner's *New Herball* (1551) contained a medicinal use for the fruit: "the inner parte of the fruyte of the coloquintida hath the natur to purge…made in pilles with honied water" (Niiv). This purging quality accords well with Iago's conviction sweet will turn to bitter, leading Desdemona to essentially consume Othello and then rid herself of him. Janet Adelman's analysis agrees with this sense: when Desdemona is satisfied, she will expel him (132). It is possible to see in the coloquintida a figuration of the bitter fruit in the Genesis story. For an account of this and other biblical references in the play, consult Naseeb Shaheen's *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Plays*. I am grateful to Sean Benson for suggesting this valuable work.

Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse,

For if she be not honest, chaste, and true,

There's no man happy. The purest of their wives

Is foul as slander.

(4.2.15-19)

The serpent's curse in Emilia's speech is a direct allusion to the moment in Genesis when God censures the serpent for tempting Eve to eat the fruit: "upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the dayes of thy life" (3:14).[171] The serpent's curse is imposed on the devil specifically as punishment for tempting the woman. Emilia's vituperative speech is itself a form of cursing, but she makes it clear she intends the serpent's curse should be visited on the head of the slanderer, whom the audience knows to be Iago.[172] The emphasis on the serpent in Emilia's speech reveals the story of *Othello* is not entirely one of an exotic African Moor but also relies on the knowledge endemic to Europe of the story from Genesis about Adam and Eve for its symbolic significance.

In her speech, Emilia draws attention to a paradox about women and sexuality. If Desdemona is not faithful, no wife can be, implying even the most irreproachable wives are tainted by adultery as a result of the serpent's curse. But the intrusion of the serpent is a reminder Othello's misunderstanding is itself a form of Eve's tragic giving ear to the misrepresentation of the serpent. Othello occupies the position of Eve, giving ear to the poisonous insinuations of the obsequious serpent, embodied in Iago, and tasting

[171] A. J. Honingmann acknowledges the reference to Genesis in his notes. M.R. Ridley attributes the meaning of the lines to Genesis, reflecting "I suppose the implication is that the crime is worthy of Satan himself; see Genesis iii. 14." Edward Pechter also notes the debt to Genesis in these lines in his edition of the play.

[172] Several critics have commented on Emilia's outspokenness. Edward Pechter in his fine essay accompanying his critical edition of the play, argues Emilia finds her "voice" while Desdemona remains consistent; both women actively "resis[t]" violence ("Murdering Wives" 371-75). Ina Habermann contrasts the worldly Emilia with the innocent Desdemona: Emilia grasps the potential for slander while Desdemona does not (140). Sara Munson Deats acknowledges as Desdemona "moves from articulateness to silence, Emilia progresses to brazen speech"; thus, Emilia is set up as a "foil" for Desdemona: "at the end of the play, therefore, in the name of principled disobedience, Emilia violates" prescriptions in conduct literature for the "good wife: to be silent, to remain at home, and to obey her husband," and dies with her mistress (249).

the bitter fruit of marriage, symbolized by the coloquintida. It follows Shakespeare situates Othello within a discourse of agency similar to the one in debates about Eve, specifically whether Eve as the weaker sex could knowingly sin. The fact Othello could choose not to sin (Adam, too, made a deliberate choice to sin) suggests Othello is not the stereotypical Moor, and supports sexual sin rather than blackness as the real cause of the curse.

The final associations of the curse are apparent in the imagery of the devil and blackness immediately following Desdemona's murder. It is an association which Shakespeare exploits to present blackness as the cumulative effects of sins of the blackest kind. The association of the devil with Iago has its roots in a medieval dramatic tradition of portraying the devil as black. Iago discloses his intentions to the audience in just such terms: "When devils will the blackest sins put on / They do at first suggest with heavenly shows / As I do now," alluding to the practice of making the devil appear black, and to sin as a black garment (2.3.339-41). Murdering Desdemona in her bed is considered by Othello to be a fitting punishment for what he suspects is her filthy sin of adultery, reinforcing the marriage bed as stained or cursed and the site of tragedy. Upon beholding the pitiful spectacle of Desdemona's lifeless body on the bed, Gratiano shares his conviction that had Desdemona's father not died from disappointed hopes, the "sight would make him do a desperate turn; / Yea, curse his better angel from his side / And fall to reprobance" (5.2.213-15). The reference to the good angel implies by contrast the bad angel, or the devil.[173] In addition, reprobance carried a religious connotation of being cast down from heaven to damnation, according well with the sense of "perdition" attached to the handkerchief (3.4.65).[174] This

[173] The trope of the good and bad angel appears memorably in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, when Faustus disregards the good angel and gives his soul over to the devil and the powers of occult (5.15-58). Mephistopheles in Marlowe's play, like the devil in the medieval tradition, could have been dressed in black, possibly with his face painted. But these are not the angels of the medieval morality tradition, even as the bad angel nudges Dr. Faustus's soul towards hell, recalling the blackening of the faces of the damned. Unlike the morality tradition, the angels here represent the dangers of secular knowledge and the emergence of the Renaissance humanist subject.

[174] Reprobation comprised "rejection by God" or "the action by which those not forming part of God's elect are predestined to eternal damnation. Def. 1. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 12 Jan. 2013.

state of damnation recalls the appearance of the black devil on the stage and the practice of blackening sinners destined for hell. The murder then cannot be read solely in terms of race or strictly as the murder of a white woman by a black man. Instead, the murder symbolizes a fall from grace as great as Adam's, which is represented as a blackness which goes beyond skin color and imprints itself on the very soul.

Blackness as sin has another corollary in Desdemona, whose apparent adultery makes her in the eyes of Othello "black in soul" (D'Amico 190). Othello characterizes Desdemona as a "fair devil" (3.4.478), and seems to be of the belief adultery should destine Desdemona for damnation: "damn her lewd minx, oh damn her, damn her!" (3.4.475). Othello shares his conviction with Emilia that Desdemona in failing to accuse him of the murder confirms her guilt and is like "a liar gone to burning hell" (5.2.132). Emilia engages in a similar language of blackness when she reverses his black/white binary, equating Desdemona with whiteness and purity: "O, the more angel she, / And you the blacker devil" (5.2.133-34). This antithesis is initially assumed to be leveled against Othello, implying disapproval of a black man marrying a white woman. It has the effect, however, of erasing the association between Desdemona's alleged adultery and blackness, realigning Desdemona with white and Othello with black. But the black and white imagery is complicated by the representation of Othello as an African Moor. Shakespeare's depiction goes somewhat against the grain of stage practice. Othello's blackness or status as African does not link him with the devil: that role is ultimately reserved for the Venetian, Iago. Othello gestures towards the morality play by referring to Iago as the vice figure: "I look down towards his feet; but that's a fable; / If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee" (5.2.291-92). Once Othello faces the prospect of his own eternal damnation, he recognizes Desdemona's innocence will speak for her and his crime "will hurl [his] soul from heaven, / And fiends will snatch at it" (5.2.280-81). The dramatic practice of associating blackness with the devil, who is here represented by the white Iago, presents more compelling evidence

for a reading of blackness as hell, which is a place for the damned. It is Othello, symbolizing the everyman, who has brought his soul from heaven to perilously close to hell through the commission of sin, not Desdemona as Eve, who is destined for heaven. Othello persists in comparing Iago with the devil, asking those present to inquire why Iago the "demi-devil…hath thus ensnared my soul and body" (5.2.306-7). Iago is of course not the devil of the medieval morality play, but the association helps to solidify Othello's status as an everyman, who has fallen into sin. The audience would liken Othello and his blackness to themselves by recognizing that every soul as a result of Adam's fall is ensnared in sin and subject to death and hell.

The history of blackness and sin in the English dramatic tradition has been well-documented, but there is one further way Shakespeare plays against this tradition in his depiction of Othello. G. K. Hunter includes examples of texts in which the devil manifests himself in the form of an African, notably as the "King of Ethiopia" and a "black-faced Egyptian" (34). Eldred Jones confirms the lasting impression representing the devil as black had on early modern perceptions of Africa and blacks as inferior ("*Othello*—An Interpretation" 48). Anthony Gerard Barthelemy demonstrates the link between blackness and sin in religious texts made its way into the drama, recounting the devil and his followers, as well as sinners, frequently turned black in medieval productions: "What is certain, however, is that on the stage, in iconography, and in the literary and religious traditions, the face of evil is frequently black" (4). However, Barthelemy makes the claim this association between blackness and sin had a negative effect on the perception of Africans as evidenced in travel literature, cementing their status as sinners as bound up in the curse:

> Because the legendary origin of their blackness is part of a myth of sin and exclusion, blacks were never able to separate the physical reality of their color from their alleged spiritual state. This linkage of their blackness to sin, seeing blackness as an outward manifestation of that sin, condemned blacks and their blackness to a symbolic role. (6)

While I do not dispute Barthelemy's point that blackness as sin, and therefore foreigners as sinners, existed as one potential sense of black, blackness and sin also resonated in a domestic sense through the Genesis story and a body of religious texts expounding on Adam as the first sinner. Othello's blackness and its connection to Adam in the archetypal domestic tragedy contained in Genesis allows the audience to relate to Othello and sympathize with him, an outcome not achievable in the same way if he is simply an exotic foreigner. Though this blackness does ultimately alienate Othello as the protagonist from the audience, it is as a sinner and not simply as an exotic black man. Though Othelllo's final soliloquy before his suicide may seem to align him with the Turk, I will later in this chapter refute the argument that Othello is ultimately portrayed as Other. D'Amico proposes Othello takes one version of blackness as truth: "Having accepted the negative self-image, Othello becomes straightaway blacker in the eyes of the audience, transformed from the noble Moor…to the man whose public mistreatment of his wife conjures up all of the stereotypical notions of the jealous, changeable African" (191). Othello's increasing blackness is tied up with his propensity to sin. It is finally the act of spousal murder of the innocent Desdemona strangled in her bed that confirms the play's status as domestic tragedy and makes Othello unpalatable to the audience, a point I will return to later in my chapter.

Othello through his murder of Desdemona is definitively aligned as the prototypical protagonist of domestic tragedy, Adam. As the pastor Christopher Love clearly explains, "[t]here was murder in this sin, for *Adam* kill'd himself and all his posterity; For by one man sin entred into the world and death by sin, so that in him all have sinned, and so all dyed" (131). The sermon offers further parallels to Othello's archetypal sins of suicide and murder; by Love's account, Adam's sins are two-fold, self-murder and bringing death into the world. Donne further reinforces an understanding of Adam's sin in relation to suicide: "what wonder if man, that is but *Adam*, guilty of this self-murder in himself, guilty of this in-borne frailty in himself, dye too?" (*LXXX Sermons* 268). Donne's description helps to support a reading of Othello as Adam, first as being capable of *frailty*, and second in committing *self-murder* or suicide, so

Othello is a suitable tragic protagonist despite or even because of his blackness. Othello through murder and suicide is shown to be guilty of the self-same sins as those committed by Adam in sermons on Genesis. A careful reading of the murder scene indicates blackness is aligned with the devil. Consequently, blackness and its relation to Othello has more to do with Othello's damnable sin of murder, which is predicated on Adam, than Othello's status as an African.

It is not my intention in this section to say Othello's blackness in the sense of ethnicity does not matter; on the contrary, I am arguing blackness as race is only one of several possible contexts in which blackness signified, and that readings of *Othello* have failed to take into account an established relationship between Adam's role in the Fall and the blackness of sin. In his association with Adam, suggested by the play text's domestic and biblical resonances, Othello can validly be considered an everyman. It is an association that is admirably suited to domestic tragedy, for the Genesis story acts as a Protestant touchstone of marriage. *Othello* is not a retelling of the Genesis story, nor does it conform neatly to a homiletic pattern. In addition to helping to define *Othello*'s affinity to domestic drama, Shakespeare also uses the Genesis text to make the husband share responsibility for the Fall. In this case, it is Othello as Adam who falls into temptation and becomes the instrument of his wife's death.

Desdemona as Eve

In the previous section, I explore how Othello functions as a dramatic type of Adam, calling to mind images of Adam and blackness, altering the Genesis narrative by making Othello, the husband, the central protagonist in the Fall. The natural extension of this claim is that Desdemona, as the wife suspected of adultery, bears some resemblance to Eve. Indeed, Desdemona is accused of the archetypal female sin of adultery; she is then punished undeservedly for woman's transgression with death. In contradicting interpretations of Genesis, Eve is represented as either the primary transgressor or the unwitting victim, who is seduced by the serpent. Eve's transgression, moreover, is causally linked with

her sexuality; she is typically accused of seducing Adam, thereby causing his fall.[175] Desdemona's sexuality, unbeknownst to her, is at the heart of Othello's transformation into the violent husband and marks marriage as a cursed state. The play suggests women, and men's relations with them, are perpetually cursed. Desdemona, to her death, defends her reputation as Othello's "true and loyal wife" (4.2.34). By contrast, any indication that Desdemona acts the part of a seductress comes from Iago's misogynistic views or from Othello himself, who takes Iago at his word on women's insatiable sexual appetites, and imagines Desdemona as "that cunning whore of Venice" (4.2.90).[176] The story of Genesis featuring the woman as seductress proves too powerful a tool for Iago despite Desdemona's unblemished innocence.

It is significant that when we would expect to find an adulterous wife in this play, to my mind so clearly a domestic tragedy, Desdemona is surprisingly innocent. Orlin has observed the idea of Desdemona as the would-be adulterous wife is an illusion which in fact never materializes: "In Desdemona we find all the warning signals of unchastity that would have been recognized by Henry Smith, John Dod, Robert Cleaver, and a score of their fellow authors. But here all those signs are wrong," and she points instead to the way Desdemona's innocence exposes the limits of patriarchy ("Desdemona's Disposition" 187). Benson has done the most to advance an understanding of *Othello* as a variation on the generic formula: "If one were looking for an innovation on the adulterous wife of certain domestic tragedies, one need look no further than Desdemona, who defies the accusation even

[175] In early modern reflections on Genesis, writers observed that the serpent seduced Eve, who then tempted Adam. In one example, the Protestant clergyman Leonel Sharpe makes the connection between the woman and seduction in this way: "as the *Serpent* seduced *Eue*, that *Eue* might seduce *Adam*" and in like manner "wiues may deceiue their husbands" (152). Almond confirms, in primary sources, "the temptation of Eve by the serpent was read metaphorically as her sexual seduction by a fallen angel, the temptation of Adam by Eve as her seduction of Adam. The text was read literally as suggesting a double Fall, and read metaphorically as a double sexual seduction" (176).

[176] Lucille P. Fultz has identified a pattern of desire and seduction at work in the play whereby Desdemona is identified in the Senate scene as the "seducer" of Othello, and Iago, using this knowledge, "seduce[s]" Othello into believing she has committed adultery (196, 198).

in the face of death," but he qualifies this progressive statement by claiming "Desdemona overturns the convention of the adulteress at the same time as she becomes another example of the utterly submissive wife," a fact which Benson imputes to Desdemona's "unwavering" love for Othello (*Shakespeare* 116). Like Benson, I believe Shakespeare presents in Desdemona a reversal of the adulterous wife found elsewhere in the domestic tragedies. Through my analysis, I attempt to offer a different explanation for Desdemona's death despite her innocence. Rather than subscribing to the prevailing view of Desdemona as a passive, "suffering heroine," I maintain Shakespeare's reversal of the genre goes even further than what is suggested by Benson.[177] Because adultery in the play is gendered male, I propose Othello is implicated as the unfaithful, infidel spouse.[178] In Othello's case, however, his unfaithfulness does not have anything to do with adultery; instead, he does not have faith in his wife. To be clear, Othello is more accurately for the purposes of the play a Christian convert. But he also resembles the conversos of Spain, namely the Moors who were forced to convert to Christianity, which for Spain meant Catholicism, and then expelled under Philip III.[179] While Othello's marriage to

[177] For the classic approach to Desdemona, see Ina Habermann's *Staging Slander and Gender in Early Modern England*. She believes "Desdemona is very coherent if her characterization is understood to create the fantasy of the 'slandered heroine,'" explaining "as the net is drawn around her, she becomes gradually less perceptive and assertive in order to fit the victim pattern" (140). Habermann also compares Desdemona to Mariam in Elizabeth Cary's closet drama, *The Tragedy of Mariam*, written around the same time as *Othello*. While Desdemona becomes utterly submissive, Cary makes Mariam a slandered heroine in spite of her flaws (144).

[178] Brian W. Shaffer has isolated a pattern in the domestic tragedies centering on faith whereby the husband, presented with the possibility of his wife's infidelity, experiences "an abandonment of faith because of empirical evidence" (447). The most profound difference of course is in *Othello*, Desdemona "is a faithful wife," and Othello "never escapes his stigma as 'civilized infidel'" (448).

[179] For an illuminating discussion of the infidel as Moor on the early modern stage, see Bartels, who suggests if plays like *The Battle of Alcazar* are uneven in their representation of the Moors as "misbelievers," *Titus Andronicus* with its "misbelieving" Moor figured in Aaron shows the problem with "incorporat[ing]" or expelling the Moor; while blackness is not a problem per se, the unbeliever becomes a scapegoat for restoring order to Christian Rome (*Speaking* 81). Likewise, in *Othello* she argues the tragedy is Othello is ostracized as a threat from the very Venice that earlier had welcomed him (119-20). Elsewhere in *Lust's Dominion*, she reads the trouble of excising Eleazar, the Moor, who is both married to a Spanish noblewoman and having an affair with the Queen, from court in the context of Spain's forced conversion of infidel Moors, who were then "subject to increased suspicion and regulation" before being expelled (118). For a similar discussion of these and other plays, see Tokson, who juxtaposes the treatment of the Moor in relation to the Christian faith (120-35).

Desdemona allows him to solidify his status within Venetian society, its disintegration results in Othello's rejection. Othello's fault is a lack of faith in his wife, implying he does not have faith at all. His lack of faith positions him as the infidel, which is an association of ideas that proves to be powerful in a play about marriage. The infidel was identified as someone of another, usually non-Christian, faith, but it also had sexual implications of infidelity.[180] Desdemona's love for Othello in the face of his baseless accusations of adultery can be understood in turn in relation to the faithful spouse's responsibility for the infidel.

A well-worn question in Puritan advice literature concerned the problem of what to do if you had an ungodly spouse. Though I briefly touched on the infidel in my chapter on *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, my point here is to connect the infidel to Othello beyond religion to include marriage, examining the attention given to the lack of faith exhibited by a spouse, and placing Desdemona's selfless actions in a new light. According to prescriptive literature on marriage, the Christian spouse was instructed to put out a show of love to the infidel so long as they saw fit to live under the same roof. Erasmus warns a man cannot "plucke a Christen woman fro[m] her husbande, which is an infidel, except he doth first departe from her" or the woman is guilty of committing adultery (*Censure* H8^{v}). In cases of marriage with an infidel, the believing spouse was justified in separating from the infidel only in cases of desertion. Gouge helpfully defined desertion as when an infidel "depart[s] from one of the true religion for other causes then hatred of religion," though he acknowledged no such provision for ending marriage existed in England (*Domesticall Duties* 215).[181] The Puritan preacher Nicholas Byfield clarifies

[180] "Infidelity." Def. 1. "Want of faith; unbelief in religious matters, esp. disbelief in the truth or evidences of Christianity; the attitude of an infidel." See also Def. 3. "Unfaithfulness or disloyalty to a person, e.g. to a sovereign, lord, master, friend, lover; esp., in mod. use to a husband or wife, called more fully conjugal infidelity." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Web. 20 January 2014. The use of infidel also occurred, however, with a more specific register in Protestantism, for instance in accusations between Puritan sects and the Church of England, implying the infidel was disconnected from the true faith.

[181] A contradictory view exists in D.R.'s *Matrimoniall Honour*, when he proclaims against marriages in which only one party is a Christian. He conjectures, "What fellowship is there betweene Christ and Belial, the believer and the infidell? what is such an union, save a monster compounded of divers natures, by an adulterous mixture?" before

the circumstances under which leaving an unbeliever is permitted: "The Beleever doth not for the businesse of religion put away the Vnbeleever, yea, the Apostle [Paul] shewes he ought not, 1. Cor. 7. only if the unbeleever will depart, let her depart. And so by the wilfull departure of the Infidell, the Christian is freed from the bond of marriage…which is a kinde of Nullity, but not a Divorce" (118). And Milton qualifies the marriage must be happy and the unbeliever "bee content, and well pleas'd to stay," which to his mind means the marriage is conditional (*Colasterion* 7). Thomas Pritchard cautions the Christian wife married to the unbeliever that she "should not vse the infidelity of her Husbande, as an occasion to departe from him" (63). Coincidentally, conduct books impressed Paul's teaching that the husband who did not care properly for his wife was "worse than an infidel" (Gataker, *Marriage Duties* 45; Smith, *Preparatiue* 94; Whately, *A Bride-Bush* (1617) 15). While Othello never unequivocally renounces his new religious faith, he does experience an irreparable loss of faith in his wife. In other words, Othello's emotional and eventually symbolically sexual desertion of Desdemona would be grounds for a marital breach.[182]

Surprisingly, Desdemona strangely reverses this conjugal advice about desertion: her resolve to love Othello seems to strengthen with his renouncement of his faith in her. Put another way, Othello becomes the infidel once he breaks faith with Desdemona, and Desdemona's treatment of him is an attempt to save the marriage and her spouse, though both efforts end tragically. In fact, conduct books also contained contradictory advice in repeatedly encouraging the spouse to bear the yoke with the infidel once married. Undoubtedly, texts based this advice on Paul's assurance "the unbeleeuing husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbeleeuing wife is sanctified by the husband" (1 Cor. 7:14).

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speculating such a marriage cannot last (37). The *adulterous mixture* is suggestive of my reading of the infidel as unfaithful. The general consensus seemed to be it was best not to marry an infidel, but once the marriage had taken place, it remained in force.

[182] Barthelemy indicates Othello in actively planning and participating in a plot to murder Desdemona ultimately "chooses abstinence" over marriage (153). Such a choice is significant I would point out because it goes against the spouse's right to due benevolence in marriage as well as illustrating Othello's symbolic abandonment of his wife.

Andrew Kingsmill, while admitting marriage with an infidel was not the ideal, nevertheless had this to say to the faithful spouse, assumed to be the wife: "Nevertheless, I would counsell you to continue for the hope of sanctification, that you might win your husband"; though he admits the possibility you might "leese your selfe" in the process (K6^{r}). Desdemona seems to be working on the presumption that, like Othello's breach with Cassio, her assiduous care can mend the crack this misunderstanding has created between them, and "their love will be made stronger than it was before," even if she ultimately sacrifices her life for Othello (2.3.313-14). This image of repairing a fissure applies to my discussion of the lute in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and the image in conduct literature of glue that fastened the husband and the wife together. The glue also recalls the moment in Genesis when Eve becomes, according to Adam, "flesh of my flesh" (2:23). Both Anne and Desdemona attempt to repair the break between husband and wife caused by infidelity, real or perceived, but both die to effect it.

The representation of Othello as the husband who lacks faith in his wife is mirrored in sources purporting Adam's cardinal sin to be failing to exercise sufficient faith in God. Andrew Willet in commentary on Genesis counts among Adam and Eve's sins as "infidelity, in not beleeving the word of God" and trusting the serpent (40). Henry Holland similarly finds that of the sins Adam and Eve are guilty of, one is "vnbeleefe" or "to doubt of the truth of Gods holy word" (10^{r}). The question remains, if Eve is not exempt from unbelief, why focus on Adam? Though some writers took the part of Adam and some of Eve, commentators emphasized Adam's superior knowledge; thus while Eve was deceived, Adam sinned willfully, suggesting his sin was greater. Amelia Lanyer certainly felt Adam shouldered the heavier part of the blame: "But surely *Adam* can not be excusde, / Her fault though great, yet hee was most too blame; / What Weaknesse offerd, Strength might have refusde" (777-79). Rachel Speght was of the same mind, "for the sinne of man, the whole earth was cursed. And he being better able, then the woman, to haue resisted temptation, because the stronger vessell, was first called to account" (5). Ester Sowernam points out Adam should have been more accountable; as a "louing husband," he should have

been Eve's "defender" not her "accuser," and that "so by the contagion of originall sinne in *Adam*, all men are infected by his diseases," not only in his sin but in their treatment of their wives (34-35). Milton resolves the conflict by mitigating Eve's guilt and making man the head: "He for God only, she for God in him" (IV.299). Almond, reading both sides of the argument regarding who was more to blame for the Fall, Adam or Eve, explains Adam's particular sin: "Since the infection of the whole human race was the result of the sin of Adam, his role could not be minimised," a reading which again places man as the central agent in the Fall and sets Adam up as an everyman (196). Though Adam's role as progenitor set him apart from mankind, his faithless condition made him representative of the fact that all lacked faith and were prone to spiritual infidelity.

A picture of Adam as the one guilty of unbelief rather than Eve repeatedly occurs in discussions of Genesis. Philippe de Mornay contrasts Adam with Abraham, "the father of the beleeuers," whereas "the disobedience…of Adam proceeded from infidelitie, whereof it is, that he is father of all infidelitie, which since that time hath bene and is in all mankinde" (R4^{v}). Mornay identifies Adam as the source of infidelity, but the reference to Adam's line also conjures up the image of Adam as the father of adulterous offspring, and may or may not be intentional. For Thomas Morton, Adam's sin stems from "defiance of God, and commeth from vnbeliefe…not seeing the euident trueth of Gods promises"; he draws the conclusion "[i]n *Adam* all mankind fell from faith to infidelitie" (72, 71). In discussions of Adam's fall, infidelity repeatedly manifests as a male sin. The effect of these sources is to show infidelity proceeds from Adam rather than Eve. It is yet another example of infidelity coming through a male line, indicating why some early modern authors saw the blame for the Fall resting with Adam. Nevertheless, the sources make clear the effects of Adam's sin are felt by men and women. Shakespeare, working within the context of religious commentary on Adam's sin, sees the basis for that sin originating in a lack of faith. In placing the blame on man rather than woman, he is using the Genesis story to create a domestic drama in which the wife is entirely innocent.

These ideas about infidelity shape the portrayal of Desdemona as the faithful wife and the representation of Othello as the fickle husband. Marriage was seen as a saving ordinance: despite the emphasis on faith over works in Protestantism, marriage became no less than "the arena in which salvation and damnation are determined for husband and wife" (Rose, "Heroics" 212). Othello's marriage to Desdemona, moreover, is the outward sign he has converted from an infidel religion, turning from a Moor of Islamic faith to the Venetian-sanctioned religion of Christianity. Under Protestantism, through the ordinances of baptism and marriage, the infidel spouse became sanctified. In a parallel example of marriage acting as the basis for spiritual salvation taken from *The Merchant of Venice*, Andreas explains Jessica a "'black' Jew is redeemed and cleansed by her marriage to a Venetian Christian," Lorenzo.[183] This example of sanctification in marriage is further evidence of Paul's teaching seen in the conduct books that the believing husband or wife "sanctified" the other (1 Cor. 7:14) and of the related metaphor by which Christ was said to sanctify his spouse, the Church.[184] Though present in Catholicism, this point of doctrine became especially germane to Protestantism because of its emphasis on the possibility that marriage could overcome the effects of the Fall. An indication Othello's marriage has been instrumental in changing his infidel status is contained in the juxtaposition of Othello with the "general enemy Ottoman" immediately following his marriage, and it is reinforced in the Duke's comment to Brabantio, "If virtue no delighted beauty lack, / Your son-in-law is far more fair than black" (1.3.49, 287-88).[185] Othello to be sure is a converted Christian; his conversion and marriage make him

[183] Andreas shows blacks and Jews were thought to descend from the same line; Jessica, in leaving her father's house, "has undone the genetic and ethical damage of Ham and Canaan, and redeemed herself and presumably her children," but while Jessica is "whitened" by marrying the Christian, Desdemona is conversely "blackened" by marrying the infidel (178-79).

[184] In *An Abridgement of the Institution of Christian Religion* (1585), Calvin was of Paul's mind: through baptism Christ "washed" his spouse and "saued" them, meaning the Church (341). According to the metaphor, the spouse would be the wife, but I am arguing that it applied equally to the husband as spouse, all the more problematic as he was supposed to be the superior in spiritual matters.

[185] Pechter highlights the contrast between the infidel and the Christian in the first example, citing Mowat and Werstine, and Honigmann, glossing the line as "the Turks, hostile 'to all Christians.'"

eligible for salvation. Nevertheless, the fact the marriage is an integral part of conversion means Othello's new faith is made dependent on his marriage. Lynda E. Boose proposes "once [Iago] has raised the flag inscribing Othello within the difference of skin color, all the presumably meaningful differences between himself [Othello] and the infidel collapse" ("'Getting'" 38). The mark of the infidel exists not only in race but in the act of losing faith in his chaste and loyal wife, Desdemona. Jensen, likewise, finds the necessity of Othello's marriage for conversion is problematic because it forces him to become "dependent" on the union for his identity: "Losing her is therefore unendurable; losing her, he loses not only love, but also virtue" (172). In addition to virtue, Othello also loses his faith.

The audience is led to expect Desdemona will fall into the sin of adultery, but these expectations are reversed, as all sin will end in Othello. Almost from the moment of the marriage, Desdemona's elopement is seen as evidence of duplicity. Brabantio's ominous warning would seem to foreshadow the fall of the female protagonist into the unfaithful wife, who is the common denominator of domestic tragedy: "Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: / She has deceived her father, and may thee" (1.3.290-91).[186] The proverbial nature of the statement in and of itself leads us to suspect the play may challenge this conventional notion of female inconstancy. Othello's confidence in the gloss of his recently performed marital vows leads him to make the fatal pronouncement, "My life upon her faith!" (1.3.292). This expression of self-assurance would seem ironic but not in the way the audience might imagine.[187] It will prove to be Othello, the doubting husband, who breaks faith with the chaste Desdemona. Brabantio's statement has been taken by some critics to mean Desdemona betrays the patriarchal institution, which is symbolized by the father, in marrying a black man; she is punished for

[186] Jensen sees Brabantio's line as foreshadowing Othello's loss of Desdemona as, fittingly for my purposes, a failure of the "'trial'" of his faith and love (183).

[187] Bevington underlines the implicit irony in this line; on the one hand, it "bespeaks [Othello's] trust in Desdemona," while on the other suggesting "if his faith in her love for him should somehow collapse, then his life will be at an end" (226).

this act ultimately by her husband, who is made the enforcer of this transgression of Venetian societal norms by carrying out her murder.[188] Commentators on Genesis agreed Adam sinned against God and himself, Eve against God and all Adam's descendants, representing another example of sinning against the Father.[189] In a development that would seem to gesture towards the fulfillment of Brabantio's prophecy, Iago holds up Cassio as a possible suitor for Desdemona. He reinforces the likelihood of the match by reference to Othello's blackness: "She did deceive her father, marrying you, / And when she seemed to shake, and fear your looks, / She loved them most" (3.3.208-10). Desdemona's loyalty to Cassio is entirely altruistic, and her devotion to her husband remains unshaken.[190] In the end, nothing comes of setting Desdemona up to fall. The suspicion of women as fallen originates with a patriarchal system of husbands and fathers who seek to control female desire through marriage.

Desdemona's sexuality is initially called into question because of its relationship with blackness, which leads as a matter of course to suspicions of female adultery. The problem with critics' readings of blackness as it relates to Desdemona is that they take the suggestion for fact. Despite assertions of Desdemona's blackness, it is never realized. Loomba determines "Desdemona's desire is especially transgressive because its object is black" (179). Desdemona's sexuality is suspect specifically because

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[188] S. N. Garner expressly states the transgressive nature of Desdemona's marriage lies not in her elopement but in marrying "a black man"; thus, "Othello's blackness is as important as Shylock's Jewishness" (240). For Edward Snow, in her choice of Othello, Desdemona demonstrates an abberant sexuality, which is a threat to the patriarchal order, and punished by Othello acting the part of the father (410-11). Peter Stallybrass maintains Desdemona's marriage to Othello is subversive because of "class (and race)"; however, the "enclosed body" signifies men's attempt to control female sexuality, and her increasing passivity is "enforced by her death" (135, 141).

[189] Addressing the question of whose sin was greater, Adam's or Eve's, Willet in *Hexapla in Genesin* sets down "the man sinned onely against God and himselfe, the woman, against God, her selfe and her neighbour," but he maintains their mutual accountability (40).

[190] Greenblatt observes, from Iago's perspective nothing would seem more "probable [than] that a young, beautiful Venetian gentlewoman would tire of her old, outlandish husband and turn instead to the handsome, young lieutenant," and Othello begins to believe him ("Improvisation" 234). Benson, working from a similar position, imagines Cassio, like the less-worthy Roderigo, as a suitor in "a fictitious…love triangle" not realized "outside Othello's fevered imagination" (*Shakespeare* 103).

she yokes herself in marriage to one of another race, a hue distrusted at least in some contexts for reasons of potent sexuality as well as for differences in religion, but her relationship to blackness is also a comment more generally on marriage. It is assumed Othello's blackness somehow rubs off on Desdemona so that her sexuality now becomes an object of scrutiny. Othello "fears Desdemona's desire because it invokes his monstrous difference from the sex/race code…and implicates him in femininity…and an imagined monstrous sexual appetite" (Newman 86). Farah Karim-Cooper sees Desdemona's blackness in similar terms; it issues from her marriage to Othello, and the blackness simultaneously darkens both Desdemona's reputation and her sexuality. Commenting on *The English Moor*, Karim-Cooper identifies a "relationship" between "blackness" and "sexual lasciviousness"; likewise, "Desdemona's face is metaphorically blackened by Othello's harsh judgement," demonstrating female sexuality is negatively affected by racial prejudice (147).[191] For Patricia Parker, Desdemona's claim to blackness is most evident through her association with Barbary. Singing the Willow Song, Desdemona, whose reputation has been metaphorically "'blackened,'" unconsciously identifies with the deserted Barbary, but the loose sexuality of Barbary transfers to Desdemona, who also "becomes an increasingly passive figure" (97). The association between adultery and blackness leads us to expect Desdemona will become tainted, but her steadfast chastity routinely frustrates this foreshadowing.

Desdemona's actions following Othello's loss of trust only serve to highlight her fidelity to her husband and offer proof of her innocence. Just as the infidel husband was saved through marriage to a Christian, the wife was saved by her faithfulness. As contained in the writing of the minister Henry Smith, "if [the wife] continue in faith and patience, she shall shall bee saued, as though one curse were turned into two blessings" (*Preparatiue* 8). The *curse* refers to the curse of Eve, and the *two blessings* to

[191] For an explanation for how blackening as a stage practice affected views of Desdemona, see also Drew-Bear. She discusses how black-face was used to juxtapose Othello's black face against Desdemona's white one. Black and white, she argues, were opposed in "moral" terms; "since Venetian women had a reputation for face-paint and for dubious morals, Shakespeare inverts the audience's usual expectations in his portrayal of the fair and chaste Desdemona" (103).

the godly promise of posterity and salvation. After Othello strikes Desdemona in public, she utters a meek and submissive refrain: "I will not stay to offend you" (4.1.241). Her response makes her the über-martyr, or ultimate example of fidelity, submitting to her husband even in the face of violence. Desdemona states her intent to remain with Othello "(though he do shake me off / To beggarly divorcement)" (4.2.159-60). Her devotion goes beyond divorce to include death: "Unkindness may do much, / And his unkindness may defeat my life / But never taint my love" (4.2.161-63). She later rebukes Emilia for speaking ill of her decision to marry Othello, a foreigner: "So would not I: my love doth so approve him / That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns / …have grace and favor" (4.3.19-21).

It is during this intimate scene with Emilia, a scene of undressing and preparing for bed, that we are faced with another dramatically charged moment when we might expect adultery to surface in the text. Even once the wife has been spurned and deserted, the play continues to defy our expectations about her propensity for adultery. In a sexually charged passage, Desdemona observes "Lodovico is a proper man," and this admiration is amplified by Emilia's observation that "a lady in Venice would have walked / barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his nether lip" (4.3.35, 38-39).[192] But Shakespeare, playing on convention, does not have Desdemona act on Lodovico's attractions. Instead, Lodovico's presence in the dialogue between the two wives is neutralized in the play, and he fades in Desdemona's thoughts as quickly as he appears. Desdemona turns once again to the trouble with her husband. In the aforementioned Willow Song, Desdemona identifies with Barbary's lamentation about the lover who has deserted her: "Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve" (4.3.52). Desdemona's realization Othello might *shake* [her] *off to beggarly divorcement* recalls the case of the infidel leaving the Christian spouse.

[192] Lena Cowen Orlin acknowledges the offense taken by critics at Desdemona's mulling on Lodovico as "seem[ing] almost to confirm Iago's prediction that [Desdemona's] affections will wander to some more appropriate man than Othello" ("Desdemona's Disposition" 180-81). S. N. Garner, who attends to the passage in detail, concludes it is intended to "human[ize]" Desdemona; she is neither the ideal held up by characters like Cassio or the wanton painted by Iago: in reflecting on her choice of Othello over a man like Lodovico, "she must feel she has made a mistake" (235, 248-49). For other possible functions of Desdemona's reference to Lodovico, particularly in enhancing her innocence at the dénouement, see W. D. Adamson (176-77) and Ann Jennalie Cook ("Design" 193).

It was a circumstance which allowed the faithful spouse to remarry, but even in the face of just allowance, Desdemona decides to stay with an unfaithful or infidel spouse. Furthermore, by stating her love doth *approve* him, she suggests the potential for the faithful spouse to sanctify the infidel or unbelieving one. Desdemona, in fact, goes beyond what is required of the faithful spouse married to the infidel as outlined in the conduct literature; though she has a legitimate way out, she refuses to take it.

Acting in her capacity as a foil for Desdemona, Emilia professes a radical opinion about who is at fault for female adultery: "But I do think it is their husbands' faults / If wives do fall," and she concludes, "Then let them use us well; else let them know, / The ills we do, their ills instruct us so" (4.3.87-88, 103-4).[193] The "revenge" she imagines would condone wifely infidelity as recompense for mistreatment or adultery (4.3.94). What's more, Emilia's explanation for husbands' neglect of their wives tends toward unfaithfulness: "What is it that they do / When they change us for others?" (4.3.98). Emilia's accusation would turn the tables and make the husband the inevitable adulterer. But Desdemona resists even this opportunity to engage in the fantasy of adultery, choosing instead to embrace Othello's mistreatment as a kind of instruction for moral and spiritual improvement: "God me such uses send / Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad, mend!" (4.3.105-6).[194] By placing the blame on the husband, Emilia echoes defenses of Eve. Like in the case of Adam, the husband is expected to be the example for the wife and is, therefore, responsible for her errors. Dod and Cleaver reinforce the husband's physical and moral responsibility for the wife's actions, noting if wives do fall, "it is for the most parte through the fault, and want of discretion, and lacke of good gouernment in the husband" (K8^{r}). In the three domestic tragedies I have examined, it could be argued that the dramatic and sexual fall of the female protagonist, evoking

[193] Benson, in the indictment of men implicit in these lines, sees a reason to read against the grain of criticism: "Despite the wife typically being the adulterous spouse in domestic tragedy, Emilia argues for mitigating circumstances," leading him to reflect the "alleged misogyny of the genre is in need of reconsideration" (*Shakespeare* 104).

[194] Carol Thomas Neely's reading of these lines clarifies Desdemona's intent: "Desdemona's final couplet suggests she is groping for a third response, one that is midway between 'grace' and 'revenge,' one that would be more active than acceptance yet more loving than retaliation" (75).

Eve's fall in Genesis, is brought about in part as a result of a failure in the husband: in the form of Arden's cupidity or permissiveness, Frankford's moral and emotional priggishness or lack of Christian forgiveness, or Othello's lack of conjugal faith. In making his domestic tragedy, Shakespeare uses existing perceptions about Adam's sin to portray Othello as the tragic hero. Desdemona's refusal to contemplate adultery as a possible alternative shows she apprehends the obedience demanded of a Christian wife and mirrors an understanding of the concept that though an infidel possessed an unclean or spiritually adulterous heart, the Christian spouse could and should remain faithful to them.

Desdemona's belief she can save her infidel spouse is bolstered by the belief espoused by some Puritans that marriage had the potential to save sinful man from the Fall. In his wedding sermon *A Good Husband and a Good Wife*, Thomas Taylor proposes one spouse indeed should try to save the other: "the man and wife ought to seeke the sauing one of anothers soule, 1. Cor. 7. 5. Christ the husband of his Church did all; suffered all, bestowed all his wisedome, strength, riches, yea his precious bloud for his spouse to sanctifie and saue her: an vnfailing patterne for all spouses" (9). The church, if we remember, is unworthy until sanctified or cleansed through marriage to Christ, implying a possible connection in Taylor's text to the infidel. Desdemona, following advice for faithful wives, would not be remiss in her attempts to save Othello according to this model of spousal obligation, though she takes it to the extreme. Nevertheless, there seemed to exist some conflict about the limits of sanctification, for William Strong maintained it was Christ and not the spouse who sanctified the other: "Grace in you cannot sanctifie your [c]onjugal relation"; otherwise, "the worse party, the unbeliever, had a power to make the husband or wife unclean,…but there is not such a power in the Believer, but it is sanctified to the other by Grace" (215).

Desdemona actively attempts to repair or save her marriage. In doing so, she follows advice literature on the burden of the faithful spouse to save the other, or the patient wife to save the husband. Rose claims Desdemona, in moving from agent to victim, "makes three remarkable attempts

to *save* her marriage in the play" (emphasis added) ("Heroics" 211, 217). The fact each one—her elopement, her evasion regarding the handkerchief, and her speech exonerating Othello at her death—constitutes "a lie" indicates conflicting views of sexuality as elevated or fallen, and of women as equal partners or submissively obedient (217). Desdemona's attempts to follow the advice in the marriage handbooks reveal the central contradiction illustrated above in Taylor and Strong. While some preachers held one spouse could in fact save another, others maintained the office could only be performed by Christ. Desdemona's attempt to save her marriage goes beyond what is acknowledged by Rose to encompass her faithfulness in the face of Othello's mistreatment. We should not, therefore, judge Desdemona's courage by the fact she suffers meekly under her husband's authority but rather acknowledge her agency through her choice to stay. In marrying Othello, Desdemona pronounces "I did my soul and fortunes consecrate," and her language indicates she recognizes she is bound to Othello for both earthly and spiritual ends (1.3.252). This endurance is seen at its most complete in Desdemona's dying speech, when she proclaims "A guiltless death I die," and places blame upon herself: "Nobody. I myself" (5.2.125, 127). The play against all expectation shows Desdemona is not the adulterous wife but completely innocent. She is not dying for her own sin but for Othello's, to compensate for the erring husband, and arguably for Eve's sin as well.[195] The criminal fault is shown to lie with Othello, and though Desdemona is blamed and dies unjustly, her innocence is confirmed.

The protracted portrayal of Desdemona as the suspected adulteress serves to make Othello relatable to the audience, exemplifying Othello acts in the dramatic capacity of an everyman. Orlin suggests the play "hints at impropriety" to align the audience with Othello's mindset, making him the point of

[195] Though Orlin does readily admit the audience is necessarily distanced from Othello by way of "his race, his occupation, his extravagant otherness," and—at its most extreme—his criminal act as "a wife murderer," Shakespeare's depiction of the faithful wife, nevertheless, shifts scrutiny onto the husband ("Desdemona's Disposition" 186-87). Rose points out Desdemona's death shifts the focus of the action onto Othello, the husband, and "the stage is cleared for Othello's final, climactic consideration of his own, more active heroism" ("Heroics" 229). In Rose's view, Desdemona's self-abnegation is "not characteristic of a tragic hero," seemingly setting up her death as providing fewer subversive possibilities than Alice Arden's or Anne Frankford's ("Heroics" 229).

reference, and "inviting each (male) member of it to share Othello's doubts, to associate himself with Othello in questioning the nature of this woman and the nature of women" ("Desdemona's Disposition" 186). With the audience divided along gendered lines, Orlin conjectures men especially would have sympathized with Othello: "How much more easily were members of the play's first audience infected with suspicion?" (186). In addition to suggesting the audience related to Othello, a black man, Orlin shows why Desdemona is set up to commit adultery: to make Othello a credible tragic hero and allow the blame to be displaced onto the husband's failure to perform his domestic duties. The chief duties expected of a husband included love towards and belief in his wife. Taylor makes this clear in his sermon when he admonishes the husband the best way to instruct the wife is through assiduous love and proper esteem of her without resorting to "violence" (*A Good Husband* 25-26). In having Othello neglect to believe his wife and then kill her unjustly, in contravention of the prescriptive literature, the play points to Othello as a failed husband.

All of this tends to an explanation of why Desdemona dies despite the fact no adultery occurs, as opposed to the other domestic tragedies I have examined. I would argue Desdemona's death, like Alice Arden's before her, is necessitated by the Genesis story, only in this case it does not proceed from her own unfaithfulness. Instead, as Emilia predicts, it occurs as the direct result of the unfaithfulness of the husband through his lack of belief in her character. In depicting Desdemona as a woman who is suspected of a monstrous sexuality but is ultimately shown to be chaste, Shakespeare reverses the expectations of the adulterous wife central to the pattern found in domestic tragedy. Moreover, Shakespeare makes Othello, the husband, the embodiment of the unfaithful spouse, establishing the black man as the tragic hero by linking him with assumptions in religious texts about Adam's original sin of infidelity to God and himself. Desdemona's treatment of Othello in the face of his loss of trust shares much in common with conduct literature on the treatment of an infidel spouse, and shows the marriage is fundamental to Othello's status as a Christian and her reputation as a faithful wife. Moreover,

Desdemona's patience suggests she believes her fidelity to Othello can cancel out his lack of faith in her, saving them both. Her determination to reclaim Othello is evidenced in her earnest question to Iago: "what shall I do to win my lord again?" (4.2.151). Though I read Desdemona's intent to save her marriage as active by compensating for an unfaithful husband, her death is undeserved, and her innocence arguably makes her the most sympathetic of the three heroines I have examined. Desdemona's death in her bed serves as a reminder tragedy revolves around marriage, calling attention to Othello as Adam, or the central protagonist. In the end, Desdemona fails because the marriage symbolizing Othello's conversion and her reputation cannot overcome associations of infidelity.

The Handkerchief

My interest in the handkerchief in *Othello* stems from its potential to represent a gendered reversal of the temptation scene in Genesis, which depicts the serpent beguiling Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. In fact, the scene when Iago uses the handkerchief to manipulate Othello's mind is frequently referred to by critics as the temptation scene, with Iago acting the part of the devil, and Othello the unwitting victim of his deceit (Jones, "*Othello*—An Interpretation" 47; Neill, "Unproper Beds" 197; Skura 315). Despite the nominal connection between the temptation of Othello by Iago and the one faced by Eve, not much attention has been given by critics to how our reading of the handkerchief might be enhanced by the account contained in Genesis. The handkerchief spotted with strawberries contains a reminder of the fateful fruit in the Garden of Eden that brings about Eve's fall. The fruit in *Othello* is used as the instrument to tempt the man, not the woman, and bring about his fall in a moral and a dramatic sense, culminating in a domestic tragedy rivalling Adam and Eve's. The dramatic use of the handkerchief accords with primary texts alluding to Adam and blackness; by incorporating the handkerchief, and by tying it to the undoing of Desdemona and Othello, Shakespeare recognizes man carries a shared responsibility for the Fall.

The use of the strawberry-spotted motif on the handkerchief is an addition made by Shakespeare to his original source found in Cinthio, which mentions only a plain one (246). This change Shakespeare makes from the source has been used by critics to support the play's classification as a domestic tragedy.[196] The motif of the strawberry has been shown to have connections to the serpent on household linens and in art both in England and on the Continent during the sixteenth century. Some of what I have to say regarding the associations between the handkerchief in the play and the temptation in Genesis has been suggested in an earlier article by Lawrence J. Ross. Though he establishes a relationship between the strawberry and the Garden of Eden, and speculates on the consequences for Othello and Desdemona, the dramatic implications of the strawberry in the tableau of the Fall are not fully explored.[197] The strawberry and leaf pattern is distinctly English, but it is also a copy of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, complete with the fruit and leaves writ small. Ross enumerates two symbolic meanings of the strawberry: one is to signal innate goodness or distinguish perception from reality, and the other is to imply the entanglements of romantic love and the potentially dangerous results of women's sexuality for men (229-31). Both of these meanings hold importance for *Othello*, either for Iago as the seemingly honest soldier who ensnares the trusting Othello, or the poisonous accusations of adultery that ultimately have the power to destroy Othello's confidence in Desdemona. Ross includes two samples, both housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and both relevant to my discussion of the thematic importance of the strawberry in the Genesis story and its refashioning in *Othello*. First, in the corner of a piece of embroidered linen, the strawberry appears alongside an adder, which is hidden in the grass; the emblem is accompanied by the motto of "'latet anguis in herba'" or

[196] Lawrence J. Ross notes Shakespeare makes a deliberate change to Cinthio's handkerchief 'alla moresca' (226). Lynda E. Boose singles out Shakespeare's addition of the strawberry motif from Cinthio's handkerchief as worthy of notice ("Othello's Handkerchief" 362). Eldred Jones agrees Shakespeare makes "significant changes" to Cinthio's hankie ("*Othello*—An Interpretation" 49). Natasha Korda notes Shakespeare's "departure" from Cinthio "domesticates" the handkerchief, making it "quintessentially English" (125). Ian Smith believes critics have focused too much on the alteration by Shakespeare from his source of Cinthio in his decision to include the strawberries rather than the fact that Shakespeare keeps the Moorish fashion of the handkerchief (15).

[197] The article to which I refer is Ross's "The Meaning of Strawberries in Shakespeare."

"there is a snake in the grass," suggesting danger lurks beneath the seemingly harmless fruit (229). The second object is a trencher made from a sycamore tree and decorated with a pattern of strawberries, which deserves closer attention than Ross devotes to it. Desdemona's plaintive singing of The Willow Song about Barbary includes the lyrics "The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree," alluding to the sorrows of lost love for women and for the men easily seduced by them, who are led into jealousy and murder (4.3.40).

Ross identifies a tradition in which the strawberry appears "in the Eden of unfallen Adam and Eve in representations of the celestial or earthly paradise," though he also observes it sometimes appears in expulsion scenes, but he stops short of exploring its significance for the play's dramatic trajectory (233-34). The tendency of the strawberry to appear in both prelapsarian and postlapsarian settings suggests there is evidence supporting a reading of *Othello* as a retelling of the Fall in Genesis. The presence of the strawberry woven into the play is a reminder of another failed marriage, being the first one between Adam and Eve. Othello exclaims against his profound sense of loss of place in the sense of position but also of emotional tranquility because he is led to believe Iago's account of Desdemona's adultery:

> O now, forever
>
> Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!
>
> Farewell the plumed troops and the big wars
>
> ……
>
> Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!
>
> (3.3.348-50, 358)[198]

[198] Indeed, Othello's speech in its profound sense of nostalgia and military associations anticipates Satan's speech upon his fall from heaven in Milton's later *Paradise Lost*: "Farewell, happy fields, / Where joy for ever dwells!" (I.249-50). Othello locates the source of that happiness in marriage as an extension of his occupation, and that state of contentment in Desdemona's faithfulness once lost is lost forever. For an explanation of how Othello's loss of military occupation is tied to chivalric romance, see Mark Rose. According to Rose, the martial and the marital come together: "To banish Othello from such an Eden, proof of Desdemona's infidelity is unnecessary"; it is

By varying the temptation scene to have Othello as the central figure, and making him the agent of the Fall, Shakespeare aligns him with Adam. This representation of Othello mirrors the concern in primary texts with Adam as the sinful man who forfeits paradise for a 'trifle' and whose blackness is redeemed in Christ. When plotting the means for Othello's fall, Iago recognizes the suggestive power of the handkerchief, and capitalizes on it as a trifle: "Trifles light as air / Are to the jealous confirmations strong / As proofs of holy writ" (3.3.323-25). The trifle also appears in texts on Adam and the Fall, a linguistic indicator that does not exist for Eve. Lancelot Andrewes in a sermon in 1610 offers an explanation of the redemption necessary for all mankind because of the Fall: "whereby we had made away our selues, (for a *sale* I cannot call it, it was for such a trifle) our nature *aliened* in *Adam*, for the *forbidden fruit*; a matter of no moment" (*Sermon* 25). Man's nature *aliened* through Adam's transgression accords with Othello's alien status in Venice, not so much an outsider because of his African or Moorish race but because his blackness can be read as man's condition as a result of falling into sin. Furthermore, just as Adam ransoms paradise for the fruit, or *a matter of no moment*, Othello loses Desdemona and their mutual happiness as a result of a symbol of the forbidden fruit in the strawberry-spotted handkerchief, which he later learns to be inconsequential. Man's fall, Andrewes explains, requires there be a redemption, a "buying backe" of that which Adam sold for naught (*Sermon* 25). It is a doctrine which resonates powerfully with Othello's own admission that he "threw a pearl away / Richer than all his tribe" (5.2.352-53). William Gurnall impresses "it was an unspeakable contempt which *Adam* cast upon his happiness to sell it for a trifle; how could he more deprize it?"(30). Gurnall's use of *sell* echoes Andrewes' *made away* while his *cast* is an analogue for Othello's *threw* away a pearl, which contains a reference to the biblical injunction not to cast pearls before swine, and signifies man's natural propensity to relinquish heaven for something of lesser worth. Thomas Manton in similar terms expresses how Adam's misreckoning is rectified by Christ's Atonement: "*Adam* sold us

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enough for him to believe it possible, for "Othello conceives of himself in this speech as a type of the knight validated by the absolute worthiness of the mistress he serves" (294).

for a trifle, but Christ did not redeem us at a cheap rate" (611). The handling of the handkerchief as a trifle would have conjured up for the audience Adam's primordial sin in the Garden of Eden.

At the same time, Iago and Othello persist in the notion that the handkerchief is a token of Desdemona's guilt. Her guilt rests on suspicions of infidelity but also on Eve's responsibility for the Fall by virtue of her gender. More surprisingly, this guilt is attributed to Desdemona before the handkerchief is even lost. Iago insinuates this guilt by association when he asks, "have you sometimes seen a handkerchief spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?" (3.3.434-35). Though holding the handkerchief is no more a fault, Othello recognizes, than "To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company, is free of speech, sings, plays and dances," Desdemona by merely possessing the handkerchief is implicated in sin (3.3.186-87). The handkerchief, moreover, is *spotted* with berries, with spotting denoting sin, acting as 'proof' of woman's relationship to the Fall (3.3.193, 198, 361, 387).[199] Othello has already decided Desdemona's guilt on the false testimony of Iago in the absence of sufficient evidence.[200] By Iago's account, Desdemona's sin is of two types. First, the loss of the handkerchief suggests infidelity, and second, the fruit captured in miniature links her to Eve's transgression. The Cranach painting discussed in an earlier chapter seems an especially poignant example of just this moment. In addition, the handkerchief used to suggest Desdemona has been unfaithful with Cassio draws attention to the sexual connotations of the fruit, for Eve's sin in interpretations of Genesis was also tinged with implications of sexual impropriety. The handkerchief presupposes Desdemona's sin, and the meaning sewn into the handkerchief demands that Desdemona be held accountable for the crimes of her sex.

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[199] Julia B. Holloway connects the strawberry motif on the handkerchief to another story in which strawberries (or mulberries) figure prominently, Ovid's Pyramus and Thisbe. For her purposes in analyzing the handkerchief, the blood on the napkin for Shakespeare acts as proof of "female sexuality," or "menstruation," and connects women to "bloodshed and death" (128, 135).

[200] For the view that Othello's mind is already made up before Iago presents him with supposed proof of Desdemona's guilt, see Mallette's discussion of Iago's persuasive rhetoric as Reformation preacher (398-99).

The handkerchief's importance lies in its domestic associations and not, as some critics have suggested, in its exotic origins. The seventeenth century critic Thomas Rymer famously belittled the attention given to the handkerchief in Othello, dismissing its suitability as subject matter for serious tragedy: "so much ado, so much stress, so much passion and repetition about an Handkerchief! Why was not this call'd the *Tragedy of the Handkerchief*?....but the Handkerchief is so remote a trifle, no Booby, on this side *Mauritania*, cou'd make any consequences from it" (160). Rymer's reading suggests an African would invest the handkerchief with meanings not accessible to an English audience. That is to say it confirms the impression contained in the play of the handkerchief as a 'common thing' (3.3.304). As recently as Benson, critics have made the claim Rymer's interpretation has forced us to misconstrue the play's relation to and value as domestic tragedy (*Shakespeare* 28).[201] Feminist critics Lynda E. Boose and Dympna Callaghan have attempted to correct this oversight, exploring instead the dramatic and cultural importance of the domestic implications of the handkerchief as a love token and for women's domestic responsibilities, respectively. While Boose ties the strawberry-spotted handkerchief to proof of "marital fidelity," making its symbolism decidedly European ("Othello's Handkerchief" 372, 362-63), Callaghan proposes the work wrought on the handkerchief is evidence of women's "material and cultural production" ("Looking" 55). Thus, Callaghan asserts that "the tragic potential of the handkerchief" consists not only in its estimation as "a love token, but in part also in its specifically economic value," and Desdemona "bears the blame" for its mismanagement: her loss of the handkerchief is suggestive of domestic and moral laxness ("Looking" 60). Likewise, Neely indicates the loss of the handkerchief reinforces Othello's mistaken impression Desdemona has been unfaithful, just as she resolves its recovery in the narrative confirms it "becomes the vehicle through which civilizing control is returned to the women" (83-84). From McQuade's perspective, Desdemona's response to the

[201] In this regard, see also Eldred Jones, who memorably acknowledges Rymer's influence while at the same time critiquing him as one, "who so frequently brings up the right questions but supplies the wrong answers" ("*Othello*—An Interpretation" 53).

loss of handkerchief signifies the double-bind of the wife in Protestant casuistical thought: if she confesses its loss, she risks losing Othello's love; however, if she lies, she violates prescriptions regarding honesty in marriage ("Love " 428). On the other hand, "for Othello," Desdemona's equivocation about the loss of the handkerchief "functions simultaneously as proof of her otherness and confirmation of her sexual infidelity" ("Love" 428). Both Boose and Callaghan emphasize the domestic in its dual sense as English and related to the household, resembling the kitchen-garden berries reproduced on the handkerchief, and, like McQuade, interpret the handkerchief's significance in light of marriage duties. Moreover, for all these critics, the loss of the handkerchief is taken for the loss of Desdemona's chastity. My approach to the handkerchief aims to build on such feminist revisionary criticism of the handkerchief to explore, like Callaghan, the relation between the material and the textual by proposing the handkerchief may have associations with another domestic story contained in the first chapters of Genesis.

In his now classic interpretation of *Othello*, Eldred Jones gives an explanation compatible with a reading of the handkerchief as primarily a domestic object. He takes the position the introduction of magic is not a way of building up the handkerchief as fetish through its African production or supernatural properties but instead betrays Othello's insecurity as a husband. Othello's need to fabricate the handkerchief's history is an attempt to "magnify its value" proportionately "in Desdemona's eyes" so he can procure it, and it is a description curiously at odds with the otherwise believable presentation of the napkin as a love token ("*Othello*—An Interpretation" 49). Jones's reading leads him to conclude "the handkerchief has…no more magic in it for Othello than it has for Desdemona. It is the pledge of a love which, according to Othello's defective vision, Desdemona has betrayed" ("*Othello*—An Interpretation" 50).[202] Writing on the presence of magic bound up in the handkerchief,

[202] Heilman advances a larger point about the "magic in the web" of the handkerchief, which extends to the drama as a whole (212). The handkerchief is lost when Desdemona tries to relieve Othello's headache: "in rejecting her attention, Othello really rejects the magical powers of love; he *will* not be cured" (213).

Robert B. Heilman has described it as a powerful "talisman" meant to "guarante[e] her husband's love," but unlike in the story Othello tells Desdemona, the play shows it is "the man who strays"; thus, Othello transfers his affections to Iago, "who used a loverlike flirtatiousness on him" (211). Heilman's interpretation of the handkerchief is relevant to the argument in my last section about Othello as the spouse who lacks faith and the drama as a reversal of the gendered treatment of faith. Jones's reading in identifying the handkerchief as a love token coincides with Boose's assessment. Jones's reading directly supports my own because it takes into account first and foremost Othello's feelings as a husband; Othello inflates the importance of the handkerchief not because of a racially derived fetishism but because he fears his wife does not esteem the value of the handkerchief or love as he does, causing her to give it carelessly to her lover. By divesting the handkerchief of its mystical qualities, Jones forces us to focus on the handkerchief's role in the more familiar setting of the dissolution of a marriage. Once the handkerchief is viewed as a domestic object and less as a foreign one, it becomes increasingly clear *Othello*, stripped of the trappings of its exotic setting of Cyprus, is at its core the story of a deterioration of affection in marriage, and thus has more in common with other domestic tragedies like *A Woman Killed with Kindness* than we might initially think.[203]

On the other end of the critical spectrum, Ian Smith suggests a revisionary reading of the handkerchief, and makes the surprising claim that Othello's handkerchief was not white, as is often assumed, but black. A black handkerchief goes against the grain of criticism and our assumptions whiteness is privileged in the play. The "black cloth" had connections to a theatrical tradition of conveying blackness on the stage by clothing the body in black (21). Othello describes the handkerchief

[203] Peter L. Rudnytsky has argued *A Woman Killed with Kindness* can be read as "subtext" for *Othello*. Both plays concern "the marriage bond" and the prospect of husband "as cuckol[d]" (106). He further singles out the setting for *Othello*, despite the allure of Cyprus, as being like other domestic tragedies such as *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, or less foreign than "English" (118). Though the setting and events of *Othello* seem to be exotic, and those of the other plays provincial, the shared concern with domesticity and the decline of marriage helps us read *Othello* as belonging with the other domestic tragedies I have examined.

distinictively as one "dyed in mummy, which the skillful / Conserved of maidens' hearts" (3.4.72-73). Smith takes this description to refer to the cultural production of bitumen; a black substance extracted for medicinal purposes, it was eventually confused with mummified flesh itself, also black (20). Smith argues the dual meaning allows the black cloth to become suggestive of Othello's flesh (20).[204] Othello's account of the handkerchief, "culminating in his mummy reference, reinforces his cultural barbarity already implied in his blackness," marking him unequivocally as an outsider in Venice, and tying him to discourses of "cannibalism" (Smith 21).[205] Inasmuch as Smith's hypothesis works to convey Othello's exoticism, it differs from a reading of the play as domestic tragedy: Othello is a husband first, an African second. Smith's discussion of the black, pitchy bitumen shares something in common with Christian texts describing the cleansing of sin in a colonial context, for instance the passage introduced earlier in my discussion of the black heart in which the angel Gabriel squeezes the black contagion from the heart of Muhammad, making him pure.[206] This blackness is not intended to make Othello foreign so much as to emphasize man's sinful state, symbolizing a heart in need of spiritual cleansing.

Looking at the portrayal of the African in the travel literature of the period, Natasha Korda has argued the handkerchief draws on the European perception of the African (or Jew) who is fixated on things, and unable to judge between a trifle and an object of real value. She identifies "an inability accurately to assess value as endemic to, if not the distinguishing feature of, a racialized other" (113). It is precisely this lack evidenced in the talisman of the handkerchief and Othello's fixation with it which results in his misprizing of Desdemona, the pearl (114). It is a behavior, moreover, Korda maintains extends not only to Africans but women as well, and it is exhibited in Desdemona's "extravagant desire for Othello" (114-

[204] I do not necessarily agree with Smith's premise the handkerchief is black, though I do find his evidence compelling. I am more interested in his discussion of the origins of the handkerchief. It is his argument the black handkerchief racializes Othello that I find limiting.

[205] In an earlier study, Vaughan articulates a similar position in brief: "'Dyed in mummy,' this handkerchief denotes Othello's exotic otherness, his Orientalism, his alienation from Christian, hence Venetian, culture" (*Othello: A Contextual History* 33).

[206] For the reference to the story of Muhammad and the angel Gabriel, see n163.

15). However, Korda's argument represents a more nuanced approach than Smith, for she takes issue with critics who have emphasized the otherness of the handkerchief at the expense of its familiar "domestic" uses as a piece of household linen, and agrees with Ross's evaluation of the strawberries as familiar to an English audience (126). Finally, she insists on the importance of the handkerchief's sense as female "paraphernalia" to unraveling its meaning in the text, including Othello's fears over ownership of his wife, and an indication of women's increasing purview over household goods, facts which Iago exploits to effect "dispossess[ion]" of both husband and wife (157-58).[207]

Even though there is much to admire in Korda's nuanced reading of the handkerchief's significance in the context of race and gender, I would question her choice to stress the exotic associations of the trifle. The perception of the Africans' inability to establish value does not apply solely to texts about foreigners such as travel literature but is also used in a Christian context to explain the momentary lapse of judgement leading Adam to relinquish paradise for the fruit. He is also dispossessed of property when he is expelled from Eden, resulting in a discourse drawing on the human tendency to privilege material things over the intangible rewards of heaven. Sermons and commentaries on Genesis emphasized man was under the same condemnation as Adam for choosing the things of the world. Andrewes indicates the parallel between Adam and the state of the soul: "Our *Persons* likewise, daily wee our selues alien them, for some *trifling pleasure* or *profit*, matters not much more worth"; he urges men to keep in mind instead the "high *price*" and "the precious blood" of Christ that is the "cost" of their redemption (*Sermon* 25-26). A similar concern is expressed by Samuel Clarke, who explains God is displeased when "foolish persons make a sport and trifle of it [sin]" like Adam, and *foolish* recalls the short-sighted misprizing of the value of a pearl as the item of greater worth (85). Gurnall explains after the Fall and Adam's misappraisal of the good[s] he had been given, God requires man "shall first restore what he so

[207] In this respect, Korda's reading of women's responsibility for household paraphernalia can be compared with Callaghan's examination of women's purview over the "realm of linens" ("Looking" 60). Korda concludes Desdemona's careful care of her wedding sheets confirms she "looked well to her linens" (158).

vilified, to its due place in their estimation," to offer "proof" of the "high price we value Heaven at" (30-31). And Manton, citing 1 Peter 1:18-19, imparts a sober warning not to trade a spiritual reward for "*corruptible*" goods such as gold and silver (868). The appearance in a religious context of the singular word trifle to explain Adam's selling mankind for the pleasures of tasting the forbidden fruit connects Othello to Adam. This combined with the conviction about man's tendency to sell his soul for the things of little value works to make Othello suggestive of sinful man. All men, not just Othello, the African, are at risk of mistaking the trifle for the thing of true value.

The stolen handkerchief can also be read more literally as representing the stolen apple in the Genesis story (Fig. 5). In discussions of Genesis, one must not look far to see evidence that in eating the apple, Adam was regarded as a thief. First, Adam stole from the rightful owner of the garden, God. Secondly, Adam's sin, theft of property, is related in kind to adultery. The impression of Adam as a thief carries over into the Reformation, with writers sometimes emphasizing the parallel between Adam as a thief and Christ as the Savior who would redeem man from the effects of Adam's theft. Geoffrey Fenton plainly stated Adam's profession when he said "[o]ur originall Father *Adam* was a théefe when he stole the Apple in Paradise" (31^{v}). The Puritan Joseph Mede, after remarking the Jews had considered Adam's transgression as theft, explains Adam's theft this way: "But who could *Adam* steal from, save from God only? If God had "reserved [the tree] unto himself *as* holy" then "[m]an by eating of this as common, violated the sign of his [f]ealty unto the great Landlord" (401). Thomas Watson, another Puritan, also accused Adam of "[s]acriledge" or "double [t]heft" when he did "steal [f]ruit from that Tree which God had peculiarly enclosed for himself," invoking the enclosure of private property that came with the breaking up of the monasteries (*Body* 81). Mede and Watson's statements clarify there was an early modern connection between the Genesis story and notions of property ownership. William Ames writes, in taking the apple, Adam robbed not only God but mankind: "the disobedience of *Adam*, hath both robbed us of originall righteousnesse" and made us partakers in his sin (135). One result of portraying

Adam's sin as common theft is it makes Othello appear in another sense like an everyman. Other Protestant preachers like Henry Smith took the position Adam became the victim of theft, conjuring up the image of the devil "as he stole paradice from *Adam* when it was in his own custodie"; what is stolen is land, and Adam is represented as the property owner, or more likely a tenant, who is disenfranchised by the grand thief, Satan (*Christians* C2^{r}). In like manner, Satan will once again steal over the wall of Paradise "as a thief" in Milton's amplification of the Genesis story (IV.188). As Almond has demonstrated in terms of seventeenth century attitudes towards the Fall, "one consequence of the belief that had sin not entered the world all men would have been equal was that all property would have been held in common. Private property was a consequence of sin" (104). Part of what makes adultery so serious for Othello is Desdemona's status as property; therefore, any adultery is an attempt to steal a wife from her rightful owner, her husband.[208]

In another possible analogue for Shakespeare's play, "The Story of the Three Apples," which is contained in *The Thousand and One Nights*, the apple shares certain similarities with the handkerchief.[209] In the story, a man travels to purchase three apples for his sick wife. When the wife cannot produce one of the apples, the husband assumes she has given it to her lover and kills her, dismembering her body and disposing of it in a trunk. Wife murder and the role of domestic objects (the

[208] Recalling texts discussing adultery as a cause for separation, what is adultery but theft of another man's property? (Joye B7^{v}). James Calderwood and Kenneth Burke have both discussed property in *Othello* as it relates to theft and adultery. Calderwood indicates though Othello's marriage is represented by Brabantio as theft, "Othello is not a thief, nor is Desdemona stolen goods. He does not simply possess her, he owns her outright, legally"; however, "[m]onogamy" is no guarantee of exclusive enjoyment (30). Burke adds "love," like property, has been "close[d]" off and made "private" so "its denial can be but promiscuity" (169). Elsewhere, Michael Neill has suggested Iago's ribald speech before Brabantio's open window "presents the abduction of a daughter as though it were an act of adultery" ("Changing Places" 122).

[209] In *The New Variorum* edition of the play, Horace Howard Furness cites Charles Knight's somewhat reluctant opinion the story could possibly have been a source for the plot of *Othello*: "The painfully affecting tale of *The Three Apples*, in *The Thousand and One Nights*, is an example of this [the "savage" reaction of the Moor]; and, further, there is a similarity between the stolen apple and the stolen handkerchief" (372). Whether the influence of the tale was applied anachronistically to Shakespeare's play by twentieth century critics, or because of the obscure nature of the connection, modern critics have not taken the suggested relationship seriously. I consider the tragic implications for the stolen handkerchief as stolen apple in the Genesis story.

trunk or the bed) are not insignificant in a consideration of the adaptation of the story to the genre of domestic tragedy. Coincidentally, Othello, when he thinks Desdemona has been unfaithful, says he "will tear her all to pieces" and "chop her into messes" (3.3.431, 4.1.194). The man in the tale later learns his child took the apple, which was then stolen by a slave. The slave is faulted for his actions leading to the tragedy while the husband escapes blame. The handkerchief makes a token appearance as a sign of an impending execution before the rightful murderer is discovered (152). The apple is eventually miraculously found in the husband's daughter's pocket, and it is revealed she purchased it from the slave (156). What would appear to be a missing link between *Othello* and the Adam and Eve story, namely the apple, is supplied by this little-discussed analogue. Two facts seem especially relevant to a discussion of Othello and the handkerchief. First, the apple given as a gift to the wife is stolen, resulting in accusations of adultery and her death. Second, race distinguishes characters and determines the outcome of both texts; the slave in the story is notably black, corresponding to Othello's identity as a Moor, albeit a general, in the play. At one point Othello does relate that his overture of love to Desdemona included how he was "taken by the insolent foe / And sold to slavery" (1.3.136-37). African slaves were purchased for use in the colonies in the Caribbean or sometimes illegally transported to Spanish territories. Though it may appear that Othello's reference to slavery is an attempt to exoticize a black character on the stage by drawing attention to Othello as Other, the reference draws upon an audience's understanding of slavery in a wider context.[210] In addition, Shakespeare's noble and well-spoken Othello differs from the racially stereotyped "ugly black slave, as tall as a reed and as broad as a bench" in the tale (154).

[210] For instance, in *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock calls attention to the European slave trade that excludes him by stating "You have among you many a purchased slave," equating the white Antonio with a slave (4.1.89). By contrast, Aphra Behn's Oroonoko, who in address, claim of royal blood, relation to the wars, physical description, and story of being sold into slavery mirrors Othello, is racialized in description: "His Nose was rising and *Roman*, instead of *African* and flat. His Mouth the finest shaped that could be seen; far from those great turn'd Lips, which are so natural to the rest of the *Negroes*. The whole Proportion and Air of his Face was so nobly, and exactly form'd, that bating his Colour, there could be nothing in Nature more beautiful, agreeable and handsome" (8).

Something that has hitherto gone unacknowledged is the connection in primary texts between Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit and images of slavery, but I propose this connection is another implicit link between the handkerchief and early modern interpretations of Genesis. Richard Cavendish establishes "the first Adam…made man the slaue of sinne, so Christ the last Adam…hath restored hym agayne" (44). William Perkins reminds man "[b]y Adam thou art a slaue of the deuill,…by Christ, thou art the child of God" (*Golden Chaine* 664). This notion of Adam and slavery pervades Catholic texts as well as Protestant, as evidenced by Thomas Fitzherbert, who makes reference to "mankind [who] was by the falle of our Father Adam made a bondman and a slaue of sinne" (59^{v}). Manton, expressing the natural extension of this belief, indicates from the moment Adam ate the fruit at the behest of the serpent, "every Man is a spiritual Slave, under the Dominion and Power of Sin and Satan, and the Curse of the Law" (304). The curse as Manton explains it extends to every man as heir to Adam's sin, not just black Othello but more immediately to the white audience member taken in sin and concerned for the welfare of his soul. The inverse of this view of Adam's Fall as ushering in (or justifying) slavery is the redemption of Christ, which will secure all men's liberty. Manton's description of the general state of mankind goes directly to my argument about Othello as a representation of sinful man. Shakespeare adapts slavery from its economic context to a Christian one, showing how every man blackened by Adam's transgression is a slave of sin and redeemed through the whitening power of the redemption.

The treatment of the handkerchief in *Othello* has tended to focus on its status as either a love token or a foreign talisman. The symbolism of the strawberry motif embroidered on the ubiquitous handkerchief suggests it also resonates with the Genesis story. In particular, commentaries on Adam's fall in Genesis bear a striking resemblance to the play by referring to his sin as *a trifle*, a linguistic oddity which ties Adam's transgression to Othello's. Othello's inability to judge the value of Desdemona, or the pearl, and his connections to practices of slavery tie him to representations of Adam in primary texts about sin and blackness. In a religious discourse of sin and redemption, the handkerchief would have

resonated with an English audience familiar with representations of Adam's sin. While Desdemona loses the handkerchief, Othello's misconstrual of its meaning and significance implicates him in the Fall and its tragic consequences.

The Murder

The centrality of the bed in the denouement of the play has been critical to identifying it as a domestic tragedy, linking it with other plays such as *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. In these plays the marriage bed is tainted with associations of adultery and, more indirectly, murder.[211] It has often been the position of critics that Othello, though he is initially successful in distancing himself from the stereotype of the Moor as barbarian and infidel, ultimately reverts to committing the murder of Desdemona in part because of his race. Race, as I have already discussed early in the chapter, was perceived of in the sixteenth century in terms of the two categories of ethnicity and religion, taken together. By this account, Othello murders Desdemona because he returns to his cruel and violent African roots or the heathen practices associated with an infidel religion, Islam: both it would seem are in his blood. Othello, however, is not represented as committing the murder solely as an African Moor but because of his lineage in another sense as a descendent of Adam. Othello's sacrifice, like Cain's before him, proves an unacceptable offering for sin according to Protestant doctrine relating to Christ's Atonement for the Fall, which also helps to account for Othello's damnation. Othello was originally played by a white actor, and the murder scene's staging and symbolism of the deathbed draws on the

[211] Benson highlights the importance of Desdemona's murder for classifying *Othello* as domestic tragedy: "the spousal murder at the center of *Othello* draws upon the uxoricides and mariticides that are such a prominent feature of the subgenre" (*Shakespeare* 98). Other critics have also drawn attention to the importance of the bed and its associations of adulteration and murder. For Neill, the bed represents a tabo[o], exposing the hideous in the sense of sexuality and "racial otherness" to view ("Unproper Beds" 207, 192). Snow interprets the tragically loaded bed as a site of sexual anxiety; even the marriage bed, the "legitimized form" of sexuality, is tainted and must be "repress[ed]" (385). Boose discusses the bed as a pornographic spectacle that must contradictorily be screened from sight ("'Let'" 42-43).

convention present in the morality play of the blackened soul. Othello's blackness and the murder he commits can just as easily be explained as a result of his originating from the sinful progeny of Adam.[212]

To read *Othello* in terms of a religious shift from Christian to Turk at the end of the play is, in a word, short-sighted. Barthelemy indicates Shakespeare's portrait of Othello goes against preconceived notions of the Moor as portrayed on the early modern stage, perhaps surprisingly so, but he concludes Othello is doomed to subscribe to the "stereotypical Moor," citing the "jealousy" and the "sexual desire" ascribed to Othello as well as the "murder" he commits in the final scene as consistent with expectations of Moors (156-57). For Barthelemy, Shakespeare is unable to fashion the end of the tragedy to allow Othello to escape his prescribed fate. In the end, Othello is made to resemble the typical Moor in terms of "blackness" and to equate himself to a dramatic tradition of the "devil," or the "damned and the damning" (156, 158). Barthelemy, nevertheless, creates some measure of doubt about the role of religion in Othello's transformation when he speculates, "How much of this is due to Othello's own tragic relapse to the stereotypical Moor cannot be determined, but surely that must be a factor" (162). If Shakespeare is varying a dramatic type, might there be additional reasons Othello is damned, aside from religion, which might resonate with a white audience conditioned to recognize the damned as black?

Daniel Vitkus has argued strenuously for a reading suggesting Othello "'turns Turk'" (176). Vitkus says of Othello, "[h]is identity as 'the noble Moor of Venice' dissolves as he reverts to the identity of the black devil…and the stereotypical 'cruel Moor' or Turk"; thus, he "'doubly damn[s]'" himself as a result of his rejection of the new faith (176). According to Vitkus, the treatment of religious difference stems from the imprecise nature of "conversion" and the "fear" of the looming threat of a black Turkish

[212] I am especially interested in the fact Othello's soul seems to blacken progressively through the play as he gives way to sin, with Desdemona's murder representing the blackest of sins. This process could have been represented through the use of blackface. Laurence Olivier, for instance, in reference to a 1964 production of *Othello*, described how he darkened his skin successively, until he emerged with a face as black as burnished coal, creating shock in the audience. In his words, he finished the application with "that glorious half-yard of chiffon with which I polished myself all over until I shone….The lips blueberry, the tight curled wig, the white of the eyes, whiter than ever, and the black, black sheen that covered my flesh and bones, glistening in the dressing-room lights" (152-59).

empire (146). While I agree with Vitkus's characterization of the Turk as Other, my problem with his reading is his claim Othello's sin is connected to his specific religious and ethnic identity, making his damnation seem predetermined (176). D'Amico remarks, once Othello gives himself over to accepting Iago's explanation of race as the reason for Desdemona's adultery, he "straightaway becomes blacker in the eyes of the audience, transformed from the noble Moor" to "the jealous, changeable African" (191). But I am more interested in how the audience may have interpreted Othello's internalized rather than his externalized process of blackening. Arthur L. Little controversially proposes the staging of the bedchamber in the final act of *Othello* is evocative of disturbing scenes found in art and drama, most famously in the story of Lucrece, depicting the rape of a white woman by a black man (93-94). Othello's murder of his chaste wife, or, alternately, Desdemona's self-sacrifice, and Othello's suicide, restore a white status quo (97-98). Despite making an admirable observation about Othello's conflicted position between sacrificer to preserve Desdemona's honor and rapist, Little too maintains Othello "becomes a mere type by the end of the play, a murderous devil," or the base Moor (98). I take issue with the problematic identification of Othello as a rapist and with Little's conclusion Othello conforms to the stereotype of blackness. The murder in the final scene and its connections to sacrifice resonate with Protestant doctrine stressing the need for physical sacrifice had been done away and could not be used to compensate for Adam's fall.

Othello's murder of Desdemona has more to do with a failed marriage than with Othello's identity as a regressed Moor. Skura makes a critical about-face to argue Othello's race has little if anything to do with his violence. While not ignoring the African subcontext of the play, she is careful not to distort its usefulness. In her estimation, "Othello's color…does not explain his savagery," for "Othello's last words show that he kills himself because has *newly* turned Turk, not because [he] has lapsed *back* into being a stereotype of anything" (306). Instead, Skura holds it is Othello's "jealousy, not his blackness or his

Moorish origin" which accounts for his recourse to spousal murder (307).[213] Simply put, "Othello murders because he loves his wife too much," in the fashion of "other famous love-murders" depicted in "European and classical tradition" around the time of *Othello's* performance (314). Skura's fresh reading takes on the prevailing critical—and I believe incorrect—view that Othello regresses in the course of the play to an inferior ethnicity and religion, allowing her to avoid reinscribing racial prejudice. She puts the murder in perspective by returning race to a supportive role in the action, and presenting a reading of killing for love consistent with domestic tragedy.[214]

There is, however, an additional "cause" for the murder proposed by the play (5.2.1,3). This cause goes back to Adam's role in the Fall and debates about sacrifice for his sin in interpretations of Genesis. Othello views his case against Desdemona for adultery as just cause. He is most upset by Desdemona's protestation of innocence, which "makes me call what I intend to do / A murder, which I thought a sacrifice" (5.2.65-66). Othello's intent is no less than a punishment for sin, enforcing death for adultery, or else an attempt to undo the adulterous act. He desires "the restoration of the ideal image of Desdemona by an atoning sacrifice"; he intends "to kill the guilty Desdemona for the honour of the innocent Desdemona, or to sacrifice the innocent Desdemona to atone for her guilt" (Nowottny 470, 471).[215] The paradox of an innocent and a guilty Desdemona recalls debates about Eve in biblical

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[213] Skura's assessment of Othello's primary motivation for murder as jealousy accords with Eldred Jones's analysis of Othello as a jealous husband not a bloodthirsty African (see my section on the handkerchief). Similarly, Orkin, in a heated article, questions the critical "collocation of violence with a certain color—[that] has been so inviting to racist interpretations of the play" (175).

[214] The common view Othello regresses from a noble Moor to his true identity as a Turk coincides with the troubling nineteenth century ideology of racial regression. The thinking behind this theory was black slaves reverted to an innate savage nature outside the institution of slavery, including committing rape. I suspect nineteenth century criticism of the play by such figures as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Charles Lamb, and that in the early twentieth century by T. S. Eliot and A. C. Bradley, was biased by this view of blackness, and unconsciously filtered through to modern interpretations of the play, which continue to assert Othello turns Turk. For a historical account of how the idea of racial regression in the nineteenth and twentieth century influenced the American South and black-on-white rape, see Diane Miller Sommerville (241).

[215] Rodney Poisson surmises, in exacting death for adultery, Othello seeks to restore his lost "honor," and follows practices of sixteenth century Venice, which allowed the husband to take the law into his own hands and kill his

exegesis, and leaves open the possibility Desdemona dies as punishment for sin inherited from Eve, which is symbolized by adultery. Desdemona's sin is conceived by Othello as adultery though she protests her only sins are the "loves [she] bear[s]" to him (5.2.40). In fact, Othello will persist in calling himself "an honorable murderer" in his attempt to wipe out Desdemona's sin (5.2.299). The idea of sacrifice as remedy for the Fall was exclaimed against in sermons and commentaries on Genesis. There was a consensus in these texts that man should not attempt to atone for his own sins, and that do so constituted a kind of blasphemy against the Atonement of Christ. By carrying out Desdemona's murder, Othello attempts to repair her fall or Adam's. That is to say, Othello enacts justice through murder, enforcing the Old Testament law of an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth. In this sense, he represents the old Adam; by allowing himself to be caught up in vengeance, he has forgotten the new Adam. In effect, Othello's murder of Desdemona is an inadequate sacrifice for sin.

Under Catholicism, sacrifice had previously been connected with the practice of the sacrament of the Eucharist. In Protestantism there was a growing sentiment sacrifice constituted a form of blasphemy: the sacrifice that God required was not human sacrifice but a contrite heart.[216] Such doctrine was in keeping with teachings of the New Testament, which claimed the old Law of Moses or sacrifice had been done away due to Christ's Atonement. Othello aligns himself with Old Testament thinking, suggesting a backwards regression less of religion from Christian to Turk and more of an outdated understanding of salvation. Protestant texts, moreover, focused on the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice to atone not only

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unfaithful wife (90). In a related argument, Ronald B. Bond finds Othello, in punishing Desdemona's supposed adultery with death, is acting in an auxiliary capacity as judicial authority, applying a stricter law for adultery outlined in *A Sermon of Whoredom and Uncleanness: Against Adultery* (1547) than that allowed under the law: "Othello believes that because he 'proceeds upon just grounds,' (V.ii.39), his act is not a murder but a sacrifice (V.ii.65)," but given Desdemona's innocence, "Othello's dark answer to Desdemona's supposedly dark deeds" would have been condemned as unnecessarily harsh (202-03).

[216] Catholics and Protestants were fundamentally divided on the nature of the sacrament. While Catholics insisted on the symbolic interpretation of the Host in Mass as representing the literal body and blood of Christ, Protestants disclaimed this ritual as "blasphemous," maintaining the Lord's Supper in communion was a remembrance of Christ (Diehl 99, 121). Though Calvinists and Lutherans themselves sometimes expressed differences on the meaning of the sacrament, they were united in their opposition to the Catholic interpretation of the sacrament as repetition of the sacrifice, or even of killing Christ afresh.

for all people but for all manner of sin, from Adam down to his posterity, and maintained its ability to wipe out even the most scarlet of sins. Christ was the only one capable of performing the intercessory sacrifice and of extending salvation. Thomas Watson, the Puritan preacher, taught the unsurpassable nature of Christ's Atonement: "Thys sacrifice is propitiatorye, and a sufficient pryce, & raunsome of the whole world" (*Twoo [sic]* N5^{r}). *Propitiatory* signified all-encompassing, and those who did not see the Atonement as sufficient, or made any attempt to circumvent it by attempting further sacrifice, were dangerously close to heresy. For Watson, Christ's sacrifice is "sufficiente to saue all men," but it does not, "for what doth it profite the Turkes, Saracenes, vnfaithful gentiles, & counterfeyte Christians?" (*Twoo [sic]* N6^{r}). Watson's statement clarifies that the Atonement only applied to faithful Christians, meaning those who were born into or converted to the faith. The inclusion of *counterfeit* refers to those who pretend to convert to religion, or the uncircumcised of heart. Othello's sacrifice fails of being acceptable but not for reasons of race as skin color. Unlike Abel, who offers the firstlings of his flock, Cain gives less than is required; this could be because Abel's sacrifice of the lamb, an animal symbolic of the Atonement, is greater than that of Cain's of ears of corn, which are harvested from land.[217] Conversely, Othello's sacrifice is rejected, like Cain's, because he does *more* than is required, enacting a supplementary Atonement, and violating scriptural doctrine against offering a token sacrifice for sin.

Othello's determination to leave Desdemona's body unmarked is significant in light of the fact she is accused of is adultery. Women who were caught in adultery sometimes had their bodies marked as a sign of shame or as a deterrent. Historically, these punishments could range from branding them as

[217] The account of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4:1-16 is not explicit about why Cain after being told to offer a sacrifice has his sacrifice rejected. John Byron examines Jewish and Christian reactions to Cain and Abel, and explains the difference in the brothers' respective sacrifices by quoting Augustine: "Since Cain's was 'from the earth' it represents the 'earthly observance of the Old Testament.' Abel's offering of 'sheep and the fat thereof' is a symbol of the 'faith of the New Testament'….Although Cain offered well, he did not divide well" (239).

whores to cutting off their noses.[218] Othello's choice to leave Desdemona's body undefiled is even more important than has been recognized because it contradicts prevailing views regarding the necessity of a bloody sacrifice for sin. Othello vows, "I'll not shed her blood / Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow, / And smooth as monumental alabaster" (5.2.3-5). Othello's description of Desdemona's body as a statue identifies him as part of an iconoclastic tradition. Protestants, as a reaction against Catholicism, destroyed idols in churches, and idol worship was similarly suggestive of the heathen. Diehl has explained the iconoclasts' habit of "sacrificing what they love in order to purify the community and themselves" (163). This sentiment reflects Othello's conviction Desdemona "must die, else she'll betray more men" (5.2.6). In choosing to kill what he loves, Othello destroys Desdemona as he would an idol because the female beloved poses a threat to the spiritual worship of Christ (Diehl 163). This mindset helps to explain Othello's paradoxical statement of love and self-denial leading up to the murder: "It strikes where it doth love" (5.2.22). If Othello is an iconoclast in the murder scene, he is aligned against the idol worshiper and with the Protestant, not the Turk. Besides Othello's desire not to spot the bed with blood acting as a reversal of the virginal blood on the wedding sheets, his language is strikingly reminiscent of biblical sacrifice. In this scene, Othello acts the part of the Old Testament sacrificer.[219] First, the animal chosen for sacrifice needed to be without blemish, and second, Othello's description of Desdemona anticipates Christ, the lamb, offering himself up as a sacrifice for sin.[220] There is nothing new in suggesting Desdemona acts in some capacity as a Christ figure whether at Othello's hand or by taking

[218] For a catalogue of biblical and classical punishments for adultery, see *A Sermon of Whoredom and Uncleanness: Against Adultery* (1547) (Rickey and Stroup 1: 85-87). In the context of biblical punishment for adultery, it is fitting Anne also implores Frankford against physical disfigurement for her sin: "mark not my face, / Nor hack me with your sword, but let me go / Perfect and undeformed to my tomb" (xiii.99-101).

[219] For more on the role of sacrifice in religion, see René Girard's *Violence and the Sacred*.

[220] The Old Testament specified the type of animal that should be offered up for sacrifice: "Your lambe shall be without blemish" (Exodus 12:5). The New Testament replaced this old law, clarifying that man is redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lambe without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19).

the blame upon herself: "Nobody. I myself. Farewell" (5.2.127).[221] The lack of blood invalidates what Othello sees as an acceptable sacrifice for sin. Roger Hutchinson specifies "it must be a bloudy sacrifice, not a drie sacrifice, for which sinne is pardoned," and, under Christ, "sinne being forgeue[n]…there remayneth no more sacrifice for sinne" (34^{v}).[222] Jackson Thomas reiterates the importance of blood to the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ rather than man; "there was no necessity …that the *second Adam* should become a *bloudy sacrifice* for our sinnes unless the first *Adam* had sinned" (191). Lancelot Andrewes protested "*carnall and externall sacrifice*" had come to an end; the Lord has "rejected" all such sacrifice, requiring instead an "*inward sacrifice*" because "we are not able to performe which we owe" (*XCVI.* 12-13).[223] Given that no drop of Desdemona's blood is shed in her death, seeing as she is strangled in her bed, Othello's sacrifice for sin would have been recognized as unlawful.

Ethnicity plays less of a role in the murder than readings of the play would have us believe. If Othello does not shift from noble Moor to Turk, an explanation of the murder and his damnation lies elsewhere. What are we then to make of Othello's soliloquy once he has killed Desdemona? He addresses the representatives of Venice:

> And say besides that in Aleppo once,
>
> Where a malignant and a turbanned Turk

[221] Snow is one who explicitly draws attention to "the allusions to Christ and his sacrifice that have been accumulating around Desdemona throughout the final act" (412).

[222] The false distinction between a bloody and a dry sacrifice was a particularly contentious topic in critiques against Catholics. In *An Abridgement of the Institution of Christian Religion* (1585), Calvin responds to the Catholic position that Mass is an unbloody sacrifice, declaring it is "[t]herfore contrarie to the nature of sacrifices, because there is none without sheding of bloud" (375).

[223] The so-called 'blood and wounds' theology of Protestantism attached to the eighteenth century Moravian sect provides additional context here. The phrase refers to the rhetorical focus on the blood and wounds of Christ's body on the cross, and to the attendant doctrine of his atoning sacrifice as the only means whereby man can be saved. Craig D. Atwood undertakes a detailed discussion of the blood and wounds theology originating with Zinzendorf, the emphasis being on salvation through Christ's Atonement and not through works: "Continual meditation on the bleeding form of Christ and the spiritual experience of being washed in that blood will preserve the believer from despair and from sin" (37).

Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,

I took by the throat the circumcisèd dog,

And smote him—thus!

(5.2.357-61)

On the surface, this speech might seem to challenge my thesis of Othello as a more universal tragic protagonist by insisting on linking Othello to a specific religious and ethnic identity. However, another possibility is that what Othello conveys in this speech is a divided identity, one which is split between his concept of himself as the quasi-Venetian and the alienated Turk.[224] Acting as representative of the state, he executes the enemy Turk, punishing him for committing the murder and for his outsider status as an intruder. Put another way, it simultaneously identifies Othello as an everyman and distances him as Other.[225] The apparent contradiction can be explained by the uncertainty surrounding the extent of Othello's guilt: he is the murderer and victim both. Like Desdemona, he is caught up in the effects of original sin.

Othello's suicide once he has recognized Desdemona's innocence and his own damnation can be read as the required bloody sacrifice. This possibility is suggested by Lodovico's exclamation "O bloody period!" (5.2.362). Othello offers himself as a sacrifice similar to Desdemona's, except suicide is an unpardonable sin. The play suggests Othello, though not guilty of Adam's sin, is nevertheless an heir of sin. This view of a sinful race springing from Adam is presented most comprehensively in John Baker's articles, which he appends to his lectures on faith:

I beleeue that al those that are come, and shall come of the race and lyne of Adam, generally are

[224] Kent Cartwright pathologizes the dual identity in Othello's final soliloquy: on the one hand, Othello is "the malignant, violent, and blasphemous Turk," on the other he is, in the figure of the Indian, the "unworldly savage, the natural man"; thus, "the rhetoric of Othello's last speech tries simply to have it both ways, making him too innocent to be evil and too evil to be innocent" (172-73).

[225] In an analogous interpretation emphasizing the domestic over the exotic, Benson proposes Othello's speech resonates as the scaffold speech used at the end of the genre: "With his bed as scaffold, the private, domestic space is transformed into a public portal for viewing the confession as well as his demise" (*Shakespeare* 116-18).

> conceiued & borne in iniquitie and corruption, (except Iesus Christ only) and that they are all sinners, transgressers and breakers of the law and wil of the Lord, and according to their nature they are corrupt, the children of wrath, worthy of Gods iudgement, of condemnation[n] & eternal death, all needing the grace and mercie of God and of Christes blood shedding. (Ggv^{r})

Notably for Thomas Wilson, it was "concupiscence" or lust "which hereditarily flowed from *Adam* vpon all his race," implicating Othello in the female sin attributed to Desdemona of intemperate or unlawful desire (675). The effect of this view is that the blame for adultery is temporarily shifted from Eve as woman and wife to Adam as man and husband. Roger Edgeworth's characterization of Adam's original transgression positions it as the cause of all sin and links it directly to more capital crimes, including murder: "our fyrst infection and corruption, taken of Adam, by whiche commeth gloteny, lechery, pride, malice, murder, robbery, and all other iniquitie, whiche all peyseth and presseth vs downe to dampnation euerlasting" (Hhhhi^{r}). The sermon identifies the taint of sin as originating from the stock of Adam, clarifying that it is the Fall that results in man's damnation, and reinforcing the blackened nature of every soul and inescapable end of death and damnation prescribed for mankind as a result of Adam's unlawful act. As much as I have argued that Othello is an everyman, his murder of Desdemona to some extent distances him from the audience.

At the end of the play, the focus is on the marriage bed as the site of tragedy, which is opened up to the gaze of the audience. The murder scene confirms *Othello's* rightful place in the canon of domestic tragedy. Shakespeare experiments with the genre by allowing the audience to sympathize with the tragic protagonist and then forcing the audience to withdraw that sympathy at the end of the play.[226] Othello is a poor, duped husband; however, there is a deliberate estranging as he commits the heinous murder. In the end, he is a Turk, not an everyman, but the shift is not because of an ethnic or religious

[226] Skura asserts the audience identifies with Othello up until his murder of the innocent Desdemona, when "[t]orn between revulsion and identification, denied resource to any easy moral schema, they are left, like the on-stage survivors, at a loss for explanations" (325).

regression but because he is caught up in the sullying effects of original sin and the murder of Desdemona.

The point of this section has been to shift focus away from Othello's regression from Christian to Turk as providing sufficient explanation for his murder of Desdemona. Instead, I have shown how readings of Genesis may provide an alternate explanation for Othello's motivation for uxoricide. Othello shares similarities with Adam; as the tragic protagonist of another domestic tragedy on a smaller scale, Othello is a representative of sinful man. This configuration of events shifts responsibility for the Fall from Eve to Adam while drawing on a dialogue within primary sources attempting to explain the Fall in terms of Adam's transgression in isolation from Eve. Part of the novelty of *Othello* is that it is a variation both on domestic tragedy and on Genesis. It changes the tragic paradigm from the Fall of the female protagonist, Desdemona or Eve, to that of the male protagonist, Othello or Adam. The dramatic focus in the domestic tragedy is on Othello as flawed husband more than it is on Othello reverting to the barbarous Turk. Correspondingly, Othello as Adam takes on the importance of tragic status previously accorded to Eve in interpretations of the Genesis narrative, but it also means he shoulders the bulk of the responsibility, at the instigation of the devil-figure Iago, for bringing death into the marital paradise.

My object in this chapter has been to argue for *Othello* as a variation on the genre of domestic tragedy. Though Othello's blackness is undeniably important, Shakespeare represents him primarily as a husband who is led to believe that he has been cuckolded. First, the curse of Ham is helpful in demonstrating how Othello's blackness is the result of fallen sexuality, and sin more generally, rather than indicative of his status as an African Moor. Othello is a type of Adam, allowing him to act as a tragic protagonist in the Fall. Just as Adam was represented as blackening his posterity through sin, Othello's descent suggests he is caught up in original sin. Second, *Othello* is a different kind of domestic tragedy because the wife is not the adulterous wife found elsewhere in the genre; unlike Alice in *Arden of Faversham* and Anne in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Desdemona is innocent. Instead of Desdemona,

Othello is implicated as the unfaithful or infidel spouse. Desdemona attempts to save her spouse and her marriage by adhering to conduct literature on the patient wife and by remaining faithful. The handkerchief, as a prop providing important evidence for the play as domestic drama, is also associated with Othello rather than Desdemona in ways that implicate him in the failure of his marriage and in the Fall. The treatment of the handkerchief as a trifle accords with primary sources that criticized Adam for trading mankind for a trifle in tasting the fruit. Finally, Othello's murder of Desdemona, besides incorporating spousal murder characteristic of domestic drama, goes against accepted notions of man's inability to offer sacrifice to atone for Adam's sin in Protestant theology. In killing Desdemona, Othello is acting in a judicial and religious capacity, enforcing biblical punishment for her perceived sin of adultery, but he is acting on an old law. Othello's attempt to offer a sacrifice and his refusal to mark Desdemona's body constitutes a double theological error. First, Othello fails to understand sacrifice is no longer required, and second, he seems to be at a loss as to how to go about performing a proper or bloody sacrifice anyway. Reading Othello as a type of Adam helps solidify the play's status as domestic tragedy. In representing the soul blackened by sin, Othello became more than the type of the villainous African Moor portrayed previously on the early modern stage; my reading helps to account for the audience's sympathy for Othello, allowing them to think, along with Othello, oh "the pity of it" (4.1.190, 191).

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have argued for a rereading of early modern domestic tragedy in relation to the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis, with attention to conflicting Puritan depictions of marriage, particularly sexuality within marriage, as godly and fallen. In the apple, the rib, and the curse of Ham, I find cultural associations with fallen sexuality, the creation and separation of woman from man, and the blackness of sin, respectively. My focus has been on the female protagonists in the drama: Alice Arden, Anne Frankford, and Desdemona, and how their fall into adultery, whether real or perceived, parallels Eve's in Genesis. Early modern perceptions of Eve were defined by her role as primary transgressor in the Fall and passive victim of temptation; this conflict helps to account for the ability of the wife in the drama to exercise agency to commit (or be suspected of committing) adultery and, in some cases, murder while still retaining a degree of sympathy. The plays, moreover, seem to align the adulteress with the crucial moment in Genesis when Eve eats the apple. One of the main points of this dissertation has been that the domestic plays did not simply rehash the biblical drama or morality plays, nor did they follow a homiletic formula of temptation, sin, repentance, and death, as Adams's early study of the plays proposed. On the contrary, more recent criticism has been invested in showing how the drama resisted a simplistic treatment of sin, including adultery. The plays represent points of tension in the Genesis story to draw out conflicts in early modern representations of gender and the household. For example, separation after adultery went against the commandment to be one flesh. When playwrights draw out these contested meanings, it isn't for the purpose of providing a definitive answer to a specific problem but to examine the consequences, both personal and political, of those contradictions. Though Heywood does not consciously respond to Whately's palpable concern about adultery frustrating marriage in *Bride-Bush*, by pointing to the cracks in the Frankfords' relationship and the permeability of household space, he is engaged in asking similar questions about marriage. In particular, the play questions how marriage, plagued by adultery, and at times fraught with violence, can act as a preservative against

unlawful sexual desire, offer fulfilling companionship, or presume to promote social order. Thus, Anne's death, while it does in a sense serve as punishment for her adultery and limit the subversive possibilities of her starvation, somewhat radically allows Anne, unlike Eve, an attempt to repair her fall, even if the solution runs contrary to prevailing doctrine or offends modern sensibility. By fracturing the household, the play critiques the pressure brought to bear on female sexuality for the meaning of marriage.

Richard Helgerson has argued the playwrights of domestic drama, in developing a new genre, often "turn back" to centre on "wifely chastity" (*Adulterous Alliances* 29). In *turn[ing] back* to *wifely chastity*, the plays take up the problem of Eve's sin in a moral and sexual sense in Genesis while reworking older forms, like the biblical plays, to explore the new phenomenon of the sympathetic adulteress on the stage. Helgerson further connects female chastity to location in ways that are useful for my discussion of the plays in light of Genesis:

> The specificity of place that is so characteristic of domestic drama has its counterpart in this attention to female sexuality. The local and domestic space, whether it be the town or the house, is represented by the woman's body, and, when that body is invaded, the local and domestic are also violated. (29)

The place of the plays in a literal sense is the household, which is reconstructed on the stage through spaces and objects as well as their meanings. But by representing adultery as an archetypal sin, the playwrights also participate in evoking another space, the Garden of Eden, or the location of the original Fall. Helgerson's study of the domestic drama leads him to conclude the plays, often based on actual recorded murders, in the end, cannot be confined to the household: a "local story of adultery and murder," in the case of *Arden*, takes on larger cultural significance and becomes imbued with tragic potential (31). For my purposes, the particular story about a wife, Alice Arden, who commits adultery and brings about the dissolution of the household, becomes tragic in part because of its associations

with the first husband and wife in Genesis. Helgerson's thesis is applicable to the three domestic tragedies I have examined, and helps to flesh out the further implications of my argument.

Arden of Faversham, as the earliest surviving example of the new genre, and the one most engaged in drawing on the geography of its setting, Kent, presents the most direct example of Helgerson's *specificity of place*. Kent's reputation as the Garden of England, including its orchards, which are the source for many of London's apples, makes it the ideal place for an adaptation of the story of Adam and Eve for an early modern audience. The play draws on the connection in the sixteenth century between the apple and fallen sexuality. Though the immediate setting of the play is a household, it is at once a local story about Mistress Arden in Kent, whose killing of her husband in 1551 resulted in a steady stream of popular literature about the wicked wife, and Eve in the Garden of Eden, who eats the apple and brings death upon her husband, Adam. Rather than being a strictly private affair, the play suggests the effects of Alice's adultery extended outside the home to the town. Arden regrets Alice and Mosby have "meetings in the town," and lashes out in anger at Mosby because "all the knights and gentlemen of Kent / make common table-talk of her and thee," suggesting the affair is public knowledge in Kent (i. 16, i. 343-44). Setting the play in a recognizable Kent, the playwright also gestures toward another Garden to heighten the expectation of tragedy anticipated in a well-known story. By eating the apple, Alice is guilty of her individual crimes of adultery and petty treason but also of Eve's transgression, which carried sexual connotations.[227] Consequently, Alice is punished for a private crime as well as one on a much grander scale.

A Woman Killed with Kindness is another example of a domestic tragedy concerned with *wifely chastity*. The play makes use of the rib to reflect on woman's creation from man's side as a companion

[227] Orlin has demonstrated the overlap of the sexual and political in *Arden,* pointing to John Ponet's claim Alice Arden was raped repeatedly by men of the town before being executed, and Orlin concludes Alice, at least the dramatic Alice, acted as a "scapegoat" (80-82). The historical reference to Alice Arden's rape serves as an example of Helgerson's claim the violation of the woman's body represented a social breach.

but also the problem of separating what God hath joined together. The play shows the marriage is unable to survive Anne's adultery, resulting in separation over divorce. Anne's stark punishment despite her contrition demonstrates adultery is a crime which results in the breakup of the household in the drama. This is another place when the drama examines contesting ideas of gender and the household. The play makes the wife's chastity the glue that holds the marriage together but shows the glue fails, resulting in the destruction of the marriage and Anne herself. As Anne is on her way to Frankford's other manor, the comments made by the servant Jenkin to Wendoll show the social consequences of adultery reach beyond the household to comprise the servants: "You have made our house in a sweet pickle, have you not, think you? What, shall I serve you still, or cleave to the old house?" (xvi.114-16). Finally, the choice to represent Anne's punishment as exile to another household echoes Adam and Eve's sorrowful departure from the Garden after the Fall, giving the domestic story tragic weight. The intolerance for adultery in the play, however, means Anne must undergo her exile alone, without a companion. By having Anne die in exile, despite her reconciliation with Frankford, and by refusing to reincorporate Anne into the home she has forfeited, Heywood refuses to gloss over the social problems of separation in favour of a unified vision of marriage as one flesh.[228]

I have included *Othello* in my discussion of domestic drama as a variation both on the genre and the treatment of the adulterous wife, suggesting it represents a gendered reversal of the Fall. Othello's blackness symbolized sin, making him an everyman, as opposed to providing evidence for miscegenation, which is an anachronistic concept in the period. *Othello* suggests the early modern mind was equally interested in Adam as an exemplum. In this play, the focus is still on *wifely chastity*, but with the surprising revelation Desdemona is innocent. Though Desdemona is implicated in her fall by her loss of the handkerchief, which symbolizes fidelity, it is Othello who is represented as the infidel or unfaithful

[228] The reading I have just proposed differs slightly from the one espoused by Diana E. Henderson, who argues Anne's death, though it does not provide closure, represents a physical and spiritual process of "exile and homecoming" (278).

spouse. However, he does not regress to the stereotypical Moor so much as reflect an early modern understanding of Adam's fall as trading paradise for a trifle. The connection forged by Helgerson between the drama and place is especially important for *Othello*, which is the only play I examine with an exotic setting. Accusations of adultery do not surface until the couple has left Venice. The play suggests the chaste wife can be persuaded to play the wanton while dwelling in Cyprus despite Iago's insinuation adultery is linked with Venice: "In Venice they do let God see the pranks / They dare not show their husbands" (3.3.204-05). The wars with the Turks are revealed to be a diversion, and what is really at stake is the *violation* of the woman's body. By making Desdemona the innocent victim, Shakespeare plays on the genre of domestic tragedy while also aligning Desdemona with defenses of Eve. Desdemona's death is not just about the loss of a handkerchief, though I maintain the importance of its domestic associations over its foreign ones. Her death at Othello's hands is an attempt to requite a perceived *invasion*, to use Helgerson's term, of the woman's body, which is interpreted as an act of violence against marriage, with martial violence.

The playwrights of domestic drama glimpsed in the story of Adam and Eve an opportunity to lend credibility to a fledgling genre by using an archetypal story while at the same time reinventing that story to suit the tastes of an early modern audience. In Eve, they found a versatile model for femininity and an innovative way to represent the adulteress as sympathetic. By using Adam and Eve, the prototypical couple and model for companionate marriage, the plays lend the wife importance alongside the husband in her own right as a female protagonist or prototype of the female tragic hero. Her death is prescribed by the genre of tragedy but also by the Genesis story, though it is not altogether passive because it is preceded by an act of transgression. By eating the apple, identified in the period with sexuality, the adulterous wife takes her place in history alongside Eve, but by then it is a history of public not just private proportions.

Figures

Figure 1. Lucas Cranach. *Adam and Eve*. 1526. Oil on panel. Courtauld Gallery, London. Web. 17 July 2014. http://www.artandarchitecture.org.uk/

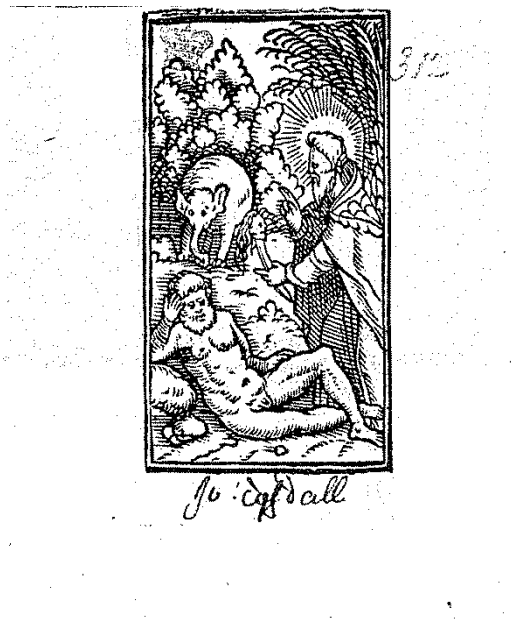

Figure 2. [Illustration of the creation of Eve from Adam's rib] c. 1600-1699. The British Library, London. From *Early Modern English Books Online*. Web. 17 July 2014. http://eebo.chadwyck.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=226317869&FILE=../session/1407328507_13099&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=203227&PAGENO=1

Figure 3. Duvet, Jean. *The Marriage of Adam and Eve*. c. 1540-1555. Engraving. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Web. 17 July 2014. http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection online/search/385433

Figure 4. Tieffenbrucker, Wendelin. Lute. c. Late 16th century. Yew, spruce, ebony, and maple. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Web. 17 July 2014. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1989.13

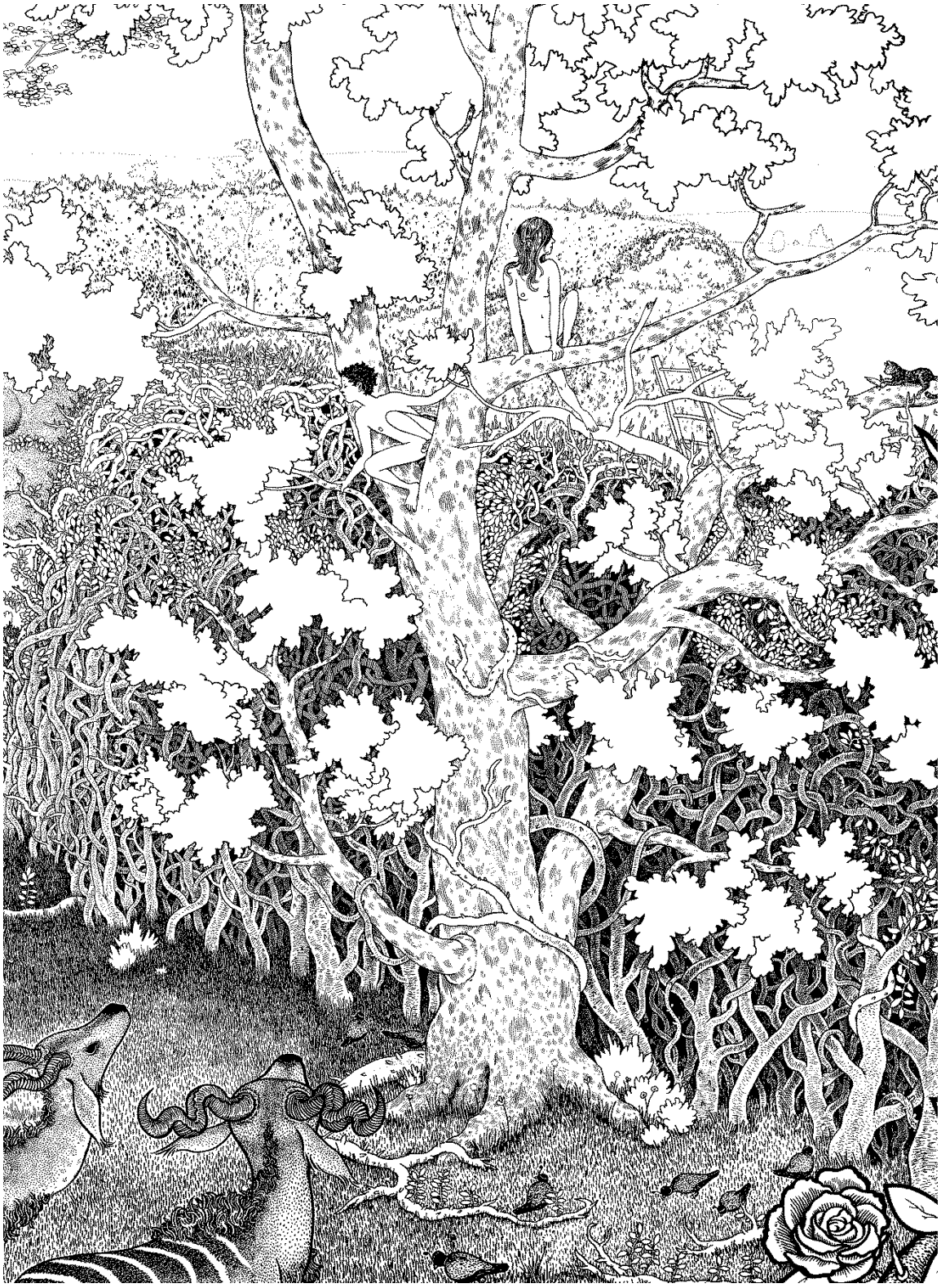

Figure 5. Nilsen, Anders. *Adam and Eve Sneaking Back into the Garden of Eden to Steal More Apples*. 2011. Ink on paper. Private collection, Chicago. Reproduced with permission of Anders Nilsen.

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