



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

Heroic But Unchaste:

Thomas Kyd's Bel-imperia
and Traditional Elizabethan Conceptions of Women

By Jeanie Warnock

Thesis presented to the Department of English of
the University of Ottawa in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Thesis Supervisor: Irene Makaryk



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-75058-8

Canada



UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Notes.....	11
Chapter One. The Social Context of <u>The Spanish Tragedy</u> :	
Proper female up-bringing and conduct in the	
Renaissance.....	14
Notes.....	70
Chapter Two. The Dramatic Context of <u>The Spanish Tragedy</u> :	
Female stereotyping in plays by two of	
Kyd's contemporaries.....	80a
Notes.....	129
Chapter Three. Bel-imperia:	
An unchaste heroine playing Perseda.....	137
Notes.....	202
Conclusion.....	217
Notes.....	230
Bibliography and Works Cited.....	236

Introduction

Thomas Kyd is primarily known as the writer of the first revenge tragedy, but he deserves at least equal recognition for presenting one of the most unconventional portrayals of women in Elizabethan literature. His work The Spanish Tragedy suggests a view of women which is far removed from the society in which he lived and which goes beyond even the liberal attitude towards women of humanists like Baldesar Castiglione, Sir Thomas Elyot, and Joannes Vives. Not only does Kyd sympathetically portray an unchaste woman who is as strong or stronger than the male characters surrounding her, but also one who consistently challenges and undermines the traditional masculine standards of the time.

Critics of The Spanish Tragedy usually concentrate on the historical importance of the play or examine, as its most complex element, the problems it raises about divine justice and the morality of revenge. Are Elizabethan audiences supposed to sympathize with Hieronimo to the end, rejoicing to hear that he will be led by Don Andrea to "...where Orpheus plays, / Adding sweet pleasure to eternal days" (IV.v.23-4), or are they supposed to become increasingly condemnatory, their moral outrage towards revenge culminating with the seemingly pointless slaughter of

Castile? Are Don Andrea and Revenge forces of heaven and of a just God bringing down retribution on the murderers or are they representatives of a hellish underworld which entices men to acts of blood and violence? Is Hieronimo an unknowing instrument of heaven, a dupe of Hades, or a man struggling to find some kind of justice in a world that suddenly seems without meaning or direction? These are some of the questions that interest critics, and if they consider Bel-imperia it is only in so far as she fits into their interpretation of the nature of Hieronimo's revenge.

G. K. Hunter and Michael Levin, who both take the extreme view of seeing Revenge as the absolute and approved instrument of a just God,¹ pass over Bel-imperia with little interest. Levin describes her with some sympathy as "a hot-headed individualist who delights in flouting convention" (318) and then moves on to other characters, while Hunter rarely mentions her, obviously viewing her as peripheral to his interpretation of the play. Elaine and Charles Hallett argue for a reading of the play directly opposed to Hunter's and Levin's interpretation, but they are equally brief in their assessment of Bel-imperia and far less sympathetic. Since the Halletts argue that Hieronimo is torn between heavenly justice, which operates on faith, and natural justice, which is represented by the pagan deities of Hades (138), they characterize Bel-imperia as a devilish figure, the relentless force that goads the Knight Marshal on to his bloody revenge. In their reading, Bel-imperia is a symbol of the element of irrationality which always threatens efforts to establish a rule based on reason and justice. Acting as

the human representative of Andrea and Revenge, she introduces their dark and infernal passions into the reasonable world of the Spanish court (137-43).

In Thomas Kyd, Peter Murray tries to reconcile the disparate positions of the Halletts and Hunter and argues that Hieronimo is a figure with whom we sympathize but whom we condemn, "From our higher perspective, then, we see revenge to be inevitably unjust: self-pity and an obsessive lust for justice tragically blind a man and make him destroy the innocent--even make him think that he is doing what heaven wants when we can see that he is the agent of a figure sent from the underworld" (51).² He examines Bel-imperia in much greater detail than most critics, but his interpretation is coloured both by his insistence on casting her, despite all the evidence in the text, into a passive, conventional role and by his inability to see her as anything but a stereotypical flighty female, causing trouble for the men in the play simply because that is the kind of thing women naturally do. Far more seriously, he tends to respond to her purely in terms of the point he might be arguing at the moment. Thus, without appearing to be aware of the absurd contradiction, he characterizes her at one stage as a naive ingenue, deceived by a duplicitous Horatio who "knows how to make himself seem so [honourable] in order to get his way with Bel-imperia" (16), and then, at another, he describes her as a deceitful female Machiavel, "a true sister to Lorenzo...[who] serves herself in her passion for love as he serves himself in his passion for domination" (18).

Other critics who take a more moderate position between the extremes espoused by Hunter, Levin, and the Halletts are less interested in Bel-imperia than is Murray. Since they emphasize Hieronimo's human suffering and focus not on the morality of Hieronimo's revenge but on his emotional state and dilemma, they tend to either ignore Bel-imperia or see her as one of the principal causes of his misfortunes. Arthur Freeman, who views Hieronimo's decision to take revenge as "a human decision based on his own human problems" (94), links Bel-imperia to later Jacobean villainesses, "She has some of the fire, courage, and wilfulness of Vittoria Accorombona, Ford's Annabella, and Middleton's Beatrice" (86). But after observing rather pejoratively that she is an Italian-type heroine (86), he scarcely mentions her again. In his introduction to the Revels edition of The Spanish Tragedy, Philip Edwards tends to side-step the problems of Hieronimo's justification and argues that the play is not intended to make the reader take a stance on the morality of private vengeance but is meant to capture "the passion for retribution" where punishment of the murderers is not only divine justice but a "human want" (li).³ He recognises Bel-imperia's impressive qualities, "Bel-imperia is a woman of strong will, independent spirit, and not a little courage," but undercuts his remark by adding, with ponderous significance, "she is also libidinous" (liv), as though this negates all her positive characteristics. For Edwards, she is a "certain kind of woman" (liv). In his later work, Thomas Kyd and the Early Elizabethans, Edwards takes his belief in the free will

of the characters even further, arguing that the pattern of events is not destiny but "the aggregation of individual deeds, too ironic to be anyone's design" (40), and since he believes that each of the characters, not the abstract concept of Revenge, is responsible for the tragedy, he tends to downplay Bel-imperia's sympathetic qualities. Her treatment at the hands of her brother and Balthazar, he contends, is only "vengefulness repaid in kind" (28), and he goes on to argue that she is no more or less sympathetic than the Portuguese Prince.

Even the critics who examine the play from the love-death angle tend to study the play purely in terms of theme, as they try to derive an understanding of the play's action from an analysis of the love-death conflict. John Weld argues that Kyd's play is influenced by the Augustinian model of two cities governed by two different loves, Babylon, the earthly city of self-love, and Jerusalem, the heavenly, selfless city. The play dramatizes the end of the earthly city, of a society "built on self-love, seeking its ends on the earth, seeking domination, at war with itself, confused and self-destructive" (340). He gives Bel-imperia little sympathy or attention and dismisses her as a spiteful woman whose worldly love, in the Augustinian sense, is actually hate (342). McAlindon views the play as built upon the Greek philosophy which stresses the necessary concord of the opposing forces of love and strife where moderation, representing "the bond of opposites," is the only path in the world that will avoid disorder and confusion (57).⁴ He sees Bel-imperia as worthy of independent attention, but

he is ambivalent in his appraisal. At one point he views her in a purely Hallett-like sense as the "euhemerized version of one of those classical, female divinities who habitually whip men out of their restrained and pacifist ways down the paths of violence and madness" (62), while at another he sympathetically characterizes Bel-imperia and Horatio as Mars and Venus celebrating "Nature's fruitful and concordant discord" in "a moment of rare harmony" (74). Stilling, who argues that the play is "built around ironies of eros and thanatos" (26), the two themes which order the symbolism and moral values of the play, expresses the most interest in Bel-imperia. He observes that "one could argue that she [Bel-imperia] is the first genuinely seductive heroine to take the Elizabethan stage" (27), and he looks in detail at her relationships with Balthazar, Lorenzo, and Horatio. But since Stilling is concerned solely with the love-death opposition, he looks at Bel-imperia only in her role as Horatio's wronged and abused lover.

While these critics provide valuable insight into The Spanish Tragedy, they do Kyd a grave injustice by dealing almost exclusively with the revenge-tragedy elements of the play. By subordinating Bel-imperia to the larger thematic concerns of the play and examining her only as she fits into their interpretations, they lose the chance to look at Kyd in an equally interesting way, to see him not just as a writer who struggles with the problems of justice and revenge and the eternal clash between love and death, but as a playwright who actively challenges Renaissance conventions

about women. The intent of this thesis is to set Kyd's portrayal of Bel-imperia against the larger context of traditional attitudes towards women in the late Elizabethan period and examine the way in which he sympathetically creates a socially disruptive heroine who violates all traditional Elizabethan standards of behaviour. By recognising and analyzing the sexually subversive nature of Kyd's work, the thesis attempts to present a new way of understanding both the play and the playwright and to draw attention to an important but neglected aspect of his play.

Chapter One focuses mainly on instructional literature which deals with the upbringing, training, and marriage of young girls. This general survey of such influential writers as Joannes Vives, Heinrich Bullinger, and Baldesar Castiglione, as well as lesser known authors who had works published when Kyd was writing, establishes a picture of the behaviour and morals considered acceptable for young Renaissance women and helps to reveal the prevailing attitudes towards women which underlie the writings of the time. Most writers stress obedience, docility, and sexual restraint in women, setting up such characteristics as meekness, constancy, and chastity as ideal virtues and condemning any indication of independence or sexual freedom. These works reveal how women were trained, almost from the day they were born, to suppress any strong feelings and emotions. To further emphasize the pervasiveness of these attitudes, Chapter One also examines a number of selected Elizabethan fictional works which were contemporaneous with The Spanish Tragedy, such as John Lyly's

Euphues and Robert Greene's Penelope's Web. While the courtesy literature reflects the social values of the time, suggesting what society deemed ideal in women, these romances provide some indication of the extent to which the ideas in the instructional literature were carried over into more popular fiction and reveal the way in which the fiction writers helped confirm and extend a set of values similar to those espoused by Vives, Bullinger, and Bruto.

Chapter Two looks at works by two of Kyd's contemporaries, George Peele and Christopher Marlowe. By studying these two dramatists' treatment of female characters in the context of the social-historical attitudes towards women examined in Chapter One, this chapter establishes that, even in other tragedies of the time, writers did not share Kyd's unconventionality, and their works provide a standard against which to measure Kyd's achievement in his portrayal of Bel-imperia. Peele's The Battle of Alcazar was written at almost the same time as The Spanish Tragedy⁵ and shares much of its concern with revenge and justice. But Peele clearly believes women to be of little importance to his tragedy, and he introduces them only as stock figures in a male-centred play. Marlowe's female characters in Dido Queen of Carthage and Edward II resemble Kyd's Bel-imperia, and this serves to underline the contrasting way in which the two playwrights handle their characterizations. While both Dido and Isabella have the potential to be strong, passionate, and socially disruptive women, Marlowe's dramatic conception of them is governed by conventional

stereotypes. When either Dido or Isabella behave in a weak and dependent fashion Marlowe portrays them positively; when they flout approved standards of behaviour, he makes them appear ridiculous or monstrously inhuman.

Chapter Three sets Kyd's portrayal of Bel-imperia against the social historical and literary framework provided by the first two chapters and argues that it constitutes a challenge to some of the most cherished and widely held beliefs of his time. Whereas a woman's virtue and honour were considered synonymous with her chastity and Renaissance writers dwelt ominously on the destructive potential of women's uncontrolled passions, Kyd depicts, without censure and considerable sympathy, a female character who is sexually unrestrained, who both uses her beauty to manipulate the men around her and enjoys sexual intimacy purely for its own sake. As well as making Bel-imperia unchaste, Kyd gives her traditionally "masculine" traits such as strength of will, intelligence, and a clear-headed decisiveness. While most Renaissance writers would condemn these attributes as monstrously unnatural in a woman, Kyd depicts her using them to challenge the corrupt, self-interested authority represented by Lorenzo and Balthazar.

This chapter also examines Kyd's satirization of typical Renaissance stereotypes of women and looks at the way he challenges the roles imposed on women by society. By having Castile, Lorenzo, and Balthazar insist on seeing and dealing with Bel-imperia in a conventional fashion while simultaneously showing that, in intelligence and ruthlessness, she is more than a match for them,

Kyd undercuts their limited views of women and ridicules their perception of her as a weak, easily manipulated, passive woman. At the same time, Kyd creates a female character whose unconventionality reflects a struggle to retain her self-identity and independence, and he makes her constant defiance of the three men's expectations stand as her attempts to define herself in a world where women had little authority or power.

Notes to Introduction

1. In "Ironies of Justice in The Spanish Tragedy," G. K. Hunter argues that the play is not centrally concerned with the "enactment of revenge" but with looking at the theme of justice (92), and he observes "Andrea was returned to earth by the just gods, to witness a parable of perfect recompense" (97). In his interpretation, the characters are little more than puppets acting out the gods' justice (93), and he sees Hieronimo as the mere instrument of divine justice, a man who carries out the gods' justice without understanding what he is doing (97-98).

Michael Levin adopts a slightly less extreme position in his essay "'Vindicta Mihi!': Meaning, Morality, and Motivation in The Spanish Tragedy." While he feels that Revenge represents the overriding scheme of the gods' divine justice, he argues that Hieronimo and Bel-imperia must become almost as bad as Lorenzo and Balthazar to obtain justice. This leads to their death on one hand, as they are punished for murder, and their reward in the after-world on the other (321-322).

2. In Thomas Kyd, Peter Murray claims the play is formed around a series of parallel events which reveal that the reason man behaves inhumanly is because he is unable to see others as forms of himself and is unable to realise that, just as he controls those beneath him, he is being manipulated by forces above him. The audience, however, views the whole picture and sees how all of the characters, including Revenge, are limited in their outlook. This awareness then leads us to realise how Hieronimo deludes himself by

imagining his revenge to be justified.

3. For this purpose, Philip Edwards argues, Kyd creates a neutrally pagan, make-believe world that is carefully detached from the audience's real world, a situation which allows audiences to sympathize with Hieronimo while remaining removed from his methods. The distance afforded by this artificial world allows Kyd to depict the strong emotional pull of vengeance, how the "hate of a wronged man... speak[s] out without check of mercy or reason," while staying removed from conventional Christian morality (lii). The only problem with Edwards' interpretation is that it does not explain the references in the play to the divine justice of God. His explanation, that the remarks are occasional slip-ups on Kyd's part similar to his geographical and historical lapses, is unconvincing, particularly since Freeman argues with a great deal of plausibility that most of Kyd's much derided mistakes are really not errors at all.

4. In his work English Renaissance Tragedy, T. McAlindon argues that the doctrine of polarity--the opposing opposites--is as significant in an analysis of Elizabethan drama as the traditional emphasis on hierarchy, and he uses this Greek philosophy, which was known to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, to interpret The Spanish Tragedy. The tragic reality of the play, he says, is "the sudden eruption of the forces of strife, hatred, and violence precisely when least expected, and their triumph over the forces of concord, love, and peace. Bonds are mocked and shattered....A golden, middle way is lost" (55).

5. "The Battle of Alcazar," notes Bullen in his introduction to The Life and Works of George Peele, "was published anonymously in 1594" (xxxvi) and recorded in Henslowe's diary (under such varying names as "mula mullocco" and "mulo mullocco") as first playing on February 29, 1591-2 (xxxvii).

Philip Edwards and Arthur Freeman discuss the dating of The Spanish Tragedy at some length. While Edwards feels that it was written after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, in the early 1590's, and Freeman thinks that it was pre-Armada (c.1586-7), both critics fix the date of composition somewhere between 1586-1592 (Edwards, The Spanish Tragedy xxi-xxvii; Freeman 71-79), with the earliest possible (but extremely unlikely) date placed at 1582.

Chapter One

The Social Context of The Spanish Tragedy:

Proper female up-bringing and conduct in the Renaissance

In order to gain the most useful and accurate backdrop against which to evaluate Kyd's *Bel-imperia*, this chapter will examine Renaissance literature which deals with the training and marriage of young women. The intention of the chapter is not, however, to take a detailed look at all of the literature of the time, but rather to attempt a general survey of the most influential and popular instructional works published in the Elizabethan period, with particular focus on the guidebooks published around the time Kyd was writing for the theatre. While the guides and authors chosen for this study may seem unconnected and disparate, each work helps to build a picture of the accepted behaviour and morals for young women of late Elizabethan society and contains aspects which add to an appreciation and understanding of Kyd's portrayal of *Bel-imperia*.

Joannes Vives stands as a nearly ideal writer for this purpose. He writes in great detail about the upbringing of young girls, he is a notable Renaissance humanist, and his The Instruction of A Christen Woman was phenomenally popular, with thirty-six English and continental editions in six modern languages (Wayne 15)¹ and two editions published in the decade during which Kyd was writing.

Heinrich Bullinger's The Christian State of Matrimony (first translated and printed in England in 1541) contains a section on the up-bringing of girls and was as frequently published as Vives.² The section dealing with women in Baldesar Castiglione's popular The Book of the Courtier is mainly devoted to an often rhetorical defence of the sex, but there are parts in the book which set out the deportment and education expected of young women. Thomas Salter's 1579 The Mirrhor of Modestie, a translation of the Italian humanist Gian Bruto's guide to raising girls, and Thomas Bentley's The Monument of Matrones (1582), an immense compilation of biblical quotes establishing the appropriate womanly behaviour and prayers for all important occasions, were less popular with Elizabethans, but they are roughly contemporary with Kyd and provide valuable insight into acceptable female behaviour. Equally important, Bullinger's marriage guide, along with Vives' section on the duties of a married woman, the anonymous A Godly Glass of the Duties in Maryage (1579), and the unidentified I. R.'s A Discourse of the Worthinesse of Honourable Wedlock (1579) establish the traditional relationship between husband and wife and father and daughter and suggest contemporary attitudes towards love and sexuality. Finally, the books by Renaissance humanists which deal specifically with women's education--Richard Mulcaster's Positions (1581), Sir Thomas Elyot's The Defence of Good Women (1540), and Vives' The Duty of Husbands (translated into English in 1550)--taken along with the more general works, illuminate attitudes towards women who are, like Kyd's Bel-imperia, learned, intelligent, and articulate.

While the controversy literature of the sixteenth century might seem an ideal source of conventional attitudes towards women, these polemical works are far less helpful than the instructional guides. They concentrate on the characteristics of women, disputing, often violently, the virtues and vices of the female sex and introducing endless biblical and classical examples to illustrate their points.³ The literary debate proves useful in suggesting a pithy list of adjectives with which to describe the "good" and the "bad" woman but provides little information about the way a girl was expected to behave. At the same time, it is uncertain to what degree the controversy literature captures "real" values. In Women and the English Renaissance, Linda Woodbridge argues that the formal controversy works were little more than "a literary game" which did not reflect contemporary attitudes, and she points out that writers such as Gosynhill felt comfortable taking both sides of the debate (6). The defences, she claims, came first, a fact which suggests that they are not sincere answers to attacks on women but mere "exercises in a literary genre" (24).

Whether one agrees with Woodbridge's claims or not,⁴ for my purpose the instructional guides have a pronounced advantage over the controversy literature. Works by Vives, Bullinger, and Bruto not only offer the same insight into conventional attitudes towards women provided by the controversy literature, but they also establish the type of behaviour expected from a young Elizabethan woman and give concrete examples and advice on how to suppress undesirable female traits. Instead of just providing a long list

of good women and good virtues, countered by another list of bad women (Woodbridge 38, 133), the instructional literature illustrates the accepted and standard treatment of women and depicts the way girls should be watched over, how they should behave with men, and how they should act towards their fathers and brothers. This genre of literature deals directly with the type of situations which arise in The Spanish Tragedy.

The main problem with using these instructional works to establish a social-historical background against which to set Bel-imperia is that it is difficult to determine the extent to which the guides truly reflect reality. Since Vives violently criticizes girls who marry without parental approval, who dance and socialize all night long (to the grievous neglect of religious duties the next morning), and who wear indecently revealing dresses and kiss at every polite introduction, he must have seen these examples of indecorous behaviour with, presumably, all too much frequency. Miles Coverdale's preface to his translation of The Christen State of Matrimony presents much the same difficulty. He has rushed to translate Bullinger's work, he tells his readers, in a desperate attempt to remedy the adultery, "whoredom," and other social evils he imagined he saw mushrooming up around him. Like Vives, his work sets up certain ideals as the standard for behaviour, while suggesting that the actual situation is quite the opposite. Compounding the problem, both writers are extremely conservative, and this makes it impossible to tell if they are over-reacting. Their denunciations of moral degeneracy might be an accurate

reflection of reality or nothing more than the exaggerated horror of men who see a few people misbehave and think that their whole society is in a state of collapse.

But, while this might make it difficult to decide how accurately works like Vives' represent the actual situation, it does not seriously damage my own use of the literature. These guides set out moral standards which, while perhaps not scrupulously followed by the audience they were intended for, were nonetheless accepted by society as its proper guidelines. They might have proposed behaviour more ideal than actual, but the fact that Vives' and Bullinger's guides were so popular, that no one ever challenged them, and that there was almost complete agreement between the instructional writers suggests that their works depict things the way the Elizabethans believed they should be. At the same time, my purpose is to see how women are portrayed in instructional literature in order to contrast it with Kyd's characterization of Bel-imperia. This study will give a picture of how virtuous and non-virtuous women were believed to behave, and so even if Kyd drew his inspiration for Bel-imperia from the many strong, independent women he might have seen around him, it will not diminish his achievement in challenging the conventional and accepted wisdom of the instructional literature.

Further, the use of four fictional romances, John Lyly's Euphues (1579) and Robert Greene's Penelope's Web (1587), Mamillia (1583), and Mamillia: The Second Part of the Triumph of Pallas (1593) allows me to see whether the behaviour considered proper for young women

in instructional literature carries over into prose works contemporaneous with Kyd. These romances, while deepening my picture of traditional attitudes towards women, also reveal the degree of influence the instructional literature had on more popular works and demonstrates the universality of the standard of behaviour described by Vives.

The three principle virtues to be inculcated in women through strict training are neatly summed up in Greene's preface to Penelope's Web: "three especiall vertues, necessary to be incident in every vertuous woman [are]...Obedience, Chastitie and Sylence" (5:139).⁵ In light of Bel-imperia's licentiousness, it is impossible to stress too strongly the value Renaissance writers place on sexual restraint. Chastity not only defines a woman's honour, it is her only possession of any value and her only real claim to nobility. Since men must possess many different positive traits, writes Vives, they can lack a few virtues such as chastity, intelligence or eloquence and still be considered good. But in a woman, he observes:

...no man will looke for eloquence, great witte, or
prudence, or craft to live by...or justice, or
liberalitie: Finally no man will looke for any other
thing of a Woman, but her honestye, the which onely,
if it be lacked, is like as in a man, if hee lack all
that he should have. For in a Woman the honestie is in
stead of all. (55-56)⁶

The Renaissance instructional writers' constant stress on chastity acts as a powerful means of social conditioning. They emphasize how a woman who relinquishes her honesty commits the supreme crime against herself, and they continually stress how the loss of her virginity outside marriage should devastate the girl. Unchasteness not only makes her unattractive to any man but it should bring complete self-hatred; the writers present a bleak picture of a woman now worthless to herself as well as to the world. Designed to frighten women into behaving, their words serve to put a heavy burden of guilt and self-loathing on any woman who breaks these accepted standards.

The prayers in Bentley's "The Fift Lampe of Virginitie" give a vivid portrayal of how one Renaissance writer believes a fornicating or adulterous woman should feel, how the magnitude of her crime should all but strike her dead with despair and guilt. He begins the lamentation with a depiction of her internal torture, "In the bitter affliction, griefe of minde, and torment of conscience, I go about to speake unto him that sitteth upon the tribunal seat, accompanied with the Saints in heaven" (13). He indicates how the girl sees herself as animal-like in her sin, "bewaile mee that am transformed into a dog, a sow, and filthie goate" ("Fift Lampe" 24). Mired in the depths of self-hatred, she feels that there is no help or relief possible to her:

Everie creature sorroweth at my case....There is no
sorrowe comparable to my sorrowe; there is no affliction

that exceedeth my affliction...neither is there sinne
greater than my sinne, and there is no salve for me.

(Bentley, "Fift Lampe" 15)

There are three pages of this self-abasement, as well as six more full lamentations mourning the loss of her honesty.⁷ The excessive melodrama of the language might make it easy to write Bentley off as an exaggerating religious zealot if Vives did not portray the unchaste girl's misery and her psychological state in the same terms. Her life will become black and sorrowful and, tortured by her conscience, she will imagine that everyone knows of her wickedness. All the world will mourn and reflect her fallen state and there will be no place to find comfort: "Turne her which waye she will, she shall finde all thinges sorowfull and heavie, wayling, and mourning, angrie and displeaserful" (Vives 66).⁸

Increasing her burden of guilt and shame, Renaissance writers emphasize how the unchaste woman commits a crime not just against herself but against God. The extreme religious weight that they place on a woman's honesty entrenches their standards even more deeply in Elizabethan society and the individual woman's conscience. In one of the unchaste woman's laments, Bentley paints a frightening scene of what she anticipates awaiting her in hell, a scene which suggests both the value he places on chastity and the terror he hopes to inspire in female readers:

O ye hellish haggas, frieng with heate, and frowning with
furie; why are yee so cruell to those that lie howling
amongst you?...are these, O my God, the torments which

are prepared for filthie fornicators and contemners of thy commandements; of which I am one, yea the cheef of all sinners? ("Fift Lampe" 30)

Vives is no less unequivocal in his portrayal of the way the unchaste insult God, and he maintains that impure women defile the church with their presence. He bridles with outrage at the thought of them bearing the names of the saints, crying, "Darest thou [thou ungratious woman!] name thy selfe by any of those names [of female saints renowned for their chastity], and make thy selfe in name like unto them, to whom thou art so unlyke in condicions, and a verie deadly enemy?" (105-6), and his overwrought anger culminates with a denunciation of the impertinence of dishonest women who dare to have the name of Mary.

While Bentley sees an unmarried woman's loss of virginity as doing the greatest harm to the girl herself and to God, Vives views her as an insult and an offense to anyone who has to come into contact with her. It is not an exaggeration to say that his The Instruction of a Christen Woman suggests that an unchaste woman casts a blight on the world. Everyone will shun and curse "the ungratious young woman" (Vives 52), and she will become, he predicts, an outcast, a pariah, in her society:

What mocking and babbling of those maydens, that envied her before? What a loathing and abhorring of those that loved her, what fliying of her company and desertnes,

when every mother will keepe not onely their daughters,
but also theyr sonnes from the infection of suche an
unthrifitie maid. (52)

Even her lover who seduced her is, in Vives' mind, entitled to judge her and, angrily throwing "the abhominable deede in her teeth" (52), to renounce her.

Moreover, for Vives the unchaste woman dishonours not just herself, God, and her society, she also brings disgrace to her entire family and slights the family honour, giving her father or her brother a just right to take revenge. He comments first on how her misbehaviour reflects badly on her parents' up-bringing and shows her to be ungrateful and selfish in her lack of regard for anyone's feelings but her own:

What sorowe will her kinsfolkes make, when everyone shall
thinke them selves dishonested by one shame of that
Mayde? What mourning, what teares, what weeping of the
Father and Mother and bringers up? Doest thou quite them
with this pleasure for so much care and labour? (66)

He then holds up a long list of fathers who, justifiably outraged, killed their unchaste daughters. He speaks with approving satisfaction of the ingenuity of one man who shut his erring daughter up in a stable to be torn apart and eaten by a starving, wild horse (52-3), and he recounts the revenge two brothers took on their pregnant sister. When they discovered her sin, they managed to hide their anger, and then, after she had her child, "thrust swoordes into her bellie, and slewe her, the mid-wyfe looking on"

(Vives 53). The most remarkable thing about Vives' account is the tone of approval; in his mind, the crime lies not with the brutality of the men, but with the women who are so unclean and so disloyal to their family as to have a child out of wedlock. Bentley's female speaker beseeches God to forgive her horrible sin, but for Vives unchasteness places the transgressors beyond the pale and leaves them undeserving of Christian kindness or compassion. They have no place in society except as examples designed to frighten other women into good behaviour.

Only Baldesar Castiglione offers genuine sympathy for an unchaste girl, and he does so within a conventional framework. His pity is not for the woman who actively chooses to take a lover but the naive and credulous maiden who is fooled by "false flattery, pretended tears, constant entreaties...ruses, trickery and perjuries" (245) into relinquishing her honesty. Moreover, he does not challenge the idea that steadfast chastity is the ideal virtue in a woman. Significantly, the women held up by Castiglione for approval are ones who have submitted to male authority and preserved their chastity at great cost to themselves. When Cesare tells his audience of the young woman whose cruel father forces her to give up the man she loves to marry "another and richer man" (246), he reinforces, in a more positive way, the values of Vives. The young girl is so highly praised because she follows, without complaint, the unjust will of her father and then refuses to challenge the authority of her husband by taking a lover. Her father's unreasonable cruelty, far from leading Castiglione to

believe that she should have defied him, makes the girl's meek submission to the man's commands that much more praise-worthy.

The instructions on the upbringing and raising of young girls reveal even more clearly the extreme importance writers place on a woman's sexual restraint and show how a girl is trained, almost before she can think, to be a chaste, modest lady. Her whole upbringing is devoted to preservation of her chastity and everything else, her dress, her demeanour, her behaviour, her speech are considered only as they will most effectively promote this end. Practically from the day she is born, Vives advises the parents to watch closely to ensure that their daughter stays clean in mind. As a toddler, she must play only with little maids, lest she learn to "delite among men" (Vives 5), while as a child it is imperative that she "learne none uncleanly wordes, or wanton, or uncomely gesture and mooving of the body" (Vives 6-7), no matter how innocent, since childhood behaviour carries over into adulthood. Moreover, the parents must take care not to arouse undesirable passion in the girl by kissing her: "Let the father and mother take good heede that they...neither kisse and embrace her therefore, which is the fowlest deede of all" (Vives 7).

When the girl grows older, Vives advises even more care. He perceives both men and women's sexuality as frightening and uncontrollable, a force that will run wild if given even the slightest opportunity, and he expects women to eliminate passionate love between the sexes by eliminating all traces of physical feeling. Since it is natural for women to desire at least some men

"and shee be not a stone" (Vives 128), she should avoid all situations, including going outside, where she might meet men. When talking in company, she should be careful to "shew great sobernes, both in countenance and al the gesture of her body" (Vives 114). If a young man and woman speak together privately, he warns, their speech, far from being of "Christ and the virgin," will invariably revolve around sex: "[they] shall be compelled to talke of their heat" (117), and she should particularly avoid feasts and banquets and the dances where she may see "so manye mens bodies" (Vives 135).⁹ Even when she becomes engaged, she must take care not to seem too excited for this would appear as though she were eager for the pleasures of wedlock and might be perceived by her husband as a reflection of dubious morals. She should seem reluctant and unhappy that she is about to be married so that everyone may be assured of her demureness and know of her extreme misery at the thought of the approaching loss of her virginity.

Both Vives' and Gian Bruto's worries about women's behaviour are based on their conviction that a woman is ruled more by her passions than her reason, which is, as Vives points out numerous times, frail and weak. So they both see a need to restrain the girl's nature from the beginning and both have a deep suspicion of what she will do if given any freedom to choose her own course. They have to be protected from themselves through constant supervision so that they have no chance to make a mistake. While an affectionate parent can be a disaster for a child of either sex, says Vives, it is particularly bad for girls, giving "them an

unbridled liberty unto infinite vices" (9), and he warns that maidens are held in check only by fear, "which if it lacke, then hath shee all the bridle of nature at large, and runneth headlong into mischeefee...and commeth not lightly to any goodnesse" (9). This emphasis on fear both underscores Vives' belief in the weak nature of women--it is the only way to keep them virtuous--and justifies various brutal means of keeping the girl under control, suggesting, as it does, how methods of intimidation and harsh suppression are the most appropriate way of dealing with and forestalling disobedience.

Gian Bruto is equally firm about the strict government a girl needs in order to grow up virtuous. She is, he claims, like a plant or horse. Without guidance, "continuall care and diligence" (Bruto Sig. A[vii]), plants will run wild and the horse "Likewise...by default of well teachyng and trainyng up, will lose a great parte of his gallant majestie, whereto naturally he is inclined" (Bruto Sig. A[vii]). As well as stressing the need for constant supervision, Bruto puts similar stress on carefully nurturing virtue, which he, of course, equates with chastity. His wise and prudent matron's sole care should be cultivating the good in her young charge and hastening to prop up weak and tremulous virtue. She should test the girl's desire for chastity, telling her, "how goodly a beautie and gallant ornament chastitie is in a young Maiden" (Bruto Sig. Bii) and then carefully watching her reaction. If the maid seems unimpressed, the matron should quickly set the propaganda mills grinding and begin to discourse on "the

lives of some renowned Ladies, who lived vertuously, and thereby purchased immortall fame and renowme" (Bruto Sig. Bii). As with Vives, there is constant conditioning to train the girl to behave in a quiet, meek, chaste fashion, and her whole upbringing is devoted to producing the character type who will do as she is told and never question the plans others make for her.

Since these instructional writers believed that women must be scrupulously protected from themselves, they place extreme restrictions on her freedom. Vives advises parents to make sure that their daughter never goes outside, except to church, an excursion which he treats as a grim necessity which cannot be decently avoided. If the mother goes to feasts, marriages or "meetinges of men," she should be sure to leave her daughter at home, in the care of a trusty woman who has no sons or brothers and of whom the maid is afraid (Vives 90-91). If the young woman does have to go out, she must prepare as for a battle and be properly and sedately covered, for all around her will be conspiring to make her lose her honesty (Vives 110). The girl has no freedom to walk where she pleases or see whom she wants, and even her maiden friends are carefully hand-picked. Vives turns with angry vehemence on any who would protest against this lack of freedom, scornfully condemning as "proud fooles...that desire to see and to be seene" those who ask, "why then...shoulde we never walke out of our owne doores? Shoulde we ever lye at home as though we were in prison?" (109-10).¹⁰

While Castiglione says nothing about restraining the girl, his

words give a picture of the many temptations that constantly assail her as her lover presses her to relinquish her virginity. Cesare observes:

Hardly a day or an hour passes but that the girl being pursued is urged by her lover with money and gifts....At no time can she even go to her window without seeing her obstinate lover pass by....If ever she leaves her home to go to church or elsewhere, he is always there to meet her. (Castiglione 253)

He presents a society composed of men who insist that women preserve their chastity while, at the same time, they do their best to seduce these women. Vives then provides what he considers a solution to this problem: complete seclusion so that the young woman will have no chance to give into the constant "inducements of [usually treacherous] lovers" (Castiglione 253).

To ensure that the girl will turn out well, Bruto, like Vives, advises shielding her from any possible corrupting influence. His words build up a sense of the maiden's utter confinement and complete lack of freedom or privacy; she is rigorously watched over and judged every second of the day. He will not be so strict, "after the maner of some" (Sig. Biii v), as to forbid her from associating with anyone, but a constant care has to be taken to screen her companions. Some youthful friends might be undesirable influences and hide corrupt and wicked morals under a nice manner, and the matron must take particular care to keep her away from "kitchen Servauntes, or such idle housewives" (Bruto Sig. Biv) who

will be trying to insinuate their way into the innocent maiden's good graces. It is best if her company is restricted so that she lives "in the companie moste commonlie of one onely" (Bruto Sig. Dii). Like Vives, he will also have her stay away from feasts and carefully avoid music, which he sees as leading to sensuality, "a swete baite, to a sowre and sharpe evill" (Sig. C[vi]). Besides studiously reading virtuous books, her only pastime is to spin and do needlework and her only exercise to walk about in a presumably enclosed and secluded garden: "Let her leave the haunt of feastes and banketes and companie of light huswives, and only settle her minde to take recreation and pleasure in walking the Gardens and pleasaunt Orchardes at convenient tyme and dewe leisure" (Bruto, Sig. D[vi]).

But more than either Bruto or Vives, Bullinger captures the restrictions placed on a woman's freedom in one brief sentence. In his description of how a girl should be treated, he writes, "Neither would I have them ever shut up as it were in a Cage, never to speake nor to come forth, but some tymes to see the good fashions and honest behaviour of others" (Bullinger, Sig. M[vi] v).¹¹ It is the casualness of his tone that evokes a powerful sense of the woman's complete lack of autonomy. It is as though he were discussing beasts not humans, pointing out that it is good to let them out "some tymes" to exercise.

Linked to and underlying the restrictions instructional writers place on young women's freedom runs their belief that a woman's sexuality was the property and responsibility of the men in her

family. Correspondingly they insist on her complete obedience to fathers or brothers. Vives' approving picture of the girl being stabbed by her brothers vividly underlines how she has no degree of independence from her family and suggests how she is seen primarily in terms of the effect she has on her family's honour. The power Vives delegates to the father in arranging his daughter's marriage further indicates both how he believed a woman should suppress all sexual feeling and how he envisioned her sexuality as being controlled by her father. The girl should see no one of whom her father does not specifically approve: "the maid [shall] let noe man in to the house at home, but whome her father by special words commaundeth to be let in" (Vives 95). When it comes time for a girl to marry, her father must choose her husband, for she would inevitably let her passion rule her judgement and make a foolish decision:

Women set all upon pleasures, and volupties, wantonnes
and follie, thinke no man wise but those that can
well convey suche matters....So theyr discretion is
blinded so sore, that they love, esteeme and set by
fooles...and abhorre them that be wise in deede.

(Vives 160)

Just as seriously, she must be protected from the licentious and impure thoughts that might soil her mind since only "drabbes and harlottes" (Vives 171) love their husbands before they are wed. While Vives feels marriages should not be compelled, he refers only to the compulsion of men since every husband must "desire her [his

wife] with all his hart" (173). He does not have any sympathy for a daughter being forced into an undesirable or unwanted match. Since Vives' woman is expected to be utterly passive and to place her sexual feelings at the disposal of the dominant male figure in her life, her love is an emotion which can be turned on like a light switch. With marriage and the establishment of the holy bond between them, love will automatically come, and it will be the correct kind of love too, love based not on passion but on the knowledge that they are joined together by God.¹²

Bentley's Monument of Matrones is no less forceful when it comes to reiterating how a girl should unquestioningly obey her father, particularly in regard to the issue of marriage. In a broad sense, he believes that girls should obey their father no matter how unpleasant his commands might be, since his words are God's will working through him. Discussing a daughter's duties to her parents, Bentley dwells nostalgically on the rigorous morality of biblical days when the rule was that "Shee that curseth her father or mother, shall bee put to death for it" ("Sixt Lampe" 38). In the more narrow context of the girl's sexuality, he is equally strict. He cites with ghoulish approval the Lord's command that the daughter "which looseth hir virginitie, and plaieth the harlot in hir fathers house, should be stoned to death" ("Fift Lampe" 37), and he states that she should wait for her parents to arrange her marriage, eschewing "all whisperings, close communication, sinister practises, and privie contracts...as a thing most ungodlie" ("Fift Lampe" 38).

Even the Protestant idealization of family and marriage, Lawrence Stone argues in his work The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800, did not give women of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries more freedom from the authority of their fathers. While it led to a condemnation of the practise of selling children like animals (Stone 190), it also resulted in a corresponding strengthening of patriarchal authority over wives and children (Stone 151). Puritan preachers, then, stressed the need for affection between the couple, while simultaneously insisting on the necessity of the child's complete obedience to the parents (Stone 137).¹³ This conflict between the parent's authority and the child's right to choose a compatible spouse is evident in Bullinger. He follows Vives's belief that children need their wise and experienced parents to control them and see that their passions do not rule them in the choice of a spouse (Sig. B[vi]), and he states bluntly that the direction of the marriage lies with the parents, not the children (Sig. B[vii] v). But he also speaks out strongly against forced marriages arranged purely for gain, and he feels that the child has the right to resist such an ungodly union (Sig. Diii v). However, he offers no practical support and does not suggest active defiance, consigning the children to the eventual justice of God: "In such a case verely ought not the higher powers to suffer that such unreasonable Parents as feare not God, should have their wyls" (Sig. Diii v).

And even though Bullinger allows the woman the right to reject her proposed husband, his underlying attitude is remarkably similar

to Vives and Bentley, for he still perceives the woman as little more than a bartered object, taken up if she meets the prospective husband's requirements. When he cites the biblical example of Rebecca as the ideal way to locate and choose a wife, the betrothal is arranged through the direction of God and all male relatives, with the girl's feelings pushed noticeably into the background. After praying for assistance from God, Abraham's servant finds the ideal wife for his master's son ("gentle, serviceable, lowly, given to labour, quick in her busines, loving towards straungers...nor a hygh minded or dainty beast, but honest and handsome" [Bullinger Sig. Hi]), and determines, by her modest, respectful and helpful behaviour that she would make a suitable wife. The marriage is then agreed upon by Abraham's servant, Rebecca's father and her brother, and Bullinger tacks on the girl's approval as a belated, one sentence afterthought, "The damsell also is enquired what her will is, she consenteth and therwith is the mariage concluded" (Sig. Hiii). Since the girl is properly brought up and trained to be meekly submissive, her consent is nothing more than a brief formality. There is never any worry or doubt that the girl might decide to do as she wants, not what her father, brother, and God deem appropriate.

Once wed, the young woman is expected to transfer her loyalty and obedience from her father to her husband, and marriage acts as a form of control and restriction as rigid and unyielding as her parents' earlier supervision. It hardly matters whether the sanctification of marriage improves her position or not, since the

marriage guides, even while they idealize marriage, emphasize how the woman should devote all her energy to subordinating her will to the authority and direction of her husband.¹⁴ Bullinger extols the happiness that can be found between man and wife, thinks that affection between the couple before wedlock can be a good thing, and unlike Vives, who accepts the double standard of behaviour, spends lengthy chapters criticizing the men who defile God and themselves by having sex outside marriage. But when Wright claims that Bullinger, "In tones almost modern...insists upon forbearance and mutual sympathy as the basis for a successful marriage" (204), he overlooks the fact that what Bullinger truly insists on is that women yield to their husbands in everything, while their husbands try to be patient with their wives' weak silliness. He characterizes woman as created for man by a thoughtful and considerate God, just one more amenity a little more intelligent than the birds and the beasts. He does not question the assumption that woman is beneath man, of necessity needing governance from her superior: "Yet was she not made of the heade [but the rib]: for the husband is the head and Maister of the wyfe" (Sig. Aiiii v).

Likewise, the unidentified author of A Godly Glass of the Duties in Maryage praises marriage, idealizing the love and loyalty between the married couple and preaching the necessity for kindness and gentleness to one's wife, "God hath made the men stronger than the women, not to rage upon them and to be tirauntes unto them, but to helpe them and beare their weaknesse" (80). But the woman is still cast into the role of passive inferior, letting her husband

see to and control all her affairs, "By all this may you geather and learne that the man is the head, governour, ruler, and instructor (with gentil wordes and good example), the provyder, defender, and whole ccmforte of the woman" (81). The writer's constant use of St. Paul's analogy of the husband being to the wife what Christ is to his congregation underlines the vast gulf between their positions and makes it easy to see why Stone believes that the idealization of marriage did little to actually improve women's status. To imagine that the woman becomes almost the equal of man within marriage, one needs to gloss over and ignore the perpetual harping on woman's inferiority and the insistence that she be completely obedient to her husband. It is also necessary to overlook the particularly important fact recorded by Stone that the Homily of Marriage, which emphasizes the weakness, inferiority, and frailty of the wife, was the eighteenth homily of the many sermons that were required reading for all parsons from 1562 on (Stone 198).

Renaissance instructional writers' constant stress on the importance of silence is the final aspect of the restraint and passivity they urge upon women. Their emphasis on silence, like their similar emphasis on chastity and obedience, reflects the way women were taught to suppress all strong feelings, emotions, and thoughts and illustrates how the Renaissance discouraged women from any kind of self-expression or assertion. Of all the popular courtesy writers in this study, only Castiglione does not dwell obsessively on the necessity of silence in a woman. His palace

lady is supposed to be witty and eloquent, always able to return a neat answer to a gibe or make a clever remark herself. But even in The Book of the Courtier, Castiglione shows himself limited by the conventions of the time and depicts a woman who is eloquent, but, like Vives' properly brought-up girl, passively so. Lady Emilia directs the conversation and makes a few clever remarks to the misogynist Gaspare Pallavicino, but she never takes an active role in the dispute. It is left to Giuliano de Medici to describe the ideal court lady and to defend womankind against her slanderers, while Emilia stays modestly silent. While it is acceptable for her to be verbally decorative, it is certainly not her place to get involved in one of the arguments or to actively challenge the male speakers, and her role remains the traditional one of mediating and smoothing out hostilities when the argument threatens to become hostile.

Stereotypically, Renaissance women are condemned for being too talkative and for being shrill and shrewish. In Elyot's The Defence of Good Women, Caninius makes the age-old complaint about women's disagreeable habits of nagging, "her propertie is to delyte in rebukyng and to be alway complainyng, and never contented" (Sig. Biii v), and Elyot refutes this charge by showing how women can, indeed, be silent. He does not, however, show a woman challenging male assumptions or arguing with them for this is immediately seen, even by a supporter of women, to be inappropriate behaviour. Bold, challenging speech is wrong and unseemly, Vives makes clear: "moderate and litile speech shall become her, and not shrille, nor

presumptuous or signe of a mans stomacke" (124). His words suggest how lack of silence in a woman leads her to usurp the male role and to challenge traditional authority.

The Renaissance courtesy writers' insistence on the need for women to remain silent and to refrain from any kind of disputatious expression becomes particularly marked when one considers the humanist debate over whether women should be educated or not and the related issue of the limitations most liberal humanists placed on women's learning.¹⁵ Vives scoffs at men who claim education will only make women more evil and deceitful, and he declares, "The woman, even as man, is a reasonable creature and hath a flexible wit both to good and evil" (Vives, Duty of Husbands 198). Educating women will help them resist temptations, not make them more prone to them. Mulcaster, headmaster of the school Kyd attended as a boy, goes even further than Vives and presents a long liberal argument as to why women should be educated. Besides pointing out that it is the custom of England to allow women to learn to read and write, he claims that women deserve education to nurture their powers of reason and that it is man's duty not to leave them ignorant. He argues, "If nature...[choose] to beautify them with most singular ornaments [reason], are not we to be condemned of extreme unnaturalness if we gay [embellish] not that by discipline, which is given them by nature?" (129).

But while these words represent an advance over past attitudes and stand as a welcome contrast to Bruto's condemnation of education in women, learning does not change women's position nor

does it change the way in which they are perceived. As Janis Holm points out, the purposes and objectives of male learning were far different from those for female learning, which were "remarkably consistent with traditional expectations of women's lives" (198). Vives argues persuasively for the education of women, but he places severe limitations on the purposes to which a woman may put her learning and dwells continually on the need for them to maintain silence. It is most unfit for women to strive for eloquence, he states, for it would be horrible if silence, "her most fairest virtue[,] should seem to be deforme and filthy" (Duty of Husbands 207). Further, he makes it clear that while women are to be educated, it is for their silent satisfaction alone, and they are not to be so undignified as to use their learning to venture an opinion of their own:

For it neither becommeth a Woman to rule a Schoole, nor to live amonge men, or speake abroad, and shake off her demurenesse and honesty,...which if shee be good, it were better to be at home within and unknown to other folkes, and in company to hold her tongue demurely, and let few see her, and none at all heare her. (29)

Bullinger takes an almost identical line to Vives. Girls should be instructed in Christian learning at home, learning quietly and meekly with no disputation, "yet shall they not be to busy in teaching and reasoning openly, but ther to use scilence, and to learne at home, openly to heare, and at home let them reason and teach eche other" (Bullinger, Sig. M[vi] r-v). Bruto, who frowns

on all education for women, is particularly suspicious of the contentious self-assertiveness which might arise from classical learning. He singles out for especiall censure fathers who allow daughters to study moral and natural philosophy (Sig. B[vi]) and denounces the women of classical times who had the temerity to openly dispute with men.¹⁶ Only a very foolish parent, he comments darkly, would allow his daughter to be a "bolde disputer" (Sig. B[viii]).

Particularly revealing of Renaissance attitudes towards women are the purposes the humanists see in educating them. While Valerie Wayne claims to be defending Vives from recent feminist attacks, she cynically points out that for Vives reading is linked with the mindless pastimes of weaving and the spinning of wool and flax (20). Advising women to "read, not think" (Kaufman 895), the humanists see learning as just one more way of keeping female minds occupied and out of trouble, "an agent of control more than enlightenment" (Wayne 20), and discourage women from self-expression (Lamb 124). Equally importantly, the humanists claim that education will make women more pleasant and congenial to their husbands. Learning, pronounces Vives, will teach a maiden to "know how she ought to love and honour her husband, whom she should take as a divine and holy thing, and obey his will as the law of God" (Duty of Husbands 202). Similarly Elyot sees education as a means of heightening women's abilities to serve. Just as training a horse the complicated steps of dressage makes it more prized, so learning teaches women how they might be of "assistance and comfort

to man through their fidelitie, which other bestes are not, except thei be by the force of manne therto constrayned" (Elyot Sig. Dii v). Zenobia, Elyot reveals, shows herself to be an suitably meek student and her learning in Greek, Latin, and Egyptian gives her the ideal virtue of total devotion to her husband: "I was never herd or sene, saie or do any thyng, which mought not contente hym, or omyte any thyng, which shulde delite hym, suche circumspection good lernynge mynystred unto me" (Elyot Sig. Div).

In fact, one could argue, as feminists have, that the humanists' stress on education for women, far from liberating their minds, was used as another means of drilling the correct form of behaviour into women, as a powerful instrument of propaganda to keep women in their ordered place in the hierarchy. Mary Ellen Lamb phrases it best when she claims that the humanist purposes of education "were perverted when they were applied to women...Instead of a means to exert control, education was, for women, a further means of being controlled" (124). The insistence on silence keeps them from articulating their own views (Lamb 124) or learning how to argue for and support their own ideas. Vives' insistence that they not be teachers keeps them from promulgating their own beliefs and building up a following. Most notably, the selection of what women are to read and study serves as a way of reinforcing an acceptance of traditional values in women and discouraging independent thought.

Vives says women are to read works which will give them good and virtuous examples to live by, but they are to forgo anything which

is philosophical, disputationous, or involves an active intellect that interacts with learning rather than passively absorbing it: "as for the knowledge of grammar, logic, histories, the rule of governance of the commonwealth and the art mathematical, they shall leave it unto men" (Vives, Duty of Husbands 205-06). Mulcaster is similarly selective as to what is suitable for women and sets up the purpose of their learning and the subject of their study as good examples to follow:

Here I may not omit many and great contentmentes, many and sound comfortes, many manifolde delites, which those wymen that have skill and time to reade, without hindering their housewifery do continually receive by reading of some comfortable and wise discourses, penned either in forme of historie, or for direction to live by.

(137)

Bullinger confines them to holy works like the New Testament and the Psalms to make them more pious, while Bruto restricts their learning purely to emulation and advises the prudent matron in charge of the girl to

reade or cause her Maidens to reade, the examples and lives of godly and vertuous Ladies whose worthy fame... will live for ever,...[and] as a spurre it [the example provided by these books] will pricke and incite their hartes, to follow vertue, and have vice in horror and disdaine. (Sig. Biii)

The woman whose lives he wishes them to follow, "as Claudia,

Portia, Lucretia and such like" (Bruto Sig. Biii), all embody the traditional, accepted values of the Renaissance and have sacrificed themselves to the male figure in their lives. The lesson to be learnt, of loyalty and perpetual sexual and spiritual commitment to their husbands to the extent of suppressing any individual feelings, is quite evident.

The objections to women's education which these writers mention suggest how a large number of Elizabethans perceived learning as a seditious force which might lead women to question their position in society. Richard Hyrde discusses men who believe education will give women the subtlety and craft to undermine rightful authority; Bruto and Vives express these concerns in their works. With education, Bruto points out, "who can warrant that when it seems good unto her [that is, she takes a decision into her own hands for once], she will not as well defende the perverse opinion of the Epicure, as the fame of Zeno and Chrysippus?" (Sig. B[vii] v). The power, frighteningly, lies with her, and her education gives her the ability to defend a point of view which men might judge morally wrong. Vives shares many of Bruto's worries. Using the justification that feminine reason is weak, he states that a woman, no matter how well educated, should never try to spread her own beliefs:

...a woman shoulde not teache, leaste when shee hath taken a false opinion and beleefe of anye thing, shee spreade it into the hearers, by the authoritye of

mastershippe, and lightlie bring other into the same
 errour, for the learners commonlie doe after the Teacher
 with good will. (30)

Like Bruto, he is afraid of what women, once educated, might teach others and ensures against subversion by forbidding them to express their own opinions.

Bruto's fears of the power education gives women to challenge traditional authority become even more evident when he talks of the learned Cornelia. He writes:

...there be some that amonge a few learned Ladies will
 alledge peradventure Cornelia to bee excellent, shee,
 that was Mother unto the two Grachi, noble citizens of
 Rome, and yet that Ladie...taught her Sonnes to be no
 lesse sedicious and violent, then eloquent and learned.
 So taught she her Daughter (as some grave authors judge)
 to put her husbände to death, in whom the magnificence
 and Majestie of that Empire consisted.

(Bruto Sig. B[viii])

Rather than inspiring her to be meek and obedient, Bruto implies, Cornelia's education leads her to rebel against the established order. More seriously, it results in a woman challenging masculine authority as she incites her daughter to murder her husband, both a highly unnatural personal crime and a crime against the state.

This second incident in particular suggests how deep Bruto's fears ran when he considered education for women and how frightened he was at the thought of their gaining the skill and the classical

learning to challenge the male hierarchy. Taking Vives, Mulcaster, Bullinger, and Elyot in context with Bruto, it becomes easy to see why even the most liberal writers place so many restrictions on women's education. They stress over and over how it will keep women in their traditional place in society, strengthening rather than weakening conventional behaviour, to allay worries and their own fears. Vives and Elyot do not want subversion of or challenges to accepted thinking, so they build restraints into their curriculum and actually try to turn it into a tool for reinforcing established values.

The Renaissance's hostile response to physical love completes the picture of traditional attitudes towards women and provides an important backdrop against which to set and evaluate Kyd's portrayals of Balthazar's and Bel-imperia's different types of love. The Neoplatonists idealize spiritual love, depicting it as the means by which man could raise himself to a position of knowledge and understanding of God. In Book Four of The Book of the Courtier, Castiglione establishes a series of steps man might climb in his efforts to reach "divine goodness" (325). The lover progresses from appreciating the outward physical beauty of one beautiful woman, to perceiving her inner beauty, to viewing beauty as "distinct from any material form" (338). The soul then moves to contemplating beauty "in its own particular intellect" (340) and finally to being able to recognise universal, divine beauty. At the same time, most Neoplatonists are suspicious of physical love, viewing it as an emotion which degrades mankind to the level of

beasts. Castiglione sums up their attitude perfectly when he says that man is poised between the extremes of intellect and of the senses, able to lead a life in common with the angels or with animals (325).

This extremely polarized view of love leads to a correspondingly polarized view of women, and both extremes deny women any acceptance as individuals. On the one hand, the idealization of women casts them into the role of an unthinking object; they are highly valued but only as they spur men on in their philosophical search for beauty. This view is very similar to the Petrarchan courtly love tradition which has a lover set up his beloved on a pedestal and worship her as an unattainable beauty. Supposedly, the woman's beauty makes the man strive to better himself as he struggles to be worthy of his beloved, but again it is a completely self-centred view of women, where they are considered only as they effect their male lover. On the other hand, the Neoplatonists' extreme suspicion of physical love and the impossibility of women ever living up to Neoplatonic ideals leads to a corresponding backlash, where women are, as Mary Beth Rose says, condemned as "degraded and sinful" (3). This opposing viewpoint is also expressed in Castiglione when the misogynist Pallavacino, scoffing at the idealization of women, claims that the female sex is governed purely by physical passion.

Courtesy writers like Vives view passionate, sensual love in much the same way as the Neoplatonists. When Vives asks, "Who can nowe expresse with wordes, how much perjurie, what disceytes, what

murther, what slaughter, what destruction of cities, of countries, and nations, this love hath caused?" (139) he voices a Renaissance commonplace. Since passionate love undermines reason, it inevitably makes people behave in a foolish, cruel or chaotic way and transforms them into irrational, unthinking animals. Not surprisingly, Vives particularly fears love's influence on women. A subversive force, love undercuts established, accepted behaviour, and Vives describes how it leads girls to challenge parental authority, "Many yong women have hated both father and mother, and al theyr kinne because they have letted them of their love" (140). Since writers imagined women to be weaker and more prone towards following their passions than men, it was naturally believed that women were more susceptible to love. It is for this reason, and because love might lead the young girl to challenge traditional authority, that writers like Vives decree complete isolation and confinement for the girl. "With these things [feasts, dancing, and banquets]," observes Vives, "folkes mindes be entised and snared and specially the womens, on whome pleasure hath sorest dominion" (137).

At the same time, Vives condemns the courtly love tradition, signalling it out for condemnation because the lover more often tries to seduce his beloved than to become worthy of her. He warns his female subjects to watch out for these men's insincere rhetoric, flattering love talk, and extravagant claims of affection. Scornfully he parodies the courtly lover's exaggerated claims, "He sayeth he shall dye for thee, yea and that hee dyeth

even straight waye. Beleevst thou that? A foole, let him shewe thee, how many have dyed for love, among so many thousandes as have been lovers" (144-45). After exaggerating the power of love to influence and destroy its victims, Vives is surprisingly brisk in his dismissal of its control over the heart. But since he wants his charges to remain pure and to stay away from all things that might lead to sensuality, he both underlines the horrors of love's destructive power and scoffs at lovers' claims.

Despite the courtly framework of his book, Castiglione, like Vives, assigns strict limits to women's love-making and views the Petrarchan lover with suspicion. In The Book of the Courtier, notes Woodbridge, "Petrarchan protestations are viewed as deceitful prologues to open lechery" (57). Castiglione's work also reveals what Diane Bornstein terms the "domestication" of the courtly love tradition (32). "While any courtly love relationship worthy of the name had, since the twelfth century, been adulterous" (Woodbridge 58), Giuliano de Medici, one of Castiglione's principal spokesmen, stresses the importance of women remaining faithful to their marriage vows, giving nothing to their lover but their heart (Castiglione 261).

Even the Protestant writers who idealized marriage rather than perpetual chastity for a young woman were suspicious and hostile towards sexual love. Sensuality, within or outside marriage, observes Stone, was considered evil, and both "Protestant and Catholic theologians condemned not only extra-marital fornication and adultery, but also the introduction of strong sexual passion

into marriage itself" (498). Indeed Stone directly contradicts Mary Beth Rose's claim that the Protestant marriage guides initiated a change from "that consciousness which exalts and idealizes the image of Woman while simultaneously regarding actual women with neglect or contempt" (21) to a more "realistic, multifaceted" sexual discourse (13) based on a "celebration of married love" (22). He argues that attitudes towards sex became more rigid in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. He argues that a phase of "moderate toleration" in sexual attitudes, in which sex is regarded as one of the natural pleasures of life, continues through the 1500s until "towards the end of the sixteenth century" and is then replaced by a long period of repression "from about 1570-1670" (545).

Whether one agrees with Rose or not,¹⁷ the Protestant writers in this study profoundly distrust physical passion. They idealize love within marriage, but it must not be based on physical attraction but on reason. Bentley summarizes both the suspicion of physical passion and the stress placed on the need for a restrained love when he has his married girl pray, "that this conjunction of our minds is not begun in us for voluptuousness nor of lust, but onlie in the feare of thee, and for the desire of Christian societie and mutuall love and the increase of godlie fruit" ("Fift Lampe" 47). I. R., who states quite definitely in his A Discourse of the Worthinesse of Honourable Wedlocke that a woman has a right to expect happiness from her marriage, nonetheless stresses the need for restraint and wisdom, not passion, when choosing a

husband. Since marriage is sacred, he advises, "See therefore that you in this case bee voyde of all fleshly affection as neare as you may" (60). "If your mariage," he continues to his cousin, "stood upon the gifte and delivery of an Apple, I trust you would not play Paris part, that Venus should vanquish you," but that she would, instead, incline towards the logical reasonableness symbolized by Pallas. Even Bullinger, who accepts sex within marriage as natural and who criticizes the Corinthians for priding themselves on "clean marriages" (Sig. D[v] v), emphasizes that the choice of spouse must be based on spiritual love, not "fond affection" (Sig. Gii).

Thus, while Protestant ideals changed attitudes towards marriage (Stone 136), the Renaissance hostility towards women's sexuality remained undiminished. Common attitudes towards women and perceptions of proper female behaviour were so unquestioned through the century that a work like Vives' The Instruction of a Christen Woman, written by a Roman Catholic Spaniard in 1523, remained immensely popular in England after the Protestant Reformation and was still being published in Kyd's time.¹⁸ Fictional romances written towards the end of the sixteenth century present an almost identical picture of Renaissance attitudes towards women and illustrate how, even in popular fiction, Renaissance conceptions of how a "good" woman should behave stayed rigidly fixed. The heroines in Robert Greene's Penelope's Web and Mamillia might have been brought up by a father well-versed in Vives, while John Lyly's reflections on the worthlessness of love and the weak inconstancy of women reiterate the underlying beliefs of most of the courtesy

writers. There is no attempt to challenge accepted standards, and many passages, particularly in Greene, are little more than didactic reiterations of what are evidently the most cherished and commonplace of Renaissance ideals.

Significantly, these same values surface even though much of the fiction is deliberately designed for a female audience.¹⁹ Salter dedicates his translation of *Bruto* to Lady Anne Lodge and makes a direct appeal to mothers and matrons in his epistle, while Vives dedicates his work to Katherine of Aragon and apologizes to male readers for embarrassing them with such an unimportant subject, as though he does not expect them to be very interested. But neither of these writers makes any effort to please women. It is also difficult, at times, to imagine what practical purpose they saw in directing their works towards female readers. If Salter is consistent, he could hardly expect many women to read his guide since *Bruto* specifically states that women should not be educated. Vives beseeches women to read all three sections of his book, but he could hardly intend for his instructions to be of much use for young women since he makes it clear that they must be guided every step of the way by men. His book, worthy and detailed though it might be, would never, in his mind, provide a sufficient check to a woman's weak and perverse will.

But, in some cases the romances deliberately court a female readership. While *Euphues* is dedicated to men and filled with misogynist commentary, Greene, snidely termed the "Homer of women" by his one-time friend Nashe, woos women readers in an excessive

and often insincere fashion. He dedicates Penelope's Web to the Countesses of Warwick and Cumberland and to the gentlemen and gentlewomen of England, and in case his female readers are too slow to notice his lavish devotion, he takes himself to task, with mock strictness, for praising women's virtues over-much. His preface to Mamillia Part II presents an even more determined and elaborate attempt to ingratiate himself with a female audience. Affecting to be too modest to call attention to his own virtues, Greene uses an awkward introductory poem by Richard Stapleton to establish himself as women's great defender and to emotionally implore womankind to take his story to heart and protect it from calumny. The device is an obvious and crude promotion, but it, along with Greene's insincere praise of women's virtue, indicates that the romance has been deliberately tailored to please his female readers.

Despite his vigorous attempts to win a female audience, there is no corresponding shift in Greene's portrayal of women. This static conventionalism suggests that the attitudes embodied in Greene's works are so firmly engrained in the minds of society that they do not soften even when the readers are mainly women and the writers, like Greene, want to please them.²⁰ Conversely, Greene's extreme popularity with his female audience (Wright 110-11) suggests that this is how women wanted to be perceived by men and indicates that the virtuous Mamillia stands as the ideal of Renaissance women as well as men.²¹

In his lengthy title page to Penelope's Web, Greene summarizes the standard ideal virtues of Renaissance women. He writes of his

intention to "pithely discuss" the "three vertues and graces, which more curiously beautifies the mynd of women, then eyther sumptuous Apparell, or Jewels of inestimable valew... namely Obedience, Chastitie, and Sylence" (5:139). The romance itself then proceeds to three stories told by Penelope and her maids as they unwind their weaving at night, and each tale contains a heroine who didactically illustrates one of these virtues. Barmenissa, the cast-off, patient Griselda-type wife of a vindictive and licentious Sultan, remains loyal to her husband through all the abuse he heaps on her, warning his new wife of a planned attack on her life and counselling patience to the impetuous son who wishes to avenge her wrongs. With no will of her own, no thoughts, no strong emotions, Barmenissa stands as the perfect example of the ideally obedient woman who stifles her individuality so completely that she does not even think or feel separately from her husband: "...a wife [ought] to have no proper nor peculiar passion or affection, unless framed after the speciall disposition of her husband" (Greene 5: 164).

In the second story, Cratyna, a beautiful but poor farmer's wife, repulses the advances of a lecherous nobleman and, disguised as a boy, flees to where her husband is working in a mine. Like the courtesy writers, Greene is frightened of the destruction and chaos an unrestrained woman's sexuality will bring, and he idealizes Cratyna's chastity because it is "a preserver of good will...and an enemie to the disordered will of the Soule...it suppresseth furie, hindreth dishonest actions...and useth reason for a rule in all things" (5:199).

These two virtues, however, are incomplete without silence, and the third tale demonstrates the almost unwomanly restraint of the heroine, who remains quiet while her two rivals, both renowned for chastity and obedience, quarrel shrewishly. With Greene, silence, obedience, and chastity are all closely linked, for they are all aspects of meek passivity. The silent woman is the obedient one because she does not verbally chastise or aggravate her husband, while both silence and chastity necessitate complete restraint of will and passion.

Along with the stress on these three root virtues from which the ideally passive woman evolves, the prose romances closely and scrupulously follow the instructional literature in their conceptions of proper female behaviour. Greene's Mamillia is the perfectly sedate, rational, Vives-trained heroine. She eschews all banquets and idleness, prefers virtuously reading by herself to feasting, and wisely advises herself after meeting the attractive Pharicles to "wade not too farre where the foorde is unknowen, rather bridle thy affections with reason, and mortifie thy mynde with modesty" (Greene 2:29). When Lyly wants to depict womanly virtue, he has his modest Livia follow the often-voiced advice from Vives' and Bruto's works and express a desire to take up a distaff rather than a lute, and a needle rather than a pen ("Certaine Letters writ by Euphues to his Friendes" 319-320). Both writers' familiarity and respect for these standards of behaviour attest to the fact that they must have been commonplace and accepted in the Renaissance, and Greene's slavish care in having Mamillia follow

all the traditional advice suggests the authority and influence of Vives' work, where his instructions become the guidelines for any virtuous woman of fiction.

But, underlying Greene's excessive idealisation of female virtues and behaviour, there is a strong note of contempt, and it reveals how his excessive praise of women who exemplify such traits as obedience, silence, and chastity comes not out of respect for women but out of scorn. In the same breath that Greene takes to impossibly idealize women, he disparages and dismisses them simply because they are women. In his third story, his silent heroine modestly informs the awe-stricken king that her great virtue "is that when others talke, yet being a woman I can hold my peace" (Greene 5:223). Her words indicate how the praise of her silence covers up and results from what is a deeply denigratory view of women. There is the common perception of women as tiresomely loquacious, and then the praise-worthy ideal woman who opens her mouth only to sing the praises of the male-established order and to belittle her own sex. Mamillia is praised for the very reason that she acknowledges that she has little of importance to say.

In a slightly different and more obvious way, Lyly's hero Euphues combines the same idealization with an underlying contempt. While he looks on Lucilla as a saint, whom he, in the tradition of the courtly lover, humbly begs to serve, he simultaneously comforts himself by observing, "There is no woeman, Euphues, but shee will yeelde in time, bee not therefore dismaied either with high lookes or frowarde wordes" (Lyly 211). His idolization of Lucilla is

matched only by his contempt for her, and from here it is a very short step to Euphues' rejection of all women as unchaste and his disgust with the courtly love tradition which leads men to shamefully and idolatrously worship their ladies. It is no wonder that Lyly makes Lucilla almost immediately prove untrue; Euphues' remarks to himself suggest a lack of respect for women on the author's part that makes it impossible for him to present them in a positive light.

The romances also demonstrate how the Renaissance insistence on extreme modesty at all times leads to a suspicion of women's morality and throws them into a situation where, no matter how properly they behave, they cannot win. Lyly, more openly misogynistic than Greene,²² satirizes what he perceives as women's falsely modest behaviour and extends his condemnation of Lucilla as a posturing hypocrite to all womankind. When Lucilla hears Euphues' declaration of love, she is secretly elated, but to show any interest would be to betray her immodesty. She must pretend indifference: "Lucilla although she were contented to heare this desired discours, yet did shee seeme to bee somewhat displeased" (Lyly 219), and this clever falseness, Lyly makes clear, is an active characteristic of her whole sex: "And truely I [the thoughtful author] know not whether it bee peculyar to that sex to dissemble with those, whome they most desire, or whether by craft they have learned outwardely to loath that, which inwardely they most love" (219). Lyly censures women for the very behaviour that Vives adjures them to follow, and he links their seeming modesty to

a commonplace Renaissance belief that women are more guileful and sly than men. Lucilla, and women in general, are not allowed to be forthright, but when they speak modestly, they are immediately accused of being pious frauds or, at best, of following a code of behaviour that certainly does not reflect their true feelings. It is the natural consequence of the Renaissance idea that women are basically licentious meeting with the courtesy writer's insistence that they suppress every strong feeling.

This belief that women never say what they mean and that their modesty is little more than a show becomes even more damaging in Greene's Mamillia Part One, for in this work it is a virtuous and steadfast virgin who behaves in the same way as Euphues' fickle love. After her first meeting with the smooth Pharicles, Mamillia, wise, eloquent, and chaste, describes the importance of her virginity and points out to her sceptical nurse that her suitor's fair front may hide a false and fickle heart. But she then undermines her prudence by concluding, "I meane...[to] remaine a virgin still. Yet thus much to your question, if my minde should change to try such happe [marriage], I would welcome Pharicles, as well as any other" (Greene 2:51), while her nurse, who was never fooled by all her virtuous proclamations, titters knowingly. The message is quite clear. Mamillia, as a good woman, has to pretend to prefer virginity, even though, as Greene satirically reveals, her true desires lie elsewhere.

In their treatment of unchaste women, the prose writers express the same prejudices and condemnation as the courtesy writers, but

they go into much greater detail and develop themes and fears only touched on in the instructional literature. They provide active examples of how "bad" women behave and show how certain stereotypical modes of behaviour are immediately given to unchaste women. This is extremely important, for characters like the light Lucilla and the courtesan Clarynda in Mamillia Part Two resemble, far more than the virtuous Penelope and the chaste Livia, Bel-imperia, and they not only provide insight into conventional attitudes towards unchaste women but illustrate the way writers portray and deal with them in fiction.

Besides being credited with all the usual bad traits, both Lucilla and Clarynda have a great deal of personal freedom, and they stand as examples of the Renaissance belief that personal freedom for women will result in sexual license. If they are not controlled and guided by men, they will inevitably follow their passions on a course of ruin. The two women's actions also suggest how personal freedom and sexual freedom are so closely linked in Renaissance minds that the one is not just portrayed as leading to the other but can be used interchangeably to mean the same thing.

When Lucilla scornfully rejects the authority of her father, Lyly explicitly links her defiance of parental governance with lust, "Time hath weaned me from my mothers teat, and age ridde me from my fathers correction....I am not to be leadde by their perswasions. Let my father use what speaches he lyst, I will follow mine owne lust" (207). By suggesting that when Lucilla decides to follow her own mind it is inevitably to fulfil base desires, Lyly mocks her

claim that she has a right to self-autonomy and ironically reveals, in her very attempts to gain freedom, just why she needs to be restrained. More importantly, the passage reveals how passion causes subversion and rebellion and suggests how sexual freedom is personal freedom, for in Lucilla's mind she must throw off all the restraints imposed on her by her family if she is to fulfil her desires.

Lyly also illustrates how it is her father's unwillingness to properly control his daughter which leads to her downfall. She leads a very free, unrestricted life, and her father often goes away, leaving her "the onely steward of his housholde" (Lyly 200), at liberty to entertain unchaperoned. It is on one of these occasions, when "she spared not to feast Philautus hir friend, with al kindes of delights and delicates, reserving onely hir honestie as the chiefe stay of hir honour" (Lyly 200), that she meets Euphues and begins to follow the destructive path dictated by her fickle passions. Resolving to follow her "owne lust," she stands in particular need of parental guidance, but Ferardo arrives only to depart again, leaving Lucilla in control of his house and property: "In the meane season I commit all thinges into thy custody wishing thee to use thy accustomable courtesie" (Lyly 217). In the end, when the unhappy father tries to figure out where he went wrong, he realises that, in excessively doting on his daughter, he gave her too much freedom. "And shall," he asks himself, "my loving care be cause of thy wicked crueltie? Yea, yea, I am not the first that hath bene too careful, nor the last

that shall bee handled so unkindely, it is common to see Fathers too fond, and children to frowarde" (244). This explanation equates his generous treatment of her with her descent into lustful passion and her eventual disgrace, and it turns her downfall into a didactic illustration of one of Vives' and Bruto's most firmly held beliefs.

In Mamillia Part Two, Greene makes the connection between liberty and sexual promiscuity even more bluntly. In his portrayal of Clarynda, he observes how freedom for a woman almost inevitably produces a prostitute:

But shee being both yong, rich, and beautifull, having neither father nor mother which might make a restraint of her nature by due nurture, and enjoying a libertie without controlement, which be the greatest bawdes in the world to make a Gentlewoman slide in such slipperie pathes...became a professed Curtizan (2:185).

Deprived of parental control, she rejects everything which the Renaissance most approved in a woman and embraces sexual freedom:

In which staylesse state of life she waded so far, that her chieftest care was to be careless in that which above all things she ought most to have regarded, for whereas...[she might have beautified her birth and looks] with a maidenlie modestie and silent chastitie, shee contrariwise link[ed] her self to sensuall libertie.

(Greene 2:185-86)

Significantly, Greene's words do not just tie personal freedom to

licentiousness, but link the type of woman who defies the male ideal with the woman who is financially independent. This suggests the deep fear and suspicion with which Elizabethans regarded women who had sufficient funds to support themselves and to enable them to do as they pleased. His work then acts as propaganda against such women, as he portrays Clarynda's freedom as both a social evil and a grave injustice to Clarynda herself, abandoning her, as it were, to follow the worst side of her nature.²³

As the story progresses, Greene reveals that the treacherous courtesan has not only embraced "sensuall libertie" but a complete freedom of action. She is stubborn and contrary, unwilling, as the meek heroines are, to do as others say: "the more she was intreated, the lesse she was tractable" (Greene 2:186). She clearly prizes her liberty and anxiously cites her freedom as the first thing she would lose if she gave herself to Pharicles, asking herself, "Wilt thou now suffer thy minde to be noused up in captivitie, which hath alwaies beene noursed up in libertie?" (Greene 2:191).

Moreover, a great deal of her freedom lies in her ability to control love and entrap men: "her fleeting fancie was never fixed upon any, but laying the net, was free her selfe, casting the bayte, avoyded the hooke," (Greene 2:187). Using her beauty and her sexuality as a means to deceive and manipulate men, she presents a dangerous threat to male authority, a challenge not easily suppressed. Particularly alarming to Greene is her deceit: she does not act or appear to be a sinful libertine, but

successfully covers "the miserable conditions of a Curtizan with the modest countenance of a matrone" (2:188). This increases the threat she poses, for she seems to be a good woman. Obviously Clarynda knows the rules of Renaissance society, but she makes a mockery of them, adopting a hollow facade of virtue that allows her to do as she pleases without fearing censure. Part of the reason that she has such freedom is that she has the skill and intelligence to sham a mock obedience to male rules and ideals.

As well as her delight in liberty and her flouting of male authority, Greene gives her other traits which are traditionally tied in with the Renaissance picture of a licentious, subversive woman. She is forward and aggressive, and she, clearly, is in pursuit of Pharicles. In an obvious inversion of the proper order, she describes her campaign to win Pharicles in the forceful military terms usually reserved for the conquest of women. She initiates the affair, writing the first letter and telling him of her love. She also disregards the coy discretion of Mamillia and the hypocritical Lucilla and tells him quite bluntly of her passion,

Yet this I am forced to confesse, that the selfsame fire
[which ignited various classical heroines] hath so
inflamed my fancie, and the like batterie hath so beaten
my brest, as silence and modestie set aside, I am forced
by love to pleade for pardon at the barre of thy bounty

(Greene 2:197-198).

Since both Lucilla and Clarynda are subversive figures

undermining the accepted rules of Renaissance society, Greene and Lyly, who follow the established Elizabethan line, show them shamed, miserable, and defeated. As women with a great deal of freedom, they are necessarily bad and contemptible, and their fate clearly illustrates what happens when women challenge accepted standards of behaviour. Lucilla, more a misogynistic parody of women rather than an actual character, falls deeper and deeper into trouble and looks more and more foolish. Given the freedom by her father to follow her passions, she eventually betrays both Philautus and Euphues, and, demonstrating the innate foolishness of women, chooses the worthless Curio, a man who, matching his name, "bee in bodye deformed, in minde foolishe, an innocent borne, a begger by misfortune" (Lyly 240). Then, because she has given free rein to passion, she inevitably proceeds to prostitution: "Thou [Philautus in an earlier letter to the now moralizing Euphues] writest that she was shamefull in hir trade and shamelesse in hir ende" (Lyly 312), until, cast off by her erstwhile doting father, she is miraculously struck down by God for her sins and dies "in great beggerie in the streetes" (Lyly:312).

Clarynda, who subverts and twists male rules for her own ends, presents a more threatening challenge to traditional authority, and Greene effectively attacks her through ridicule, then emphasizes his didactic lesson by contrasting her with the virtuous Mamillia. She loses her independence when she falls in love with Pharicles, and despite her use of strong military imagery, her feelings make her subordinate to him, a suppliant pleading for his favour. Her

humiliation continues when Pharicles, despite her vast fortune, treats her with loathing and detestation and rejects her as "that person whom verie brute beasts do detest" (Greene 2:208). Finally, the virtuous Mamillia exposes the courtesan to the general scorn and contempt of the spectators who have gathered to watch Pharicles' execution, unmasking her as a vicious liar scheming to revenge herself on the "guiltless Pharicles" (Greene 2:231): "It was not.. that she accused Pharicles [of spying] because...she had such love to her native countrie, but in that Pharicles would not agree to match himself with so gracelesse a monster" (Greene 2:246). To drive home the point of Clarynda's worthlessness and of the just punishment of such a shameless, aggressive woman, the same citizens who marvelled loudly "at the mischievous mind of so hellish a harlot " (Greene 2:246), wonder that "such marvellous wit, wisdome, and incomparable constancie" (Greene 2:246) could ever be present in one so young as Mamillia. The good woman, passive, quiet, devoting her whole life and all her energies to one man is publicly praised, while the bad woman, who is independent and who challenges men and takes aggressive action, is publicly condemned.

The attitude of the male characters towards Clarynda and Lucilla further emphasizes the depth of the contempt with which Lyly and Greene viewed licentious, free-willed women. Neither Euphues nor Pharicles is especially virtuous, and since Greene and Lyly are both fond of satirizing hypocrisy, one might imagine that the high moral stance these characters take regarding light women is ironic.

Euphues triumphantly betrays Philautus and gloats maliciously over his best friend's doltish gullibility. He has few scruples about double-crossing his friend and steals away--or at least actively encourages--his beloved. Yet when Lucilla deserts him, he feels entitled to take a high moral stance of pious self-righteousness, solemnly lecturing Lucilla on her fickle inconstancy, "[your] light behaviour hath dimmed the lightes of thy beautie, whose unconstant mynde hath betrayed the innocencie of so many a Gentleman" (Lyly 240). There is no indication of irony or satire on Lyly's part despite the fact that Euphues continues with this sanctimonious pose through the remainder of the book.²⁴ Not only is all the blame thrust onto Lucilla for "inciting" Euphues' passion, but she is also condemned for behaviour which, in Euphues' case, is portrayed as a learning experience. Euphues' cold-blooded betrayal of his friend prepares him for the role of lofty moralist, philosophizing on others' weaknesses. Lucilla's fickleness leads her into degradation and prostitution.

Pharicles' contempt for Clarynda strikes an even uglier note because he, more than Euphues, is a worthless philanderer. Greene continually condemns Pharicles's fickleness and his smooth-tongued insincerity, and the only reason the young man is in Sicily is because he had to flee his own country, disgraced after promising himself to both Mamillia and the equally virtuous Publia. But when Pharicles sees Clarynda, posturing in the window in the fashion typical of a woman with light morals, he dismisses her with laughing contempt:

For why...seeing this gorgeous Gorgon so shrined in the shape of a goddess, did not onely repine at Nature for placing so hellish a minde in so heavenlie a creature, but also smiled to see such braverie linked with so little honestie, and such perfect beautie blemisht with the want of chastitie (Greene 2:188-89).

Once she has lost her virtue, she leaves herself open to the disdain of any man, and the superior way Pharicles smiles to himself, undeceived by her appearance of beauty, underlines more effectively than all of Euphues' prosing the contempt with which unchaste women were portrayed in fiction.

Lyly's and Green's attitudes towards love are, like their conception of proper womanly behaviour, so similiar to the instructional literature that it is only necessary to briefly illustrate their solidarity with the courtesy writers. In Euphues, Lyly brings out all the standard Renaissance beliefs about physical love. It is an incurable sickness: "O ye gods have ye ordayned for everye maladye a medicine, for every sore a salve, for every payne a plaister, leving only love remedillesse?" (Lyly 208). It is a destructive force which sweeps over people and which cannot be controlled, and it brings out the worst in its sufferers: "...the case is lyght where reason taketh place, to love and lyve well, is not graunted to Jupiter" (Lyly 210). Since it makes men and women follow their passions instead of reason, it turns them into beasts, and it causes a complete loss of morality and ethics: " I [the passion-stricken Euphues] am of this minde, that both might and

mallice, deceite and treacherie, all perjurie, anye impietie may lawfully be committed in love, which is laweless" (Lyly 236).

Greene views love with less condemnation than Lyly but the major stereotypes remain intact. Intense sexual passion is bad: "Beware of hot love, Mamillia, for the greatest flowe hast the soonest ebbe" (Greene 2:39), while the power of love is unconquerable: "Strive not against the stream: if thou [Publia] resist Love, thou art overmatched" (Greene 2:73). The difference is that Greene dwells less on the catastrophic and more on the comical aspects of love, humorously depicting the foolish behaviour of Mamillia, Publia, and Pharicles as they all succumb to love. There is Mamillia's coy hesitation and avowed loyalty to her virginity, quickly and summarily abandoned when Pharicles beckons. There is Publia, who, instantly overwhelmed by love for Pharicles, brings out two pages of solid, virtuous reasons why she should not yield, then argues the opposite case with a verbal dexterity that deceives even herself. Most amusingly of all, there is Pharicles' comical dilemma as he debates whether he should try and stay loyal to Mamillia or follow his new, true love and the eloquent rhetoric that he uses to convince himself to follow a course he knows to be morally wrong. Greene also satirizes the lies and the excessive flattery lovers use to win their ladies, and he undercuts the extravagant vows of lovers as Pharicles promises eternal devotion to Publia in the same terms he used with Mamillia.

Like Bullinger and the unknown I.R., Greene believes that marriage rather than perpetual virginity is the ideal state for

women, and both Mamillia and Publia are eager to wed Pharicles. Greene even has Mamillia persist in wedding Pharicles despite her father's opposition. But in Mamillia, there is a constant stress on not choosing a husband for physical love, while Penelope states, so frequently that a cynic might be suspicious, that her love for Ulysses is a virtuous, spiritual love, based on the Protestant ideal of companionship between husband and wife. She waits patiently for Ulysses to return, uninterested in her numerous suitors, because her love for her husband is not a "fond furie" but the "settled fancie" (Greene 5:157) which "unit[es] the hearts with...the strickt leages of amitie" (Greene 5:157).

Often the prose romances seem to be little more than dramatization in story form of the advice and instructions in Vives, and they show little deviation from or questioning of accepted Renaissance standards of proper behavior for young women. All of the works in this study, from Bentley and Vives to the insincere Greene, insist that women suppress all strong emotions and feelings and discourage any kind of self-assertion or independent thought. Characteristics which are passive, self-effacing, and restrained are praised and idealized, and active, aggressive traits are seen as unnatural and leading to vice. While some Elizabethan women undoubtedly defied the moral standards of their time, these values are so constantly set up as ideal, both in the guide books and the prose fictions, that it would take a strong

and unconventional mind to disregard or challenge them.

Notes to Chapter One

1. The STC catalogue compiled by Pollard and Redgrave lists publications of Vives' work in England in [1529?], [1540?], two different editions in 1541 and 1557, 1585, and 1592.

2. The STC catalogue lists publication in 1541, [1543?], 1543, 1546, four different issues in 1552, and 1575.

3. For a full discussion of the formal controversy literature see Linda Woodbridge 1-110.

4. Both Ruth Kelso's Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance and Lawrence Stone's The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800 take the controversy literature as useful for determining attitudes towards women. There are, in fact, certain questionable aspects to Linda Woodbridge's argument. While she says that Thomas Elyot follows a literary convention in writing his The Defence of Good Women (22), there is no reason to immediately assume that it is an insincere and completely emotionless rhetorical game. He could be expressing deeply held beliefs in a conventional format. Further, she holds up the fact that Edward Gosynhill can write on both sides of the controversy as proof of its literary gamesmanship (5). However, it is not even certain whether Gosynhill wrote both of the works or not (Woodbridge 25-6), and, even if one agrees with her argument that he did, it is neither logical nor reasonable to assume that because there is one cynic in the vast number of controversy writers, they are all cynics. At the same time, as

Woodbridge and most feminists realize, the attacks and defences of the controversy literature are just two sides of the same coin, where one praises the "good" women and the other denounces the "bad" women and both establish a completely similar set of virtues and vices (Woodbridge 133). This means that Gosynhill could, conceivably, argue both sides of the argument and still present a fairly consistent attitude towards women. Finally and most importantly, the very fact that the formal controversy attracted so much attention and energy suggests that it did engage contemporary interest and did reflect contemporary values.

Woodbridge's main grievance with the controversy literature is that it obscured the problems of women's unequal position in society behind a mass of clever rhetoric. Instead of addressing the issue of women's equality, it contented itself with trying to prove whether history contained more good women than bad or vice versa. While Woodbridge's complaint might be justified, it does not have to detract from the works as accurate reflections of contemporary attitudes.

5. Suzanne Hull calls attention to the importance of these three key virtues through the title of her book Chaste, Silent & Obedient: English Guidebooks for Women, 1475-1640.

6. All quotes from Vives, unless otherwise specified, are from his Instruction of a Christen Woman and are taken from the 1585 publication of Richard Hyrde's translation (STC 24862).

7. Ironically, the extreme number of prayers Thomas Bentley includes on this one subject suggest that there was ample occasion

for them.

8. Page 66 of Vives' 1585 edition of The Instruction of a Christen Woman follows page 50 and is found on Sig. E.

9. Vives' whole invective against dancing suggests that the times in which he wrote were fairly liberal. Attacking the men and women who are out dancing and "shaking unto midnight" (Vives 133), he evidently wishes manners were more straitlaced than they actually were. It must be remembered, however, that my thesis does not concentrate on the actual deportment of individual Tudor noblewomen who might have distressed Vives by their loose morals, but the behaviour considered proper at the time. Since Bruto and Bullinger also condemn dancing and excessive socializing, as do Lyly and Greene, it seems reasonable to assume that dancing was perceived as an evil that might lead women into even greater sin.

Only Castiglione praises the woman who dances and the plays musical instruments, but he stresses that she should carry out these activities with a "discreet modesty" (216). Moreover, she is not to derive a great deal of personal enjoyment from her dancing; Castiglione makes it evident that his courtly lady dances to please others and to show her delicate grace and musical ability.

10. The viciousness with which Vives attacks these more independent women suggests that there was opposition to his advice and there were women who openly challenged and dismissed his restrictions.

11. All quotations from Heinrich Bullinger's The Christian State of Matrimony come from the 1579 edition of Miles Coverdale's

translation (STC 4053).

12. Vives again suggests, however, that not everyone follows his advice. He speaks with disbelieving disapproval of having heard rumours that in England marriages have been broken off only because the "women sayde, they coulde not love them, nor finde in their hearte to have them in marriage, whome they loved not, nor knew before" (171).

13. In his essay "Foucault, Stone, Shakespeare and Social History," David Cressy points out that recent social historians have challenged the validity of Stone's often sweeping generalisations, and he discusses the dangers of an uncritical use of Stone in interpreting Shakespearean drama. He writes:

[Stone] argues that the English family underwent sharp structural and attitudinal transformations across the early modern period, that marriage was a transaction of material convenience, and that couples rarely loved each other, and made slight emotional investment in their children before the eighteenth century. Each of these propositions is wrong, sometimes perversely wrong and at variance with the evidence, but they nourish a theory of patriarchalism and cultural change that many Shakespeare scholars find irresistible. (10)

In defence of Stone, it is important to note that Cressy has over-exaggerated Stone's primary themes in order to emphasize the historian's tendency to generalize. For example his observation that Stone argues "that couples rarely loved each other...before

the eighteenth century" is an unfair distortion of his work. Stone actually argues that from 1500-1700 there was an increase of "affective bonds" within the family (123). What also increases, according to Stone, is "the despotic authority of husband and father" (151), but heightened patriarchal power does not especially rule out women loving their husbands. Stone devotes a long section to the Protestant "sanctification of marriage"(136) which, while emphasizing the inferiority of the wife, strongly stressed the need for love and friendship between the two (136). As well, Stone observes that "love before marriage, however rare it may have been in the sixteenth century, may have been on the increase in the early seventeenth century and after"(283). The only type of love marriages which Stone discounts as completely as Cressy claims were those based on romantic love, which, Stone contends, were not viewed as a proper basis for marriage until the end of the eighteenth century (283). Cressy also neglects to mention that while Stone does claim that most pre-eighteenth century marriages were based on money and property and he does argue that most parents avoided deep feelings for their children, he nonetheless cites opposing examples in each case. Thus Stone's generalizing claims are neither as radical nor as rigid and fixed as Cressy claims.

But, without having read the works of the social historians Cressy cites as disagreeing with many of Stone's contentions, I have to agree with Cressy that some of Stone's statements are questionable. He pronounces, for example, on the sex habits of

whole generations based on the information he finds in one or two diaries of the time. However, my argument is not particularly dependent on Stone, and I quote him mainly as a comment on or a summary of my primary sources, in cases where it seems as though the evidence of the text agrees with Stone's claims.

14. Wright argues that women's liberty greatly increased in the sixteenth century because of the break from medieval conventions (202-4) and the idealization of marriage, where "the manuals continually insist that woman must be treated as the lieutenant of her husband, sharing his confidence and trust, and not as his chattel and slave" (227). Stone, however argues that the status of women declined in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and he points to the idealization of marriage as one of the principal causes (202). The sanctification of marriage, he claims, actually contributes to the subordination of women, subjecting them to an increased amount of moral pressure to love and obey their husbands and strengthening the "authority of the husband over the wife, and...[the] readiness of the latter to submit herself to the dictates of the former" (202). Further, he suggests that the power of middle and upper class husbands increased in the sixteenth century because Protestantism increased patriarchal authority, reinforcing the husband's authority as the head of the family and transforming him into the spiritual as well as the secular head of the household (152-55).

While Cressy questions many of Stone's conclusions, it seems

probable that the sanctification of marriage, with its accompanying stress on the wife's complete obedience to her husband, would not immensely improve her position. He is far more plausible than Wright who completely ignores the constant insistence that women subordinate their wills to their husbands. Reading through Bullinger, the anonymous I.R., and, in particular, Greene, it often seems that the idealization of marriage serves only to make women transfer their worship from God to man. Instead of dedicating herself and her virginity to God--the so-called medieval ideal--she moves on to dedicating herself and her chastity to a potentially less deserving subject: her husband.

15. The idealization of silence, theorizes Margaret Hannay in her introduction to Silent But for the Word is what led educated Renaissance women to write only religious works or translations (4-5). Only religious discourses were acceptable because women, even highly educated ones, were discouraged from self-expression and trained to see silence as one of the primary womanly virtues (4-8).

16. He mentions, among others, Mantinea, Assiothea, and Lasthemia "who chaunged their womanlie attire, and entered manlike into the schooles of Plato, and...disputed the movyng of Principles and of causes" (Sig. Bviii r-v). Leontium, who "defended fleshlie pleasure against Theophrastus" fills him with such horror, that he professes himself unwilling to even mention her (Sig. B[viii]). Evidently, Bruto believes women's learning leads to an usurpation of the male role (hence the masculine dress of the two female philosophers) and tends to encourage women's natural inclination

towards licentiousness.

17. The problem with Mary Beth Rose's contention is that while she acknowledges that both her so-called "dualistic sensibility" and her "multi-faceted" Protestant sexual discourse suspect physical passion, she over-emphasizes the great, distinctive gap between the two. Both viewpoints have their roots in a suspicion of physical love and a suppression of women's individuality and their sense of self. The Petrarchan idealization of women ends up, as she says, casting women into the role of the passive beloved or the debased slut. The male writers perceive them positively so long as they remain pure and emotionless and condemn them if they show any signs of physical passion. The Puritan idealization of marriage, however, throws women into an equally unforgiving and rigid role. Since women must devote themselves utterly to their husbands, marriage does not recognise the legitimacy of their feelings, while their sexuality is acceptable only if invested utterly in their husband.

The paradoxes within the Puritan concept of marriage, where women are both subordinated and elevated (Rose 31-2) and which Rose sees as inspiring certain tragedies of the early seventeenth century, are actually based on a dichotomous view of women very similar to the "dualistic sensibility" which she dismisses. On the one hand, they are held up as the idealized companion and helpmate of the husbands, while on the other, they are condemned to a life of servitude, subordination, and obedience simply because they are seen as being weaker and more liable to the passions than men.

Both the courtly love tradition and the "complex" Protestant sexual discourse elevates women while simultaneously dismissing and suspecting them simply because they are women.

18. In Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance, Ruth Kelso studies all the European instructional literature for women, and she remarks that the consensus between the writers of the sixteenth century was so great that it gave the appearance to other writers that there were actually far more instructional books than there really were. There was so little that anyone would dispute or question that one or two books gave the appearance of dealing exhaustively with the subject (38).

19. Linda Woodbridge comments that prose fiction was strongly oriented towards women and observes that dedications and remarks to female readers in romances are the rule rather than the exception (114). Louis Wright says that all romances were popular with women and singles out Margaret Taylor's Mirror of Knighthood as a particular favourite (110-111). In Chaste, Silent, and Obedient: English Books for Women, Suzanne Hull notes how the number of fiction books directed at women readers shot up towards the end of the 1500's. From 1575-99, there were 300 prose fiction books published compared with 89 books between the years of 1550-1574 and 92 over the first 75 years of printing (74-75).

20. Suzanne Hull notes, "Even their escape literature reminded women that they must be obedient, chaste, and silent" (81).

21. This reinforces Stone's claim that the propaganda campaign accompanying the idealization of marriage actually furthers the

subordination of women as they internalize the ideals which pressure them to love and honour their husbands (202). Penelope's Web is a long lesson on the ideal virtues of the wife. Mamillia never actually marries Pharicles, but the two books trace her continuing loyalty to and unquestioning support of her betrothed.

22. Greene, though, undoubtedly equals him in his lack of respect for women. Lyly is just less servile and more honest about his feelings, while Green tries to please two masters--the female audience his works were at least partially aimed at and his own sense of superiority and that of any other men reading the work. Quite often he will have a passage which fulsomely eulogizes the virtues of women followed by a man-to-man aside where he jokes about the frailty of the female sex.

23. Likewise, in Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare, Lisa Jardine argues that the preface to Penelope's Web, which dedicates the book to two noblewomen who have enough money to possess some independence is a propaganda attempt on Greene's part, aimed at getting upper-class women to conform to traditional standards (62).

24. Woodbridge claims that Euphues' "Cooling Carde for Fonde Lovers," in which he lectures his amorous friend Pharicles on restraint and proper behaviour, is ironic (62), but she gives no proof from the text to suggest that this is, indeed, true. The structure of Euphues seems to indicate that Euphues' reformation is meant to be taken seriously. He leaves Athens, the city of reason, for Naples, the city of the senses, falls in love, learns how empty

and foolish passion is, and returns to Athens a wiser and more experienced man. The lesson in the story seems clear-cut and evident.

Chapter Two

The Dramatic Context of The Spanish Tragedy:

Female stereotyping in plays by two of Kyd's contemporaries

George Peele wrote The Battle of Alcazar within a few years of Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy, and while Peele's work is, in some senses, a history play, the dramatist nonetheless stresses the elements of revenge and justice. Abdelmelec is not just trying to regain the throne of Barbary, he is attempting to avenge the bloody murder of his brother at the hands of the Moor, Muly Mahamet, and he makes frequent appeals to Heaven to right his wrongs and advance his just cause. Like Kyd, Peele shows himself concerned with all the trappings of revenge drama. He establishes a luridly violent scenario for the beginning of Act Two and dwells upon the inevitable punishment of murder:

Now war begins his rage and ruthless reign,
And Nemesis, with bloody whip in hand,
Thunders for vengeance on this Negro-Moor;
Nor may the silence of the speechless night,
Dire architect of murders and misdeeds,
Of tragedies and tragic tyrannies,
Hide or contain the barbarous cruelty
Of this usurper to his progeny.

(II.Introduction.1-8)¹

He calls up a gruesome picture of the three furies of classical mythology, "Alecto with her brand and bloody torch, / Megaera with her whip and snaky hair, / Tisiphone with her fatal murdering iron," who will oversee the revenge of Abdelmunen's "grieved ghost" (II.Introduction.18-28).

But Peele, unlike Kyd, rigidly follows convention in his portrayals of the three principal women in the play. When the brother of King Abdelmelec introduces two of the main female characters, he sums up, with an unintentional irony, the role of women in the play:

Renowned Bassa, to renumerate
 Thy worthiness and magnanimity,
 Behold, the noblest ladies of the land,
 Bring present tokens of their gratitude.

(II.i.24-7)

They are no more than stock figures who wander in to murmur praise for the war-like endeavours of the men or to echo their husbands' vows. If they are not supporting the male characters, then they are present to beg for revenge or to act, by their very timidity and weakness, as foils for the more aggressive men. In the world of the play, of blood, revenge, fighting and politics, they stand as very faint shadows of their husbands.

Abdil Rayes, wife to the wronged and disinherited King Abdelmelec, speaks only long enough to establish herself as the traditional loyal wife. She is such a weak figure, animated only

by Abdelmelec's presence and Abdelmelec's concerns, that she could almost stand as a parody of the Renaissance ideal that women should be defined solely by their husbands. While the King takes nearly twenty lines to thank "Great Amurath, great Emperor of the East" (I.i.9) for his military assistance, his wife, silent and obedient, restates his gratitude as well as emphasizes her loyalty to her husband in a brief four lines:

Long live my lord, the sovereign of my heart,
 Lord Abdelmelec, whom the god of kings,
 The mighty Amurath hath happy made!
 And long live Amurath for this good deed!

(I.i.34-7)

In her one other speech, she serves as an admiring chorus and emphasizes the justice and righteousness of her husband's actions, crying, "Forward, brave lords, unto this rightful war! / How can this battle but successful be, / Where courage meeteth with a rightful cause?" (I.i.131-33). As the conventional wife, she naturally supports her husband, and as the conventional woman she stands aside and lets the men see to the important business of justice.

Rubin Archis, the widow of Abdelmunen, also plays a traditional role. Her words, pleading for justice, bewailing the unkindness of fortune,

Of death, of blood, of wreak, and deep revenge,
 Shall Rubin Archis frame her tragic songs:
 In blood, in death, in murder, and misdeed,
 This heaven's malice did begin and end,

(I.ii.109-12)

provide an accurate description of her role in the play. She stands to one side, framing "tragic songs" as she comments on what the male characters are doing, but she never becomes involved herself. Like Abdil Rayes, she is nothing more than one part of a two women chorus reiterating the virtues of great Abdelmelec. Her words serve only to give the King moral authority and legitimacy and to present him with a chance to proclaim his righteous plans, as he solemnly promises the helpless woman to "...draw my weapons for revenge / Of my deep wrongs and my dear brother's death" (I.ii.117-18).

As the widow of the murdered Abdelmunen, Rubin Archis also assumes the traditional role of the wronged and unhappy wife who "breathes but for revenge" (II.i.28). In her desire for vengeance, she is a figure similar to Bel-imperia, but the vast difference between the two characters underlines the remarkable fashion in which Kyd portrays the Spanish Princess. Peele shows no interest in Rubin Archis and does not even bother to expand upon or explore her conventional desire for revenge. Thus as well as being allowed no life or emotion apart from a yearning to see her husband avenged, she has no place in the development of the plot and no dramatic function but to curse Muly Mahamet, murderer of her

husband. Bel-imperia, on the other hand, is a dynamic character who influences the course of the tragedy. She takes an active role in directing her personal affairs, and instead of standing back and letting a man take revenge, she makes her own plans to avenge Don Andrea's death. She is never a spectator, content to step to one side and "frame tragic songs," but thrusts herself into the action of the play.

The third woman in Peele's The Battle of Alcazar is a more fully realised character, but she does not speak except to mouth traditional, weak, womanly platitudes. Calipolis, wife of the Moor, flees with her husband after his defeat in battle, and she spends the one scene in which she appears either counselling her husband or drawing attention to her own feeble weakness. She stands as an embodiment of the Renaissance belief in the weakness and timid fragility of womankind, while her words underline the contrasting ferocity of her husband and her son. She tries to soothe her ranting, enraged husband with a patiently Christian remark, "Alas, my lord, what boot these huge exclams / T'advantage us in this distress'd estate? /...turn all curses to submiss complaints" (II.iii.16-9). If the audience has forgotten that she is a woman she reminds them with the plaintive, "I faint, my lord; and naught may cursing plaints / Refresh the fading substance of my life" (II.iii.21-2). Her womanly advice to the Moor, "Yet patience, lord, to conquer sorrows so" (II.iii.25), is dismissed with scorn and disgust by her husband, and even her son is impatient of her frailty, reprimanding her with a "Tush, mother,

cherish your unhearty soul, / And feed with hope of happiness and ease" (II.iii.41-2). Peele particularly underscores the difference between the two sexes when he has the Moor re-enter the play with the "flesh [he] forced from a lioness," (II.iii.71) hanging from his sword. The contrast between the woman who finds her stomach to "...be/ Too queasy to disgest such bloody meat" (II.iii.96) and the ferocious man who went out and killed a lioness merely because his wife felt hungry is so extreme as to be almost ludicrous.

Further emphasizing Peele's dependence on traditional stereotypes in his characterization of women is the way in which he makes Calipolis uninterested in politics. While the two men, her husband and son, think of nothing but the horror of losing their kingdom, she is only concerned with her physical well-being, loudly bemoaning her hunger and her exhaustion. She is the typical woman, so wrapped up in her petty concerns that she is indifferent to the great and important events occurring around her.

After Act Two, the women no longer enter the play, and their already shadowy, undefined forms fade out of sight. Since Peele can only envision women as observers, doing no more than either praising or condemning the men's behaviour and providing moral legitimacy for Abdelmelec's war, they necessarily have little part in the complex political machinations of the play and the serious affairs of war and politics. In a tale of "...this true and tragic war, / A modern matter full of blood and ruth, / Where three bold kings, confounded in their height, / Fell to the earth, contending for a crown" (I.The Second Dumb Show.49-52), conventionally weak

and passive women have no other role but to comment briefly on male characters and then to exit.

While Christopher Marlowe's female characters have a substance that the women in The Battle of Alcazar lack, Marlowe, like Peele, also deals with women in a purely conventional fashion. Both Dido Queen of Carthage and Edward II contain female characters who have the potential to be subversive and unconventional, but Marlowe, following standard Elizabethan ideas about love and women, makes little effort to depict their concerns with any depth or seriousness. In Dido Queen of Carthage, Marlowe initially establishes Dido as a strong, autonomous woman, but he soon reduces her to a passive, pitiful character entirely dependent upon Aeneas for her happiness. He treats love with the mingled suspicion and awe which characterizes the Renaissance; even while he acknowledges love's power, he makes Dido's passion at first appear comical and destructive to her dignity and later as a dangerous force slowly devouring Aeneas' self-identity. Unable to conceive of Dido in anything but stereotypes, Marlowe casts her in a dual role, alternately characterizing her as the weak, helpless female of tradition and thus dependent upon Aeneas for all of value in her life, and the sensuous, demanding woman who threatens male self-respect and dignity. Since Marlowe cannot accept her sexuality and move beyond convention, she is sympathetic in the first role but is to be cast off and renounced in the second. At the same time, Marlowe's differing portrayals of the conflict between love and honour in Dido, the woman, and Aeneas, the hero and man, emphasize

the vast gap Marlowe envisions between the sexes and illustrates the difference between the type of behaviour traditionally expected from a woman and that expected from a man.

In the beginning of the play, Dido stands out as a strong and impressive figure. She sweeps in before the ragged, disoriented Aeneas, and Ilioneus' cry, "Look where she comes! Aeneas, view her well" (II.i.72),² draws attention to her awe-inspiring presence and the vast distance between the lowly wanderer and the great Queen of Carthage in all her glory and magnificence. Aeneas' reply, "Well may I view her, but she sees not me" (II.i.73), further underlines the disparity in their positions and Dido's remoteness from all that is not grand or splendid.

Ignoring her sex, Marlowe then proceeds to build her up as the traditionally great and magnanimous prince and, showing a seemingly impressive disregard for stereotypes, he gives her all the noble qualities usually reserved solely for men. In her speech with Aeneas, she is stately and dignified and displays a princely generosity as she moves to give the hero her own seat: "Thy fortune may be greater than thy birth. / Sit down, Aeneas, sit in Dido's place" (II.i.90-1). When she proposes a toast to the betterment of Aeneas' fortune, "...Be merry man. / Here's to thy better fortune and good stars" (II.i.97-8), she is very much his equal, one great leader drinking with another. Her sharp dismissal of Aeneas' grief and humbleness, "Remember who thou are. Speak like thyself. / Humility belongs to common grooms" (II.i.100-101), indicates her contempt for the traditional womanly virtues of meekness, modesty,

silence, and obedience. Her impatience with Aeneas' pain and emotion as he tells of the fall of Troy reveals her as courageous and scornful of characteristically female displays of tears and sadness.

As well as giving her these traditionally male virtues, Marlowe portrays her as valuing her sovereignty which she struggles to preserve by spurning her suitors. To marry means relinquishing her independence, and her relationship with Iarbas shows how she delays his suit while carefully avoiding giving offence. When Iarbas becomes too persistent, "But Dido is the favor I request" (III.i.18), Dido's reply, "Fear not, Iarbas; Dido may be thine" (III.i.19), contains the perfect mixture of promise and lack of definite commitment. She does not wish to anger him, since he is a powerful prince, but she clearly has little intention of surrendering herself to him either. After she falls in love with Aeneas, her words again emphasize how she has earlier rejected her suitors in order to retain her freedom. Telling him, "Aeneas, think not Dido is in love, / For if that any man could conquer me, / I had been wedded ere Aeneas came" (III.i.135-37), she chronicles all the men she has refused and concludes with a direct reference to her independence, "Yet none obtained me; I am free from all" (III.i.152). She is a queen and a ruler in her own right and, until she is wounded by Cupid, she avoids marriage because it leads to a loss of power and authority.

Marlowe seems to have sympathetically created the type of woman most feared by the Renaissance. She is independent, in control,

and is as impressive, clever, and courageous as any male prince. And unlike Clarynda and Lucilla in Greene's and Lyly's works, she does not abuse her freedom but shows herself equal to it, ruling her kingdom efficiently and well. But, as Barbara Baines points out, while their relationship starts out with a seemingly interesting role reversal, with Dido in control and Aeneas a suppliant, it soon reverts back to a more traditional structure (4). Dido falls in love with Aeneas and "she relinquishes her power and her sense of self-control" (Baines 4). All her high eminence, all her glory, are then placed at the disposal of Aeneas, and like the traditional women of Renaissance literature she becomes completely dependent on a man for her happiness, equating Aeneas with everything of importance in her world.

Unlike Bel-imperia, who chooses her own lover and never shows signs of becoming enslaved to Cupid, once Dido falls in love there is no chance of her retaining her independence. This suggests a fundamental difference between Marlowe's and Kyd's portrayals of the two strong women. While Dido's words to Aeneas, "...think not Dido is in love, / For if that any man could conquer me, / I had been wedded ere Aeneas came" (III.i.135-37), underline her previous desire for autonomy, they also reveal Marlowe's conception of a proper male-female relationship. Not only does he make Dido see love immediately in terms of marriage, but he also cannot picture a situation where she might fall in love and retain her sovereignty over her self and her kingdom. For Dido, to love means subjection, to be, in Balthazar's terms, the conquest of the conqueror. This

implies that Dido rules Carthage (as Elyot so ingenuously puts it in The Defence of Good Women) by virtue of behaving in no way like a woman. Since Marlowe believes Dido will assume a purely subordinate role in a relationship with a man, he forces her to deny her female sexuality in order to rule successfully. When she falls in love, she immediately loses to Aeneas her pride, her dignity, and her liberty and becomes "woman-like" in her passive dependence and her disregard for anything but the Trojan Prince.

Kyd, on the other hand, shows a much richer and less conventional understanding of women's sexuality, depicting both how Bel-imperia uses her physical attractiveness to insult and manipulate Balthazar and how her sense of liberty is tied to her sexuality. It is neither a burden to her nor is it something to be suppressed; rather it is closely linked to her sense of self as she asserts her independence by asserting her right as a woman to choose her own lovers. Unlike Dido, she does not have to deny her passions as a woman to remain autonomous, and when she falls in love, she does not become a passive subject of her lover but remains his equal. For Kyd, a woman can be female and strongly independent at the same time; for Marlowe the two are opposites which can never be reconciled.

Marlowe further undercuts Dido's initially impressive impact through his satire of her love for Aeneas. In their interpretations of the play, numerous critics examine the clash between female love and male honour and argue about the degree of

sympathy with which Marlowe portrays Dido's feelings for the Trojan Prince. J. B. Steane, who feels that the play contains "a glorying in romantic love" (29), comments on the tension between the woman's Lotus land-like world of love and Aeneas' desire to achieve great things (38). Sara Munson Deats claims that Marlowe is split between the Ovidian version of the Dido myth, where love is elevated above honour, and the Vergilian version, where duty and honour are set up as the most important values ("The Dialectic of Gender" 14). Through the play, she argues, Marlowe cannot integrate the two sides into a whole and leaves the division unresolved ("The Dialectic of Gender" 17). Leonora Brodwin, who believes that the dual attitude towards love in the play arises from Marlowe's later revisions (148),³ argues that Dido's love is sympathetic but eventually rejected by Aeneas because she will not surrender her "sovereign will" (141). Roger Stilling argues that the play powerfully depicts the healing powers of love. Aeneas comes to Carthage unmanned by the death and carnage in the fall of Troy, and Dido's generous love gives him back his sense of self (Stilling 46). The last two acts depict the conflict between the private Aeneas, reborn through love, and the public Aeneas who will go on to found Rome (Stilling 51). By admitting that while his actions hurt him he must leave Dido, he finally manages to acknowledge both sides of himself (Stilling 54). With questionable accuracy, Stilling even manages to claim that Dido's final thoughts of Aeneas are selfless (55), thus depicting the utter generosity of

her love.

But despite these critics' insistence on seeing some sort of clash between love and honour, there is very little in the play to suggest that Marlowe does not almost consistently denigrate Dido's love, nor is there much to indicate that there is a great deal of actual conflict between female love and male honour. Instead, the play illustrates in a characteristically Renaissance way both the extreme power of love and its negative impact on honour, dignity, and independence. There seems to be little clash between Aeneas' commitment to his grand destiny and Dido's absorption with love because Marlowe rarely portrays Dido's love, in itself, with much sympathy. He depicts her love more often as something silly rather than grand and sympathetic, and this leaves slight chance for tension between the two. In fact, Marlowe undercuts both Dido and her love before her passionate desire even comes into direct conflict with Aeneas' glorious destiny as founder of Rome.

Stilling's most telling argument in claiming that Marlowe idealizes love is that it is Dido's speeches, not Aeneas' words on heroic virtue, which seem to move Marlowe to the greatest poetical beauty and effort, giving love tragedy a truly heroic quality (54). But as Robert Logan points out in his essay "The Sexual Attitudes of Marlowe and Shakespeare," what inspires Marlowe's poetry is not an urge to movingly depict Dido in love but a desire to capture the extreme, overwhelming strength of her passion (5).⁴ Thus one of Dido's most famous speeches in the play has the Queen describing her love in purely material terms. She makes a long list of what

she will give up to keep Aeneas' love:

Aeneas, I'll repair thy Trojan ships,
 Conditionally that thou wilt stay with me
 And let Achates sail to Italy.
 I'll give thee tackling made of rivelled gold,
 Wound on the barks of odoriferous trees,
 Oars of massy ivory, full of holes
 Though which the water shall delight to play

 For ballace, empty Dido's treasury.
 Take what ye will, but leave Aeneas here,

(III.i.112-26)

and her emphasis is on what love is worth. There is nothing deeply poignant about Dido's feelings because Marlowe gives no spiritual depth or humanity to them.⁵ His poetic commitment to love in this speech is more a fascination with the awe-inspiring power of love, which makes Dido willing to relinquish all the beauties and riches of her kingdom in order to keep Aeneas, rather than any interest in love as a sympathetic emotion and need.

In the same way, Marlowe depicts Jupiter's passion for Ganymede in brilliantly lyrical but emotionally hollow images. Jupiter, like Dido, describes his love in terms of the fantastical things he will do to make Ganymede happy:

From Juno's bird I'll pluck her spotted pride
 To make thee fans wherewith to cool thy face,
 And Venus' swans shall shed their silver down
 To sweeten out the slumbers of thy bed,

(I.i.34-7)

but there is little suggestion of what Ganymede means in emotional terms to Jupiter, only the long category of gestures each more fabulous than the last that Jove will make to illustrate his love. Ironically, one of the few suggestions of a truly sympathetic feeling of love lies in Aeneas' words before he leaves Dido, "O queen of Carthage, wert thou ugly black, / Aeneas could not choose but hold thee dear. / Yet must he not gainsay the gods' behest" (V.i.125-27). Quite shorn of poetry or excess, they ring true in their brief sincerity and suggest by comparison that brilliant and beautiful poetry does not necessarily provide depth or feeling to an expression of love.

So while Stilling may be accurate in claiming that Marlowe's treatment of love tends to be more poetic than his writing on Aeneas' noble destiny, it does not mean that these passages portray love as a legitimate and sympathetic emotional state. In fact, Marlowe's fascinated concern with the power of love ties in very well with conventional Renaissance beliefs about physical passion.⁶ Vives emphasizes the extreme strength of love and, at the same time, views love with profound suspicion and distrust. There is his acknowledgement of love as one of the greatest and most disruptive forces in the world and then his corresponding

denigration of love because of his hostility towards its overwhelming influence.

In the same way, running alongside Marlowe's lyrical depiction of love's power and its fantastic excesses, there is a corresponding and consistent ridiculing of love which deflates Dido's passion before it even begins to conflict with Aeneas' male honour. The first two acts, which Deats believes establish the sympathetic, romantic view of love later to clash with the Vergilian emphasis on honour,⁷ actually do nothing of the sort. The initial scene of Jupiter cavorting with Ganymede may undercut Aeneas' pretensions of being the glorious instrument of the gods (Deats, "The Dialectic of Gender" 15),⁸ but even more strikingly, it provides an early introduction to both the strength and the foolishness of love. Not only does Jupiter's passion make him vow to clasp Juno in golden bracelets and dangle her from the heavens if she persists in tormenting Ganymede, it also makes him promise to allow the boy to "Control proud fate and cut the thread of time" (I.i.29). But against the mighty sovereignty of love, Marlowe forces the reader to consider the absurdity obvious in the scene, as the great Jupiter sits dandling this grinning "sweet wag" on his knee, carelessly promising, as tokens of his affection, control of the heavens. And, further undermining the romanticism of the scene is Ganymede's realistic and comic description of the effects of Juno's jealousy, "She reached me such a rap for that I spilled, / As made the blood run down about mine ears" (I.i.7-8), which introduces a prosaic note noticeably out of place amidst the lofty language of

the scene.

More importantly, Marlowe's depiction of Dido in love stresses just how ridiculous and absurd her fancy is and makes it evident that love has little of the stature that Marlowe gives to Aeneas' great destiny as the colonizer of Italy. Critics point to such things as the Iarbas-Anna subplot and the nurse's foolish infatuation with Cupid as evidence of Marlowe's deflation of love, but the most significant element in the play is the way in which he portrays Dido herself. The fact that she is the dupe of Venus and Juno naturally diminishes the import and significance of her feelings but is not necessarily important since Marlowe takes this idea straight from Vergil. However, Marlowe, unlike Vergil, makes her love look comic, not tragic. The playwright creates a hilarious picture of Dido sitting with Cupid and struggling with her passion. She repulses Iarbas, calls him back, rejects him again, and then cries, in a final culmination of the frenzied irrationality brought on by love:

No; live Iarbas. What hast thou deserved
That I should say thou art no love of mine?
Something thou hast deserved. Away I say!
Depart from Carthage. Come not in my sight.

(III.i.41-4)

Love, in the typical Renaissance fashion, deprives her of her dignity and self-restraint and turns her into a figure of fun, fighting, as she does, with immoderate, unreasonable fancy.

Marlowe's satirical portrait of her love continues through the

rest of the act, as Dido veers comically from one extreme to another, from loving Aeneas intensely to trying farcically to conceal her passion. When Aeneas remarks innocently, "O, happy shall he be whom Dido loves" (III.i.167), Dido twists herself into a knot of broad hints and passionate denials:

Then never say that thou art miserable,
Because it may be thou shalt be my love.
Yet boast not of it, for I love thee not.
And yet I hate thee not....

(III.i.168-171)

When they finally meet in the cave, there is little if anything that is dignified or glorious in their avowals of love. It is supposed to be the final, splendid moment of the consummation of their love, the moment when, as Stilling would say, Dido demonstrates "the life-giving generosity of eros" (46) and gives him back a sense of himself (46). But it is little more than a comical joke, featuring a Dido who is very far removed from her earlier princely stature. After broadly hinting that she loves him, Dido cries, "And I must perish in his [the man she loves] burning arms. / Aeneas, O Aeneas, quench these flames" (III.iv.21-2), and she presumably hurtles herself into Aeneas' embrace. But all an extremely puzzled and shocked Aeneas can manage is to ask, "What ails my queen? Is she fall'n sick of late?" (III.iv.23), and his uncomprehending words reduce her bold gesture of love to the level of broad comical farce. Dido does not help to redeem the situation by her oscillation between shame and desire:

And yet I'll speak. And yet I'll hold my peace.

Do shame her worst, I will disclose my grief.

Aeneas thou art he. What did I say?

Something it was that now I have forgot.

(III.iv.26-9)

Aeneas' vow of undying love which eventually follows is flat compared to the earlier undignified hilarity of the scene, and even Dido's words, as she triumphs loudly in her love, do little to give the scene much glory or splendour. She cries:

What more than Delian music do I hear!

That calls my soul from forth his living seat

To move unto the measures of delight!

Kind clouds that sent forth such a courteous storm

As made disdain to fly to fancy's lap!

(III.iv.51-5)

Her words are more comical in their exaggerated, excited jubilation than either nobly elevated or genuinely passionate.⁹

This comical portrayal of Dido's love undercuts her later passion and grief at Aeneas' departure, for Marlowe has already suggested that while her feelings are strong, they are also absurd, making her behave in a way more conducive to laughter than tears. The fundamental silliness of love is further emphasized, as even Stilling concedes, by the triple death at the end of the play. Dido dies with seeming magnificence, but Iarbus' and Anna's rapid suicides, as they both call "I come to thee," tend to diminish her moment of glory and make the whole idea of dying for love appear

rather silly.¹⁰

As well as ridiculing Dido's passionate love, Marlowe does not treat Dido's oscillation between love and honour seriously enough to move his portrayal of the Queen beyond the traditional stereotype which claims women are governed purely by their passions. Deats points out that Marlowe actually diminishes Vergil's portrayal of Dido's internal conflict, "A feminist drama, not assuming Dido's inevitable surrender to passion, would have highlighted the queen's psychomachia between love and honour, passion and power, an element prominent in Virgil but minimized by Marlowe" ("The Dialectic of Gender" 18), while Baines goes even further, claiming that Marlowe, unlike Vergil, is interested only in Aeneas' struggle between passion and duty and that he uses Dido only to act as a hindrance and temptation to Aeneas (4-5).

In fact contrary to both Deats' and Baines' claims, Marlowe does at least attempt to develop the clash within Dido between love and honour, but he makes the conflict comical and this, more than a debate over the depth of her internal struggle, reveals his attitude towards the play's heroine. Unlike Aeneas, whose dilemma is essentially serious, Dido's attempts to fight love's usurpation of her reason are portrayed as a joke. Marlowe turns her struggle to abide by her honour into something laughable. She says she loves Aeneas, then quickly says she does not, and then says she does again and then feigns indifference. All these rapid vacillations suggest that the very notion of a woman struggling between honour and love is an impossible jest, something to be

treated humorously and lightly. This attitude finds ultimate expression in the moment when Dido, after a series of coy hints which leave Aeneas unmoved, abandons all pretence of modesty and throws herself into the astonished Trojan Prince's arms. His shocked reaction and Dido's sudden retreat into a frenzy of modesty warring with passion provide the climax to a hilarious and undignified scene. Despite the fact that Dido Queen of Carthage is supposed to be a tragedy, there is nothing to suggest that Marlowe perceives her plight as anything but funny.

Further, as Deats points out, Marlowe makes it quite clear from the moment Cupid wounds Dido that the outcome of the battle between love and honour is a foregone conclusion, and instead of exploring Dido's early concerns in any sincere way, he depends on the comical, conventional struggle between shameful modesty and passion to provide the focus of the scene. The only conflict he chooses to present lies in his amusing depiction of a passionate Dido torn between desire and modest discretion. "O, here he comes!" she cries as she sees Aeneas approach, "Love, love, give Dido leave / To be more modest than her thoughts admit, / Lest I be made a wonder to the world" (III.i.93-5). She is very much the conventional woman, overwhelmed by love but restrained by a sense of modesty that is based more on concern about what others will think than on any genuine virtue.

Marlowe does not even give her the stature and dignity of a woman worried about relinquishing her autonomy and her power to Aeneas. Since, in the traditional Renaissance way, her honour is

represented solely by her modesty and her chastity, Dido's only problem lies in making her love known without looking bold, and Marlowe capitalizes on the satirical potential of her dilemma in much the same way that Greene deals with his heroines. Like the virtuous Mamillia who spouts two pages of rhetoric to prove that she wishes to remain a virgin to the death and then promptly betrays her true feelings with an unintentional slip-up, the comical Dido does the same thing as she asserts her love and then hastily contradicts it. She gives a long speech about the riches with which she will present Achates if he will leave Aeneas behind, and then, alarmed by her impropriety, rushes to claim, "Aeneas think not Dido is in love" (III.i.135). Both of the portrayals rest on the Renaissance belief that women really had very little honour; their natural tendency towards unrestrained passion then renders any show of modesty fair game, since it is more a facade adopted for appearance's sake than a genuine love of virtuous chastity.

But while Marlowe presents the love-honour conflict within Dido as a joke, Aeneas' internal struggle is never anything but important. This fundamental difference underscores the stereotypical nature of the two characters. Unlike his treatment of Dido, Marlowe creates a strong picture of the way in which honour and love are warring within Aeneas. In the most erotic lines of the play, the Trojan describes the strength and intensity of the physical passion he feels for Dido:

'Come back. Come back,' I hear her cry afar,
 'And let me link thy body to my lips,
 That, tied together by the striving tongues,
 We may sail as one into Italy,'

(IV.iii.27-30)

while at the same time, he reveals his strong feelings of humiliation and degradation at the power Dido exerts over him, "Her silver arms will coll me round about /...And every speech be ended with a kiss. / I may not dure this female drudgery" (IV.iv.51-5). His conflict between a desire to surrender to Dido's love, as she has to his, and his masculine rejection of such base enslavement to any woman, is, while not developed to any great extent, certainly not portrayed as an amusing jape."

Act Five emphasizes the serious gravity of Aeneas' situation and the essentially dignified way he deals with the problem. He tells Dido of Jupiter's order to leave, "I am commanded by immortal Jove / To leave this town and pass to Italy, / And therefore must of force" (V.i.99-101); but he also reveals how it will wound him to leave her, "Not from my heart, for I can hardly go. / And yet I may not stay. Dido farewell" (V.i.103-04). He then proceeds to disregard her hysterical pleas and her angry recriminations with a calm, steadfast dignity that shows his manly allegiance to honour. Simultaneously, Anna's description of his hasty flight, "...he, clapped under hatches, sailed away" (V.i.240), suggests how difficult his departure is for him. Even Dido's best lines accusing him of abandoning her out of self-interest, "It is Aeneas

calls Aeneas hence" (V.i.132), are shown to be obviously false, since Marlowe makes a point of introducing Mercury at the beginning of the scene.

The important difference between Aeneas' struggle and Dido's evidently rests in Marlowe's implicit belief that for Dido honour is only a superficial--and unconvincing--commitment to modesty, while for Aeneas honour is an integral part of his being. Thus Dido's struggle with love is perceived as humorous, since the outcome is assured, while Aeneas' battle with love is never less than serious. This widely varying expectation of the type of conduct expected from women and that expected from men accounts for the apparent clash in the play between Dido's "female" love and Aeneas' "male" honour. Critics such as Stilling and Deats discuss the degree of sympathy with which Marlowe portrays Dido's love and the extent to which the dramatist wishes to undercut Aeneas' heroic pretensions, but none of them suggests that Marlowe judges these two characters by completely different standards, in a way which eliminates any external conflict between love and honour. Dido helplessly laments Aeneas' betrayal, and she gains particular sympathy when she cries:

Had I a son by thee, the grief were less,
That I might see Aeneas in his face.
Now if thou goest, what canst thou leave behind
But rather will augment then ease my woe?

(V.i.149-52)

Since she is a woman, Marlowe can portray her love and utter

dependence on Aeneas and her traditional desire to be his wife and a mother to his children positively.

However, Aeneas, as a man, must follow a completely different code of behaviour, and Marlowe clearly indicates that for Aeneas to love Dido as she loves him is to be trapped in ignoble slavery. In Act Four, Aeneas attempts to throw off "this female drudgery" (IV.iv.55), only to slink ignominiously back to face an infuriated Dido. His patent foolishness, as he sheepishly tries to think up lies to justify his behaviour, does not, as Stilling claims, ridicule his "anti-romantic, soldierly" conception of honour (53); rather it derides his inability to live up to true standards of proper male conduct. He is an absurd figure precisely because he stands before this enraged woman and instead of courageously telling her he wishes to leave, he mumbles feeble lies and attempts base appeasement. Dido's imperious command, "Fair sister Anna, lead my lover forth / And, seated on my jennet, let him ride / As Dido's husband through the Punic streets" (IV.iv.65-7), underlines the extent to which he has lost both self-respect and independence, how he has become, as Brodwin puts it, Dido's "toy" being proudly "paraded" through the streets of Carthage (141). Aeneas' and Achates' resentful complaints, which are all they can manage in Dido's haughty presence, call pitiless attention to their shameful humiliation. Achates mutters, "Aeneas, for his parentage, deserves / As large a kingdom as is Libya" (IV.iv.79-80), which the Trojan Prince rather fatuously echoes, "Ay, and unless the destinies be false, / I shall be planted in as rich a land"

(IV.iv.81-2). They are both like sullen, chastised boys, not quite daring to fully voice their opposition.

As Marlowe portrays him, Aeneas is contemptible because he has relinquished his independence to a woman, and the only way for him to regain both the reader's and his own self-respect is to throw off the servile yoke of Dido's control. In the Fifth Act, he receives the message from Jupiter and steadfastly embarks on his divine mission to colonize Italy. He no longer appears foolish because, confident in his new sense of self-worth and dignity, he does not have to walk gingerly around Dido but tells her that duty and a glorious future call him from her. There is never any real conflict, for there is never a moment when Marlowe suggests that a passionate, all-engulfing type of love would be acceptable for Aeneas. While Dido gives all to love and remains sympathetic, it would be pitiful and rather embarrassing for Aeneas to stay behind to spend the rest of his life trundling through town on a meek Spanish palfrey instead of roaring through Italy on the back of a great war-horse. An entirely different standard of behaviour prevails for a male hero, and when one considers that Marlowe makes the consummation of Dido's love appear more comical than soaring or sublime and that he does not allow her the dignity of a sole, magnificent death, it is evident that he regards love as something of a poor second to honour or to power.

The vast gulf between what Marlowe considers acceptable behaviour for a woman and a great princess and a man and a splendid hero leads into the wider question of Marlowe's attitude towards Dido's

relationship to Aeneas. Brodwin and Baines take seemingly irreconcilable positions about Marlowe's portrayal of the interaction between Dido and Aeneas. The Carthagian Queen, claims Baines, is the type of passive, pathetic woman typical of Marlowe, "One of the most obvious limitations of Marlowe's dramatic art is his flat characterization of women: his female characters have no vital, fully developed identity. Lacking independent judgement and self-esteem, Marlowe's women become helpless victims of their love for men" (3). Brodwin, on the other hand, argues that "Dido is willing to give everything she has to Aeneas but herself and that which most defines her, her sovereign will" (141); and she believes that Dido loses Aeneas as a result of her imperious insistence on her sovereignty and seigniory over him (142). While these viewpoints seem widely disparate, they are not at all irreconcilable. The two critics' seemingly opposing interpretations suggest that Marlowe's portrayal of Dido has its roots in the traditionally dichotomous view of women in which they are perceived as sympathetic when they are the long suffering, passive victims of men and seen as threatening when they are powerful and sexually aggressive. In his picture of Dido, Marlowe shows himself veering between these polar opposites, positive towards Dido when she is helpless and dependent, suspicious and distrustful when she attempts to assert her power over Aeneas.

When Dido falls in love with Aeneas, she becomes, as Baines asserts, a passive character, who while sympathetic, has relinquished "her power and her sense of self-control" (4). In

loving Aeneas, she becomes entirely dependent on him for her happiness and her well-being, and her whole world begins to centre on him. After Cupid wounds her, Dido's words indicate how Aeneas has become the god of sensual passion whom she will lovingly devote her life to worshipping:

His glistening eyes shall be my looking-glass,
 His lips an altar, where I'll offer up
 As many kisses as the sea hath sands.
 Instead of music I will hear him speak.
 His looks shall be my only library,
 And thou, Aeneas, Dido's treasury.

(III.i.85-90)

This idolizing submission to Aeneas is representative of her actions through the play, and they make Brodwin's contention that Dido will not relinquish herself or her sovereignty to Aeneas appear highly doubtful.¹² After Aeneas tries to steal away, Dido, in quittance of her jealousy, gives him the rule of Carthage, "Wear the imperial crown of Libya. / Sway thou the Punic scepter in my stead, / And punish me, Aeneas, for this crime" (IV.iv.34-6). For Dido, giving up her crown and her sovereignty, giving up all her wealth and her power, is a price she will gladly pay to keep Aeneas. At the same time, she does not just try to buy and possess him for her own satisfaction, as Mary Smith claims (42). There is no suggestion that she holds back any part of herself from him and her later indecisiveness, as she struggles to decide whether she should sink Aeneas' ships and risk his anger or leave them afloat.

and risk his escape, illustrates how she ties everything of value to him. She says, "Armies of foes resolved to win this town, /...Affright me not; only Aeneas' frown / Is that which terrifies poor Dido's heart" (IV.iv.113-16). Her words indicate how entirely dependent she is on Aeneas' slightest whim, where the mere thought of his being annoyed with her is enough to fill her with despair.

But while it is acceptable for Dido to love Aeneas, Marlowe follows the traditional Renaissance belief that for Aeneas, a man, to surrender to love for a woman is a degrading humiliation. Aeneas' reluctance to commit himself utterly to Dido arises from the implicit assumption that women are in some way inferior to men, a belief Marlowe illustrates in the soldiers' grumbling to Aeneas. Ilioneus' words capture what Baines terms the contrast between "feminine love and masculine endeavour" (5):

Will Dido raise old Priam from his grave
And build the town again the Greeks did burn?
No, no; she cares not how we sink or swim,
So she may have Aeneas in her arms,

(Iv.iii.39-42)

and underline the perceived difference between the aspirations of Dido the woman, and Aeneas, the man. However suitable such love might be for Dido, it is demeaning to Aeneas.

But in loving the Trojan Prince, Dido expects him to return her feelings just as completely, and her insistence on his complete surrender to love, and thereby to herself, accounts for all the images of Dido's possession of Aeneas (noted by Brodwin) which are

simultaneously intertwined with pictures of her complete submission. From the start of their relationship, Marlowe makes it evident that Aeneas' love for Dido means a loss of his identity and independence. Dido promises to yield up her authority and her rule to him, "...in mine arms make thy Italy, / Whose crown and kingdom rests at thy command" (III.iv.56-7), but her joyful words that follow portend a loss for Aeneas of his name, his heroic lineage, and his identity as the son of Anchises, "Sichaeus, not Aeneas be thou called, / The king of Carthage, not Anchises' son" (III.iv.59-60). This dual picture of Dido's love as both submissive and devouring suggests how Marlowe can at once sympathize with her love while believing that for Aeneas to return it in the same passionate fashion entails inglorious subjection. Even when Dido clearly surrenders control of herself to Aeneas, she is still perceived by Aeneas (and by Marlowe) as being unendurably possessive.

The more Aeneas falls in love with her, the more he begins to relinquish control of his self to Dido, and thus the images of possession gain form and potency as their relationship develops. The Prince's passionate rejection of Dido (Iv.iii.51-55) captures the sense of how he is attracted to her and simultaneously stifled and entrapped by her all-engulfing love. The sensuality in Aeneas' choice of words, "silver arms" and "tears of pearl," indicate his intense awareness of Dido's physical beauty, but his description of her arms "colling" him about suggests how, even as she kisses him, she is quite literally choking the life and spirit out of him. It is not just that he will give up "masculine endeavour" for

"feminine love" (Baines 50), it is that by following love, as Dido does, he would have to set up a woman as the centre of his world and the reason for his happiness. This is the "female drudgery" that means, essentially, subjection to a woman and that arouses the fear that underlies all the images of Dido's possessiveness.

The sheer ignominy of "female drudgery" becomes clear in the next scene when Aeneas and Achates slink back to face the wrath of the Queen. Aeneas' lack of resolution and of decisive planning results in a humiliating situation where he will be "paraded," as Brodwin puts it, through the streets on Dido's jennet, like her latest prize (Brodwin 14). But characteristic of Marlowe's portrayal of Dido, this moment of the Trojan's greatest embarrassment, the climax of his emasculation, is also the scene where Dido formally relinquishes her sovereignty to Aeneas and presents him with her crown and sceptre; the ride through the streets, which Brodwin rightfully sees as so demeaning, is actually meant to establish him as king. This suggests that a great deal of Aeneas' humiliation is psychological, not actual, the galling feeling of helpless impotency caused by being entirely dependent on a woman for his position and authority. There is no question that Dido gives him absolute rule, but Marlowe still presents her, at the same time, as ruling Aeneas, a symbolic suggestion that as long as Aeneas loves Dido as completely as she loves him, he surrenders up his manhood and falls into the role traditionally assigned to meek, submissive women. He becomes as weak, as helpless to assert himself as Dido herself and he looks ridiculous, for in allowing a woman to govern

his actions, he loses his stature as hero.

After the unlucky Aeneas leaves to ride through the streets, Dido's soliloquy perfectly captures the dual aspect of Marlowe's portrayal of the Queen, illustrating how he conceives of her as completely dependent on Aeneas while, at the same time, he sees her as dragging the Trojan Prince into base servitude through her insistence that he commit himself to her fully. She observes how the thought of Aeneas' frown makes her tremble, and her famous passage: "If he forsake me not, I never die, / For in his looks I see eternity, / And he'll make me immortal with a kiss" (IV.iv.121-23) shows how she has made her physical love for Aeneas her heaven. But again, even while he makes her sympathetic as the woman who is entirely dependent on the Trojan Prince, in the same scene Marlowe portrays her love as stifling and imprisoning Aeneas. She resolves to keep him against his will, and when the lord returns with the ships' oars, tackling, and sails, she plans to destroy each of these items to ensure Aeneas' captivity. Her final words underline Aeneas' utter helplessness as her prisoner: "Instead of oars, let him use his hands / And swim to Italy. I'll keep these sure" (IV.iv.163-64). It is as though Marlowe must suggest, even in Dido's soliloquy, how her consuming love smothers Aeneas' independence. Her planned physical imprisonment of Aeneas mirrors what Marlowe, Aeneas, and Achates see as the psychological imprisonment of being absolutely in love with a woman. It is the "female drudgery," perceived by Aeneas earlier as surrendering to Dido's sexual appeal, literalized.

The fact that Dido is Aeneas' equal compounds Marlowe's stereotypically polarized response to the Queen. She is not a conventional woman, reduced to waiting for whatever Aeneas chooses to give her, but is free to demand his love as a right, a just return for all that she has given. This is the other side of the "female drudgery" Aeneas resents. While Marlowe initially presents Dido's princely behaviour in a positive light, her imperious strength and authority become a liability and a threat in her relationship with Aeneas. When she falls in love with the Prince, Marlowe begins to present her powerful position as a queen and a ruler in a consistently negative fashion. The scene in the cave with Aeneas derives most of its humour from the comical role reversal, where Dido, the woman, not Aeneas, is the aggressive suitor. When Dido gives Aeneas "These golden bracelets, and this wedding ring, / Wherewith my husband wooed me yet a maid" (III.iv.61-3), she thrusts the Prince into the incongruous role of timid virgin and establishes a relationship in which the bracelets and the ring suggest that Aeneas is bound to Dido like a woman. Dido's final words, "And be thou king of Libya by my gift" (III.iv.64), emphasize how, while she willingly relinquishes her authority and rule to Aeneas, he is King of Carthage solely through her generosity.

As the play continues, Aeneas becomes so deeply indebted to her that he loses the remainder of his pride and dignity. He is not degraded just by his love for Dido but by the humiliating and galling fact that he owes everything, his crown, his rule, his

repaired ship, even his rich clothes to Dido. The Queen appears at her least attractive and most threatening to Aeneas' self-respect when she arranges to have him ride through the streets as king, and Achates' and Aeneas' angry grumbling suggests the extent to which her power rankles. But Aeneas has not yet regained enough of his self-respect to throw off his "female drudgery," and Dido's furious response to his complaints, "Speak of no other land. This land is thine" (IV.iv.83), easily silences him. When Act Five opens, Aeneas seems to have recovered his dignity as he plans to rebuild the "petty walls" of Troy and rename it, in an assertion of his lofty descent, "Anchisaeon." However, Mercury's question, "Why, cousin, stand you building cities here / And beautifying the empire of this queen, / While Italy is clean out of thy mind?" (V.i.27-9), cuts through Aeneas' pleasant self-delusion and underlines the painful fact that no matter how Aeneas might phrase it, he is still glorifying the "empire of this queen" and not his own. Marlowe again emphasizes the degradation implicit in gaining one's power and sovereignty through a woman, and it is Mercury, reminding Aeneas of his and his son's great destiny, who returns his courage and self-respect to him and prompts him to behave in a honourable, manly fashion. His new-found confidence in himself allows him to face Dido and tell her the truth, and his act of leaving the Queen becomes not just a redemption of his honour by throwing off the "ticing dame's" physical enthrallment, but a thoroughly typical masculine assertion of his own greatness and independence. That Aeneas' uncomfortable sense of obligation to Dido culminates with

his realisation that he does not need to get his glory second-hand, humiliatingly doled out to him by a woman, underscores Marlowe's suspicion of Dido's power as a sovereign. He can portray her positively as long as she remains safely asexual, but when she embarks on a relationship with Aeneas she becomes a threat to the Prince's self-respect and must be completely excised from his life.

Edward II further demonstrates the passive and stereotypical role women play in Marlowe's drama. Isabella, like Dido, has the potential to be a forceful, subversive character. Victimized by her husband, she eventually takes a paramour and launches a successful attack on her husband's authority, overthrowing his sovereignty and taking the rule of the country into her own hands. But Marlowe does not take the trouble to develop her beyond shallow conventions and restricts her to two equally rigid roles, setting her up as a wronged woman in the first half of the play, sympathetic because Edward has denied her "her natural role" (Baines 14) in society, and then as the archetypally unnatural woman in the second half, a wife whose unlawful revolt against her husband transforms her into a cold-blooded monster. He rarely bothers to provide motivations for her actions or to explore her relationships with the two men in her life, Mortimer and Edward. At the same time, the play amply demonstrates how Marlowe, even when he portrays a "strong" woman, cannot create a female character who is truly independent, who has concerns and desires and feelings that are her own, not dictated to her by the various male characters. He always portrays her as subordinate and yielding to

the dominant man in her life, and he never shows her except as she appears in her relationships with men.

In "Edward II: A Study in Androgyny," Sara Deats argues that Isabella is one of the play's brilliant "ambiguous, androgynous characters whom we simultaneously esteem, pity, and condemn" ("Edward II" 31), and she claims that Isabella is actually a powerful, strong-minded woman who struggles to control and manipulate the men in her life. Her "Griselda mask fits loosely," occasionally slipping far enough to reveal "a forceful, disciplined calculating female" who seeks to "initiate and control actions around her" (Deats, "Edward II" 32). The problem with Deats' interpretation is she constructs her whole case for Isabella's androgyny on the possibility that the Queen might have been the source of Mortimer's plan to lure Gaveston back to England and assassinate him ("Edward II" 33). To fully accept Deats' argument, one has to overlook the fact that Marlowe is so uninterested in the Queen's role in the lords' political manoeuvring that he does not even take the trouble to describe Isabella's and Mortimer's whispered conference or to make it clear that the idea for Gaveston's murder originated with Isabella. Deats also expects the reader to give more credit to this one unverified possibility than to all of Isabella's soliloquies, soliloquies which establish her as a confused, miserable woman helplessly in love with a man who cares nothing for her. There is no real evidence that all of Isabella's meek submissiveness to her husband is a facade, that "she superbly performs the role of the conventional feminine ideal,

the patient Griselda" (Deats, "Edward" 32). When Isabella tells Mortimer that she will not return the King's hate with hate but will love him still, she might, in view of her later behaviour, be cleverly and shrewdly dissembling to win the lord's admiration and support. But her soliloquies reveal the same complete love for Edward and the same desire to win his affection. Her desperate words, "I must entreat him [Edward], I must speak him fair, / And be a means to call home Gaveston" (I.iv.183-84), do not suggest a concerted plan to subtly manipulate Edward by flattery but her despairing recognition of her utterly hopeless situation, in which she can win the King's regard only by aiding her hated rival.¹³

Marlowe gives no indication, then, that Isabella's grieving submission to Edward and her often pathetic attempts to please him are anything but genuine.¹⁴ In fact, the more passive, helpless, and wronged she is, the more positively Marlowe treats her. Through the first part of the play, Isabella enters only to bewail her husband's unkind treatment; consequently she stands as a highly sympathetic figure. Her words telling Mortimer how the king neglects her are pitifully plaintive:

...the king regards me not,

But dotes upon the love of Gaveston.

.....

And when I come, he frowns, as who should say,

'Go whither thou wilt, seeing I have Gaveston.'

(I.ii.49-54)

When Isabella begs Edward to acknowledge her as his wife, he

dismisses her with an indifferent cruelty, "Speak not unto her; let her droop and pine" (I.iv.162), that causes her great distress and establishes her as a forlorn, abandoned woman. When Edward later abuses her and then feigns kindness on the advice of Gaveston, Marlowe makes her pitifully eager to accept his insincere apology, "Your pardon is quickly got of Isabel" (II.ii.229). Even after her husband callously abandons her to flee from the barons and she begins to love Mortimer, she still resolves to give the King one more chance, observing, in a soliloquy that leaves no question of her sincerity, "In vain I look for love at Edward's hand, /...Yet once more I'll importune him with prayers" (II.iv.61-63).

The plan to let Gaveston return to England and then assassinate him is her only possible act of defiance (Deats, "Edward II" 33), and it is consistent with the actions of a weak, dependent woman who is doing everything she possibly can to win her husband's love without alienating him. She remains within her role of loving wife to Edward, still sympathetic because she wants only to gain her rightful place in the King's affections, not to challenge his authority. She also seems to suggest the assassination of Gaveston as a last resort, an aspect of the affair that Deats does not mention. Mortimer, straight from his secret parley with the Queen, immediately gains the sympathy and attention of the lords by dwelling on the ease with which they could deal with Gaveston if he were recalled to England, but he then goes on to point out that the French favourite might be suitably chastened by his exile, "...when he shall know it lies in us / To banish him and then to call him

home, / Twill make him vail the top-flag of his pride" (I.iv.274-76). His speech, despite its violent opening, makes it quite clear that he only advises murder if Gaveston persists with his arrogant behaviour, and this suggests that Isabella, far from being ruthless and cold-bloodedly indifferent to her husband's wishes, has made the best of a bad situation, successfully winning one final chance for the King and Gaveston to be together. Thus if she is the motivation behind Mortimer's sudden volte face, she has done no more than to exert her feminine powers positively, in an attempt to bring peace to the realm. The "coquettish blandishments" which Deats lavishes such a great deal of attention on ("Edward II" 33) are not so much an attempt to sexually manipulate Mortimer and the other barons as they are the traditional peace building actions of a woman who seeks to reconcile hostile parties through gentle compromise and mediation.

Her conventional, womanly role in the affair is particularly evident when Edward praises her powers of persuasion, "I'll hang a golden tongue about thy neck, / Seeing thou hast pleaded with so good success" (I.iv.327-8). Even in her joy at being welcomed by her husband, she does not neglect her role as mediator. She turns and makes a point of drawing the barons into the reconciliation, "My gentle lord, bespeak these nobles fair, / That wait attendance for a gracious look" (I.iv.336-37). While Isabella's later remark to Lancaster, "Look, Lancaster, how passionate he [Edward] is, / And still his mind runs on his minion" (II.ii. 3-4) might be, as Deats claims, a deliberate attempt to exacerbate the baron's rage

("Edward II" 33), her distress when the nobles and the King begin to quarrel again is genuine and poignant. Her despairing aside as the two parties begin to exchange fierce insults, "Ay me, poor soul, when these begin to jar" (II.ii.72), indicates how their anger disturbs her, and since she is speaking to herself, there is no reason to think that she is dissembling or coolly cultivating her Griselda mask. Her words generate great sympathy for a woman caught up in a violent struggle which she is powerless, despite her best efforts, to resolve.

But Marlowe portrays her sympathetically only as long as she remains within the patient wife mould, and when she challenges her husband's authority in the second half of the play, she becomes a treacherous, deceitful, and cold-blooded monster. Marlowe, unable, as Velma Richmond argues, to perceive Isabella as anything but an angel or a devil (37), turns her into an exaggerated caricature of her former self, a walking parody of her previous patient submission. The transformation is so complete and grotesque that she arouses only revulsion. Repenting of his rebellion against the King, Kent is the first to direct attention to her hypocrisy and falseness: "...for Mortimer / And Isabel do kiss while they conspire; / And yet she bears a face of love forsooth" (IV.v.21-22). This false pretence of love and gentleness, the elaborate charade of a cruel white devil, marks the remainder of Isabella's behaviour. Unlike Mortimer, she cannot be bad and cruel with an over-reaching, arrogant courage but challenges her husband in a low, base fashion, skulking behind a facade of patient obedience.

She plots Edward's death with Mortimer and then mouths pious words of concern, "...tell him that I labour all in vain / To ease his grief and work his liberty, / And bear him this as witness of my love" (V.ii.70-2). Even more hypocritically, she pretends to great worry for the King in front of her son, in order to keep the young prince on her side and under her control. Straight from plotting Edward's murder, she greets her son with a show of love and expresses her horror at the thought of the King's imprisonment. Strongly underscoring the depth of Marlowe's condemnation is the way in which the playwright introduces Isabella's presence even in the midst of the King's gruesome death and links the type of horrible cruelty embodied by Lightborn to Isabella, not to the Earl of March. The very heart of the evil in the murder scene and the reason for its brutal impact come from Lightborn's hypocrisy as he makes a sardonic mockery of love and loyalty, a hypocrisy mirrored by the seemingly submissive, concerned-wife pose adopted by Isabella. When Lightborn enters the King's cell, Marlowe draws a clear parallel between the murderer and Isabella and emphasizes how Lightborn builds on and follows Isabella's lies, taking his cue from her hypocrisy:

The queen sent me to see how you were used,
 For she relents at this your misery.
 And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears
 To see a king in this most piteous state?

(V.v.47-50)

Clearly her pretence of false concern equals the lying and sadistic

way in which Lightborn torments the King by pretending horrified outrage at his treatment--they are both inhuman hypocrites who plan murder while feigning friendship and humble love. Her crocodile tears and pained, worried cry to Matrevis, "And tell him [Edward] that I labour all in vain / To ease his grief and work his liberty" (V.ii.70-1), match Lightborn's viciously mocking pretence of heartbreak at the King's plight, "O speak no more, my lord; this breaks my heart. / Lie on this bed, and rest yourself awhile" (V.v. 70-1), while both go through elaborate, hypocritical protests in which they refuse to acknowledge that they plan to murder the King. Mortimer, on the other hand, is not mentioned in the scene until the murder is completed and Lightborn slain, and while this does not absolve him of responsibility, it relieves him in part of the smiling hypocrisy that makes the murder so unsettlingly grisly. Even though he dissembles about his intentions to Kent and hires Lightborn to carry out the murder, one remembers that, unlike Isabella, he never makes any secret of his hatred and contempt for Edward and bravely opposes the riotous King from the start.

The marked contrast between Mortimer's and Isabella's behaviour in defeat further underlines Marlowe's conventional attitude towards women, showing how he views Isabella as entirely irredeemable and despicable when she violates traditional standards of morality. Though Mortimer becomes callous, cruel, and Machiavellian, he nonetheless makes a glorious end. Scorning Isabella's attempts to intercede on his behalf, he reflects philosophically on his fall from Fortune's wheel and takes his

leave with the characteristic bravado and courage that made him sympathetic earlier, "Farewell, fair queen; weep not for Mortimer, / That scorns the world, and, as a traveler, / Goes to discover countries yet unknown" (V.vi.64-6). Isabella, however, gets no such lines and shows no such dauntless spirit. An emblem of dissembling falseness, she is not even impressive in the scope of her evil. She weeps frantically for Mortimer, then promptly stops when she sees that her grief is incriminating her. She passionately, desperately denies any involvement in Edward's death and displays a shameless, almost pathetic hypocrisy as she begs leave from her son to accompany Edward II's funeral procession, "Shall I not mourn for my beloved lord, / And with the rest accompany him to his grave?" (V.vi.87-8). She shows, first and foremost, a desire to save herself and her respectability at any cost, and only when her son abandons her and when she realises that her words are futile does she murmur lamely, "Then come, sweet death, and rid me of this grief" (V.vi.92). Even in her end, there is no magnificence, only cowardice and lying.

The very fact that Marlowe depicts so clearly Edward's brutal treatment of his wife only reinforces the message that it is wrong and unnatural for her to challenge traditional male authority under any circumstances. He creates a situation where it seems as though she must be justified in rebelling and then shows how merciless and cruel she becomes when she does. Isabella stands as a character similar to the abandoned Sultan's wife in Greene's Penelope's Web. Barmenissa meekly endures unkindness and abuse from her husband,

but, unlike Isabella, she never rebels, chides her son when he is angry with his father, and tells the Sultan of the lords' plan to assassinate his new wife. Isabella, faced with almost identical provocations and portrayed in her trials with identical sympathy, eventually challenges her husband and in doing so forfeits all of Marlowe's compassion. Like traditional Renaissance writers, he expects her to show almost impossible forbearance and then condemns her when she cannot live up to his standards.

The only sense in which Marlowe suggests that Edward deserves his wife's betrayal is the ironic way in which he implies that the rebellious Isabella is a monster of the King's own creation. Edward repels her, tells her to go to her lover Mortimer, and accuses her of inciting the barons to revolt. Eventually, she takes him at his word and behaves just as he continually claims she does. There is intentional poetic justice in that Isabella, unable to endure his indifferent and even cruel treatment of her, finally lives up to the nasty words and accusations which he had earlier hurled at her in his attempts to be unkind.

But apart from the ironic retribution which overtakes the King who denies his wife "her natural role," Marlowe depicts Isabella in a mercilessly black fashion and gives her no speeches and hence no chance to justify her behaviour. Deats argues that Isabella is an androgynous woman in the mould of the great tragic Greek queens like Clytemnestra and Medea ("Edward II" 31), but she neglects to point out that no matter how cruelly the women might behave, Aeschylus and Euripides give them powerful speeches of self-

justification. When Medea plans to murder her two children and her husband's new bride, Euripides movingly captures her feelings of outraged betrayal, having her speak of how she gave up everything for Jason only to have him abandon her when she could no longer be of use to him. But once Isabella chooses to rebel against her husband and king, she is not even allowed the right of self-vindication. In the beginning of the rebellion, she begins to defend herself by attacking Edward's rule, "Misgoverned kings are cause of all this wrack; / And, Edward, thou art one among them all / Whose looseness hath betrayed thy land to spoil" (IV.iv.9-11), but Mortimer chides her for being too woman-like in her angry passion. From then on, Marlowe gives little suggestion of her emotions and deprives her of the dignity of self-defence and expression. Even worse, by having her pretend that she does not mind what Edward has done to her, she loses all the sympathy that she won earlier and obscures the fact that she has a legitimate cause for grievance and anger. Instead of reinforcing her position with a clear articulation of her wrongs, she sinks into the role of a hypocrite whose every word is greeted with suspicion and distrust.

At the same time, Marlowe's depiction of Isabella shows an unwillingness or inability on the playwright's part to separate Isabella from her relationships with men. Some critics, points out Deats, complain that Isabella's transformation from patient wife to unnatural rebel is unconvincing and is inconsistently maintained;¹⁵ others argue that Marlowe lays the foundations for the Queen's

change of character in her early behaviour.¹⁶ While Isabella evolves from the archetypal "good" woman to the traditional "bad" woman with very little explanation from Marlowe, the dramatist's portrayal is consistent in that he depicts her as dependent on the male characters around her. Making her a figure who rarely functions as an individual in her own right, she spends her time attempting to please the men in her life. In the first half of the play, she devotes all her energies to lamenting her husband's cruelty and trying to win back his love, and in the second half, she shows herself almost equally absorbed by Mortimer and her son. When the Earl of March warns her of the threat Edward poses to their security, her answer reveals her indifference to the rule of the realm and suggests how she sees herself purely in terms of her love:

Sweet Mortimer, the life of Isabel,
 Be thou persuaded that I love thee well,
 And therefore, so the prince my son be safe,
 Whom I esteem as dear as these mine eyes,
 Conclude against his father what thou wilt,
 And I will willingly subscribe.

(V.ii.15-20)

Like Dido, she has no concerns and no self apart from the man to whom she has given her love. Though she ends up looking more despicable in her hypocrisy than Mortimer, Marlowe indicates her fundamental helplessness when he has the Earl gloat over the control he wields over her, "The prince I rule, the queen do I

command" (V.iv.48).¹⁷ Mortimer uses her and her love to gain the power that he desires, and as long as she keeps him, there is no sign that Isabella has any qualms about relinquishing everything to his command.

Marlowe also gives Isabella no clear-cut motive for murdering Edward apart from a shadowy and largely undeveloped love for Mortimer, a lacuna which both emphasizes Isabella's lack of individual characterization and her weakness. Deats argues that Isabella's passionate speech to the troops reveals that her rebellion arises out of vengeful "animosity toward her once-beloved husband" ("Edward II" 34), not love for Mortimer or her son. Even if this is the case, Marlowe never develops the idea and leaves her motivation sketchy. He does not suggest that her sense of honour as a woman has been outraged by Edward's treatment of her, that she wishes to help her country or that she has been overwhelmed by passionate desire for Mortimer. The only direct reason she gives for murdering Edward is brief and characteristically oriented towards the men in her life. She wonders, "But, Mortimer, as long as he [Edward II] survives, / What safety rests for us or for my son?" (V.ii.42-3), and this prompts the Earl to suggest that they have the king assassinated. Isabella's words are curiously lacking in any feeling of personal hatred against her husband; there is just her fear that Edward, aided by his brother, might challenge her position with Mortimer and deprive her son of his new honours. The only picture of Isabella that emerges from beneath the unnatural, cold-blooded monster who defies her husband is an image

of a weak, dependent woman who transfers all her energy and her single-minded love from her husband to Mortimer and her son. It is certainly difficult to imagine her as assertive, forceful, and independent as Deats claims.

Isabella's end stands as the perfect paradigm of her dependent behaviour through the play. While Mortimer justifies his death as entirely worthwhile and claims that it will give him new chances to increase his honour and satisfy his ambition, Isabella sees her defeat in terms of a terrifying loss of male support and approval. First she frantically begs for Mortimer's life and then when she realises that her words are turning her son against her, she tries, at least, to keep him from hating her, crying, "That rumour [of her part in the murder of Edward II] is untrue; for loving thee, / Is this report raised on poor Isabel" (V.vi.74-5). When he rejects her, she tries with pitiful hypocrisy to reclaim her identity as Edward's wife, begging to be allowed to "...mourn for my beloved lord, / And with the rest accompany him to his grave" (V.vi.87-8). Failing in this, she tries one last time to assert herself as Edward III's mother. It is only when she is convinced of the futility of her pleas that she begs for death. Her words suggest how she derives her identity and her sense of being from her relationships with men. With no Mortimer left and no recognition as a wife or a mother, her life quite literally loses all meaning and she fades out of sight.

Marlowe, then, shows himself unable to portray woman in anything but a conventional sense. He makes Dido and Isabella sympathetic

when they stay within the limits rigidly prescribed by Elizabethan society, but treats them in a traditionally negative fashion if they overstep the bounds of proper behaviour. His female characters oscillate between being the conventional women who equate their husbands with everything of value in their life and the bad women who are eyed with hostility because they pose a threat to male honour or traditional authority. Most significantly, Marlowe cannot seem to depict strength in a female character whether she is archetypally "good" or "bad". When Dido and Isabella bemoan their husbands' cruelty, they are sympathetic, but they are never impressive since they look weak and helplessly dependent on others for their happiness. Conversely, when Isabella becomes the typical "masculine" woman, usurping the rightful authority of her husband, she still seems feeble and at times almost pathetic. She rebels in the characteristically weak way attributed to women, through lies and deceit, and never verbally asserts herself, never sheds the role of meek female. Likewise, Dido, apart from her initial appearance, never appears strong or in any way independent. As she slowly stifles Aeneas with her love and takes action to keep him with her, she still remains a weak, clinging character. Marlowe's female characters, as Baines justly claims, have no self-identity and "Lacking independent judgement and self-esteem...become helpless victims of their love for men" (3).

Notes to Chapter Two

1. All further references to The Battle of Alcazar are taken from The Life and Works of George Peele edited by A. H. Bullen.

2. All further references to Marlowe's Dido Queen of Carthage and Edward II are from Irving Ribner's The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe.

3. In "Edward II: Marlowe's Culminating Treatment of Love," Leonora Brodwin claims that Marlowe achieved a deeper understanding of love later in his career, a new acceptance revealed in Edward II. She argues that the playwright then came back and re-worked Dido, his earlier work, in a way more sympathetic towards the Queen's love. This, in her mind, accounts for the varying attitudes towards Dido and love in the play (139-55).

4. He observes in his essay "The Sexual Attitudes of Marlowe and Shakespeare" that "the true nature of Marlowe's interest in sexuality is in the power it has to attract and dominate people, in its effects rather than its causes....Marlowe depicts love exclusively as physical attraction" (5).

5. In his comments on Tamburlaine I, Robert Logan emphasizes the sterility of Marlowe's conception of love. He observes that Marlowe avoids portraying the "nature of love apart from the power of sexuality, thereby avoiding a depiction of all that is most deeply human" (7).

6. Logan believes that Marlowe, like Shakespeare, is remarkably unaffected by cultural attitudes towards sexuality: "Essentially both are strongly independent, and it is to their

literary influences and individual psychologies, not broad or particular cultural influences, that we must look to understand their sexual attitudes" (1). But all of Logan's observations about how Marlowe is fascinated by the power of physical attraction fit firmly into a traditional Renaissance framework. He observes that what is most characteristic of Marlowe's attitudes towards love "is that the passion, whether homosexual or heterosexual, is chiefly sexual and almost without exception brings pain, suffering, and destruction" (7-8). Apart from the acceptance of homosexuality, this could stand, without alteration, as a summary of Vives' outlook on physical passion.

7. In her article "The Dialectic of Gender in Four of Marlowe's Plays," Sara Munson Deats later observes that elements of both are mingled through the play. It is just that Ovidian romance has the ascendancy in the first half, while Vergilian commitment to duty and honour takes control in the second (17).

8. Even this is not unquestionable because Jupiter only looks foolish when he is indulging his love. When he discusses Aeneas' great destiny, his demeanour becomes more impressive and competent and contrasts favourably with his earlier infatuated, love-stricken manner. This suggests that Marlowe's target is not so much Aeneas or Jupiter as love itself, which has the ability to make even the gods appear ridiculous.

9. In his book Marlowe, J. B. Steane, who, as I have noted above, believes the play glories in romantic love, claims that at this moment, Dido's happiness is "vigorously and movingly

expressed" (36-7). His choice of the adjective vigorous is unintentionally, or perhaps unconsciously, appropriate.

10. While Marlowe's denigration of love diminishes Dido's stature and grandeur, it also raises questions over recent critics' claims that the play depicts a clash between "female" love and "male" honour. Marlowe never explicitly categorizes honour as a purely male value and love as a female one; he portrays Iarbas, who is in no way "womanly" and Jupiter as helpless victims of love whose plight is just as ridiculous as Dido's. The play could be read as an attack on love itself, an examination of the way in which it deprives a great queen of her honour and dignity and brings her to disgrace and ignominy. In this way, Dido would be, to use Deats' favourite term, a purely androgynous heroine, a ruler brought low by love in a fashion quite free from gender typing.

After the Trojan Prince leaves her, Dido falls into a wild, passionate frenzy, but her sister's words, "Ah, sister, leave these idle fantasies. / Sweet sister, cease. Remember who you are" (V.i.262-63), bring her back to her senses. For the first time since Cupid wounded her, she throws off her love for Aeneas, and re-asserts her self-identity, crying, "Dido I am, unless I be deceived. / And must I rave thus for a runagate?" (V.i.264-65). As she acknowledges that, with or without Aeneas, she is still Queen of Carthage, she regains her stature and, casting off the enslaving power of love, embraces her sense of self-worth and dignity. From then on she conducts herself with a dignity reminiscent of her earlier self, and this suggests that the focus of the play is the

disastrous effect of love, regardless of the sex of the sufferer.

But while Marlowe might attack love itself, not "female" love, an important distinction that few critics make, the contrasting way in which he deals with Aeneas' and Dido's internal conflicts between love and honour and his suspicious portrayal of their relationship still illustrate the way in which he automatically characterizes them by gender. He might, like Vergil, feel sympathy for the Queen brought low by mighty love, but this does not change his differing attitudes towards Aeneas and Dido.

11. There is, as Roger Stilling points out in his work Love and Death in Renaissance Tragedy, certainly a note of humour in the next scene (IV.iv) when Aeneas and Achates return with Anna and ignominiously face an enraged Dido (53). But the scene itself does not denigrate male honour and uplift Dido and her love, as Stilling contends. Aeneas does look a fool as he hastens to lie to cover his tracks, but he appears silly not because a commitment to his honour is silly, but because he shows a singular lack of honour by trying to sneak off and then by coming back and meekly enduring Dido's wrath. He is unimpressive in having lost his male dignity, a grievous and embarrassing circumstance made all the more evident by the fact that Dido proceeds to set him on her jennet and have him ride through the streets. This is the climax of the emasculation so feared by Achates and Ilioneus and makes it all the more necessary for him to throw off Dido's control.

12. Other aspects of Brodwin's argument are also questionable, particularly her contention that Dido remains a proud, dignified

woman who gives herself to Aeneas only when she decides that he is worthy of her (141). Her love for Aeneas appears abrupt and sudden, and the scene in the cave, when she hurtles herself into his presumably uninviting arms is hardly dignified.

13. John Cutts, who (inexplicably) blames Isabella for all the problems in her marriage, makes an even greater mystery of her conflict than Deats, wondering why she would ever want Gaveston back, since she knows it will not do her any good. Her only possible motivation, he decides, is that she wants to be even more miserable than she already is, so that she can win the nobles further to her side and advance her secret passion for Mortimer (216). He does not seem to notice the quite simple explanation that Marlowe himself gives: she wants to please her husband but knows that Gaveston's presence will only push her further from the King.

14. Another and even more fundamental problem with Deats' argument is that Isabella's character is too sharply split to be called androgynous. Even if one concedes that Isabella is the manipulative, assertive, forceful woman of Deats' imagination, her claim that Isabella is androgynous backfires because her interpretation leaves Isabella far too masculine. As Deats would have it, all of Isabella's feminine traits--her attempts to make peace and to influence men through persuasion and flattery, her overwhelming grief at her husband's betrayal, and her frantic, upset helplessness--are all a facade which covers her essential masculinity. But how can she possibly be androgynous if all her

womanly characteristics are just a clever, dissembling mask?

Ironically, she underlines just this problem in her later essay "The Dialectic of Gender in Four of Marlowe's Plays" in which she claims that Isabella begins to reject the woman's part in the second half of the play as she "descends from androgyny into unalloyed masculinity" (27). But since Deats' whole argument rests on the idea that Isabella's behaviour in the first half of the play is similar to that in the second--with the only exception that it is left to the speculative and ingenious critic to deduce the duplicitous motives that lurk behind her patient Griselda mask --it would seem that her "androgyny" is no more than successfully hiding her true, "masculine" personality in the first half of the play. The only difference is that she initially has her love for Edward, but this love is balanced by her feelings for Mortimer.

15. Deats summarizes the early criticism of Isabella's characterization ("Edward II" 31).

16. Deats, as I discussed above, argues in two articles that Isabella is actually an androgynous character whose carefully adopted patient Griselda role hides the "male" qualities which will later help her to challenge and defeat her husband. From the beginning of the play, her actions suggest that she is a forceful, disciplined, and calculating woman who struggles to control and manipulate the men around her ("Edward II" 32). T. McAlindon simply observes that Marlowe prepares for the Queen's transformation by suggesting her complicity in the murder of Gaveston, while Baines sees her change as a process of perversion

caused by her husband's unnatural infidelity and cruelty (14). In Steane's mind, "she is a poor, sad woman, having just about as much loyalty and feeling as most people have, yet required to bear more than a non-heroic nature can endure" (230). Cutts, who pays little attention to the text and recreates Edward II as he evidently feels appropriate, also sees the Queen's character as consistent. Since she is in love with Mortimer from the beginning (200), rejecting Edward's need for warmth and affection (220) and secretly glad of Gaveston since it will give her a chance to further her own passion for the Earl of March (216), it is hardly surprising that she goes on to betray and murder the King.

17. Deats claims that this is pure self-delusion on Mortimer's part ("Edward II" 34), but there is nothing in the play to suggest that the Queen does not do precisely as Mortimer wishes. For example, Deats feels that Isabella actually manipulates Mortimer into murdering Edward so that she can "obtain her revenge" ("Edward II" 34) but it is evident that Mortimer desires control over Edward for a far longer time than Isabella does. In Act One, the impetuous Mortimer cries, "The king shall lose his crown, for we have power, / And courage too, to be revenged at full" (i.ii.58-60), and the Bishop of Canterbury's alarmed response, "But yet lift not your swords against the king" (I.ii.61), underlines how different Mortimer's plans are from those of the more moderate rebels in the party. He already wants to depose the King, and this early eagerness suggests that, so far from being controlled by the Queen, he finds Isabella a helpful instrument in his long rebellion

against Edward, the final and best means to unseat the King since she brings control of her young son with her.

Deats also feels that the fact that Mortimer's control of Edward III proves illusory calls his boast of the influence he holds with Isabella into question ("Edward II" 34). However, the situations are not only different but Mortimer's arrest and execution of Kent, over Edward III's futile protests, indicates that, at the time he brags of his control over Isabella, he does have complete authority over the young King.

Chapter Three

Kyd's Bel-imperia:

An unchaste heroine playing Perseda

When the pious and virtuous woman in Bentley's "Fift Lampe of Virginitie" beseeches God to:

...take from me a stout stomacke, an incorrigible hart,
an impudent mind, an unshamefast eie, and a bold
countenance...and instead therof, give unto me a
gentle spirit, a meeke heart, an humble mind, a
demure looke, a sober countenance...with all other good
graces and comlie conditions of a chaste virgin, and
godly child, towards hir parents, (35-6)

she summarizes the virtues and behaviour expected of a young woman in the Renaissance. In his play The Spanish Tragedy, Kyd creates a character who has none of the virtues for which Bentley's virgin prays so earnestly and all of the faults; one who ignores all accepted Renaissance standards of behaviour and who flouts, through her indifference to chaste meekness, all that Vives and the Elizabethans held dear. Kyd also gives his heroine a "masculine" strength of will, active courage, and aggressive verbal fluency and presents her using these characteristics, which the Renaissance perceived as perverted and unnatural in a woman, to challenge traditional male authority and assert her independence. But,

instead of condemning Bel-imperia or of setting her up as a didactic example of the fate that befalls bad women, Kyd turns her into a sympathetic and impressive heroine. Unlike most Renaissance writers, he does not place the blame for the tragedy on the licentious, self-willed woman, but on the cruelty and excesses of the male characters. He portrays her illicit love for Horatio positively and makes her legitimate, well-born suitor a man who is defined by cowardice and self-love. He depicts her brother's efforts to control and restrain her, which would be viewed as fully justified by Vives, as the machinations of a murderous and self-interested Machiavel who has little moral right to direct her life. He links her with Hieronimo, transforming her into another seeker of justice, a person who is as oppressed as the Knight Marshal, and he has her die the noble and impressive death usually reserved for persecuted virgins or other chaste women. He defies conventions by making her undefinable, a sexually unrestrained woman capable of inspiring sympathy and admiration in an audience.

Besides challenging on the most obvious level Renaissance writers' conceptions of how an admirable woman behaves, Kyd more subtly undermines typical male attitudes of the time. Through the play, he creates a Vives-type society peopled by male characters with traditional Renaissance attitudes towards women, and then he undercuts this world by showing just how blind and ludicrously limited these men's beliefs are. He satirizes their inability to see Bel-imperia in terms of anything but the conventional stereotypes used by Renaissance society to describe women. At the

same time, Bel-imperia's refusal to conform to the men's expectations turns her unconventionality into a refusal to follow the traditional role imposed on her by the Renaissance and stands as Kyd's portrayal of a woman who seeks to define herself in a world where women had no independence or authority.

At the beginning of the play, the ghost of Don Andrea describes his clandestine liaison with Bel-imperia, "By duteous service and deserving love, / In secret I possess'd a worthy dame, / Which hight sweet Bel-imperia by name" (I.i.9-11).¹ His words immediately establish her as the type of woman most often condemned by Renaissance writers. She is unchaste, and this should make her an insult to God, an outcast from society, a disgrace to her family, and an unending source of misery and degradation to herself. Her licentiousness also leads her to challenge her father's authority and to show an utter disregard for his feelings of family dignity. Kyd says little, but he makes it evident that Castile was enraged by her behaviour with Andrea. In his attempts to win Pedringano's trust, Lorenzo claims that "...I did shield thee [Pedringano] from my father's wrath / For thy conveyance in Andrea's love, / For which thou wert adjudg'd to punishment" (II.i.46-48). Later, he justifies his murder of Horatio as an attempt to protect her from her father's anger. But Bel-imperia, instead of showing herself ashamed of her behaviour, is obviously so indifferent to her father's authority, as well as to conventional standards of decorum, that she takes up with Horatio almost as soon as Andrea is dead. Equally inappropriately, she

openly mourns Andrea's death, providing Lorenzo with the chance to claim that "Your melancholy.../ My father's old wrath hath exasperate" (III.x.68-70).

As well as being unchaste and insubordinate, Kyd also portrays Bel-imperia as both sexually aggressive and manipulative. Following Clarynda's example, she actively pursues Horatio and sends him a letter "Full fraught with lines and arguments of love" (II.i.85). In her private conversation with him, she is evidently the one in control, and when Horatio finally gets the boldness to suggest an assignation she is suspiciously quick with a well-thought out reply. Even in their love-making she takes an active role, matching his embraces without even attempting a suitable pretence of coy modesty. At the same time, she does not just direct the development of their love affair, turning the conventions of the delicate, modest young woman upside down, she uses it to humiliate and offend the Portuguese Prince. She vows, "I'll love Horatio, my Andrea's friend, / The more to spite the prince that wrought his end" (I.iv.67-68), and proceeds with her plan by dropping her glove in front of Balthazar and openly presenting it to Horatio. In deliberately using her sexuality to stir up ill-will and gain supremacy over the Prince, she becomes a representative of the type of woman most feared and despised by the Renaissance, one who uses her sexual attractiveness to influence and control men.

But even in the moments when he portrays her as openly unchaste, Kyd depicts Bel-imperia with a remarkable sympathy. While her vow

to use Horatio to avenge Andrea and the rapidity with which she abandons memories of Andrea for her second love might seem to call the early strength and honesty of her feelings for Horatio into question,² the later scenes contain a warmth that makes the affair not a bestial, illicit union, but a consummation of human tenderness and sexual passion. As Lorenzo and Balthazar eavesdrop on the unsuspecting couple, Bel-imperia describes the peace she hopes to find in Horatio's love in some of the best poetry in the play:

My heart, sweet friend, is like a ship at sea:
 She wisheth port, where, riding all at ease,
 She may repair what stormy times have worn,
 And leaning on the shore, may sing with joy
 That pleasure follows pain, and bliss annoy.

(II.ii.7-11)

Kyd depicts her love as a natural need for comfort and consolation and recognises its power as a healer of sorrow and loss.³ Unlike the self-immolating heroines of tradition who are entrapped within their excessive grief, she continues with her life, using her new love to assuage the grief and pain of Andrea's death. Her words also draw on the Petrarchan imagery used by male poet lovers and cast her in an active role in her relationship. Without implying a comic or perverted role reversal, Kyd allows her the same freedom as a man to seek out and enjoy love.

Along with a need for comfort in a warm human relationship, Bel-imperia frankly admits to sexual desire as well:

Possession of thy love is th'only port
 Wherein my heart, with fears and hopes long toss'd,
 Each hour doth wish and long to make resort,
 There to repair the joys that it hath lost,
 And sitting safe, to sing in Cupid's quire,
 That sweetest bliss is crown of love's desire.

(II.ii.12-17)

But there is nothing ugly in this physical love and unlike a similar moment in Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage, nothing ridiculous. It is part of the warmth and companionship of human contact, and Kyd's phrase "sitting safe," while obviously meant to be ironic, captures the feelings of security lovers find in one another's company as their love shuts them out from the realities and miseries of everyday life. Unlike most Elizabethan writers who strongly condemn physical passion, Kyd recognises the positive qualities and regenerative power of physical love and thus, even though the lovers' relationship does not have the title of marriage to give it a thin veneer of respectability, he suggests that Bel-imperia's feelings are a natural and sympathetic expression of her desire for human warmth.⁴

The scene in the bower presents an equally accepting picture of their relationship. The only hint that Kyd is not entirely sympathetic towards Bel-imperia comes with her appraisal of Pedringano's character, "...he is as trusty as my second self" (II.iv.9). Since the servant plans to betray her, the remark ironically suggests that Bel-imperia herself is treacherous and

revives memories of her plan to use Horatio to enrage Balthazar. But as the scene develops, the focus of the lovers' tryst becomes the physical attraction between the two, and Kyd portrays the rising sexual tension explicitly and without any sign of censure. The introduction of Flora, goddess of flowers, and the abundant growth of the "leafy bowers" evokes a sense of the warm, regenerative qualities of their love and suggests that their love is meant to be a positive, not negative force. The love-war metaphor of Venus and Mars symbolically indicates the natural harmony of their love, suggesting "the well-known interpretation of the union of Mars and Venus, and the birth therefrom of the goddess Harmonia, as an allegory of nature's fruitful and concordant discord" (McAlindon 74),⁵ and adds to the intense sensuality of the scene as the two lovers flirtatiously feign hostility as they embrace. Clearly, Kyd's purpose is not to judge, but to portray a passion that seems to promise both of them pleasure and comfort in a ruthless world.⁶

Along with Kyd's positive depiction of the love between Bel-imperia and Horatio, his treatment of Balthazar and Lorenzo deepens his unconventional portrayal of the sexually unrestrained Bel-imperia. Instead of placing the blame onto Bel-imperia, the licentious woman who deliberately stirs up hostility between Balthazar and Horatio, Kyd creates a complex picture of the underlying jealousy, class tension, and pride that leads to Horatio's murder. The unchaste Spanish princess plays a part, certainly, in initiating the tragedy, but as Kyd reveals, she is

really only taking advantage of tension and character flaws which already exist.

By having Lorenzo try to claim credit for Balthazar's capture, the playwright immediately establishes him as a man of little true worth, with no courage or spirit behind his haughty, aristocratic facade. Hieronimo's scornful assessment of Lorenzo's military prowess, "He hunted well that was a lion's death, / Not he that in a garment wore his skin. / So hares may pull dead lions by the beard" (I.ii.170-72), mercilessly strips away his pretensions of honour and bravery and reveals him as he really is, a coward who is reduced to trying to steal honour and glory from one of his braver soldiers. He is a character who needs no provocation from a licentious sister to behave poorly and cruelly.

At the same time, this early confrontation between Horatio and Lorenzo creates bad feeling and hostility between the two before Bel-imperia even enters the play and makes his motives in murdering Horatio appear suspect and base. Ostensibly, Lorenzo's justification for the murder is that he wishes to remove the cause of his sister's dislike for Balthazar. The King and Castile have arranged a dynastic marriage between Balthazar and Bel-imperia which will seal the peace between the two kingdoms, and Bel-imperia's lover seems to stand in the way. It is also an insult to Lorenzo's pride that his sister is unchaste and that she is contemptuous of his high-born friend. But his excessive brutality during the murder of Horatio and his sneeringly ironic comment as Horatio is hanged, "Although his life were still ambitious

proud, / Yet is he the highest now he is dead" (II.iv.60-1), suggest that he is more concerned with killing the man who made him look small and ridiculous in front of the King, his father, and all of the nobles than with avenging the blot Bel-imperia has cast on his honour. Horatio did not just have the temerity to woo his sister, he also stood up in court and dared to dispute with Lorenzo in public over the capture of Balthazar. Lorenzo's savage and vicious words suggest that the memory still rankles, that the murder is the bitter revenge of a man who does not like to admit that the lowly Knight Marshal's son is his superior in the battlefield as well as his friend's superior in love.

Lorenzo's later metamorphosis into a Machiavel who delights in evil for its own sake further establishes him, not Bel-imperia and her love, as the cause of the tragedy. After perverting the master-servant relationship with his betrayal of Pedringano, he makes a mockery of the trust that should exist between friends and severs his last connection to human decency when he gloats over his manipulation of Balthazar:

I lay the plot, he [Balthazar] prosecutes the point,
 I set the trap, he breaks the worthless twigs
 And sees not that wherewith the bird was lim'd.
 Thus hopeful men, that mean to hold their own,
 Must look like fowlers to their dearest friends.
 He runs to kill whom I help to catch,
 And no man knows it was my reaching fatch.

(III.iv.40-6)

His final lack of any redeeming qualities and his perversion of the fundamental ties that bind people together make Bel-imperia seem warm and human by contrast and turn her, like Hieronimo, into a victim of his injustice, inviting sympathy in the face of his vice-like evil. Her so-called "violent, destructive love" does not turn Lorenzo into a cruel Machiavel, just as it does not lead him to attempt to claim the credit for Horatio's victory. These faults are deep-rooted in his character, and while they find expression in cruelly thwarting her illicit love, they are not caused by it.⁷

Just as importantly, Kyd makes Balthazar, like Lorenzo, an unlikeable and ignoble character before Bel-imperia even enters the play. Whether or not the reader believes Horatio's account of the dishonourable slaying of Andrea,⁸ the general's brief description of Balthazar's behaviour in battle captures, long before Bel-imperia begins to scorn him, certain unpleasant aspects of his personality. The Prince defeats Andrea, a "Brave man at arms, but weak to Balthazar" (I.ii.72), but his loud exultation over the fallen body of his foe, "...insulting over him, / Breath'd out proud vaunts, sounding to our reproach" (I.ii.73-4), violates all ideas of chivalrous magnanimity and generosity and casts Balthazar into the unpleasant role of a brave but rather mean-spirited man. When he then goes on to fall in love with Bel-imperia and murder Horatio, his earlier "proud vaunting" suggests that it would be ludicrous to blame his behaviour on love or on Bel-imperia. As Kyd depicts it, love and the vengeful Bel-imperia do not change a noble man into a beast; they operate in a negative way on a man who is

already shown to have a fundamentally flawed character.⁹

Kyd also builds on the class tension between Horatio and Balthazar, and this, as is the case with Lorenzo, places the blame for the tragedy on Balthazar's excessive pride--pride, moreover, which Kyd holds up as unjustified and hollow. The very insignificance of Horatio's station, which Kyd stresses,¹⁰ makes his success in battle all the more insulting to Lorenzo and Balthazar and inspires strong doubts as to whether offended pride or love for Bel-imperia makes Balthazar behave badly. Despite Balthazar's earlier words about his love for Horatio, his speech when he finds out that Bel-imperia prefers Horatio,

I think Horatio be my destin'd plague:
First in his hand he brandished a sword,
And with that sword he fiercely waged war,
And in that war he gave me dangerous wounds,
And by those wounds he forced me to yield,
And by my yielding I became his slave.

(II.i.118-23)

suggests that his degradation at the hands of the Knight Marshal's son still galls him. In his mind, it is not proper that the Prince of Portugal should be the captive of a low-born man like Horatio, and it is revealing that he concludes his speech with "But in his fall I'll attempt the destinies, / And either lose my life, or win my love" (II.i.132-33). His conquest of Bel-imperia becomes equated with a satisfying defeat of the man who made him his "slave" and indicates the extent to which Balthazar's love for Bel-

imperia is tied up with his pride and an already festering resentment of Horatio. The Prince's angry words as he watches the two lovers arrange a tryst, "Die heart, another joys what thou deserv'st" (II.ii.20), provide the final comment on the way in which Balthazar's love for Bel-imperia is bound up with the desire to best the rival who keeps stealing the glory and honour that he feels rightfully belongs to him.

Besides shifting the responsibility for the tragedy from Bel-imperia to the two murderers and clouding their motives with personal jealousy and hatred, Kyd undermines the very foundations of the traditional male value system by satirizing Lorenzo's and Balthazar's sense of honour and pride. According to Vives, Lorenzo, as Bel-imperia's brother, and Balthazar, as her betrothed, would have every right to avenge their honour by killing Horatio. But by consistently portraying them as base and ignoble and by depriving them of all true honour, Kyd cuts the ground out from under them and makes their murder of Horatio appear unjustifiable and vicious.

The early scene in which Balthazar vaunts over Andrea reveals an innate baseness of character. Later, the Prince's belief that he, not Horatio, deserves Bel-imperia indicates his egotistical self-love, since he is inferior to Horatio in every way except rank. Finally, and most terribly, Kyd has him turn his back not only on basic human gratitude but on one of the most fundamental tenets of male honour and chivalry. He murders the man who spared his life in battle and who accepted his surrender and parole. In his first

stunned words after he discovers the murderers of his son, Hieronimo condemns Balthazar for his ingratitude and his treachery:

And Balthazar, bane to thy soul and me,
 Was this the ransom he reserv'd thee for?
 Woe to thy baseness and captivity,
 Woe to thy birth, thy body and thy soul,
 Thy cursed father, and thy conquer'd self!

(III.vii.59-64)

Balthazar's murder of Horatio, the man who spared him in battle and to whom he swore submission, makes all his affectations of honour and nobility a sham and establishes him as a man who has no inner integrity to justify his excessive pride. When he then acts as though he deserves Bel-imperia and goes on to pursue her, his ignobility makes her immeasurably more sympathetic and turns his pride in himself, his traditional, stereotypical male belief that he deserves to win and possess her, into something negative and destructive.

Kyd's attack on Lorenzo's honour runs even deeper and is even more important since he, more than Balthazar, has the right to murder her lover. If Kyd had given Lorenzo the courage to match his high-birth, he would have forced the audience to respect, even if they did not admire, him. But when Lorenzo rather feebly attempts to claim praise for the capture of Balthazar, the playwright makes it evident that he, like Balthazar, has little of substance behind the title of prince. He is not just haughty and cruel, he is a contemptible craven, and since a coward cannot

pretend to honour, his murder of Horatio stands as it truly is, an act of cruel violence against his sister, not a justifiable punishment of sexual license. By extension, Lorenzo's brutality serves to call the whole Vives-type concept of male family honour into disrepute and to reveal the ugliness that underlies much of Vives' advice on the proper treatment of women. Since there is nothing to Lorenzo's character except cruelty and cowardice and a desire for dominance, there is also very little left to the idea of avenging male honour; appropriately, the most vicious character in the play upholds an equally vicious code of behaviour.

Kyd also undercuts Lorenzo's right to justify his treatment and imprisonment of Bel-imperia in traditional terms by having him use the idea of offended family honour as a cynical and deliberate means of making the murder appear acceptable. He states quite clearly that his real reason for imprisoning Bel-imperia is that he does not want news of the murder to get out:

And bid him [Christophil] let my sister be enlarg'd,
And bring her hither straight.

This that I did was for a policy
To smooth and keep the murder secret,
Which, as a nine-days' wonder being o'er-blown,
My gentle sister will I now enlarge.

(III.x.9-12)

His motivation, evidently, is pure self-interest, one more Machiavellian "policy" to advance his own ends. He does not even pretend to an interest in or a concern for his sister's honour.

But, in the furious argument with Bel-imperia that follows, he trots out careful zeal for family honour as justification for his behaviour and uses it as a blind for his dishonourable actions. He tells Bel-imperia, "...I have done you no disparagement, / Unless, by more discretion than deserv'd, / I sought to save your honour and mine own" (III. x.36-8), and he proceeds with an elaborate tale of how the King and Castile were about to discover them and of how he, Lorenzo, rushed in and saved the day by thrusting "Horatio forth my father's way" (III.x.59). It is all a long lie, designed solely to preserve himself and further his own plans, and his glib dissembling degrades the idea of family honour because he deprives it of any moral value. It is just another empty word used to clothe his "policy" of murdering Horatio in an acceptable fashion and not a sincere motivation at all.

Thus the moral emptiness of Lorenzo and Balthazar and their lack of honour undermine the Renaissance belief that they have the right to control Bel-imperia's sexuality. Even if one gives Bel-imperia more blame in instigating the tragedy than this study does, there can be no question that Kyd deliberately leaves Balthazar and Lorenzo little real or justifiable authority to order Bel-imperia's life. From a Renaissance standpoint, she needs to be restrained; she is self-willed, licentious, and dangerously governed by her passions. But in his portrayal of Balthazar and Lorenzo, Kyd suggests that they have no right to assert control over her because they are even worse; this fact transforms their attempts to force her to behave properly into a hypocritical charade, an abuse of

power and authority to which they have forfeited all ethical right. This is extremely important because Renaissance courtesy writers seem to feel that the very fact that a person is a man makes him qualified to rule the women in his family, and in their marriage guides and instructional literature, they gloss over the problems that might arise if the man is not morally qualified to meet his responsibilities."

But Kyd shows how this power invested in men can easily become tyrannical and unfair, and he creates an uncomfortable situation for Renaissance audiences by exposing Lorenzo's actions towards his sister as being motivated by cruel pride and greedy self-interest. His play looks forward to the more universally acclaimed The Duchess of Malfi whose heroine's brothers act in a similar fashion. The scenes which suggest Lorenzo's fundamental lack of honour and his sadistic cruelty reveal him as unfit to have authority over anyone. The fact that Bel-imperia is unchaste complicates the problem and makes Kyd's dismissal of Lorenzo and Balthazar all the more impressive. As Greene's *Pharicles* demonstrates, dishonest women were dismissed as completely contemptible, and this is why the philandering *Pharicles*, despite lying, cheating, and betraying two noble and virtuous women, still feels entitled to adopt a high moral position when he meets Clarynda the courtesan, laughing her proposal of marriage to scorn. But Kyd, through his portrayal of the brutality, dishonour, and ignobility of the two murderers acknowledges that there are far worse things than a lack of chastity.

Kyd further challenges the conventional standards of his time and actually justifies Bel-imperia's unchaste behaviour by making Horatio a thoroughly honourable character.¹² The general's account of the battle establishes Horatio as the unquestioned hero:

Friendship and hardy valour, join'd in one,
 Prick'd forth Horatio, our Knight Marshal's son,
 To challenge forth that prince in single fight;

 But straight the prince was beaten from his horse,

 When he was taken, all the rest they fled.

(I.ii.75-81)

Even more importantly, Kyd has Horatio, in direct contrast to Balthazar and Lorenzo, live up to the highest ideals of human behaviour, the ideals that the two murderers pervert and poison. While Horatio's description of his struggle to rescue Andrea's corpse may, indeed, be a self-serving attempt to insinuate his way into Bel-imperia's good graces (Murray 46), Andrea's initial speech establishes at once how Horatio loyally honours the obligations of their friendship, "Ere Sol had slept three nights in Thetis' lap / ...By Don Horatio, our Knight Marshal's son, / My funerals and obsequies were done" (I.ii.23-6) and leaves the reader inclined to believe that Horatio is truthful and sincere when he describes how he rescues his friend's body and then mourns his death:

No, that was it for which I chiefly strove,
 Nor stepp'd I back till I recover'd him:

.....

And welding him unto my private tent,
There laid him down and dew'd him with my tears,
And sigh'd and sorrow'd as became a friend.

(I.iv.32-37)

Unlike Balthazar who insultingly exults over the corpse of Andrea, he abides by conventions of chivalric mercy and takes the Prince prisoner instead of killing him. Even his love for Bel-imperia contrasts favourably with Balthazar's. Balthazar's wooden, stiff language makes his feelings appear conventional and artificial, more narcissistic than truly loving, and his angry remark as he watches the lovers' secret meeting, "Die heart, another joys what thou deserv'st" (II.ii.103), makes his elaborate protestations of being enslaved to Bel-imperia ring hollow. Horatio, however, is frank and, as Stilling points out, genuinely poetic in his expression of love (29), while he is sincerely respectful, behaving with the true humility that, by the courtly love tradition, a knight should show for his lady. He serves her first by bringing her news of Andrea's death and like a true friend of both of them plays up Andrea's noble bravery and down-plays his own.¹³ When Bel-imperia gives him her glove, his response is simple and humble, "I reap'd more grace than I deserv'd or hoped" (I.iv.103), and underlines the difference between his genuine modesty and Balthazar's spurious affectation of it.

By presenting Horatio in such a favourable light and by making the Knight Marshal's son everything truly noble, Kyd creates an

immediate and irresolvable conflict between traditional Renaissance ideals of proper womanly behaviour and instinctive audience response to Bel-imperia's liaison. Stereotypically, women who are governed by their passions show their folly and the way they are unsuited to any kind of freedom by choosing a bestial brutish man for a lover. But while Bel-imperia seems to behave irredeemably by challenging her father and taking lovers, her choice of Horatio stands out as admirably reasonable. Kyd aligns her with the better man, and her passions lead her to degrade herself only in that she chooses someone who is lower-born than she is, but not of less intrinsic merit. A true degradation, Kyd makes clear, would be marriage to Balthazar, who is not just a "courtly fool" (Stilling 29), but a dishonourable coward who murders the man who accepted his surrender. Kyd does not give Elizabethan audiences the complacent comfort of seeing the licentious woman, as is expected of her kind, cavorting with the debased. Instead, his positive portrayal of Horatio legitimatizes their, for the Renaissance, disturbingly illicit relationship and makes Bel-imperia a more admirable figure.

Kyd further deviates from conventional Elizabethan attitudes towards sexually unrestrained women and completes his remarkably sympathetic portrayal of Bel-imperia by having her die a noble and brave death. Since, as Vives says, a woman's purity is her honour, an unchaste woman is incapable of any great gesture of nobility and is consistently portrayed as contemptible. The fickle Lucilla dies a dishonoured and penniless prostitute on the street, while the

scheming Clarynda is exposed to the ridicule and scorn of her city. Even the passionate Dido, who marries Aeneas, dies in a comically undignified fashion as the bodies of Iarbas and Anna are heaped up around her funeral pyre. But in the play-within-the-play, Kyd casts Bel-imperia in the role of Perseda, "chaste and resolute," and has her die defiantly and bravely, in spirit and courage clearly matching the valiant, virtuous Perseda. Her words as she confronts Balthazar are stirring and undaunted:

Tyrant, desist soliciting vain suits,
 Relentless are mine ears to thy laments,
 As thy butcher is pitiless and base,
 Which seiz'd on my Erasto, harmless knight.
 Yet by thy power thou thinkest to command,
 And to thy power Perseda doth obey:
 But were she able, thus she would revenge
 Thy treacheries on thee, ignoble prince.

(IV.iv.59-66)

The King's and Castile's excited, admiring response to her performance attests to the noble spectacle she must make. Even more importantly, she does not just die bravely; her words as she condemns Soliman extend to Balthazar's treatment of her outside the play-within-the-play and make his persecution of her seem as cruel and evil as the infidel Soliman's oppression of the married Perseda. By linking her to a long line of great and respected women who die for their husbands, Kyd legitimizes her illicit affair, an affair she initiated and encouraged, and equates her

passion with the ideal love of the chastely-wed Perseda for Erastus. She becomes a stern, impressive heroine who avenges a love which in Renaissance tradition would be seen as sordid and destructive but which Kyd endows with all the stature and dignity of the virtuous Perseda's feelings for her husband. Despite her licentiousness, he allows her the supreme status of the Lucrece figure whose suicide or "offer of suicide," says Rowland Wymer in his work Suicide and Despair in the Jacobean Drama, stands in Renaissance drama as the symbol of ultimate virtue, "the definition, rather than merely an illustration of virtue, in a woman" (101).

Her style of death also links her to the Renaissance tradition of suicides as a defiance of tyranny. Wymer points out that the type of suicide most closely associated with women like Perseda often has a political importance, acting as a defiant statement against tyranny or a subversive challenge to authority.¹⁴ While Bel-imperia's virtue is not threatened and she is not chaste, she assumes much of the moral righteousness of these heroines through her connection with Perseda and challenges, as Perseda and Lucrece do, tyranny. But Kyd inverts the whole tradition of what Wymer terms "female honour-suicides" (100) by having Bel-imperia use suicide to revenge her lover's death, not protect her own and her husband's honour, and he equates "tyranny" with the man who is about to become her lawful husband. Thus while Kyd makes Bel-imperia seem to strike out against injustice by likening her to Perseda, the tyranny she challenges is not based on a despotic

ruler but on gender. The traditional tyrant of the Lucrece-Perseda-Virginia type myths becomes, in Kyd's hands, the man who would constrain her within a perfectly acceptable marriage. Moreover--and especially striking--Bel-imperia's murder of Balthazar remains consistent with a noble defiance of tyrannical authority while Hieronimo's murder of Lorenzo becomes morally problematic. In murdering Erasto, the "harmless knight," he reenacts, as numerous critics point out, the terrible murder of his son and symbolically adopts the most inhuman characteristics of Lorenzo. But Bel-imperia murders the man who is a tyrant both in the real world of the court and of the play-within-the-play, and this ensures that there is no moral ambiguity in her actions. Her role redeems rather than degrades her, and she dies virtuously triumphant over tyranny.

By portraying a sexually intense, unrestrained woman as sympathetic and capable of honour and courage, Kyd challenges some of the most cherished of Renaissance beliefs. His overall depiction of Bel-imperia as a strong figure who possesses a "masculine" courage, strength of mind and intelligence further subverts the accepted standards of Elizabethan society.¹⁵ From the beginning of the play, Kyd makes it clear that she is the equal of the male characters and he consistently depicts her taking a dominant, not a passive role, in all her relationships. She actively seeks out Horatio and encourages him in his advances. She dismisses Balthazar's artificial avowals of love with a cool, brisk practicality that makes mockery of the stereotype that women are

weak and sentimental while men are more rational. She encourages a hesitating and uncertain Hieronimo to take revenge,¹⁶ and when he seems to hesitate, her grim, angry words, "Shouldst thou neglect the love thou shouldst retain /...Myself should send their hateful souls to hell" (IV.i.26-28), illustrate the strength of her will and her undaunted spirit. Her promise of aid to Hieronimo, "...I will consent, conceal, / And aught that may effect for thine avail, / Join with thee to revenge Horatio's death" (IV.i.46-8), is impressive in its direct sincerity, force of expression, and resolved simplicity, and the defiant gesture of her suicide and her fearless confrontation of the murderers reveal a courage greater than either Lorenzo's or Balthazar's.

In no way, then, is she the quiet, meek woman of tradition whose ideal virtues lie in passively accepting and enduring with Christian humility the will of men. Kyd gives her the characteristics popularly ascribed to men and considered unnatural, licentious or monstrous in women; and he portrays them positively. It is not Bentley's "stout stomacke" which Bel-imperia has but the courage to challenge cruel and vicious enemies; not an "incorrigible heart" but resolve in the face of oppression; not an "impudent mind" but a quick, undaunted wit; an "unshamefast eie," certainly, but used in choosing the noblest of men; and not a "bold countenance" but a fearless one.

Most notable in Kyd's positive portrayal of Bel-imperia's "male" characteristics is the way in which he gives her considerable verbal aggressiveness and dexterity. In Bel-imperia's first

encounter with Balthazar, Kyd presents her as remarkably fluent and quick-witted in her responses and she assumes the male role of using language to deflate the artificial posturing of Balthazar. When Balthazar cries, "What if conceit have laid my heart to gage?" she answers rationally, "Pay that you borrow'd and recover it," and as he hastens to add a more fanciful claim, "I die if it return from whence it lies," she affects to take his words literally in order to scoff at their hollowness, "A heartless man and live? A miracle!" (I.iv.85-88). She both confronts Balthazar's ridiculous language with the cold, dampening logic of reality and engages in an elaborate rhetorical game where she moves to puncture Balthazar's fantastical claims as fast as he can make them. It is a formalized duel of words similar to exchanges in Shakespeare's comedies, but Bel-imperia's constant undercutting of Balthazar has far darker undertones, for she genuinely does not like him and language is the only acceptable way she can express her dislike. Equally seriously, she uses her quick and cutting repartees to expose the faults of Balthazar's character which lead to Horatio's murder.

Her aggressive, active use of language becomes more important in her confrontation with Balthazar and Lorenzo after Horatio's murder. Before she enters, Lorenzo's plan of salving suspicions and "jesting with her gently" indicates how he intends to use language as a way of manipulation, of duping her into doing as he wants.¹⁷ But Kyd lets Bel-imperia direct and control the conversation and, in her hands, he allows language to become a

powerful weapon to throw them, even if only momentarily, off balance. As she stands in front of them, she lists her wrongs with clarity and furious precision:

First to affright me with thy weapons drawn,
 And with extremes abuse my company:
 And then to hurry me, like whirlwind's rage,
 And clap me up where none might come at me,
 Nor I at any to reveal my wrongs.

(III.x.27-32)

When she goes on to question Lorenzo, her every word is a direct and open challenge that puts her brother on the defensive, forcing him to hastily embellish the weak parts of his story.

But while she uses powerful language and a quick intelligence to expose her brother's weaknesses, she is not presented as the typical Renaissance shrew screaming out impudent insults and hysterical curses along the lines of Queen Margaret in Richard III, but as a woman who is as logical in her questions as she is angry. Her use of irony in the scene is particularly significant and impressive, for it is not a weapon usually associated with angry women, and it gives her more of a dignified "masculine" stature and credibility. When Balthazar hastens to back up Lorenzo's story with a few eager additions, Bel-imperia turns on him and asks, "Even so, my lord? And you are witness / That this is true which he entreateth of?" (III.x.62-3). Her ironic words deride the absurdity of a second murderer who rushes to back up the testimony of the first and then solemnly expects to be believed. As she goes

on, "You gentle brother forged this for my sake, / And you, my lord, were made his instrument: / A work of worth, worthy the noting too!" (III.x.64-6), her sardonic evaluation of their motives cuts through all the hypocrisy of their long story and lays bare their self-interest. Kyd provides her with a clear-sighted understanding of their true motives and allows her freedom to attack, expose and ridicule men who could, by Elizabethan tradition, claim that they are acting entirely within their rights. Even Hieronimo, who is a far more complex figure and much more impressive in his inner struggle, never gets an open moment of confrontation with Lorenzo, never directly challenges him to his face or strips away his claims of virtue. Hieronimo's methods of revenge, based as they are on duplicity, lies, and an elaborately feigned reconciliation, are fundamentally less impressive than Bel-imperia's open confrontation.

It is difficult to emphasize just how strongly Kyd presents her in this scene and how thoroughly she turns the tables on the brother who planned to "jest with her gently." Through language, he has her stand up and challenge the man who has rightful authority over her, and in doing so he does not present her as a nagging harriidan, but as entirely impressive, a woman who uses words both bitterly and in a rigorously logical sense¹⁸ to question her brother's long, smooth story. Her sharp, acerbic irony, which cuts to the core of their self-interest, and her laconic, angry questions are both impressive and, in marked contrast with the men's deceit, sympathetic. The most extraordinary aspect of Bel-

imperia's verbal defiance is, of course, that she attacks not the murderers of a father or a husband but the killers of her illicit lover. By firm Renaissance convention and belief, she should not even be holding up her head, let alone denouncing her brother's hypocrisy.

But there can be no question that Kyd makes and deliberately intends her to be an impressive figure. After having her challenge Lorenzo and Balthazar, Kyd not only gives her the last word in the dispute, but also has her make it in Latin. Coming from a playwright frequently accused of being pedantically classical, her two weighty sounding phrases indicate, more than anything else, just how admirable she is supposed to seem. Her Latin quote calls up images of respect, of learning, of authority, and of unapproachableness, and acts as the final crushing blow to Balthazar's pretensions of love. It allows her to emerge as the clear victor in the encounter and establishes Kyd as a playwright who does not just depict a woman using words to challenge traditional authority but to best it. Even more strikingly, by making her well-educated enough to extemporize a snub in Latin, Kyd has her behave exactly as Renaissance humanists feared or expressly criticized. She uses her education to help her in open contention and throws out a Latin phrase as the crowning conclusion to her scornful rejection of her brother's and her betrothed's authority. But there is no condemnation on Kyd's part, and his use of Latin re-emphasizes how Bel-imperia's remarkable verbal fluency is not

the shrill, empty cursing of a shrew but speech as learned and intelligent as any man's.

While Bel-imperia possesses strong, "male" qualities, they do not detract from her femininity, and in this way, Kyd creates a heroine who is, in Deats' term, truly "androgynous." Unlike Queen Isabella, a character whose two sides are more schizophrenic than closely integrated, Bel-imperia combines masculine and feminine traits in a balanced whole.¹⁹ She does not remain strong and independent only as long as she suppresses traditional female feelings like love, and her courage, her intelligence, and her assertiveness do not distort her femininity or her sexuality. Even though she pursues Horatio vigorously, her behaviour in the love scenes is neither rapacious nor obscenely aggressive. The two express mutual feelings of love and sexual passion, and Horatio's cry, "O stay awhile and I will die with thee, / So shalt thou yield and yet have conquer'd me" (II.iv.48-9), suggests a healthily balanced relationship. At the same time, her plea to the murderers, "O save his life and let me die for him! / I lov'd Horatio but he lov'd not me" (II.iv. 56-8), shows her capable of the self-sacrifice in love which the Renaissance believed to be one of the noblest female characteristics. Kyd illustrates, far more convincingly than Marlowe, that a woman can have "masculine" characteristics and still be both feminine and sympathetic.

And if androgynous portrayals challenge traditional gender typing, Kyd's portrayal of Balthazar further blurs the line between typical "male" and "female" qualities. Deats claims that Edward II

is another one of Marlowe's androgynous characters, a man who is fundamentally "female," that is weak, passive, and submissive, but who manages to rise to martial activity (36). But she undercuts her own argument by pointing out that the only time things really work out for Edward is when he takes on his so-called male responsibilities (40). This suggests that Marlowe, far from supporting Edward II's "androgynous" characteristics, shows how disastrous the role reversal is. Balthazar, however, acts as an androgynous figure who reveals how certain negative characteristics transcend sex. In his relationship with Bel-imperia, he retains the traditional authority of a man and is very much aware of his superiority over her. He also regards her as a possession, a prize to be won away from his lower-class rival. But, simultaneously, he has many of the negative qualities usually given to women: he is malicious, of a glib but shallow intelligence, excessively wordy, easily duped and controlled, vengeful in a cowardly way, weak-willed, and full of self-love.

Unlike Edward II's character, his "male" qualities are tightly fused with his negative "female" qualities, and some of his typically feminine traits, such as his vindictive dislike for Horatio, evolve from his masculine perception of himself. There can be no question, then, that Kyd is just portraying a negative role reversal, and in the scenes that contrast Balthazar implicitly with Bel-imperia, the dramatist shows how certain qualities truly transcend gender. The most obvious example lies in Balthazar's and Bel-imperia's differing relationships with the powerful and

scheming Lorenzo. Weak-willed, hesitating, and timid, Balthazar never dares challenge his mentor and follows his lead even when he has doubts about the wisdom of his advice. In turn, Lorenzo treats his friend with an impatience that borders on contempt. He interrupts the Prince's artificial claims of love with the curt, "Tush, tush my lord, let go these ambages, / And in plain terms acquaint her with your love" (I.iv.90-1), and he cuts off his long description of love's miseries with a "My lord, for my sake leave these ecstasies" (II.i.29).

But while Lorenzo's manipulation of Balthazar never fails and the Prince dies without realising how Lorenzo arranged the murder of his servant, Lorenzo is unable either to dupe or intimidate his sister. When one contrasts her fearless denunciation of her brother's behaviour with Balthazar's almost timid ineffectiveness in the face of Lorenzo's cold efficiency, Kyd leaves no doubt that courage and strength of will go far beyond sex. Balthazar, man though he is and Lorenzo's social equal and friend, with infinitely more security and power than Bel-imperia, would never dare to stand up to him or question his will as she does. Through his portrayals of Bel-imperia and Balthazar, Kyd reveals the inadequacy of evaluating characters merely by gender and draws attention to the irony implicit in the fact that Balthazar, despite his weakness and base spirit, has power over the strong-willed Bel-imperia simply by virtue of his sex.

As well as challenging stereotypes through his portrayal of Bel-imperia, a sympathetic character who defies some of the

Renaissance's firmest conceptions of the proper behaviour, virtues and capabilities of women, Kyd introduces these stereotypes into the play through the words and actions of Balthazar and Lorenzo, and then he deliberately undercuts them. By setting the strong-willed, intelligent Bel-imperia against the traditional beliefs espoused by Lorenzo and Balthazar, he suggests just how inadequate and dangerously foolish their attitudes are. In his treatment of Balthazar, Kyd uses the Prince and his ridiculous and cruel behaviour to make a telling and deliberate comment on the narcissistic elements of the courtly love tradition. Few critics neglect to point out how shallow and insincere Balthazar's protestations of love are.²⁰ His fanciful language, dismissed by Bel-imperia and Lorenzo as "ambages" and "words of course," provide an accurate reflection of his love. His conceits are more self-indulgent than loving, and the fact that he is clearly far more in love with himself as the courtly lover than he will ever be with Bel-imperia explains why her rejection of him strikes so deep. When he concludes his first attempt to win Bel-imperia with a speech in praise of her beauty:

Yes, to your gracious self must I complain,
 In whose fair answer lies my remedy,
 On whose perfection all my thoughts attend,
 On whose aspect mine eyes find beauty's bower,
 In whose translucent breast my heart is lodg'd,

(I.iv.93-7)

his words beautifully capture the egocentric nature of his love. He ostensibly speaks of Bel-imperia's beauty, but actually shows himself far more fascinated by himself as he discusses its effects on his susceptible person. Bel-imperia's contemptuous reply, "Alas, my lord, these are but words of course / And but device to drive me from my place" (I.iv.98-9), underlines the ridiculous inadequacy and the hollowness of his love. She realises that Balthazar's Petrarchan declaration of love is not a true expression of strong and sincere feelings; his courtly love for her is nothing more than an egocentric game, marked by complete self-engrossment. He mourns Bel-imperia's coldness, "No, she is wilder, and more hard withal, / Than beast, or bird, or tree, or stony wall" (II.i.9-10), but he soon turns to a long, self-pitying monologue which has his imagined faults as the principal focus:

But wherefore blot I Bel-imperia's name?

It is my fault, not she, that merits blame.

My feature is not to content her sight,

My words are rude and work her no delight.

The lines I send her are but harsh and ill,

.....

My presents are not of sufficient cost,

And being worthless all my labour's lost.

Yet might she love me for my valiancy,

Ay, but that's slander'd by captivity.

(II.i.11-20)

It is, as Stilling claims, the glorified self-abasement entirely characteristic of him (29), for there is never a moment when Balthazar can forget himself. Through Lorenzo's impatient response, "My lord, for my sake leave these ecstasies" (II.i.29), Kyd again draws attention to the emptiness of Balthazar's love and emphasizes how removed the Prince's affected posturing is from the real, practical world that Bel-imperia and her brother live in.

But while Balthazar's self-centred, fanciful flights of language and the disgust they arouse from his peers make him and the tradition of Petrarchan love look ridiculous, the words in themselves are harmless. It is the attitude behind the words which Kyd exposes as cruel and dangerous. Seen through the eyes of the self-enraptured courtly lover, Bel-imperia is beautiful but also little more than a prize to be won,²¹ a prize whose capture is closely tied into Balthazar's sense of self-esteem. After Pedringano reveals the identity of Bel-imperia's new love, Balthazar's words indicate how he views her as a trophy to be wrested from the grasp of his rival, "But in his fall I'll tempt the destinies, / And either lose my life, or win my love" (II.i.132-33), while the true selfishness behind his love becomes abundantly clear when, spying on the tryst between Bel-imperia and Horatio, he cries, "Be deaf my ears, hear not my discontent, / Die heart, another joys what thou deserv'st" (II.ii.19-20). The very nature of his love for Bel-imperia denies her recognition as an individual with feelings and directly leads to the tragedy. Since he is unable to see her as anything but the prize due to him because of

his high-birth, he does not realise that to kill her lover will only win her hatred.

Through Balthazar's reaction to the murder of Horatio, Kyd epitomizes and then dismisses the self-loving insensitivity of Balthazar's courtly love code. The young man has just been hanged in front of Bel-imperia's eyes and stabbed repeatedly, and she makes a frantic plea for mercy, humiliating herself in an attempt to save her lover, "O, save his life and let me die for him! / O save him brother save him, Balthazar: / I lov'd Horatio but he lov'd not me" (II.iv.56-58). In the face of her fear and horror and desperation, Balthazar replies, "But Balthazar loves Bel-imperia" (II.iv.59). To him that is truly the only thing that matters, and the absurd and brutal insensitivity of the remark stands out as a caustic comment on his utter self-centredness and, by extension, on the courtly love tradition which he espouses and represents. In Balthazar, Kyd takes the inherent narcissism of the courtly love tradition to its logical extreme and sets out the underlying ugliness of its indifferent attitude towards women, where the lover is so wrapped up in the way he is experiencing love that he declares his feelings over the body of his beloved's murdered paramour. The playwright fully understands the absurdity of what Mary Beth Rose calls the "dualistic sensibility" which "articulate[s] that consciousness which exalts and idealizes the image of Woman while simultaneously regarding actual women with neglect or contempt" (21) and mercilessly ridicules it.²²

This interpretation might read like a twentieth-century distortion of the play if Kyd did not take so much trouble to portray Bel-imperia's feelings of pain and shock and to show how cruel Balthazar's actions are. He leaves little doubt that the murder of Horatio terrifies and angers her. Her fear in the harbour is evident; she goes on to plan revenge with Hieronimo; and he even gives her a soliloquy where she broods over her wrongs. By then setting Balthazar's blind insensitivity up against this carefully prepared backdrop of Bel-imperia's suffering, Kyd emphasizes the brutality of the Prince's treatment of her. In Act Three, Bel-imperia confronts Lorenzo after her release from imprisonment, and her scornful words make Lorenzo's attempt to justify his behaviour look ridiculous and hypocritical. Particularly underlining her feeling that she has been badly treated is her derisive mockery of Lorenzo's claim of having done it all for her own good. But Balthazar, wrapped up in himself, is not just indifferent to her anger, it does not even register with him. After dismissing him as a coward in scathing Latin, she leaves, and Balthazar mourns:

Led by the loadstar of her heavenly looks,
 Wends poor oppressed Balthazar,
 As o'er the mountains walks the wanderer
 Incertain to effect his pilgrimage.

(III.x.106-09)

After all that has happened, he still has not advanced beyond himself, and his words make him and the courtly love tradition look ridiculous as well as empty and cruelly insensitive. It is

impossible for him to imagine that she might be suffering as much or more than he, and the image of "poor, oppressed Balthazar" which follows the convention of the lover being tortured by the haughty indifference of his beloved stands as a particularly ironic comment on his self-engrossed blindness.

At the same time, Kyd consistently undermines the very foundations of Balthazar's attitude towards women by showing, over and over again, that Bel-imperia is not the mindless, inanimate object he fondly believes her to be. He makes Balthazar look eminently foolish not just through his studiedly Petrarchan language and complete narcissism, but through the continuing irony in the play which suggests that it is his complacent dismissal of Bel-imperia which leads to his death. Secure in his condescending masculine superiority and unable or unwilling to acknowledge that Bel-imperia might possess strong feelings, he never dreams that she will conspire with Hieronimo to kill him. Kyd works on two levels, one depicting the traditional attitudes towards women as revealed by Balthazar and Lorenzo, the other showing the reality as evinced by Bel-imperia's behaviour; and the latter acts as a running satiric comment on the blind foolishness of the former.

In the play, Balthazar insists on casting Bel-imperia into the role of the inanimate courtly beloved. When the two conspirators discover the identity of Bel-imperia's new love, Balthazar launches into a long speech in which he characterizes Horatio as a smooth seducer:

Now in his mouth he carries pleasing words,
 Which pleasing words do harbour sweet conceits,
 Which sweet conceits are lim'd with sly deceits,
 Which sly deceits smooth Bel-imperia's ears,
 And through her ears dive down into her heart,
 And in her heart set him where I should stand.

(II.i.124-29)

His attitude springs from the Renaissance picture of women as purely passive and receptive, blank minds to be imposed on by the strongest or nearest male personality. In his mind, she is no more than a prize to be fought over by male competitors, and so, if she rejects Balthazar, she must have been seduced and led to it by his rival Horatio. He cannot recognise that she might have an active and decisive will of her own, and this makes him immediately envision Horatio in the dominant role.²³

But through Bel-imperia's first soliloquy and the glove scene, Kyd shows just how inaccurate Balthazar's conception of her as a meek, passive innocent are. Horatio certainly does not seduce her; she singles him out for attention, and she does it partly to slight Balthazar. Further satirizing the Prince's shallowly conventional view of her, Kyd gives Balthazar ample evidence that it was Bel-imperia, not Horatio, who took charge of the relationship. In Pedringano's words, delivered in the scene before, it was Bel-imperia who sent Horatio "...letters which myself perus'd, / Full fraught with lines and arguments of love, / Preferring him before Prince Balthazar" (II.i.84-86). Besides actively initiating the

correspondence, Bel-imperia's "arguments" of love suggest a rather aggressive approach, while the pointed attention she draws to her preference for him over Balthazar recalls her earlier plan. But despite this letter, Balthazar cannot see her as anything but traditionally unassertive, and he proceeds to distort the evidence before him to keep Bel-imperia's role in the love affair entirely passive.

This entirely inappropriate picture Balthazar creates of Bel-imperia as the stereotypical unthinking woman, to be worshipped on one hand and dismissed with condescending superiority on the other, continues through the play, and is consistently undercut by Kyd. The most obvious manifestation of this attitude comes with Balthazar's belief that the removal of Horatio will leave Bel-imperia open to love him. Just as he characterizes Horatio as Bel-imperia's seducer, so he thinks that all he has to do to make her compliant is to remove the strong male figure currently guiding her. The Prince's cry as he aids in the murder of Horatio, "But Balthazar loves Bel-imperia," illustrates his conception of Bel-imperia as utterly without feelings, a blank slate except for what men choose to inscribe on her. The murder of Horatio has just wiped her clean of past male influence, and Balthazar hastens to impress his love on her before anyone else does. But coming so promptly after the murder, his words are, of course, grossly inappropriate, and this allows Kyd to hold up his whole outlook on the psychological make-up of women as purely ridiculous. By having Balthazar solemnly declare his love as he murders Horatio, Kyd

takes the Prince's belief that Bel-imperia has no feelings to its logical extreme and makes sure no one misses how absurd and cruel his evaluation of Bel-imperia is.

Besides Balthazar's ludicrous belief that Horatio is Bel-imperia's seducer and his inopportune declaration of love, his behaviour following his engagement to Bel-imperia strengthens Kyd's satire of Balthazar's traditional outlook on women. Despite the fact that he has murdered her lover, neither he nor Lorenzo perceives her as a threat. When the two friends come upon her deep in discussion with Hieronimo, Balthazar's jocular comment, "...How now, Hieronimo? / What, courting Bel-imperia?" (IV.i.52-3), ironically underscores his silly complacency. Though Kyd has just shown them grimly plotting his death, he is secure in his estimation of Hieronimo as a raving madman and Bel-imperia as a mere woman; he anticipates no danger from either of them.

His same dismissal of Bel-imperia's ability to feel deeply and to desire and plan revenge is made particularly and painfully clear in the scene following their betrothal. Not surprisingly, she is not overjoyed, and Balthazar chides her in the fashion of a father reprimanding a sulky child:

Come Bel-imperia, Balthazar's content,
My sorrow's ease and sovereign of my bliss,
Sith heaven hath ordain'd thee to be mine;

Disperse those clouds and melancholy looks,
 And clear them up with those thy sun-bright eyes
 Wherein my hope and heaven's fair beauty lies.

(III.xiv.95-100)

He treats the grief she feels for Horatio with obvious condescension, and his patronizing tone dismisses the possibility that the feelings which make her look melancholy are anything but a shallow sulk. His words contain the same idolization of her beauty mingled with contempt for her as a feeling, independent individual that is so evident in Euphues' spurious idealization of Lucilla and Greene's praise of the virtuous Mamillia; it is this attitude which makes him declare himself enslaved to her at one moment and then murder her lover at the next.

When Bel-imperia will not respond to his prompting and turns to her father, Balthazar concludes the conversation with "...Truce, my love, / I will go salute him [Castile]" (III.xiv.105-6), and again the carefree tone suggests how light he makes of her feelings. Her reluctance to speak with him and appear happy and delighted at the upcoming nuptials are just a game in his eyes. He will not see her in any way as his equal or acknowledge that her hatred and hostility are strong enough to pose a threat to him, and his words capture a standard Renaissance attitude towards women where even their supporters imagined them to be inferior and weaker than men. Kyd, however, shows this traditional belief to be sheer, unmitigated folly, as silly as believing that someone like

Hieronimo, of a much lower social station, will be too poor-spirited and frightened to take revenge on his superiors.

While Balthazar looks on Bel-imperia as a proud, emotionless beauty to be won, a viewpoint which leads him to both worship and patronize her and which causes his downfall, Lorenzo's attitude towards his sister is one of contempt. McAlindon comments that it is "one of the more satisfying ironies of the play" that Lorenzo is undone because of his blindness in regard to his sister (61), but he neglects to point out that Lorenzo's outlook on Bel-imperia is quite acceptable within an Elizabethan context. When Bel-imperia deliberately flouts Balthazar by presenting her glove to Horatio, Lorenzo comforts his friend with words with which most Renaissance writers would feel comfortable:

My lord, be not dismay'd for what is past,

You know that women oft are humorous:

These clouds will overblow with a little wind,

Let me alone, I'll scatter them myself.

(I.iv.104-107)

It is this condescendingly superior tone which underlies all the Elizabethan instructions about women submitting to the guidance of men, and the advice in the marriage guides telling husbands to be patient yet firm with their wives' follies, and Vives' shame-faced embarrassment as he apologises for writing on something as trite as women's matters. His outlook is closely related to Balthazar's, for both have their roots in the belief that women are inferior to and easily influenced by men. But Kyd openly and thusly

demonstrates how ludicrous Lorenzo's assumption of superiority and breezy optimism actually is. Bel-imperia is not being "humorous" but is following a plan worked out in an earlier soliloquy; his attempts to "overblow" her only harden her resolve to defy them.

Persisting with his dismissive attitude towards his sister, Lorenzo, like Balthazar, imagines that all he needs to do to make Bel-imperia cooperate is to remove the rival male. "Some cause," he says, "there is that lets you [Balthazar] not be lov'd: / First that must needs be known, and then remov'd. / What if my sister love some other knight?" (II.i.31-32). In Lorenzo's mind, Bel-imperia is entirely passive, responding only to outside stimulus; thus he puts the blame for her indifference to Balthazar on external causes, causes which he imagines can be easily manipulated. Classifying her as somehow less than human, he allows her no inner life or feelings of her own, and this indifference to and dismissal of her self makes him believe that murdering Horatio will be a good way to further Balthazar's suit.²⁴ Kyd portrays Lorenzo as so contemptuous of his sister, in fact, and so confident of his ability to control her, that he does not even seem to bother disguising himself and Balthazar when they carry out the murder.²⁵ What she thinks of his actions is clearly of the greatest indifference to him.

Kyd further establishes Lorenzo's contempt for her and then undercuts it in the explosive scene following her release from imprisonment. As he advises Balthazar on how to deal with her, his patronizing scorn is evident:

Then in your love beware, deal cunningly,
 Salve all suspicions, only soothe me up;
 And if she hap to stand on terms with us,
 As for her sweetheart, and concealment so,
 Jest with her gently: under feigned jest
 Are things conceal'd that else would breed unrest.

(III.x.18-23)

The understatement is not just typical Lorenzo black humour, it also provides an accurate reflection of his evaluation of his sister. He will not even give her the honour of treating her seriously, but seeks to trivialize her outrage and anger by treating it as a joke, as though the murder of her lover could be glossed over with a few well-placed "gentle jests." Like Balthazar in the later scene, he characterizes her as a hysterical child to be coaxed from peevish ill humour into love.

But Bel-imperia is not shrill, uncontrolled, or easily duped, and as she proceeds to challenge her brother in no uncertain terms, Kyd makes mockery of Lorenzo's jocular complacency. After her first angry words, she is cool and sardonic, and the laconic questions she hurls at Lorenzo as she goes for the weak spots in his story force him to come up with increasingly ridiculous embellishments. There is nothing more certain than that she is both as quick-witted and intelligent as he, and her final words, delivered in Latin, emphasize by their very learnedness how she is a match for both of the men.

In the face of Bel-imperia's cold, interrogative anger, their airs of joking superiority are evidently unfounded and slightly absurd, and Kyd completes his deflation of Lorenzo's and Balthazar's masculine assumptions of aloof control through their infuriated reaction to her defiance. Lorenzo cries after his departing sister, "Nay, and you argue things so cunningly, / We'll go continue this discourse at court" (III.x.104-05), and these few angry words suggest a Lorenzo who has, for an instant, lost his pose of detached, ironic superiority. He is so galled by the force of his sister's rhetoric that he throws in a spiteful last comment after she has left, like the little boy who screams out an insult after his opponent moves out of hearing.²⁶

As well as challenging the traditional attitudes espoused by Balthazar and Lorenzo, Kyd also examines the relationship between Bel-imperia and her father and suggests the inadequacies of Castile's traditional Vives-type outlook. The playwright depicts Castile as a man whose understanding of his daughter is governed solely by Vives' precepts, and then goes on to show how this narrow outlook, taken in the face of reality, is not only ridiculous but is also the direct cause of Bel-imperia's unhappiness and suffering. He criticizes both Castile's treatment of his daughter and challenges the underlying attitudes towards women that, in the Duke's mind, justify his behaviour.

As he does with Balthazar and Lorenzo, Kyd portrays Castile as a man who consistently misjudges and underestimates Bel-imperia simply because she is a woman. When the King asks his brother how

he thinks Bel-imperia will react to Balthazar's love, the Duke responds with a stereotypical comment perfectly acceptable to Elizabethan audiences, "Although she coy it as becomes her kind, / And yet dissemble that she loves the prince, / I doubt not, I, but she will stoop in time" (II.iii. 3-5). His words reflect the Renaissance commonplace that women's modesty does not allow them to act in a forthright manner and provides justification for proceeding with a marriage that Bel-imperia seems to dislike. At the same time, he dismisses the possibility that Bel-imperia might have strong feelings or convictions that cannot be overcome.²⁷ She is just a woman, fickle, shallow, "coying it as becomes her kind" without, he suggests, the strength of will or the desire to challenge him. Kyd deliberately undercuts this attitude, however, by placing Bel-imperia's first love scene with Horatio immediately before Castile's speech. He reveals that Bel-imperia is not "coying it" but is quite strong and resolved in her dislike for Balthazar and that far from waiting modestly for the Duke to arrange her marriage, she is actively seeking out another lover. More importantly, it does not even matter whether Bel-imperia is justified in her behaviour or not, for Kyd is satirizing the Duke's blind complacency. Simply because he is her father, entitled to say that she must love Balthazar "or forgo my love" (II.iii.8), and because she is a woman, "who will stoop in time," he imagines that he has nothing to worry about. He cannot conceive of his daughter as someone with a will of her own, with the strength of mind to

challenge his dearly laid-out plans, and this, Kyd shows, is eminently short-sighted and self-deluding.

Linked to the Duke's unawareness of the threat his daughter poses to his plans runs Kyd's portrayal of Castile as a man whose view of women, like Balthazar's, is permanently distorted by self-loving pride. This is one of Kyd's most remarkable observations and achievements in his delineation of male-female relationships, for he understands and shows how inadequate men's outlooks are when they relate to women in purely egocentric terms. Like Balthazar, whose feelings for Bel-imperia are really an elaborate form of self-love, and like Lorenzo, who considers her only as she effects him and his plans, Castile sees his daughter in terms of himself. When the Duke observes, "I doubt not, I, but she will stoop in time" (II.iii.5), he betrays his portentous self-importance through the use of the double "I." As he continues, "And were she froward, which she will not be, / Yet herein shall she follow my advice, / Which is to love him or forgo my love" (II.iii.6-8), Kyd not only reveals how he regards his daughter as a puppet who will direct her life and her energies to pleasing him, but ironically undermines his self-engrossed attitude. Castile's speech suggests that there is little doubt in his mind that the greatest and most horrible punishment he can inflict on his daughter is to withdraw his love and approval, to make her "forgo [his] love." But Kyd has already shown how Bel-imperia, supremely indifferent to her father's regard, rushes to choose another lover, and this makes Castile's

belief that his daughter exists only to please him stand out as ludicrous self-delusion.

While this might seem an extreme interpretation of Castile's behaviour, Kyd later calls deliberate attention to the fashion in which he persists in seeing Bel-imperia only as a weak appendage of himself. She is engaged to Balthazar, and the Duke, seeing her melancholy face, generously and kindly consoles her:

...How now, girl?

Why com'st thou sadly to salute us thus?

Content thyself, for I am satisfied,

It is not now as when Andrea liv'd,

We have forgotten and forgiven that,

And thou art graced with a happier love.

(III.xiv.108-13)

On the one hand, Castile's blundering incomprehension is Kyd engaging his flair for and delight in black irony but, on the other, it offers powerful insight into the Duke's outlook on his daughter. He cannot imagine her as a free person, quite removed from him with a life and concerns of her own, so, in his mind, the only possible reason she might be upset is because she is worried about having offended him. Regarding her in the traditionally egocentric light of a Vives-type father, he immediately assumes that his anger is the cause of her grief.

But as the play reveals, this is clearly a ridiculous and inappropriate way of looking at his daughter, and the very cheerful insensitivity of his words emphasizes the extreme degree of

selfishness in his attitude towards Bel-imperia. He is like Balthazar who cries, "But Balthazar loves Bel-imperia," as Horatio dangles, butchered, in front of her. Since both men cannot see beyond themselves to realise that Bel-imperia feels and thinks independently of them, they both treat her with grotesque, ludicrous callousness and try to force her into the role and the behaviour that they feel to be appropriate. Balthazar insists on seeing her as his passive beloved, while Castile makes her fit into his picture of the ideally submissive, dutiful daughter, and neither will acknowledge that she is a person in her own right, a person who cannot be defined or described by conventional titles.

Balthazar's and Castile's blind, self-centred response to Bel-imperia also furthers the play's larger thematic concerns. Murray singles out the characters' blindness to anything but their own problems and desires as one of the most important elements in the play: "The central image of man in The Spanish Tragedy is thus a figure standing alone in semi-darkness, able to see and apparently able to control those below him...but often unable to even see those above him" (31). Likewise, Edwards, using similar imagery, claims that The Spanish Tragedy presents the society of the Spanish court "as a group of blindfolded men bumping into each other as they strive to get even with those who have affronted them" (Thomas Kyd 39). With the exception of Hieronimo, one major aspect of the characters' blindness lies in their inability to perceive Bel-imperia in anything but conventional stereotypes. Kyd effectively uses traditional pictures of women, which he realises obscure a

true perspective of their characters, to advance and deepen his more general theme of man's inability to understand much of the world outside and apart from themselves. In the play, gender stereotyping acts as one of the forces which blind characters to the truth and to the reality around them.

The insensitivity of Castile's self-engrossed and traditional outlook on his daughter, Kyd then suggests, has tragic consequences. By not recognising the true cause of Bel-imperia's unhappiness, he deprives her of any hope of reprieve and pushes forward the action of the tragedy. His complacent assertion that she is "graced with a happier love" suggests the degree to which he is detached from a true consideration of his daughter's welfare, and his blindness makes him a party to Lorenzo's and Balthazar's injustice. Since his attitude supports and reflects their behaviour, it becomes unquestionably evil and wrongs Bel-imperia as much as Horatio's murder did, for his outlook on her, like Balthazar's and Lorenzo's, refuses to acknowledge that she is a feeling, independent individual.²⁸

The fact that Castile is such a traditional Renaissance father widens the scope of Kyd's attack, for he is not just challenging one person but also the type that Castile represents, the traditional Elizabethan father of Vives' guidebook who will not recognise his daughter as a separate entity. A surprising number of critics have commented on and condemned the Duke's actions²⁹ and in assessing the situation, McAlindon observes, "[The King's and the Duke's] one fault lies in their unthinking assumption that Bel-

imperia has no rights whatever in the choice or rejection of a suitor. Any opposition to their will in this matter threatens to crack the mould of their patient urbanity and humane justice" (63). But even McAlindon, who warns against the dangers of judging Bel-imperia by modern standards, does not tie the Duke's behaviour in with typical Renaissance attitudes. Castile's blind, "unthinking assumption," after all, consists only of following an accepted treatment of his daughter and a conventional assessment of her character. Like Rebecca's father in Bullinger's marriage guide, he arranges what he believes to be a highly suitable marriage and takes her compliance as a matter of course. Since the loss of her chastity should be torturing Bel-imperia's conscience, his misconception about the cause of Bel-imperia's grief fits into a traditional Renaissance framework, and his willingness to forgive her misbehaviour, so far from cracking "the mould of [his] patient urbanity," is, taken in a Renaissance context, an extremely generous gesture. And even if one wants to argue that Kyd is following the most liberal Protestant standards, where the girl is allowed at least veto power over the choice of her suitors, Stilling's claim that Bel-imperia's love-life is "her own closest concern" (39) would be inconceivable and unacceptable for most of the Elizabethan audience, particularly given her public position as Princess of Spain.

Thus Kyd's undermining of the Duke's fatherly authority is not something to be lightly passed over, and Bel-imperia's licentiousness makes the playwright's negative portrayal of Castile

all the more extraordinary. Her affair with Andrea would reveal, in Renaissance eyes, just how unsuited she is to any kind of freedom and would justify Castile's eager haste to marry her off as soon as possible. Further, her rebellion against Castile's arranged marriage, which critics term justified, does not, like Juliet's similar defiance of her father, come out of a legitimate marriage to a man fully her equal. It arises out of her illicit love for Horatio. This means that her flouting of her father's will and authority evolves from a desire to choose her own lovers, and the way in which Kyd depicts Castile as a man who callously disregards her feelings and attempts to force her into a marriage with a man linked to Soliman, the "legendary tyrant" (McAlindon 64) and Turk, amounts to an astonishing implicit support of her position.

By having Bel-imperia consistently defy the three men's traditional expectations, Kyd does not just satirize their limited view of women, but turns her unconventionality into a refusal to be defined by or to follow the roles imposed on her by society. Lorenzo views her as the docile, not too intelligent, easily manipulated sister; Balthazar treats her as the beautiful, disdainful, but passive fair; and Castile sees her as the meek daughter who would tremble at the thought of forgoing his love. But in Bel-imperia, Kyd creates a woman who refuses to conform to their expectations, and who, by continually doing what they least expect, asserts her right to define herself. She is what she chooses to be, not what her brother, her father, and her betrothed

think she should be or cannot see her as anything but, and she refuses, as Marlowe's Queen Isabella and so many other women in Renaissance drama are, to be characterized by her relationship to a man. She defies categorization as a daughter, sister, or betrothed and insists on remaining herself, indescribable by any conventional stereotype. The men continually misjudge and underestimate her not just because they believe her to have little intelligence, strength or feeling, but because she will not follow the proper behaviour of their time and because she makes a life for herself quite detached from theirs. Since she cuts herself off from all conventional standards by which they might judge her, they are almost pathetically powerless to understand what she is thinking or planning, and their inability to see her except in relationship to themselves leaves them blind to the personal, individual feelings which motivate her.

As well as having her reject the proper behaviour forced on her by her society and by the male characters within the play, Kyd makes her profoundly subversive, challenging, in every action, traditional male authority. Levin characterizes her as "a hot-headed individualist who delights in flouting convention" (318), but Kyd's portrayal is far more complex than that. He sets her up as a woman who consciously seeks autonomy, who, despite the restrictions placed on her by society, tries to establish and maintain independence in a world where women had little control over their destinies.³⁰

In Greene and Lyly's fiction, sexual license and personal freedom are so closely linked that either one can be used as a symbol for the other, and this connection arises from their belief that a woman, given freedom, will inevitably behave irresponsibly. But in The Spanish Tragedy, Bel-imperia has no such personal liberty, and her sexual transgressions become a means of asserting a wider freedom. While the speed with which she transfers her affection from Andrea to Horatio might seem to be an classic example of the shameless way love moves licentious women to throw away all dignity and ignore the concerns of their family and parents, Kyd proceeds to suggest that it is a fundamental act of defiance, emphasizing how she, and she alone, will attempt to determine her own course in life. Critics debate whether love or the desire for revenge moves Bel-imperia more in her relationship with Horatio, but they miss the suggestion that it is impossible to separate the two, for they both reflect and arise out of similar aspects of Bel-imperia's character. Whether for desire or revenge, loving Horatio is an act of defiance. It follows her own wishes, which run contrary to her father's and Lorenzo's, and it gives her power over Balthazar, whom she wishes to punish for killing Andrea and to discourage from forcing her into marriage. Both emotions have their root in Bel-imperia's attempts to assert her independence from authority and to gain control over her life, taking an active rather than a passive role in directing her affairs. Simply choosing Horatio as her lover challenges both Lorenzo and Castile whether she does it to slight Balthazar or not. That she then goes on to consciously use

her love against Balthazar and her brother is just the logical next step in her struggle for autonomy, to publicly show them, as she presents her glove to Horatio, that she will do as she pleases.

In her developing relationship with Horatio, Bel-imperia's sexual license becomes both a means of gaining personal autonomy and an assertion of it. She does not appear, as Edwards coyly phrases it, to be "planning an early marriage" with Horatio (The Spanish Tragedy liv), and her rejection of the restrictions of wedlock emphasizes how she intends to keep hold of her independence whether she loves the man or not. She satisfies her sexual desires, but unlike Dido, she does not relinquish her personal sovereignty by marrying him. Moreover, her choice of Horatio over Balthazar, like her choice of Andrea, gives Bel-imperia the freedom that she would lack in a relationship with her social equal. These two lower-class men cannot make the same demands on her that Balthazar could, and cannot, in any way, restrict or govern her behaviour. Choosing lower-class lovers puts her in a situation where she is at least the equal of the man and allows her to terminate the relationship at will. It also eliminates any fears she might have of being forced into and then confined by marriage, for her social status is so much greater than Horatio's that he would not dare suggest it unless she prompted him.

Even more importantly, her liaison with Horatio stands in constant opposition to the proposed marriage to Balthazar, and the contrast between the two relationships underlines the extent to which she gains power and independence with the former and loses

them with the latter. Balthazar, Kyd suggests, views Bel-imperia as an object to be won, the prize so befitting his station that it becomes a deadly insult when "another joys what [he] deservs't" (II.ii.20). His attempts to win her become nothing more than an endeavour to use his position to force her to comply with his will; and as his suit for her progresses, she increasingly loses control over her life, a situation which culminates with her actual imprisonment at the hands of Balthazar and Lorenzo. After her release, she remains his prisoner, jubilantly paraded about the courtyard by her triumphant captor, and his condescending dismissal of all her grief and cause for pain, "Disperse those clouds and melancholy looks, / And clear them up with those thy sun-bright eyes" (III.xiv.98-9), marks his utter denial of her as an individual who feels and grieves. The way he emphasizes his possession of her in this short speech--"Balthazar's content," "my sorrow's ease," "sovereign of my bliss," and "thee are mine"--suggests that he is treating her in much the same way that he exulted over Andrea's corpse, "...insulting over him, / Breath'd out proud vaunts" (I.ii.73-4).

Against this, there is her liaison with Horatio, and the implicit contrast between the two relationships underlines how Bel-imperia's affair with him is not just the indulgence of a sexual passion, but a reflection of her desire for autonomy and freedom from male authority. When she and Horatio arrange to meet in the harbour, it is Bel-imperia who takes the initiative, while Horatio's rank casts him into the role of respectful subordinate. His courteous,

cautious words at the beginning of the scene, "Now Madam, since by favour of your love / Our hidden smoke is turn'd to open flame" (II.ii.1-2), suggests how he dare not presume on their relationship but must wait for her overtures, while his constant use of the more formal "you" to her "thou's" and "thee's" indicates his social inferiority and careful humility. In the scene in the garden, Bel-imperia no longer takes the initiative but she remains Horatio's equal, returning his embraces without any pretence of false modesty or coy weakness. As they challenge and encourage each other, their sexual interaction is very different from her one-sided relationship with Balthazar, who will not even recognise that she has the capacity for intense erotic passion.

With the evident difference between the two relationships, Bel-imperia's affair with Horatio becomes an obvious attempt to resist the restrictions forced on women by society and to retain possession of her self. She makes a free choice of Horatio, refuses to marry him, and chooses a man whose lower social status will leave him unable to make demands on her. He will, of necessity, treat her far differently than Balthazar: not as the prize that he deserves but as the high-born woman who decides, out of free will, to give herself to him. The fact, however, that Bel-imperia fights subordination to male authority would in itself be unimportant if Kyd did not justify and sympathize with her struggle. By portraying her illicit union positively while linking the marriage which will bring peace to both countries with the

forces of cruelty and false pride, he vindicates, or at the very least, makes appear sympathetic, Bel-imperia's pursuit of autonomy.

In this light, Bel-imperia's death becomes the final assertion of her right to individuality. It might seem as though she is actually enacting the tiresome cliché of the passive, constant woman sacrificing herself on the altar of male egotism, but by choosing her own lovers and refusing to marry them, she moves outside this traditional scenario. Her decision to kill herself is one which is quite independent of male coercion since she, and she alone, has chosen Horatio and Andrea and now decides to die for them. At the same time, the fact that she also kills Balthazar as well as herself not only establishes her as active in her death but also justifies her love for Horatio and provides a dramatic statement of her individual sovereignty. She kills the man who would restrain and subordinate her within a forced marriage to revenge a love which was freely entered into and initiated by herself. Her slaying of Balthazar, then, is not self-immolation but the ultimate proclamation of her right to control her own sexuality. Most strikingly of all, even if one follows Murray's argument that the characters' actions are controlled by the gods, her suicide becomes her final assertion of personal independence. In a controlled world, to choose one's own time of death is one of the few entirely self-determined things an individual can do, and her final gesture in stepping outside Hieronimo's script and choosing to die rather than live marks her fearless defiance of both the last man who seeks to direct her life and of death itself.

These claims might seem like a feminist imposition on the text, but it seems clear from the play that Kyd recognises that Bel-imperia is struggling for independence, and he actually articulates her fears and her desire for personal freedom. At the end of her fierce argument with Lorenzo in Act III, Balthazar and Bel-imperia embark on a long conversation which is crucial for an understanding of her as a character who is determined, above everything else, to remain autonomous. After claiming with obvious irony that "To love, and fear, and both at once, my lord, / ...are things of more import / Than women's wits are to be busied with" (III.x.93-5), Bel-imperia goes on to say that she fears herself, and when Lorenzo asks her how this can be possible, she replies, "...As those / That what they love are loath and fear to lose" (III.x.98-99). The passage is slightly awkward but the meaning is clear. She fears to lose what she loves above everything else--her self. Kyd understands that for Bel-imperia to marry means giving up her freedom and her personal sense of self to become subordinate to the will of another. Balthazar's solution, "Then, fair, let Balthazar your keeper be" (III.x.100), provides the last touch to Kyd's portrayal of the marriage as a form of unbearable imprisonment for Bel-imperia, of an enslavement of self where her husband is not the friend which she constantly terms Horatio, but a "keeper" like a guard in a jail. He deliberately establishes the nature of her upcoming marriage with Balthazar, and he then allows her to scornfully reject Balthazar and all he stands for, "No, Balthazar does fear as well as we" (III.x.101). This passage confirms the

earlier suggestion that all of Bel-imperia's actions are not just the indiscretions of a sexually licentious woman but part of a concerted effort to challenge authority and maintain freedom of will in a society which allows women no liberty.

But while this scene clearly captures Bel-imperia's commitment to complete self-freedom, it also introduces a fundamentally negative aspect of her personality. She says that she fears to lose what she loves, her self, and this acknowledgement of self-love links her with Balthazar and Lorenzo. To desire complete liberty to do as she pleases is to throw off all the laws and all the social ties that bind individuals together. It is to be completely self-loving, placing what she desires before personal obligations to friends, family, and society. This is how Balthazar and Lorenzo view the world and this is how some critics claim Bel-imperia, haughty, imperious, and ruthless, views it as well. Murray makes the case best when he states, "Bel-imperia is a true sister to Lorenzo. Her 'imperious' will is a match for his, and she serves herself in her passion for love as he serves himself in his passion for domination" (18); Edwards, Weld, McAlindon, and Freeman share this opinion. In this interpretation, Bel-imperia becomes a dangerous anarchist, who, like her brother and Balthazar, ignores the laws and obligations of society and helps to bring about the collapse of the kingdom.³¹

There can be no question, however, that Kyd portrays her sympathetically, and his sensitivity suggests that her desire for sovereignty is not the unrestrained, destructive passion of a

lustful woman but a legitimate struggle for recognition as a person deserving to be free from the manipulation and control of others. Her desperate attempts to save Horatio and her subsequent grief and anger suggest that, unlike Balthazar or Lorenzo, she is capable of feelings for others and of self-sacrifice. Since the two conspirators are so base and the King and Castile (however kindly one might argue they are) seem unable to check or even recognise the corruption within their society, it is difficult to imagine that her defiance of their authority should be seen as the flouting of good, solid, traditional law and just hierarchy.

Further reinforcing the idea that Kyd's portrayal of her struggle for autonomy is a challenge to the unfairness of male authority, not a portrayal of overwhelming self-love along the lines of a female Lorenzo, is his awareness of the often unjust restraints placed on women. He evokes a sense of Bel-imperia's powerlessness in the face of the restrictions and limitations placed on her by society and then sets it against her fierce desire for independence. Unlike Marlowe, Greene, Peele, or Lyly, he at least attempts to examine the woman's side, to show how it feels to be restricted by authority that is clearly unjust and motivated purely by self-interest. Just as he captures Hieronimo's despairing anger with a world that will not give him justice for the murder of his son, so he evokes Bel-imperia's outrage at a society which leaves her completely powerless and subject to the will of others.

Through the first part of the play, he depicts how she slowly loses all of her freedom. Her father attempts to constrain and

control her by dictating whom she will love, while her brother's spying deprives her of any privacy or true liberty of action. When this gradual deprivation of freedom culminates with her actual, physical imprisonment, Kyd, remarkably, allows her a soliloquy in which to angrily denounce her brother's actions and to express her feelings of being wronged. By having her stand at her prison window and cry:

What means this outrage, that is offer'd me?

Why am I thus sequester'd from the court?

No notice? Shall I not know the cause

Of this my secret and suspicious illls?

Accursed brother, unkind murderer,

Why bends thou thus thy mind to martyr me?

(III.ix.1-5)

he legitimizes her defiance of her brother, emphasizes the importance of her concerns, and elevates her stature within the play. He does not, as Marlowe does with Isabella, keep her silent once she becomes disruptive.

In the same scene, Kyd also uses her words to create a stark picture of her helplessness in a world where men have absolute authority. When she concludes her lament with the Stoic "Well, force perforce, I must constrain myself / To patience, and apply me to the time, / Till heaven, as I have hop'd, shall set me free" (III.ix.12-4), the contrast within the soliloquy between her outrage at her imprisonment and her utter powerlessness to do anything about it underlines the painful hopelessness of her

situation. On the one hand, Kyd suggests her passionate desire for freedom, while on the other, he juxtaposes the bleak reality of a society where she has no rights. As Christophil enters and leads her away, his words, "Come, Madam Bel-imperia, this may not be" (III.x.15), indicate how even her protests are silenced.

At the same time, Bel-imperia's presence and soliloquy by the window serve as a powerful metaphor for her plight within society. Her bleak situation as a prisoner is the final, logical extension of her father's and brother's attempts to restrict her to the passive role traditionally given to women and of the Vives-type world in which she is allowed no autonomy as an individual. It is a natural consequence of her father's belief that he can dispose of her to whom he chooses and of her brother's efforts to exercise complete control over her. Kyd suggests how little difference there is in her situation through the course of the play. When she rebels against family authority, the metaphoric imprisonment imposed on her by a society which sanctions her brother's and father's actions becomes literalized. The first leads quite naturally to the second, while the second, the actual imprisonment, stands as an ironic comment on the first, revealing the ugliness that lies beneath Lorenzo's and Castile's attitudes. The window and the prison also stand as a sharp image of her painful loss of freedom. The window captures both her helplessness and, as she stares down at all of the world stretching out before her, the space and escape that goes with freedom. When she is so rigidly confined, the view from the window is a taunting reminder of

liberty. On a deeper level, her speech at the window provides striking representation of her position through the play, of her desire for independence in a world where she remains forever a prisoner, controlled by the commands of her father and the manipulation and violence of her brother. Locked up within society, her interrupted liaison with Horatio, which is meant to affirm her autonomy, provides only the illusory and tantalizingly painful freedom of gazing out of a prison window.

In the scene that follows, Kyd further develops the image of Bel-imperia's hopeless imprisonment. Lorenzo "enlarges" his sister, but Bel-imperia is released only to be confronted with Balthazar's desire to marry her and his suggestion, "...fair, let Balthazar your keeper be." His picture of himself as her keeper, calling up images of a gaoler or a warden, ironically suggests that her enlargement is purely illusory. She has escaped one form of imprisonment only to be faced by a lifetime of another.

Adding to the depth of Kyd's remarkable sympathy for Bel-imperia's powerless position in society and his suggestion of its injustice is the way in which the dramatist ties the Spanish Princess' plight in with Hieronimo's. While critics are divided over whether Kyd intended audiences to approve of Hieronimo's revenge or not, few dispute that he is the victim of unbearable injustice and driven to personal revenge because he cannot get public, lawful satisfaction from the King. The fact that Bel-imperia joins with him in seeking revenge casts her into a similar role and makes her seem, like Hieronimo, the victim of cruel

oppression. This both gives her illicit love, which should not even be recognised, the legitimacy of a just cause, and, by virtue of the bond she shares with Hieronimo, creates a moving sense of her powerlessness in the face of an unjustly ruled society. Just as Lorenzo uses his position as a highly placed nobleman to suppress Hieronimo's pleas to the King, so Kyd suggests he uses his position as a man and as a brother to manipulate Bel-imperia, and he forces them to act together to seek out vengeance and justice.

The play-within-the-play, then, becomes a chance for Bel-imperia to avenge a wrong that society's laws will not address. Hieronimo cannot avenge his son because Lorenzo blocks his suit in court and intimidates him when he tries to seek an audience with the King. Bel-imperia has no rights within the law and cannot even denounce her brother's murder of Horatio because that would mean revealing he was about to become her lover. The play-within-the play gives her and Hieronimo a chance to challenge established authority and to avenge injustice and cruelty in a way she would never be allowed within society. Her words before she stabs Balthazar,

Yet by thy power thou thinkest to command,
 And to thy power Perseda doth obey:
 But were she able, thus she would revenge
 Thy treacheries on thee, ignoble prince,

(IV.iv.63-66)

eloquently capture her helpless position within society and her passionate desire to throw off unjust authority. Even more strikingly, Kyd likens the despotic power which Soliman wields over

Perseda to Lorenzo's and Castile's traditional authority over Bel-imperia. Despite the fact that there is nothing exceptional in Castile's treatment of his daughter, Kyd suggests that for a woman as independent and as courageous as Bel-imperia to live in the society of the play is to live in a society governed and controlled by tyrants.

The degree to which Kyd means to deliberately challenge the accepted standards of his time can be argued, but there is no doubt that his portrayal of Bel-imperia stands in marked contrast both to the female characterizations in plays by his immediate contemporaries and to the Elizabethan ideals of proper womanly behaviour. Commenting on Kyd's use of different sources, Freeman writes, "we must credit him with powers of invention unparalleled among the dramatists of the time" (50); readers should also recognise that Kyd creates an independent, sympathetically unconventional female character who is unmatched by any other woman in contemporary literature. While Marlowe's most interesting and subversive women, Dido and Isabella, are dependent on men and defined and controlled by their love, Bel-imperia remains the dominant figure in all of her relationships and seeks to actively direct her own destiny. More than anything, she stands as an individual who seeks to fulfil her desires--some noble, some selfish--in a world where women were expected to suppress all traces of independence.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. All further references are taken from Philip Edwards' Revels' edition of The Spanish Tragedy.

2. The degree and sincerity of Bel-imperia's love for Horatio are debated by the critics. While Philip Edwards acknowledges Bel-imperia's courage, he portrays her as cold-bloodedly using Horatio to wound the hapless Balthazar who "has unluckily fallen in love with her" (Thomas Kyd 28). In Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems Arthur Freeman claims that her desire to avenge Don Andrea is the "motive for all her subsequent action" (86). On the other hand, Roger Stilling sees no problems in Bel-imperia's rapid substitution of Horatio for Andrea. She is merely choosing his most worthy successor (28).

The most satisfactory interpretation lies with critics who balance her motivation between love and revenge (McAlindon 62; Bercovitch 225-6; Levin 319). She does love Horatio, but she also decides to use her affection to slight Balthazar (Levin 319). However, as the play progresses, her plans for revenge are forgotten as her love for Horatio grows and enables her to become happy again. As Bercovitch puts it, "her subsequent actions reveal that, even as she considers her scheme [of revenge], love has in fact driven all such thoughts from her mind" (225). Edwards makes an earlier charge that her love seems fickle and inconstant (The Spanish Tragedy liv), but, given Kyd's portrayal of her grief and anger after Horatio's death, it seems unlikely that he meant their love to appear light and changeable. As McAlindon explains it,

"Kyd manages the development [of their love] in an awkwardly condensed manner, and not because it is meant to appear unworthy" (61-62).

3. Similarly, Stilling claims that "Kyd develops the theme of love in terms of love's beauty, love's healing qualities, love's place and value as creator of human bonds" (27). But, since Stilling sees the play as being built around the "ironies of eros and thanatos" (26) and views it in such absolute terms as the working out of the "love-death opposition" (1-3), he tends to over-idealize the love affair and casts Bel-imperia into the one-sided and restricting role of wronged lover. He also ignores the illicit nature of the two lovers' relationship, which, as McAlindon points out, should have immediately condemned it in Renaissance eyes (36).

4. In Thomas Kyd, Peter Murray claims that Lorenzo's and Balthazar's comments as they watch this scene undercut the seemingly positive nature of its portrayal and foreshadow the ugly consequences that the lovers' affair will have. Their vicious words make the "violent potential" of the lovers' talk evident (83). While there is certainly irony in this dramatic juxtaposing of the lovers and the murderers, it is the very intensity and the positiveness of Bel-imperia's feelings that give the scene its impact. If the encounter were no more than a sordid, unpleasant tryst, Lorenzo's grim promises of revenge would have very little emotional impact. At the same time, Murray overlooks the fact that it is Lorenzo and Balthazar who force death and violence onto Bel-imperia and Horatio's love and assumes instead that destruction

and violence are contained within their love. But what Kyd shows in the play is not the destruction caused by violent love, but the destruction caused, as Stilling claims, when the positive forces of love are choked by the forces of death (27). It is the negation of all warm feelings (Stilling 27), symbolized by the murder of Horatio, which leads to the carnage of the-play-within-the-play. Describing the love affair, Charles Barber writes that Kyd expresses "at one and the same time the menace it [their relationship] is subject to and the positive energies of life which flow into it" (139).

5. McAlindon is more ambivalent about their love than this one sentence might make him appear. He cannot completely accept the idea that any Renaissance writer would portray an illicit union between a princess and a minor nobleman positively, but, at the same time, he acknowledges the beauty and the intensity in Kyd's portrayal of their love. So he responds to the warmth of the scene, observing that Bel-imperia and Horatio are Mars and Venus celebrating "the allegory of nature's fruitful...discord" in "a moment of rare harmony," (74), and then he qualifies his statement by saying that they are "a symbol of unity (albeit a unity flawed from within as well as threatened from without)" (74). It is hard to imagine (and McAlindon never attempts to explain the paradox) how their unity can be a rare moment of harmonious concord even as it is essentially flawed, and his ambivalent reaction seems to be the reaction of a critic who responds positively to Kyd's portrayal of love and then tries to reconcile it with the conventional

Renaissance outlook he believes Kyd must have had.

6. Both Murray and John Weld argue strongly that the bower scene reveals that their love is negative, not positive. Since Weld argues that the love of The Spanish Tragedy is meant to mirror the love of Augustine's earthly city of Babylon which is based on the desire to dominate, he, not unexpectedly, contends that "even in that scene [in the arbour] the lines clearly imply a physical grappling of the lovers that gives the image a strong, visual impact" (343-44). This ugly, unseemly "physical grappling" then suggests how their love is really a hostile battle (344). Murray is more general than Weld and less concerned with linking the play to the writings of a fourth century Church Father, but he makes the same points as Weld. He argues that the violence within their relationship is expressed through the love-war imagery (88) and observes that every metaphor in the later part of their love scene implies that their "love is destructive" (89).

Weld and Murray, however, overlook the pure eroticism of the scene, in which Kyd appears more concerned with making it sensual than suggesting that it is morally wrong. If one considers "the visual impact" of the lovers' exchange, it seems likely that the foot pushing, the kissing, and the "twining arms [that] yoke and make [Horatio] yield" (II.iv.43) would contribute to the sensuousness of the love-making, not make it seem like unsightly wrestling. Further, the love-war imagery is not a symbol of the destructiveness of love but of the hope, where the fields of battle have given way to those of love and the only war is the joyful one

of love, that "breaks no bonds of peace".

Even Bel-imperia's early nervousness, which, Murray claims, is natural, since their love is violent (86), seems more intended to heighten apprehension than to lead one to question their love.

7. Thus it is simplistic, as well as illogical, for Charles Hallett to claim that all the problems in the kingdom flow from Bel-imperia who, he feels, represents the forces of irrationality (137-145). While one might argue that her love for Don Andrea initiates and causes the tragedy, this still would not explain Lorenzo, who is infuriated with Horatio before Bel-imperia casts her eye on him and who turns to evil because he likes it, not because his sister's lack of restraint drives him to it.

8. Murray argues that Horatio, who is an ambitious man eager to ingratiate himself with Bel-imperia, distorts what happens in the battle to make both himself and Andrea appear better than they actually were (45). While, of course, there is no way of proving whether Murray is right or wrong, it seems more reasonable, given their respective characters in the play, to believe in Horatio's honour than Balthazar's. Both the General's mention of Balthazar's "proud vaunting" and the Prince's later cowardly murder of Horatio lead one to believe Balthazar perfectly capable of taking dishonourable advantage of a fallen foe. Conversely, Horatio's valour in battle, his chivalric treatment of Balthazar, and his zeal to recover his dead friend's body leave one wondering why he would suddenly change character and basely lie about the course of the battle, particularly since, as the uncontested hero, he hardly

needs to dissemble or deceive in order to appear noble.

9. This might seem rather obvious, but the idea that a woman who is sexually aggressive is to blame if one of the men in love with her behaves badly is still quite commonplace in the twentieth century, as Edwards', Murray's, and Hallett's analyses of *Bel-imperia* demonstrate.

10. Barber points out that when Pedringano reveals who *Bel-imperia*'s lover is Lorenzo registers his shock in terms of Horatio's social status, crying "What, Don Horatio our Knight Marshal's son?" (II.i.79), as though unable to believe that his sister would take up with someone of such low rank (140). Other critics note that the King does not even know Horatio by sight. The most effective indicator of position to me is the way in which the King rewards Horatio's valour: he allows him to serve him. The King's words, "Sit down young prince, you are our second guest: / Brother sit down, and nephew take your place: / Signior Horatio, wait thou upon our cup, / For well thou hast deserved to be honour'd" (I.iv.128-131), emphasize what Barber terms "the gulf of caste difference" (137). Even though Balthazar is a prisoner, a rebel, and a former enemy, he is treated with far more respect and honour than Horatio.

11. The best example of this idea that, for the woman, the man in the position of authority is always right comes from William Gouge's popular marriage manual Of Domesticall Duties (1622). He pontificates, "Though an husband in regard of evil qualities may carry the image of the devil, yet in regard to his place and

office, he beareth the image of God" (Qtd. in Stone 197).

12. Both McAlindon (63) and Murray (45-7) argue that Horatio is not an entirely honourable figure but their claims are based more on speculation than evidence from the text and neither of them press their argument too strongly. Horatio's honourable characteristics, which are set out in the play quite straightforwardly and which neither McAlindon or Murray attempt to address or to explain away, seem to easily outweigh their suggested negative qualities.

13. Murray would argue otherwise since he sees Horatio's speech here (I.iv.6-29, 32-43) as a calculated attempt to ingratiate himself with Bel-imperia (46). But since there are no suggestions in the text that Horatio is a dishonest liar and since both Andrea and the general--clearly an impartial source--attest to his loyalty and bravery, it seems more likely that Kyd meant the reader to take Horatio's speech at face value rather than to engage in convoluted speculation in order to make him look base. In the speech itself, Horatio appears more likeable in his modesty than anything else, and though he was clearly responsible for the victory he does not exult or boast over his own role and glory but focuses on Andrea's contribution to the battle.

14. "From very early on," observes Rowland Wymer, "the Lucrece story was being shaped as a political myth of republicanism and revolution" (104). Lucrece's death, he points out, leads to the overthrow of the Roman monarchy as it prompts Lucius Brutus and the common people to revolt, while Virginia's death re-establishes

consular rule (104). Jacobean writers, he claims, often suppressed this element of republicanism when dealing with one of the chaste-suicide myths (105).

15. Numerous critics mention Bel-imperia's impressive qualities, but they are too concerned with Hieronimo to do more than comment on them in passing. For some reason (which he never attempts to explain), Frederick Boas believes Bel-imperia bears marked similarities to Lady Macbeth, "With masculine strength of will and intellect, yet with a deep vein of affection in her nature, and with the polish and charm of a true 'grande dame' she has her place amidst the band of tragedy heroines of whom Lady Macbeth is the supreme type" (Introduction xxxiv). Edwards writes, "Bel-imperia is a woman of strong will, independent spirit, and not a little courage" (The Spanish Tragedy liv) and then adds, "she is also libidinous" (liv) as though, Renaissance-like, this negates all her positive qualities. Freeman links her to later Jacobean characters, "she has some of the fire, courage, and wilfulness of Vittoria Accorombona, Ford's Annabella, and Middleton's Beatrice" (86). Murray mentions her strength of will and her intelligence but tends to interpret these traits negatively, seeing them as an expression of her imperious disdain. He even manages to view her confrontation with Balthazar and Lorenzo after her imprisonment as nothing more than a manifestation of her proud scorn and her delight in belittling others.

16. Michael Levin comments, "Her constancy dwarfs Hieronimo's frequently check-mated resolution" (318).

On the other hand, neither Freeman (96) nor Edwards (The Spanish Tragedy, lvi) feel that Hieronimo is truly hesitating, but this does not detract from the force of Bel-imperia's speech and her words evidently give Hieronimo courage and support.

17. For a discussion of the abuse of language in the play, particularly by Lorenzo, see Scott McMillin 27-48.

18. On the Renaissance perception of the general irrationality of women's speech, Woodbridge writes, "According to literary pronouncements female speech is less rational than male speech in general; authors' dictions often characterize female speech as meaningless sound, babbling, prating, chattering" (210).

19. Describing Bel-imperia, Levin writes, "Mercurial, and melancholic, amorous, clever, coy, and scornful by turns, she is the eternal female--and her femininity has iron in its soul" (319). While I won't argue whether his adjectives constitute an accurate definition of "the eternal female" or not, he seriously misrepresents Bel-imperia's character. Not only does he ignore her "eternal male" qualities such as ruthlessness, courage, intelligence (as opposed to mere cleverness), and decisiveness, he gives her traits which are not suggested in the text. Considering that she twice tells Balthazar, and in a rudely blunt fashion, that she does not care for him, it's hard to imagine her as coy. It's only the male characters in the play who insist on seeing her obvious reluctance as "coying it as becomes her kind." She is scornful with Balthazar, but as Kyd presents him, it is with just cause. Lorenzo, who is as forthright as she at the beginning of the

play, is as disgusted with him as she is. Her impatience with Balthazar's artificial language is actually more traditionally male than female. She's certainly amorous, but so are Balthazar and Horatio, and her actual love turns out to be fairly constant. He terms her "mercurial," but except for her quick love for Horatio, Kyd does not depict her as rapidly changing her moods or her decisions. If she seems melancholy, this is only to be expected since both of her lovers are killed and she is being forced into an unwanted marriage.

20. Only Murray, who looks on Bel-imperia's self-assertion and strength as a negative manifestation of her proud and cruel disdain and who can only speak sympathetically of her when imagining her to be seduced by an ingratiating Horatio, defends Balthazar's highly artificial declarations of love. He claims, in an appeal to circular reasoning, that Balthazar's love for Bel-imperia is hollow and shallow because he instinctively understands how cruel she is, "Although he has hardly met the girl, he has a better grasp of her wild, hard nature than he knows; and he instinctively hates her" (78-9). While Balthazar's behaviour certainly does suggest hate rather than love, Kyd provides little suggestion that Balthazar is intuitively repulsed by her or that his empty love is anything but the natural expression of a self-enraptured man.

Murray also accepts, quite literally, Balthazar's conventional claims that he will die if he does not win Bel-imperia (81) and sees this as at least partial excuse for his actions. Given Kyd's obvious satire of Petrarchan excesses, it seems unlikely that he

meant us to believe that Balthazar would collapse, dead, at Bel-imperia's feet if she did not show him mercy.

21. Levin is the only critic to comment on this, observing that Horatio "cares about Bel-imperia as a human being," while "Balthazar's admiration...is that of a man for an inanimate object he wants to possess; he makes no attempt to know Bel-imperia as a person" (318). Levin's attitude stands in marked contrast to Murray, who, like Balthazar and Lorenzo, tends to see Bel-imperia as an unfeeling abstraction--imperious Beauty goading hapless men on to violence.

22. In satirizing Balthazar's courtly love outlook on Bel-imperia, Kyd proves the exception to Rose's claim that the state of mind she calls the "dualistic sensibility" was "most commanding and pristine in Elizabethan...tragedy " (104-5) and was only later replaced in some Jacobean tragedy by the more "complex and multifaceted" (31) Protestant sexual discourse which combined love within marriage. She argues that the changing portrayal of women and sexuality in Jacobean drama arises from a changed concept of tragic heroism that resulted from the rising prestige of marriage in Renaissance England (9), and she cites Marlowe's Tamburlaine as the perfect example of the prevalence and purity of the dualistic sensibility in Elizabethan tragedy. But by ignoring Kyd's portrayal of Balthazar and of Bel-imperia, she overlooks the possibility that an acceptance of women without either idealizing them or utterly condemning them exists in Elizabethan tragedy, quite removed from and uninfluenced by the Protestant idealization

of marriage. The way in which Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy challenges her view suggests the dangers of using broad generalizations in order to impose a neat pattern of cause and effect and evolution on drama.

In direct contrast to Rose, McAlindon singles out Kyd's role in combining romance and sexuality with the traditionally tragic concerns of politics and government, observing that, "As a result of his [Kyd's] design, the interaction of socio-political and sexual disorder is a constant feature of Renaissance tragedy" (39). He goes on to point out that seventeenth century tragedy follows this trend established by Kyd, moving from political issues to sexual and marital ones (40). McAlindon places the origin of the increased Jacobean focus on sexuality within tragedy squarely in Kyd's work, not in the evolution of a more "multi-faceted Protestant sexual discourse" caused by the idealisation of marriage.

23. Interestingly Murray does the same thing in his interpretation of the play and casts Bel-imperia into a passive role.

24. The best way to counter the claim that Kyd is satirizing Lorenzo's traditional attitude towards women is to argue that his treatment of Bel-imperia is characteristic of his treatment of everyone. Murray's observation, "Lorenzo thinks people can be motivated by external forces very much as puppets are" (80), suggests that the Machiavel's scornful dismissal of human feelings is not confined to Bel-imperia. However, while Lorenzo does treat

everyone with contempt, there are a number of reasons for believing his attitude towards Bel-imperia is based on her sex. First, Balthazar and Castile both treat Bel-imperia as Lorenzo does and neither of them is manipulative. This suggests that in the play there is a common masculine outlook on Bel-imperia, an outlook which Lorenzo shares. Secondly, Lorenzo makes the early, disparaging remarks about her sex, and while he manipulates everyone else around him, he is far more careful in how he deals with Balthazar, his father, and Hieronimo than he is with Bel-imperia. As men, he at least acknowledges them as potential opponents and treats them with a show of respect, while he behaves with open contempt towards his sister. Finally, Kyd shows more thoroughly with her than with anyone else how ridiculous his assumptions about her lack of feelings are.

25. The 1615 woodcut of the play in performance has the actors wearing some kind of black mask or paint, but there is nothing in the play to suggest that they are disguised and Bel-imperia recognises them instantly.

26. It is uncertain whether Lorenzo directs this angry comment at Balthazar or Bel-imperia, and the remark could well be Lorenzo's sarcastic evaluation of Balthazar's lame and ineffective attempts to win Bel-imperia. Since Balthazar makes no response to it, however, and Lorenzo is not in the habit of openly insulting him, it seems likely that it is aimed at the departing Bel-imperia.

27. Cf. Stilling's remark that Castile cannot imagine her

choosing her own path as "a free agent with her own mind and heart" (35).

28. This is similar to Stilling's claim that the King's words (II.iii.41-46) reveal a philosophy which echoes and supports Lorenzo's decision to murder Horatio. Lorenzo just takes the principles embodied in the King's words to their logical conclusion (36). I would not, however, implicate the King in the murder or mistreatment of Bel-imperia. Unlike Castile, he is concerned with how Bel-imperia will respond and acknowledges that she might reject the match, while Castile takes her compliance for granted.

29. It is logical, Stilling argues, that Castile should die at the end of the play because he interferes "in an area of his daughter's life which was her own closest concern," and this makes him a force of death (39). He takes the strongest position in favour of Bel-imperia but even Freeman, who expresses very little interest in her elsewhere, comments that Castile "shows one of his less sympathetic sides as he proposes nearly to compel her acceptance of Balthazar" (88).

30. Critics like Murray and Edwards comment that Bel-imperia's attempts to control her fate are purely ironic since she, like the other characters in the play, is manipulated by the gods and since the characters always have the wrong idea of where their actions are leading them. Bel-imperia, Edwards points out, thinks that her second love will help her revenge, but it only results in her second lover's death; while we realise from the beginning, as Lorenzo and Balthazar spy on their tryst, just how futile her

defiance is (The Spanish Tragedy lii). But even if one credits the predestination idea, which Edwards later rejects, it does not negate her attempts to control her own life. They might appear ironic but it does not lessen our admiration for her courage and determination. At the same time, neither Edwards nor Murray distinguishes between the destiny imposed on individuals by fate and the destiny imposed on individuals by other individuals. All the characters might be subject to Revenge or divine justice, but only Bel-imperia, as a woman, is subject to male control and authority as well. Thus even if you agree with Murray's statement that "an individual's very effort to impose his will on destiny is self-defeating" (54), Bel-imperia's attempts to defy Lorenzo and Castile can be seen as something quite separate from characters' attempts to control fate.

31. Cf. McAlindon's observation that in the play the failings of many characters combine to produce a collapse of society (64).

Conclusion

In The Spanish Tragedy, Kyd appears to be both aware of gender stereotypes and interested in puncturing them, and he creates a strong-minded, independent, and sympathetic female character who successfully defies male authority. But it is difficult to tell to what extent his portrayal is a deliberate critique of the values of his society and to what extent it is entirely unintentional. Is his creation of Bel-imperia mere sensationalism, with a heroine who behaves in the fashion Elizabethan audiences would expect of a Spanish woman? Or is it a copy based on "the actual sexual mores of more than a few aristocrats," as Barber suggests (140)? Perhaps in moving outside the values of his society and creating a morally "make-believe world [where] attitudes are sanctioned which might very well be deplored in real life" (Edwards, The Spanish Tragedy lix), he also adopts, within this purely fictitious world, a more forgiving attitude towards unchastity. Or Bel-imperia might be nothing more than an expression of his characteristically "confused moral standards" (Boas, Introduction xxxiv), in which he is as lax in his depiction and condemnation of Bel-imperia's behaviour as some critics argue he is in his portrayal of the morality of revenge.

While it is impossible to resolve these questions, both The First Part of Hieronimo, the play written as a fore-piece to The Spanish Tragedy, and the works of Seneca and Garnier, two playwrights recognised as major influences on Kyd, help to evaluate Kyd's portrayal of Bel-imperia and place it in perspective. It might seem unlikely that Kyd would deviate so markedly from the traditional standards of his time, but The First Part of Hieronimo emphasizes the depth of Kyd's unconventionality in his creation of the Spanish Princess. The First Part of Hieronimo, most critics agree, was written well after The Spanish Tragedy by an anonymous writer who might have been basing his work on a lost Hieronimo written in the early 1590s.¹ In this later play, the unknown dramatist subdues the most striking and unconventional aspects of Kyd's portrayal of Bel-imperia's illicit relationship and transforms Bel-imperia into a more traditionally acceptable heroine. It is as though the writer, despite that fact that he is utterly dependent upon the plot and characters of The Spanish Tragedy, cannot deal with Kyd's ridiculing of traditional stereotypes and must actively change the play to force it and its characters into a conventional framework. But, in scrupulously eliminating all traces of what McAlindon terms "socio-political and sexual disorder" (39) from the fabric of The Spanish Tragedy, the unknown playwright unwittingly calls attention to the subversive aspects which he works so hard to conventionalize.

In Hieronimo, the dramatist immediately eliminates the secret affair between Andrea and Bel-imperia and makes their relationship

respectable, decent, and staidly unconsummated. His purpose is evident: he wants to keep Bel-imperia and Andrea the sympathetic figures of the story, but obviously feels that they must follow conventional standards of morality if they are to be acceptable to himself and his audience. Thus while Kyd's Andrea frankly admits to having "In secret...possess'd a worthy dame, / Which hight sweet Bel-imperia by name" (I.i.10-11) and Kyd does not seem to think the worse either of him or of Bel-imperia, in Hieronimo, Andrea noticeably refrains from any such improper liaison. As Lorenzo plans Andrea's assassination, his words emphasize the stolid respectability of Bel-imperia and Don Andrea's relationship:

He loves my sister; that shall cost his life;

So she a husband, he shall lose a wife.

Oh sweet, sweet policy, I hug thee; good:

Andrea's Hymen's draught shall be in blood.

(i.121-24)²

Later, when the courtier Alcario disguises himself as Andrea in order to deceive Bel-imperia, his jubilant cry, "This falls out rare; in this disguise I may / Both wed, bed, and board her" (v.19-20) indicates the honourable nature of Andrea's relationship with Bel-imperia. In order to successfully pose as Andrea, Alcario must not meet Bel-imperia in the orchard for a night of passion but must plan to marry her. His careful chronology of action--to first wed her and then bed her--suggests that this Bel-imperia, steadfast in her pure virtue, would not allow anything else.

Besides changing a clandestine liaison into what appears to be a

respectable betrothal known to the whole court, the dramatist alters the other most objectional and subversive factor in their relationship: Andrea's social standing. In The Spanish Tragedy, Kyd leaves no doubt of Andrea's low rank. "My name," announces the ghost, "was Don Andrea, my descent, / Though not ignoble, yet inferior far / To gracious fortunes of my tender youth" (I.i.5-7). But the author of Hieronimo carefully erases all traces of class tension and elevates Andrea to a social level equal to Lorenzo's and Balthazar's. At the beginning of the play, he is chosen by the King to act as Ambassador to Portugal, a position of extreme honour and distinction coveted by Lorenzo himself. In his negotiations with Balthazar, he treats the Prince as his social equal, addressing him by the familiar and less respectful second-person singular. Clearly his status in the court is far removed from Horatio's in The Spanish Tragedy, where the Knight Marshal's son, as a singular honour, is allowed to wait upon the King's cup. In light of Andrea's newly improved social standing, his affection for Bel-imperia becomes quite acceptable within the social hierarchy of the play, and he need make no attempt to hide his feelings for the Princess. In front of Rogero and the other noblemen of the court, he addresses her with a familiarity and affection which Horatio would never have dared adopt, "Raise up my dear love, Bel-imperia. / Oh, be of comfort, sweet, call in thy spirits" (vii.120-21).

Correspondingly, there is no suggestion that Castile feels any "old wrath" at the misbehaviour of his daughter. In the conventional, tidied-up world of Hieronimo, there is no need for

the father to attempt to hinder his daughter's lover, just as there is no place for Pedringano to act as a secret go-between. There is nothing wrong or clandestine about their love affair to distress him. Even Lorenzo's objection to the match lies solely in his jealous hatred for Andrea "'cause he aims at honor, / When my [Lorenzo's] purest thoughts work in a pitchy vale" (i.106-7). While the basis of Kyd's challenge to traditional male standards of honour rests in the fact that he allows Lorenzo genuine reason to disapprove of the secret affair and then goes on to show that his treatment of his sister is still unacceptable, the writer of Hieronimo disposes of any uncomfortable problems by making the relationship seem blessed by the court and Castile. He deprives Lorenzo's anger of any foundation and makes it nothing more than further proof of the general blackness and malevolence of his soul. The playwright perceives that Bel-imperia's love for Andrea is meant to appear positive--which accounts for Lorenzo's villainy--but he cannot react to her feelings sympathetically unless her love is sanctioned by social class and parental authority.

The playwright's radical transformation of Bel-imperia is equally revealing and underlines, in each of its alterations, the most daring elements of Kyd's characterization. She becomes, in every aspect, the weak, passive, clinging woman of tradition. She enters the play in tears, a fact commented on, with patronizing impatience, by the dry-eyed Andrea. When she beseeches Andrea to forgo his honour and stay safe at home with her, she appears dependent and plaintive, a traditional woman who values love above

honour. Her humble words to her departing lover, "Nay, hear me, dear: / I know you will be rough and violent" (ii.22-23) cast her into the unlikely role of soft-voiced, pleading suppliant. She is foolish and easily duped by Lorenzo's plan to have Alcario disguise himself as Andrea, while she is forced to assume the conventional female role of bemoaning the cruelty of war, blind to the higher masculine conceptions of glory and honour in combat, "You [Andrea] came but now, and must you part again? / You told me that your spirit should put on peace; / But see, war follows war" (ix.1-3).

Even more significantly, the playwright insists on diminishing Bel-imperia's authority and the powerful, commanding position she takes in her relationships with men. The anonymous writer starts out with an aggressive, strong-willed woman who dominated her affair with Horatio and transforms her into a humble, teary-eyed girl who is reduced to begging for Andrea's affection. Conversely, Andrea treats her with a superiority bordering on contempt. When he takes his leave of her, he is more concerned with emphasizing her female frailty than saying farewell, and he lectures her on her weakness with an odious air of patronizing forbearance:

What playing the woman, Bel-imperia?

Nay, then you love me not; or, at the least,

You drown my honors in those flowing waters.

.....

Love me more valiant; play not this moist prize;

Be woman in all parts, save thy eyes.

And so I leave thee.

(ii.56-63)

Kyd's Bel-imperia never wept, never clung, and never let men, particularly ones who were not even of her social station, condescend to her. But in Hieronimo, the natural order in which the woman weeps miserably while her long-suffering husband endures her silliness as patiently as possible, is lovingly restored, and Bel-imperia is thrown back into a satisfactorily dependent role. The brusqueness of Andrea's "And so I leave thee" draws particular attention to his aloof detachment from Bel-imperia's tearful emotion and his manly indifference to her weak, womanly love.

The proper hierarchy of male-female relationships is reinforced even more emphatically at the end of the play. As Andrea prepares to go to war, he must all but physically fend off Bel-imperia's clinging embraces. Frantically she begs him, "Oh, let me kiss thee first", to which he, thrown into raptures by the thought of war, replies, "...The drum again!" (x.25). When Bel-imperia, hurt, inquires, "Hath that more power than I?" (x.26), he wisely refrains from answering and seems to resign himself to her silliness. Telling her curtly, "...Do't quickly then: / Farewell" (x.26-27), he endures her embrace and exits before she can pester him any further. Nothing could be further from the admiration that Kyd's Bel-imperia inspires than the barely concealed contempt with which both Andrea and the unidentified dramatist view Hieronimo's Bel-imperia.

The writer does not just diminish Bel-imperia as a character and force her to play a pathetic Kate Percy to Andrea's Hotspur, he shifts both Bel-imperia and her love affair to the periphery of the main action. In The Spanish Tragedy, Bel-imperia's love for Andrea and then Horatio is central to the play. Her desire to assert her independence, along with her passion for Horatio, are two of the principal factors in the development of the tragedy. In Hieronimo, Bel-imperia not only relinquishes all her importance and her control over the plot, but her relationship with Andrea is regulated to the function of comic relief. Their love has little influence on the main events of the play, and Andrea's brusque impatience with her feelings encapsulates the dramatist's philosophy. As in The Battle of Alcazar, "female" elements have little importance or significance in the "real" world of politics, war, and intrigue, and Bel-imperia serves as little more than the butt for various misogynistic jokes.

Unable to deal with or to accept Kyd's portrayal of Bel-imperia, the unidentified dramatist alters the most offending elements of the play and reduces Bel-imperia to a safely passive, weeping woman, a conventional figure who is no threat to the superiority and well-being of the male characters and a perennial source of embarrassment to herself. She becomes a Dido without the redeeming power of Marlowe's poetry, clinging, helpless, demanding and, even in tragedy, an unending source of amusement. In Kyd's hands Bel-imperia is a forceful, impressive heroine; the unidentified dramatist, despite Kyd's example, distorts her into a conventional

woman.³

While the unidentified writer of Hieronimo makes Bel-imperia more traditionally acceptable, the two playwrights acknowledged by critics to have influenced Kyd both deal with women in a rich and complex fashion. Garnier's and Seneca's drama provide Kyd with examples of strong, intelligent women and establish a precedent in female characterization which suggests that Kyd's portrayal of Bel-imperia is not sensationalism, careless indifference, or a lapse of moral standards but a deliberate creation based upon and influenced by his two favourite writers. Just as Kyd transforms and adapts Senecan revenge tragedy, so he builds upon and changes Garnier's and Seneca's forceful heroines.

While numerous critics have discussed the Senecan elements in Kyd's play,⁴ few have linked the prominent role women play in Senecan tragedy to Kyd's creation of the strong-willed, sensuous Bel-imperia.⁵ In Hyppolitus, Theseus' young wife falls disastrously in love with her step-son and shamelessly attempts to win his affection. When her efforts fail, she is overwhelmed by shame and to divert suspicion from her crime accuses Hippolytus of rape. While Seneca is not overly sympathetic towards Phaedra and condemns her destructive passion, he nonetheless makes the young Princess the centre of his play. Following his Greek source, he concentrates on her desperate efforts to suppress her love and portrays, with some sensitivity, her despairing shame and confused passion. He also makes her die bravely, confessing her crime to Theseus and then, repentant, killing herself. Again in Medea,

another re-working of a play by Euripides, Seneca presents a very strong and passionate female character. While the way in which Medea murders her young children is truly horrible, she is both the focus of the play, a powerful driving force who directs the action of the tragedy, and a woman who is grimly impressive in her ruthless strength and intelligence. Senecan female characters are not admirable but they can never be dismissed as mere weak women, and they demand, as Bel-imperia does, to be treated with respect.

Robert Garnier is also acknowledged as an influence on Kyd,⁶ and the French dramatist's works all centre around a strong female character. While few Elizabethan plays even contain a feminine name in the title, six of Garnier's works are named for women.⁷ This, in itself, is significant for it indicates Garnier's belief that women as well as men are suitable subjects for tragedy. Unlike Peele or Marlowe, Garnier shows that a woman's feelings and suffering are worthy of centre stage and not to be treated as comic relief or pushed off into the background in favour of more important masculine concerns. Garnier also does not restrict women solely to the realms of love and passion but looks at their position in society, examining how war and male-governed politics effect women. While Bradamante is a tragicomedy about love (Witherspoon 24-7), Cornelia, the play translated by Kyd, allots little space to the traditionally female issues of passionate or comical love. With the death of her second husband, Pompey, and her father, Scipio, in the wars against Caesar, Cornelia finds herself alone and utterly grief-stricken. Garnier attempts to

capture her furious hatred for Caesar and her feelings of guilt, fear, and confusion. His unconventionality lies not in his actual portrayal of Cornelia, but in the mere fact that he chooses to focus on the woman's helpless plight rather than the political machinations of Caesar and Antony struggling to gain power. He elevates Cornelia's personal problems to the level of the destiny of the crumbling Roman Republic and recognises that the fate of women who are left miserable by the death of their husband or father can be as devastatingly tragic as the most complex affairs of state.

Equally significantly, Garnier, like Seneca, creates women who are strong, intelligent, and impressive. A woman like Cornelia is entirely conventional in that she defines her life by her husband and her father. But when she challenges the cruelty of Fate, she becomes bravely defiant, while in her conversation with Cicero she is never less than his equal, not meekly listening to the great orator speak but talking and arguing with him. Clearly she stands as a valuable model for Bel-imperia's intelligence and resolve. Garnier is also interested in portraying the Stoic dignity of women beset by ill fortune, another element which finds expression in Kyd's play. Cornelia loses everything of value in her life and sees her husband and her father left not just dead but disgraced and defeated. But as she watches Caesar go forth in triumph, she finds the courage to continue long enough to give her father's bones a proper burial. She is defeated, helpless, miserable, but her inner strength and spirit remain undiminished. Garnier's

sympathy for her plight and his admiring and moving portrayal of her spiritual bravery are very similar to Kyd's depiction of Bel-imperia's steadfast courage in the face of her brother's oppression. While she is never the hapless victim that Cornelia is, her dignified demeanour as she stands by the window and accepts her imprisonment and then later as she acts out the role of Perseda, equals the self-possession and unflinching endurance of Garnier's Cornelia.

It might be simplistic but it is easy to view Bel-imperia as a composite of these two dramatists' varying conceptions of strong women. Bel-imperia has the passion and sensuality of Phaedra and is as self-serving, ruthless and aggressive as the Senecan Medea or Clytemnestra. But, at the same time, she possesses many of the noble qualities of Garnier's good women, and when she dies like Perseda, "chaste and resolute," she follows in the path of some of the great female heroines described by Garnier. Kyd's achievement lies in fusing these two types of women to create a heroine who is at once aggressive, "masculine," and sensual, while remaining noble and courageous; who lives outside accepted standards of behaviour and challenges traditional male authority but who is also sympathetic and loyal to her lover.

The degree to which Garnier's and Seneca's female characters influenced Kyd remains pure speculation, but both of the playwrights dramatically resemble Kyd in that they conceive of women as strong and intelligent. When Hieronimo asks, "For what's a play without a woman in it?" (IV.i.97), a critic who has just

read Marlowe or Peele might answer that it would be very little changed, since these playwrights' female characters act out such nominal and conventional roles. But the Knight Marshal's words could stand as Kyd's philosophy of his characterization of Bel-imperia and as a summary of the lesson to be learned from Seneca and Garnier. Unlike Marlowe or Peele who are indifferent to the female characters in their plays, The Spanish Tragedy suggests that Kyd believed women had an important contribution to make to tragedies. It is Kyd who creates a female character who has desires and ambitions quite apart from the designs of the male characters, and he illustrates, through his portrayal of Bel-imperia, that a woman can be a part of the action of a tragedy, can initiate it, attempt to control it, and be impressive and tragic in her death. It is Kyd who makes the reader feel that a play "without a woman in it" would truly be lacking an exciting, dynamic element.

Notes to Conclusion

1. The play, published in 1605, is commonly given a date by scholars after 1600, due to the reference Hieronimo makes to the Jubilee of 1600 (Boas, Introduction xlii). Since Boas rejected Sarrazin's arguments for Kyd's authorship (Introduction xliii-xliv), most critics have agreed that the play, as it is printed, was not written by Kyd. Of recent scholars, only Cairncross attempts to seriously argue that the play was written by Kyd, and as Mulryne succinctly puts it in his 1989 edition of Kyd's work, "his evidence is not convincing" (xiii).

While critics generally agree that Hieronimo, as it stands, was not written by Kyd, they are not as unified when it comes to determining the source of the later play. Henslowe's diary lists six performances of a play variously called The Comedy of Don Horatio and The Comedy of Hieronimo in the spring and summer of 1592, and records that The Spanish Tragedy was twice preceded by this comedy and once by a play simply entitled Don Horatio (Edwards, The Spanish Tragedy 137-38). This leads scholars to believe that there was an earlier version of The First Part of Hieronimo performed in 1592, and some scholars suggest that it served as the source for the later play. Mulryne feels that the later work "is written in a style unlike Kyd's and may derive from a revision of the play by another hand" (xiii). Freeman argues that The First Part of Hieronimo was performed by the Children's Company from a script which revised the earlier 1592 edition of the play written by either Kyd or an unknown dramatist (176). Boas

acknowledges the existence of a 1592 fore-piece but rejects it as a source of The First Part of Hieronimo which he believes to be the "spurious...work of a journeyman playwright who found in the Induction to The Spanish Tragedie hints from which he manufactured this crude melodrama" (Introduction xliv). Edwards feels that even the evidence provided for a 1592 fore-piece is inconclusive and unsubstantial (The Spanish Tragedy 176).

Both Freeman and Edwards agree that if there was a fore-piece to The Spanish Tragedy acted in the early 1590's, it was written after Kyd's play in order to capitalize on the success of The Spanish Tragedy. Edwards observes, "I cannot find in The Spanish Tragedy anything to prove that is a sequel" (The Spanish Tragedy 138), while Freeman points out that if the play truly preceded The Spanish Tragedy it would have been likely that the writer would have made Andrea the hero and not called the play the comedy of "donne oracioe." The fact that Horatio is the hero of the play suggests that the writer is following The Spanish Tragedy (Freeman 177).

Whether the original play was actually written by Kyd or not hardly matters. The First Part of Hieronimo's style and characters are so altered from The Spanish Tragedy that any possible contribution from Kyd has been revised beyond recognition.

2. All further references to The First Part of Hieronimo are taken from Andrew Cairncross's 1967 edition of the play.

3. In his essay "Hieronimo in Decimosexto: A Private Theater Burlesque," John Reibetanz claims that Hieronimo is a deliberate

burlesque of The Spanish Tragedy intended for private boy theatres. This, he argues, accounts for the radical changes in all of the characters; the unknown dramatist exaggerates one idiosyncrasy of each of Kyd's characters and turns them into caricatures of their former selves. He observes, with some justice, that Hieronimo appears little more than a capering, half-witted buffoon and that his love for Horatio is exaggerated into doting, ridiculous foolishness (105).

But while it is difficult to take many of the elements of Hieronimo seriously and while both Edwards (The Spanish Tragedy 138) and Boas (Introduction xliv) suggest that the play was intended as a burlesque, neither the conventionalization of the relationship between Bel-imperia and Andrea nor the improvement of Andrea's social status significantly adds to the effect of the parody. In fact, role reversals, in which the woman assumes an unacceptably dominant role, and inappropriate love matches are two of the most common elements of Elizabethan comedy. Surely the most effective way to burlesque Bel-imperia's affair is to deal with it as Reibetanz claims the unidentified dramatist deals with the character of Hieronimo and blow it up out of all proportion. Making the relationship respectable and ensuring that it carefully conforms to the moral standards of Elizabethan society is not successful burlesque.

Likewise, the anonymous playwright's treatment of Bel-imperia does not appear to be deliberate burlesque. Reibetanz argues that the dramatist wishes to satirize the traditional "shrinking

violets" who populate romantic drama (117-18). But there is no indication in the play that Bel-imperia is not meant to be taken seriously, and the underlying misogynistic tone which colours almost every scene in which she is mentioned suggests that the writer is not particularly interested in challenging traditional portrayals of women. Moreover, the conventionally dependent, passive woman would not be seen by many Renaissance writers as a promising target for satire, since this was how most of them actually expected women to behave. If the author truly intended to burlesque Bel-imperia, it seems much more likely that he would have followed the same course he takes with Hieronimo. Just as he turns Hieronimo's madness into senile, self-congratulatory half-wittedness, so he could have taken Bel-imperia's licentiousness or her imperiousness and exaggerated them to ridiculous proportions. That he chooses to subdue, rather than emphasize, these two most notable aspects of her character indicates that he is attempting to make her more acceptable, not to burlesque her.

4. In his introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, Edwards notes, "Kyd's debt to Seneca needs no documentation here. It ranges from tags and sentences to the machinery of a ghost, lusting for revenge--and, indeed, much of the atmosphere of revenge" (xlix). Boas writes, "[Kyd] had Seneca's drama at his fingers' ends. In The Spanish Tragedy almost everyone of them is drawn upon" (Introduction xvii). Critics who discuss Seneca's influence on Kyd include Freeman, Hallett, Barber, Eugene Hill, and John Cunliffe.

George Hunter and Howard Baker are two of the few critics who

downplay the importance of Senecan influence on Kyd and the development of revenge tragedy.

5. To my knowledge, Edwards is the only one to comment on the similarity between Kyd's *Bel-imperia* and Seneca's heroines. He writes, "It may well be because of Seneca's example (especially in *Hyppolitus*) that Kyd was able to create the character of a bold, passionate woman like *Bel-imperia*" (*The Spanish Tragedy* xlix).

6. Edwards summarizes the relationship between Garnier and Kyd, "Robert Garnier, himself influenced by Seneca, was another from whom Kyd borrowed much, both generally and verbally; it was *Cornélie* which seems to have impressed Kyd most" (*The Spanish Tragedy* xlix). While it seems unlikely that Nashe refers to Kyd's imitation of Garnier when he derides dramatists who "'attract infection' by spending 'two or three howers in turning over French Doudie,'" as Boas claims (Introduction xxix), Kyd does use Garnier's *Cornélie* in the General's early description of the battle between the Spaniards and the Portuguese (Boas, Introduction xxix). Boas also points out that the collected works of Garnier became available in 1585 (Introduction xxix). The fact that Kyd later translated Garnier's *Cornélie*, as well as intending to work on *Porcie*, also suggests that he admired the dramatist's works.

7. The six are: *Porcie* (1568), *Cornélie* (1574), *La Troade* (1578), *Antigone* (1579), *Bradamante* (1582), and *Les Juifves* (1583) (Witherspoon 19-24). Garnier's other two plays assign an equally important role to women. If one followed the emphasis placed on the respective characters, *Marc Antoine* (1578), notes Witherspoon,

could be called Death of Cleopatra (22), while in Hippolyte (1573) Phaedra is the central character.

Bibliography and Works Cited

Primary Sources

- Alberti, Leon Battista. Hecatonphila. The Arte of Love. STC 257, 1598.
- Bentley, Thomas. "The Fift Lampe of Virginitie." The Monument of Matrones: Conteining Seven Severall Lampes of Virginitie. STC 1893, 1582.
- "The Sixt Lampe of Virginitie." The Monument of Matrones: Conteining Seven Severall Lampes of Virginitie. STC 1894, 1582.
- Bruto, Gian. The Mirrhor of Modestie. Trans. Thomas Salter. STC 21634, 1579.
- Bullinger, Heinrich. The Christian State of Matrimony. Trans. Miles Coverdale. 1541. STC 4053, 1575.
- Castiglione, Baldesar. The Book of the Courtier. Trans. George Bull. London, England: Penguin Books, 1967.
- Elyot, Sir Thomas. The Defence of Good Women. The Feminist Controversy of the Renaissance: Facsimile Reproductions. Comp. Diane Bornstein. Delmar, N. Y.: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1980.
- Garnier, Robert. Bradamante. Ed. Marcel Hervier. Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères, 1949.
- Porcie: Cornélie. Ed. Raymond Lebeque. Paris: Société Les Belles Lettres, 1973.
- La Troade: Antigone. Ed. Raymond Lebeque. Paris: Société Les

- Belles Lettres, 1952.
- A Godly Glass of the Duties in Maryage. STC 20397, 1579.
- Greene, Robert. Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene, M. A.. Ed. Alexander B. Grosart. 15 vols. New York: Russell & Russell, 1964.
- Hyrde, Richard. Preface. Precatio dominica. By Erasmus. Trans. Margaret Roper. The Renaissance Education of Women. Ed. Foster Watson. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912.
- Kyd, Thomas. The Works of Thomas Kyd. Ed. Frederick S. Boas. 1901. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.
- The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy. Ed. Andrew S. Cairncross. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.
- The Spanish Tragedy. Ed. Philip Edwards. 1959. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1965.
- Lyly, John. The Complete Works of John Lyly. Ed. R. Warwick Bond. 3 vols. 1902. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967. Vol. 1.
- Marlowe, Christopher. The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe. Ed. Irving Ribner. New York: The Odyssey Press Inc., 1963.
- Mulcaster, Richard. Positions. Ed Richard L. De Molen. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York: Teachers College Press, 1971.
- Peele, George. The Life and Works of George Peele. Ed. A. H. Bullen. 2 vols. 1888. Port Washington, N. Y.: Kennikat Press Inc., 1966. Vol.1.

- Pritchard, Thomas. The Schoole of Honest and Vertuous Lyfe: Profitable and Necessary for All Estates to be Trayned In. STC. 20397, 1579.
- R., I.. A Discourse of the Worthinesse of Honourable Wedlock. STC 20397, 1579.
- Seneca. Phaedra. Four Tragedies and Octavia. Tr. E. F. Watling. London, England: Penguin Books, 1966.
- Seneca: His Tenne Tragedies Translated into English. Ed. Thomas Newton. 1581. Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1966.
- Vives, Joannes Ludovicus. The Duty of Husbands. Tr. Thomas Paynell. 1550. Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women. Ed. Foster Watson. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912.
- The Instruction of a Christen Woman. Trans. Richard Hyrde. 1529. STC 24862, 1585.
- "Plan of Studies For Girls." Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women. Ed. Foster Watson. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912.

Bibliography and Works Cited

Secondary Sources

- Aggeler, Geoffrey. The Eschatological Crux in *The Spanish Tragedy*. Journal of English and Germanic Philology 86 (July 1987): 319-331.
- Ardolino, Frank. "Corrida of Blood in *The Spanish Tragedy*: Kyd's Use of Revenge as National Destiny." Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England 1 (1984): 37-51.
- Baines, Barbara. "Sexual Polarity in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe." Ball State University Forum 23.3 (1982): 3-17.
- Baldwin, T. W.. "On the Chronology of Thomas Kyd's Plays." Modern Language Notes xi (1925): 343-9.
- Baker, Howard. Induction to Tragedy. New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1939.
- Barber, C. L.. Creating Elizabethan Tragedy: The Theater of Marlowe and Kyd. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- Belsey, Catherine. The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama. London: Methuen, 1985.
- Bercovitch, Sacvan. "Love and Strife in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*." Studies in English Literature 9 (1969): 215-29.
- Boas, Frederick. Christopher Marlowe: A Biographical and Critical Study. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.
- Introduction. The Works of Thomas Kyd. By Thomas Kyd. 1901. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962. xiii-cxxvi.
- Bornstein, Diane. The Lady in the Tower: Medieval Courtesy Literature for Women. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books,

1983.

- Brodwin, Leonora. "Edward II: Marlowe's Culminating Treatment of Love." English Literary History 31 (June, 1964): 139-55.
- Bullen, A. H.. Introduction. The Life and Works of George Peele. By George Peele. 2 vols. 1888. Port Washington, N. Y.: Kennikat Press, 1966. 1: xxxvi-xxxvii.
- Cairncross, Andrew S.. Introduction. The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy. By Thomas Kyd. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967. xi-xxxviii.
- Charlton, H. B.. The Senecan Tradition in Renaissance Tragedy. 1921. Norwood, Pa.: Norwood Editions, 1978.
- Cressy, David. "Foucault, Stone, Shakespeare and Social History." Shakespeare Association, April 1990.
- Cunliffe, John William. Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy. 1893. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1965.
- Cutts, John P.. The Left Hand of God. Haddonfield, New Jersey: Haddonfield House, 1973.
- Deats, Sara Munson. "Edward II: A Study in Androgyny." Ball State University Forum 22.1 (1981): 30-41.
- "The Dialectic of Gender in Four of Marlowe's Plays." University of Hartford Studies in Literature 20.1 (1988): 13-36.
- Eaton, Sara J.. "Presentations of Women in the English Popular Press." Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Eds. Carole Levin and Jeanie Watson. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987. 165-183.

- Edwards, Philip. Introduction. The Spanish Tragedy. By Thomas Kyd. 1959. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1965. xvii-lxviii.
- Thomas Kyd and Early Elizabethan Tragedy. London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1966.
- Forker, Charles, R.. "The Love-Death Nexus in English Renaissance Drama." Shakespeare Studies 8 (1975): 211-30.
- Freeman, Arthur. Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.
- Friendlenreich, Kenneth, ed.. "A Poet and a Filthy Play-Maker": New Essays on Christopher Marlowe. New York, N.Y.: AMS Press, Inc., 1988.
- Gerrard, Ernest A.. Elizabethan Drama and Dramatists 1583-1603. 1928. New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1972.
- Hallett, Charles A. and Elaine Hallett. The Revenger's Madness: A Study of Revenge Tragedy Motifs. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980.
- Hannay, Margaret Patterson, ed.. Silent But For the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985.
- Introduction. Silent But For the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works. Ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985. 1-14.
- Hill, Eugene D.. "Senecan and Vergilian Perspectives in The Spanish Tragedy." English Language Review 15 (Spring 1985):

143-65.

- Holm, Janis B.. "The Myth of a Feminist Humanism: Thomas Salter's The Mirrhor of Modestie." Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Eds. Carole Levin and Jeanie Watson. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987. 197-218.
- Hull, Suzanne W.. Chaste, Silent & Obedient: English Guidebooks for Women, 1475-1640. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1982.
- Hunter, G. K.. "Ironies of Justice in The Spanish Tragedy." Renaissance Drama VIII (1965): 89-104.
- Hunter, George. "Seneca and the Elizabethans: A Case Study in 'Influence.'" Shakespeare Survey xx (1967): 17-26.
- Jardine, Lisa. Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare. Sussex, England: Harvester Press, 1983.
- Kaufman, Gloria. "Juan Luis Vives on the Education of Women." Signs 3 (1978): 891-96.
- Kelso, Ruth. Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance. 1959. Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978.
- Kiefer, Frederick. Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy. San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1983.
- Kohler, Richard. "Kyd's Ordered Spectacle: 'Behold.../ What 'Tis To Be Subject to Destiny.'" Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England 3 (1986): 27-49.
- Lamb, Mary Ellen. "The Cooke Sisters: Attitudes Towards Learned Women in the Renaissance." Silent But For the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious

- Works. Ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985. 107-125.
- Levin, Carole and Jeanie Watson, eds. Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987.
- Levin, Michael H.. "'Vindicta mihi!:' Meaning, Morality, and Motivation in The Spanish Tragedy." Studies in English Literature 4 (1964): 307-24.
- Logan, Robert. "The Sexual Attitudes of Marlowe and Shakespeare." University of Hartford Studies in Literature 19.2 (1987): 1-23.
- Loomba, Ania. Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989.
- McAlindon, T.E.. English Renaissance Tragedy. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986.
- McMillin, Scott. "The Figure of Silence in The Spanish Tragedy." English Literary History 39 (1972): 27-48.
- Mulryne, J. R.. Introduction. The Spanish Tragedy. By Thomas Kyd. London: A & C Black Limited, 1989. xi-xxxviii.
- Murray, Peter B.. Thomas Kyd. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1965.
- Reibetanz, John. "Hieror mo in Decimosexto: A Private Theater Burlesque." Renaissance Drama V (1972): 89-121.
- Ribner, Irving. Introduction. The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe. By Christopher Marlowe. New York: The Odyssey Press Inc., 1963. xiii-xl.

- Richmond, Velma B.. "Renaissance Sexuality and Marlowe's Women."
Ball State University Forum 16.4 (1975): 36-44.
- Rose, Mary Beth. The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Sheperd, Simon. Amazons and Warrior Women: Varieties of Feminism in Seventeenth Century Drama. New York: St Martin's Press, 1981.
- Smith, Mary Elizabeth. Love Kindling Fire: A Study of Christopher Marlowe's The Tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage. Salzburg: Institut Fur Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universitat Salzburg, 1977.
- Steane, J. B.. Marlowe. Cambridge: University Press, 1964.
- Stilling, Roger. Love and Death in Renaissance Tragedy. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1976.
- Stone, Lawrence. The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800. Great Britain: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1977.
- Wayne, Valerie. "Some Sad Sentence: Vives' Instruction of a Christian Woman." Silent But For the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works. Ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985. 15-29.
- "Zenobia in Medieval and Renaissance Literature."
Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Eds. Carole Levin and Jeanie Watson. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987. 48-65.

Weld, John S.. "The Spanish Tragedy as the Fall of Babylon."

Mediaevalia 6 (1980): 335-352.

Witherspoon, Alexander Maclaren. The Influence of Robert Garnier on Elizabethan Drama. 1924. New York: Phaeton Press, 1988.

Woodbridge, Linda. Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984.

Wright, B.. Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1965.

Wymer, Rowland. Suicide And Despair in the Jacobean Drama. Sussex: The Harvester Press Limited, 1986.