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CORPUS SALUBRE

Medicinal Cannibalism in Early Modern English Culture

by

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Now for these wals of flesh, wherein the soule doth seeme to be immured before the Resurrection, it is nothing but an elementall composition, and a fabricke that must fall to ashes; *All flesh is grass*, is not onely metaphorically, but literally true, for all these creatures we behold, are but the hearbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in our selves. Nay further, we are what we all abhorre, *Antropophagi* and Cannibals, devourers not onely of men, but of our selves; and that not in an allegory, but a positive truth; for all this masse of flesh which wee behold, came in at our mouths: this frame wee looke upon, hath beene upon our trenchers; In briefe, we have devoured our selves.

(Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*)

ABSTRACT

My study explores the implications of the fact that in early modern England human body parts and excretions were consumed for healing purposes. Specifically I examine the paradox of cannibalism in the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century, when the ingestion of human flesh, constituted as at once civilized, in medical discourses, and barbaric, in religious discourses, is shadowed by the figure of the geographically distant Other constructed in European colonialist discourses as cannibal. These conflicting understandings of cannibalism, found in medical doctrines and pharmacopoea which valorize the therapeutic ingestion of specially-prepared human body parts, and in anti-papal Protestant tracts which condemn the Catholic Eucharist as a cannibalistic ritual, provide an historical frame for considering how literary representations negotiate such complex and contradictory understandings of what it means for one human to eat the flesh of another. While I assemble texts from a range of discourses, I am specifically interested in literature as a multifaceted space where cultural contradictions intersect in dangerous ways. In the works of Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne, and Nashe, the paradox inherent in conflicting colonial, religious and medical conceptualizations and regulations of the eaten body is richly exposed. In different ways their texts reveal the complex irony evident when the uncanny resemblance between the medical consumption of corpses and the eating of human flesh is repressed—the savagery of cannibalism abominated and attributed to others—only to return to haunt the Europeans.

Beginning with an historical analysis of the practice of early modern corpse pharmacology in Chapter 1, I proceed to show in Chapter 2 how this practice is interrogated in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Unfortunate Traveller* in the light of European

notions of civility that confound attempts to construct the foreign Other as cannibal and barbaric. The discussion of the medical consumption of corpses leads inevitably, in Chapter 3, to an analysis of the cultural contradictions inherent, as *The Faerie Queene* and the *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* show, when the medical ingestion of the human corpse is socially tolerated, while at the same time the religious ingestion of Christ's corpse in the Catholic eucharist is abjected in anti-papal Reformist rhetoric. Chapter 4 interrogates how the privileging of the virginal female corpse in medical discourse is employed metaphorically in *Othello* and the *Anniversaries* to construct the troubling female body as a curative, both medical and spiritual, for ailing masculinity. In the final analysis, my focus on literary preoccupations with the eaten body keeps returning me to the fact that the written text, in its engagement with uncomfortable cultural contradictions and ideologies, is a cultural document that reflects, and makes understandable, the complexities of the historical moment of its production.

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SAVAGE APPETITES AND CIVILIZED PALATES

> The degrading of the image of the Other, from the heroic idealization of the Renaissance to the stormy twilight of Romanticism, is paralleled over the same stretch of time by an increasing inability to make sense of anthropophagy.
>
> (Frank Lestringant, *Cannibals*[1])

> There...they began to mock me, and king [Cunhambebe's] son bound my legs in three places, and I was forced to hop through the huts on both feet, at which they [laughed, and called out]: "Here comes our food hopping towards us."
>
> (Hans Staden, *The True History of His Captivity, 1557*[2])

> Inside the freezer compartments were three plastic bags. They turned out to be Oliver Lacy's heart, which Dahmer told police he saved "to eat later," and other human organs.
>
> (Robert J. Dvorchak and Lisa Holewa, *Milwaukee Massacre*[3])

Early modern pharmacopoea abound with references to the pharmacological excellence of corpse matter, in particular *mumia*, or mummy, the remains of an embalmed corpse often prepared according to recipes such as this astonishingly explicit one offered by Oswald Croll:

> Chuse the Carcase of a red Man (because in them the blood is more sincere, and gentle and therefore more excellent) whole (not maimed) clear without blemishes, of the age of twenty four years, that hath been Hanged, Broke upon a Wheel, or Thrust-through, having been for one day and night exposed to the open Air, in a serene time. This Mumy (that is, Musculous flesh, of the Thighs, Breasts, Armes, and other parts) from the two Luminaries, once illuminate and constellate, cut into small pieces or slices and sprinkle on them Powder of Myrrh, and of Aloes, but a very little (otherwise it will be too bitter) afterward by Macerating, Imbibe them for certain days in Spirit of Wine, hang them up a little, and again imbibe them, then hang them up to dry in the Air, this so dryed will be like Flesh hardned in Smoak, and be without stink.[4]

Croll's recipe adopts the prescriptive terms of a well-established therapeutic model which subscribes to the pharmacological superiority of the human body, both living and dead,

and valorizes medicinal cannibalism—the ingestion of medicinally-prepared human flesh as well as blood, fat, bone and bodily excretions for therapeutic purposes. By advocating the culinary methods of butchering and pickling, Croll's careful formula for the preparation of corpse drugs treats the corpse as food, performing a linguistic slippage between the medical and the culinary that brings the medical ingestion of human matter dangerously close to cannibalism.

Different perceptions of the eating of human flesh by humans are constituted and regulated within distinct orders of discourse. By constructing the medical consumption of human bodies as a desirable practice, early modern European medical discourse offers a complex understanding of what it means for one human to eat the body of another, at odds with conflicting discourses of cannibalism circulating in the period which repudiate such practices as abhorrent and taboo. Medical discourse constitutes a socially sanctioned form of cannibalism where the human body is literally eaten for pharmacological purposes. This study offers an interrogation of the cultural contexts that inform the medical privileging of, and consumption of, the human corpse, and the literary exposure of the cultural uneasiness over transgressions of the cannibal taboo, evident when Europeans eat each other. I argue that corpse pharmacology gave rise to a deep cultural ambivalence that proved irresistible to the early modern literary imagination which was, in different ways, preoccupied with the complex irony evident when the boundary between ingested corpse drug and eaten corpse food becomes almost impossible to sustain.

"Cannibal" is a term used to demarcate cultural boundaries and sharply discriminate between "civilized" and "barbaric" modes of behaviour. "What could be

more distinctive," William Arens asks, "than creating a boundary between those who do and those who do not eat human flesh?"[5] In early modern Europe, the cannibal distinction becomes imperative when it is linked firstly with a desire to distinguish those who are geographically remote as uncivilized, and secondly with the desire to make civilized culture, and civilized behaviour, such as colonization, more significant and morally justifiable. And yet, paradoxically, while charges of cannibalism were being leveled at the non-European and the Irish Other, cannibalism was being practiced at home. In the same historical moment that the cannibal distinction was used to establish English cultural superiority in the New World, the English themselves violated, manipulated, processed and consumed human bodies as pharmacological drugs.

Literature, with its capacity to mediate between reality and fiction, plays a pivotal role in the shaping of discourses; as a multi-faceted space where ideologies jostle against one another, literature can embrace and reproduce dominant ideologies, but it can also destabilize and interrogate them.[6] For instance, Walter Ralegh's description of Guiana's "savage" neighbours, "the *Trinidado*, [as] a nation of inhuman *Cannibals*"—one example from a text liberally sprinkled with the term "cannibal" as the signifier for barbarity[7]—shows that literature often works to reinforce colonialist ideologies. In the words of Jerry Phillips, "The motif of cannibalism imprisons the Jew or the colonized native in an exotic mythology of the dangers proffered to the 'universal' subject—dismemberment, ingestion, castration, the measures of bestial appetite."[8] At the same time, however, the paradox inherent in colonialist constructions of cultural superiority was not lost on many early modern writers whose texts, either advertently or inadvertently, offer a destabilizing interrogation of the boundaries between the civilized and the barbaric, thus exposing the

cultural contradictions inherent when a behaviour is constituted as at once acceptable and taboo. For critics of European self-delusion, such as Michelle de Montaigne, who argues that, "We are justified therefore in calling these people barbarians by reference to the laws of reason, but not in comparison with ourselves, who surpass them in every kind of barbarity,"[9] such arbitrary signifiers of civility plainly blow the whistle on European cultural hypocrisy. And yet, while he is acutely alert to the barbarism of his own culture—Montaigne's focus is primarily the savage violations of Protestant bodies during the French religious wars—he reveals his own cultural blindness when he posits corpse pharmacology as a tolerable, if not also admirable, practice: "Physicians, too, are not afraid to use the corpse in any way that serves our health, and will apply it either internally or externally."[10]

The most recent scholarship on cannibalism forms part of a debate centered on the premise that descriptions of institutionalized cannibalism in the non-European world are constructs of the discourse of European colonialism. In other words, the cannibal Other is a figment of a European imagination eager to reforge and reinforce its own cultural identity as inherently "civilized" within an expanding geographical realm. This debate can be traced roughly from William Aarens' provocative text *The Man Eating Myth* (1979), to the more recent exchanges between Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere over interpretations of cultural differences, and Peter Hulme and Myra Jehlen who make difference a question of degree in their definitional fine-tuning of the term "cannibalism."[11] Hulme defines cannibalism "...as a term meaning, say, 'the image of ferocious consumption of human flesh frequently used to mark the boundary between one community and its others,' a term that has gained its entire meaning from within the

discourse of European colonialism,"[12] while Jehlen counters that the "term" cannibalism cannot be separated from the "material possibility of "anthropophagy." "[13]

I deliberately choose to use the term "cannibalism" with its implication of ferocious consumption, rather than the term "anthropophagy" as Hulme directs,[14] for several reasons. Firstly I agree with Jehlen's argument that the term cannibalism cannot be separated from the activity of anthropophagy to which it refers, and which it interprets in a certain way: as a particularly ferocious form of anthropophagy. Secondly if, as Hulme argues, cannibalism exists as a European term that means the "ferocious devouring of human flesh practiced by some savages,"[15] then the medical eating of human flesh by Europeans constitutes a serious challenge to that definition. In these terms medicinal cannibalism *is* ferocious consumption: an appetite mediated and transformed through a whole host of practices—execution, corpse violation, dissection, distillation, embalming, packaging, distribution—which distance the ultimate ingestion from the original violence.[16] Thirdly "cannibalism" is the appropriate term to describe the therapeutic ingestion of corpses which takes shape within, and is enacted within, a culture of spectacular violence, public displays of violent executions, and bloody anatomies[17]—a culture which remains, for the most part, oblivious to the cannibalistic nature of its own actions. And lastly I choose "cannibalism" because my investigative lens focuses on "us" who coined the word, and if "cannibalism" is a condition of savage barbarity then we need to savor the truth of our linguistic savagery in the light of our own shady legacy.

But can the discourse of European colonialism be as neatly isolated from other discourses, as the cannibal debate attempts to make it? Sara Mills writes that, "...we

imbue a text with the meanings of a larger framing discourse" and argues for "the conflictual nature of discourse, that it is always in dialogue with and in conflict with other positions."[18] My interest lies in these other discursive positions, in competing constructions of the eating of the flesh of one human by another circulating in the period, and the intriguing paradox of such diverse positions. In this study I interrogate how, in early modern literature, colonial discourses of cannibalism are in a constantly shifting relation with other discourses of the eaten body, namely medical discourses, but also anti-papal religious discourses that construct the literality of the Roman Catholic eucharist as cannibalism. These discourses repeatedly challenge and perplex what it means for humans to eat each other. In his discussion of cannibalism Obeyesekere argues that, "...discourse is not just speech; it is imbedded in a historical and cultural context and expressed often in the frame of a scenario or cultural performance. It is about practice: the practice of...cannibalism. Insofar as discourse evolves it begins to affect the practice."[19] If we consider these discourses together, there emerges a complex European social history, not only of the early modern eaten body, but also of the practice of eating bodies, as at once abhorrent and desirable, barbaric and civilized.

In the following chapters I will show how early modern literature negotiates the contradictions inherent when the eating of human bodies, a practice that is culturally defined as foreign and taboo, is also familiar and acceptable—practiced in fact in one's own backyard. In different ways the works of Shakespeare, Nashe, Spenser, and Donne eloquently testify to the precariousness of the boundary between civilized and barbaric—embedded as it is in notions of who does, or does not, eat human flesh—as well as the larger cultural and religious implications of consuming the human body. The powerful

figurative language of corpse pharmacology employed in the works under discussion registers in its wide connective reach, not only the multiple complexities of medical violations and ingestions of the body, but also, in this period of religious reform, the controversial Catholic doctrine of the salvific powers of ingested divine matter.

To begin illuminating the corpse pharmacology underwriting the intricate play of figurative language between the cannibalistic eating and the medical consumption of human corpses in the texts that I will consider, the first chapter describes, and historically contextualizes, the medical deployment of human corpse matter in early modern Europe. Building on the long medical tradition of using the human body for healing purposes within which corpse therapeutics belongs, numerous early modern pharmacopoea offer recipes that contain mummy, human body parts and excretions prescribed for a vast range of ailments. This culturally-tolerated practice, which drew initially on preserved bodies from the middle east, is perplexed by formulas, such as Croll's, for preserving European bodies—raising the intriguing questions that my first chapter attempts to answer, such as whose bodies were turned into mummy; how were they acquired; how were they processed; and how were they traded? As the chapters that follow demonstrate, the careless pharmacological treatment of corpses troubled notions of European civility, and provided a fertile ground for literary invention.

In Chapter 2 I argue that in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Unfortunate Traveller*,[20] both of which are saturated with descriptions of barbaric otherness and the language of medical consumptions of the human body, the cannibal distinction against which civility is measured breaks down. Here Shakespeare and Nashe situate themselves within a tradition of critics of European self-delusion such as Montaigne. In *Titus Andronicus*,

human bodies, ravaged and violated in escalating acts of savage revenge, culminating in the cannibal banquet, are deployed as powerful pharmacological purgatives, and the force of Shakespeare's play lies in its exposure of the artificial, hypocritical nature of civility. The pernicious anti-semitism and cultural duplicity of the Doctory Zachary episode in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, where Jack is imprisoned as the Jewish physician's next dissection victim—imagined as the unblemished male corpse ripe for dissecting and processing into mummy—is destabilized in Nashe's text by medical discourse that situates Jack's body within a larger Christian European medical corpse economy. In both texts, as the performative codes of civility that operate against definitions of culturally- and racially-different Others as barbaric disintegrate, we are clearly reminded that cannibalism is no longer a measure for barbarity.

Interrogations of the cultural implications of consuming corporeal matter bring us inevitably to the question of whether we can identify a discursive slippage between the medical ingestion of corpses and the Reformists' denial of the Catholic eucharist as corporeal matter, and whether such a slippage reveals a residual Protestant hunger for the flesh and blood of Christ. In Chapter 3 I highlight the uncanny resemblances between these different forms of eating that share a certainty in the mysterious healing potential of the ingested human body, and trace the theological history of understanding Christ as both food and medicine: an understanding that provided rich material for Reformists' constructions of the eucharistic sacrament as cannibalism. The historical discussion in this chapter also addresses the connection between medical and religious reform, and the attraction of Paracelsian medicine—that promoted corpse pharmacology—to Protestant Reformists eager to reject the entrenched authority of both Galenism and Catholicism.

Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and Donne's *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*[21] represent oppositional voices in the eucharist controversy that reveal the powerful link between medical ingestions of the human body and religious ingestions of the body of Christ: expressed in Spenser in terms of unmitigated disgust at any form of corporeal eating, and in Donne as a profound alimentary longing for the body of Christ that is mediated through the pharmacological corpse.

The female body in Shakespeare's *Othello* and Donne's *Anniversaries*,[22] preserved in death in a permanent state of chastity as the panacea for sick masculinity, registers medical representations of the virginal female body, the *fille vièrge*, as the most efficacious and valuable form of mummy. In this final chapter I bring medical and religious understandings of the salvific power of the ingested body together with the culture's deep suspicion of women's sexual fidelity, to argue that the discourse of medicine that privileges the female virginal body—employed in different ways by Shakespeare and Donne to imagine the female body as a curative—is symptomatic of the cultural paranoia towards women. Within the emotionally charged masculine culture of *Othello*, Desdemona's problematic body is constructed as a corpse remedy in a relentless process of containment and control, that builds systematically on the image of the mummified virginal hearts that stain the handkerchief. However, the female body that tantalizes Othello at the end of the play is absent in the *Anniversaries*; rather the virginal Elizabeth Drury is imagined in life and in death as healing quintessence, the vital source that her body contains, and is appropriated into Donne's larger poetic project of offering textual sustenance to a spiritually sick world. In this way, sublimated into the thin paper of Donne's poems, Elizabeth Drury becomes the universal eucharistic offering for the

ailing masculine soul. In both works, women, imagined as preserved in an innocuous state of sexual chastity, are reduced to the mummy medicine for masculine spiritual disease.

While on the one hand the medical consumptions of human flesh, that brought the behaviour of Europeans precariously close to the "bestial appetite" of the barbaric Other that Philips describes, unsettled the early modern European consciousness, on the other hand it made perfect sense. In a culture grasping for answers to the mysteries of the human body and its illnesses, and in the absence of reliable medical treatments, the human body, replete with powerful curative essences, offered an enduring source—the seductive idea of its efficacy lingering well beyond the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With the eucharist controversy of the Reformation, the ritual that had for centuries been central to the "whole religious system of the later Middle Ages,"[23] was thrown into crisis. It comes as no surprise then, that for those Reformists who rejected the literality of the eucharist, the "new" corpse pharmacology, with its central tenet of the vital quintessence of the human body, appeared attractive, not as an alternative, but as a trace that mediated a special kind of hunger in the name of healing the body.

NOTES

[1] Frank Lestringant, Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne (Berkeley: U of California P, 1997) 5.

[2] Hans Staden, *Hans Staden, the true history of his captivity, 1557* (London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1928) 80.

[3] Robert J. Dvorchak and Lisa Holewa, *Milwaukee Massacre: Jeffrey Dahmer and the Milwaukee Murders* (New York: Dell, 1991) 7-8.

[4] Oswaldus Crollius, *Bazilica Chymica and Praxis Chymiatricae or Royal and Practical Chymistry 1609,* trans. John Hartman (London, 1670) 156. A similar recipe for embalming is

offered by the distinguished English physician Dr. Alexander Read, *Chirurgorum Comes: or the Whole Practice of Chirurgery Begun by the Learned Dr. Read* (London: 1687) 710.

[5] William Arens, The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979) 145.

[6] See Ania Loomba's discussion of "Colonialism and Literature," in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (Routledge: New York, 1998) 69-94.

[7] Walter Ralegh, The discovery of the large, rich, and beautiful Empire of Guiana, ed. Neil L. Whitehead (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1997).

[8] Jerry Phillips, "Cannibalism qua capitalism," *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, eds. Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 184.

[9] Michel de Montaigne, "On Cannibals," *Essays*, trans. J.M. Cohen (London: Penguin, 1993) 114.

[10] Montaigne, 114.

[11] For an excellent exposé of the history and current status of the debate see Peter Hulme's introduction to Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen ed., *Cannibalism and the Colonial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998).

[12] Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797* (London: Methuen, 1986) 86.

[13] Myra Jehlen, "Response to Peter Hulme," Critical Inquiry 20.1 (1993): 187-191, esp. 188.

[14] Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, 86.

[15] Hulme, "Making No Bones: A Response to Myra Jehlen," *Critical Inquiry* 20.1 (1993): 179-187, esp. 183.

[16] In his discussion of ritual cannibalism Rene Girard similarly argues that, "...after the maleficent violence has been completely transformed into a beneficent substance...the victim is eaten." In *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1979) esp. 277.

[17] Francis Barker identifies early modern English culture as a "culture of violence" as his title makes clear. See Francis Barker, *The Culture of Violence: Tragedy and History* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993). As well Jonathan Sawday describes the public punishment and mutilation of human bodies as "spectacles of suffering" in *The Body Emblazoned: Dissections and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995) 81.

[18] Mills is drawing on the work of Michel Pecheux. See Sara Mills, *Discourse* (London: Routledge, 1997) 14.

[19] G. Obeyesekere, " 'British Cannibals," Contemplation of an Event in the Death and Resurrection of James Cook, Explorer," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1992): 630-654, 650.

[20] *Titus Andronicus*, Alan Hughes ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994). *The Unfortunate Traveller*, Paul Salzman ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998).

[21] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. Thomas P. Roche, Jr. (London: Penguin, 1987). John Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*, ed. Anthony Raspa (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1975).

[22] *Othello*, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann (Surrey: Arden, 1997). *John Donne: The Anniversaries*, ed. Frank Manley, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963).

[23] Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991) 1.

CHAPTER 1

FRESH, UNSPOTTED CADAVERS

> Have, [or produce,] the *body* of the defendant on a given day before the court (my italics).
>
> (*Habeas Corpus Act* of 1679[1])

> What our druggists are supplied with is the flesh of executed criminals, or of any other bodies the [makers of mummy] can get, who...send them to be baked in an oven till the juices are exhaled.
>
> (Samuel Johnson, *Johnson's Dictionary*[2])

The fact that early modern Europeans ate each other is inarguable. The practice belongs within a pharmacological dialectic according to which the human body and its by-products possessed an extraordinary medicinal power. This hypothesis provides the philosophical and scientific basis for medical uses of the body that include not only mummy, but bodily excretions such as milk, blood, urine, menses and dung. Two of the most influential figures in early modern medicine, Galen and Paracelsus, both subscribe to pharmacological uses of the body, albeit from opposing doctrinal positions. Galen, the second-century physician from whose humoral theory of cure by contraries the fundamental principles of early modern medicine are drawn, admits the curative effect of an elixir of burned human bones on epilepsy and arthritis.[3] Paracelsus, whose homeopathic doctrine of chemical therapy offered the strongest departure from entrenched Galenic therapeutics,[4] observes that the noblest medicine for man is man's body,[5] and promotes the medicinal power of mummy, human blood, fat, marrow, dung and cranium in the treatment of many ailments, including epilepsy.[6]

Beyond these powerful authorities, English physicians also had access to many influential European medical treatises translated into English,[7] such as Oswald Croll's *Bazilica Chymica* with its inventory of pharmacological uses of the human body, and Ficino's *De vita* with its enthusiastic recommendations for the revitalising effects of sucking milk from a young, lactating woman and blood from a youth.[8] Thus English pharmacopoea, representing an imaginative compromise between the Galenic and Paracelsian medical traditions, are saturated with prescriptions and recipes incorporating a wide range of human body parts and excretions. In an ardent advertisement for English pharmacological inventiveness and the superior quality of English Pharmacopoea, Dr Christopher Merret writes, "...the Medicines in our *Pharmacopoea* are the best of any other Pharmacopoea in the World, both for their goodness, and well preparing of them, whether they be Chymical, or Galenical."[9] The most significant of these was the officially-sanctioned *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis of 1618*, first published on 7 May with a proclamation by King James commending all apothecaries of the realm to embrace the Pharmacopoeia. The 1618 edition offers a survey of the entire "*materia medica simplicium*," cites a large number of medical sources, and lists various human excrements, grease of men, milk of women, mummy, and blood as pharmacological ingredients. In his modern introduction George Urdang notes that the Pharmacopoeia, incorporating medicine as practiced by Galen and Hippocrates that had been modified by the Arabians and revolutionized by Paracelsus and his followers, was a product of the necessities of the sixteenth century but did not see the light of day until 1618.[10]

The belief in the pharmacological nature of the human body, and the use of bodily parts and excretions as drugs, is not an isolated early modern phenomenon but can be

traced to ancient Hippocratic medical texts that prescribe pollutant therapy—the use of bodily pollutants, such as the polluted blood of violence, menstrual blood and "corpse-food"—to fight impurity or disease.[11] The Roman notion that blood drunk hot from a gladiator's wounds could cure epilepsy, and the Democritean treatment of an unspecified ailment with bones from the head of a criminal, also belong in this context.[12] Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Chinese, Talmudic, and Indian healers shared an enormous confidence in the therapeutic usefulness of bodily pollutants; in ancient Egyptian "thaumaturgic-cum-pharmacological logic," Piero Camporesi explains, "the human body and its derivatives possessed a great variety of medicinal and curative properties."[13] As well the Greeks adopted many ingredients from Egyptian and Near Eastern drug lore. This represents a continuity of pharmacological usage of the body that is both cross-cultural and within the Greek medical tradition itself.[14] Galenism is part of this continuum, although the extensive use of 'dirt' therapy within the Greek tradition from "the early Hippocratics to Galen and beyond"[15] does not mean that the Greeks considered excrement and other excreted bodily substances without a certain uneasiness: to the contrary they often regarded them as defiling. Galen's own inconsistencies towards the use of such ingredients describes the contradictory position of many Greek physicians: on the one hand he vehemently renounces the drinking of "sweat and urine and a woman's menstrual blood," and the internal and external uses of feces as "outrageous and disgusting," while on the other hand he recommends the therapeutic use of excrement.[16]

I situate the early modern medical usage of human body matter and mummy, the "sovereign remedy" and "universal panacea"[17] of Paracelsian homeopathy, with its direct

link to the Hippocratic "dirt" therapy and the drug "corpse-food," within this cross-cultural and intra-Greek pharmacological continuum. While the increased popularity of mummy as a drug in England can be related to the influence of Paracelsian philosophy and therapeutics, the ingestion of mummy for healing purposes is an ancient practice, originating in the use of bituminous materials in medicine. The tradition was established early in the Arab world and the influential *Materia medica* of the Greek physician Dioscorides influenced the employment of bituminous substances from mummy as a drug in Europe.[18] One of the first known Arabian advocates of mummy is Avicenna (980-1037) who promotes "*mumia*" (from the Arabic *mumiya*) as a "subtle and resolutive" remedy:

> ...useful in cases of abscesses and eruptions, fractures, concussions, paralysis, hemicrania, epilepsy, vertigo, spitting of blood from the lungs, affections of the throat, coughs, palpitation of the heart, debility of the stomach, nausea, disorders of the liver and spleen, internal ulcers, also in cases of poisons.[19]

The traditional pharmacological understanding of "mummy" as a bituminous material underwent several semantic shifts, through what Karl H. Dannenfeldt describes as "a complicated and confusing process of transference and substitution," to the point where "mummy" described the black tar-like substance found in embalmed bodies and ultimately the embalmed body itself.[20]

By the eleventh century Arabian authorities were advocating the therapeutic value of any part of a mummy, not just *mumia*, and it is this understanding of mummy that came to prevail in Europe.[21] From the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries mummy was an important pharmaceutical drug.[22] In early modern Europe mummy was "a medicinal preparation of the remains of an embalmed, dried, or otherwise 'prepared' human body

that had ideally met with sudden, preferably violent, death."[23] The sudden extinguishing of life is essential to ensure the "occult qualities of Medicines," reasons the seventeenth-century physician John Schroder, because the corpse must possess the "Balsamick spiritual substance fit to nourish," which is absent from those of "diseased dispositions" who "dye of themselves."[24] This logic is consistent with the Paracelsian doctrine of the "intrinsic virtue" of the human corpse, according to which "...the body of a man who did not die a natural death but rather died an unnatural death with a healthy body and without sickness" provides "the true pharmaceutical mumia."[25] Francis Bacon's statement that: "...any *part* taken from a *Living Creature* newly *slain*, may be of greater force, then if it were taken from the like *creature dying* of it *self; because it is fuller of Spirit*"[26] attests to the widespread influence of Paracelsus' ideas.

Medical treatises suggest that mummy was administered as a drug by English physicians to Henry VIII and probably even before this date.[27] The official *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis of 1618* of the English College of Physicians includes mummy and human blood as remedies, and mummy was a common drug in the pharmacological arsenal of the apothecary shop.[28] In his *Dispensatory* Schroder gives recipes for elixirs, tinctures, oils, ointments, and powders made from human bodies and their by-products, manipulated and processed in various forms.[29] In the 1747 *Pharmacopoeia Universalis* of Dr R. James, mummy, blood and other body parts are still recommended, and the entry for "*Homo*, Man"—that occurs curiously between the entries for "The Sand Martin," and "The Porcupine"—states that man is "not only the subject of Medicine, but contributes with his Body to the *Materia Medica.*"[30] Under the entry for "Man" James first lists the "simples," or pharmacological ingredients taken from the live

body, such as hairs, nails, saliva, ear wax, sweat, milk, menses, secundines, urine, dung, semen, stones of the bladder, and blood which, "drank recent and hot, is said to be effectual against the Epilepsy."[31] These are prescribed as efficacious for a whole slew of ailments ranging from a draught of husband's urine to facilitate a difficult labour; to dung for phlegm in the throat; to menstrual blood for epilepsy, pestilence, abscesses and carbuncles.[32]

James also details the pharmacological role of the "human Carcase", describing those drugs "useful in Medicine" as "the Skin, Fat, Bones, Marrow, *Cranium*, and Heart," as well as,

> ...*Mummy*, which is resinous, hardn'd, black shining Surface, of a somewhat acrid and bitterish Taste, and of a fragrant Smell. Under the Name of *Mummy* are comprehended, first, the *Mummy* of the *Arabians*, which is a Liquament, or concreted Liquor, obtain'd in Sepulchres, by Exudation from Carcases embalm'd with Aloes, Myrrh, and Belsam. If this *Mummy* could be procured right and genuine, it would be preferable to other Sorts. The second Kind of *Mummy* is the *Egyptian*, which is a Liquament of Carcases, season'd with *Pissasphaltus*. A third Substance, which goes by the Name of *Mummy*, is a Carcase torrified under the Sand, by the Heat of the Sun: but such a one is seldom to be met with in our Country.[33]

Furthermore the *Pharmacopoeia Universalis* proceeds to detail the wide spectrum of ailments for which the ingestion of mummy and other corpse matter are liberally prescribed:

> *Mummy* resolves coagulated Blood, and is said to be effectual in purging the Head, against pains of the Spleen, a Cough, Inflation of the Body, Obstructions of the *Menses* and other uterine Affections: Outwardly, it is of Service for consolidating Wounds. The Skin is recommended in difficult Labours, and hysteric affections, and for a Withering and Contraction of the Joints. The Fat strengthens, discusses, eases Pains, cures Contractions, mollifies the Hardness of Cicatrices, and fill up the pits left by the Measles. The *Bones* dried, discuss, astringe, stop all Sorts of Fluxes, and are therefore useful for Catarrh, Flux of the Menses,

> Dysentry, and Lientery; and mitigate Pains of the Joints. The *Marrow* is highly commended for Contractions of the Limbs. The *Cranium* is found by Experience to be good for Diseases of the Head, and particularly for the Epilepsy; for which Reason it is an *Ingredient* in several anti-epileptic *Compositions*. The *Os triquerum*, or triangular Bone of the Temple, is commended as a specific Remedy for Epilepsy. The *Heart* also cures the same Distemper.[34]

Curiously, James's treatise, spanning as it does approximately two hundred and fifty years of medical practice—taking into consideration the evidence suggesting that mummy was prescribed to Henry VIII—draws uncritically on the same medical paradigm as the numerous earlier medical treatises advocating corpse pharmacology.

As mummy from the Middle East became increasingly difficult to obtain, physicians often prepared "modern mummy" using recipes such as Croll's. "Mummy" therefore refers to both the embalmed bodies from the Middle East, and to more recently preserved European body parts. This pharmacological processing and consuming of human bodies is made possible by a judicial system that systematically executed large numbers of its citizens and made their bodies available for "scientific" dissection in public anatomy theatres. Francis Barker argues that, "the record of death by hanging suggests there was an extensive, ruthless and effective coercive apparatus that was putting to death vast numbers of the people, overwhelmingly the low-born and the poor."[35] The European theatres of anatomy, where medical dissections were performed on the bodies of executed criminals, were potentially a regular source for corpses destined for processing as mummy.[36] Certainly Antonio Brasavola's recommendation that, "When an executed criminal is dissected some of his fat should be preserved for pharmacological purposes,"[37] assumes the products of a brutal judiciary system, now off-cuts from the dissection table, as highly suitable material for the production of corpse drugs.

Furthermore, Ben Jonson's satire on medicine recognizes the anatomists as traders in human fat when Volpone identifies "some quantity of human fat...which we buy of the anatomists" as a secret ingredient in the "*oglio del Scoto.*"[38] As the evidence suggests, executions of large numbers of people, particularly from the lower classes, expediently ensured ready supplies of Croll's ideal corpse.

While the passage of the early modern European corpse from execution, to mummy, to the alimentary tracts of the sick is obscure, the Annals of the Barber-Surgeons' Company of London provide some clues. Describing what was legislated against, rather than what was actually practiced, the Annals provide a fascinating story of the progress of a corpse from execution, through dissection, to embalming. The Barber-Surgeons Company was originally licensed to conduct anatomies during the reign of Henry VIII, and the new charter granted to the Barber-Surgeons' Company by King James I in 1604 legislates barber-surgeons as the sole practitioners of dissections as well as embalmings. The charter stipulates all

> ...openinge searinge and imbalmeinge of the dead corpses to be properly belongeinge to the science of Barbery and Surgery, And the same intruded into by Butchers Taylors Smythes Chandlors and others of macanicall trades unskillful in Barbery or Surgery, And unseemely and unchristian lyke defaceinge disfiguringe and dismemberinge the dead Corpses, And so that by theire unskillfull searinge and imbalmeinge, the corpses corrupteth and groweth presentlie contagious and ofensive to the place and persons approachinge.[39]

In an attempt to control barbaric violations and misuses of corpses, and contagion, only the 'skilled' members of the Barber-Surgeons' Company were licensed to perform public and private dissections at the Barber Surgeons' Hall.[40] The Annals also describe complaints against private persons dissecting bodies in their own houses, and court orders

forbidding the removal of body parts and ordering that dissected bodies be buried in their entirety: all of which suggests the difficulty of policing dissections and the resulting traffic in dismembered bodies.[41]

Although only four public anatomies a year were legislated in London, and certain criminals' bodies were directed by the judges to be dissected,[42] the Annals cite numerous private anatomies,[43] indicating that a steady supply of executed corpses were processed through the Barber-Surgeons' Hall. The fact that the practice of processing executed bodies through the anatomy theatres was fairly widespread is suggested by a 1694 ballad celebrating the adventures of a highwayman named Summers executed at the Aylesbury assizes. As the ballad tells, before his execution Summers sold his body to a surgeon for eight shillings, "to be made an anatomy of after it was henged," and then "drank the money all out in wine before he was executed."[44] Moreover the Town Council of Edinburgh were quite liberal in their granting of bodies for dissection, legislating in 1694 that dead bodies, such as those who died in the Correction House, foundlings, children stifled at birth, those found dead upon the streets, and those who were murdered, "all of which who shall nobody to own them, upon which subjects the petitioners might make anatomical dissections for further improvement of anatomy."[45] Edinburgh's openhanded "gift of their bodies"[46]—a glut of corpses that is rather curious in the face of only one official anatomy per year—suggests a regular occurrence of anatomies.

The frequent involvement of apothecaries in dissections fully implicates them in the process of corpse manipulations; but this is not surprising given their role as merchants of corpse drugs. In Edinburgh the fact that the surgeon Alexander Monteith was permitted to build his own laboratory and furnace in the new Anatomical Theatre,

and to allow "Intrant Apothecaries" to use them when conducting their own "trials," links apothecaries to anatomies and the processing of corpses.[47] Additionally, prosecutions against apothecaries such as Michael Markeland in London, who was "complayned to have embalmed severall humane Bodyes within this City against the Ordinance of this Company in that behalf being an Apothecary and not a Surgeon of this Company,"[48] and William Cheselden, who "often procured the bodies of malefactors and privately dissected them at his own house"[49] make it easy to trace the route of an executed corpse, dissected and embalmed, to the jars of drugs on apothecaries' shelves. The significant role of apothecaries in this process is reinforced by the extraordinary story of Anne Green who, after her execution, was "beg'd for an Anatomy, by the Physicians, and carried to Mr *Clarkes* house, an Apothecary, where in the presence of many learned chyrurgions, she breathed, and began to stir."[50] Moreover, the words of Rollyard in James Shirley's *The Bird Cage*, "make Mummy of my flesh, and sell me to the Apothecaries,"[51] serve as a grim reminder that the path from healthy body to swallowed medical substance was relatively smooth.

Rollyard's inference that apothecaries were willing traders in all kinds of mummy is consistent with the general mistrust of apothecaries and the many charges of fraud and abuse leveled at them. Physicians such as Merrett frequently accuse apothecaries of falsifying medicines; using inferior, cheap and decayed ingredients; overcharging; and using incorrect quantities.[52] Another accuses apothecaries of "great abuses...in handling, keeping, choosing and dressing their Drugs and Medicines," and describes concoctions purchased from apothecaries as "...made many times of naughty stuff, or not well prepared."[53] Several cases are cited of apothecaries killing patients by substituting drugs

other than those prescribed by physicians.[54] Furthermore their active participation in the lucrative business of embalming led to more sinister charges of apothecaries deliberately murdering rather than curing their patients:

> ...*Apothecaries* taking upon them the wrapping up, and Embalming of Bodies (whereby they gain more money then by several years practice upon them, for their embalming amounts to great sums) may upon better reason be suspected of poysoning then any other persons whatsoever conversant among the sick; since both a particular interest and convenience of concealing may induce them to it.[55]

Conceptions of the corrupt and self-serving practices of apothecaries and their involvement in the mummy trade are reinforced by Ambroise Paré's condemnation of French apothecaries—"men wondrous audacious, and covetous"—who, in the absence of superior mummy, were "sometimes moved...to steal by night the bodies of such as were hanged and embalming them with Salt and in an oven, so to sel them thus adulterated instead of true mummie." [56] The similarities between these early modern European disparagements of apothecaries suggest that they were deeply implicated in the procurement and processing of human corpses for pharmacological purposes. While evidence points to dissected executed bodies as ingredients for corpse drugs, it also implicates apothecaries in the corpse drug industry: as embalmers, processors, and traders of human bodies.

The public anatomy theatre was not the only arena for exploiting the seemingly boundless pharmacological potential of a corpse, and the public witnessing of such a fate. The execution site itself provided an arena for the spectacular performance of cannibalistic acts. In a scene suggestive of epileptics drinking blood from Roman gladiators, a Danish folkloric account describes how "epileptics [stood] around the

scaffold in crowds, cup in hand, ready to quaff the red blood as it flow[ed] from the still quivering body."[57] However, this practice raised curious moral issues, such as the danger to the drinker who might be infected with the disease of criminality expressed by Elias Henckel in his caution that, "Drinking the blood of a criminal who has been beheaded is likely to result in the acquisition of his criminal character and the pursuit of a career of crime."[58] Interestingly his focus is the moral risk to the blood-drinking individual, rather than the morality of the action itself. And yet, in spite of a general uneasiness surrounding these practices, the fact that all this was socially sanctioned in the name of health attests to the complexity of early modern understandings of, and attitudes towards, medicine, the human body, and its properties.

Significantly this form of European cannibalism cannot be isolated as a grotesque practice unique to the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and there is evidence that the sale of corpse drugs continued into the twentieth century. The 1785 edition of Samuel Johnson's dictionary of English reveals that mummy was still being sold at that date.[59] More recently, the 1905 edition of *Hagers Handbuch der pharmaceutischen Praxis* states that Egyptian mummy can still be found in isolated pharmacies,[60] and the 1908 catalog of a reputable German pharmaceutical company offers "genuine Egyptian mummy, as long as the supply lasts, 17 marks 50 per kilogram."[61] These references demonstrate an obvious reluctance to relinquish an enduring belief in the therapeutic powers of the ingested corpse.

I am not claiming a wholehearted endorsement of corpse pharmacology, however; to the contrary, Henckel's above-quoted objection was not an isolated voice of disquiet. Earlier I discussed the discomfort displayed by Greek physicians towards "dirt" therapy,

and we can identify a similar early modern European uneasiness towards the medical deployment of corpses. The use and merit of mummy as a drug had many dissenters, and although their objections were usually couched as a general abhorrence towards ingesting bodies, rather than as an identification of and a rejection of the practice as cannibalism *per se*, there is a sense that what is constructed as the behaviour of the cultural Other seems disturbingly familiar. For example the physician Mundella declares the practice to be "abominable and detestable," and Guybert condemned mummy as "a true poison" and "a useless drug."[62] Offering a more graphic picture, one English explorer reveals his uneasiness with the element of bodily ingestion involved, when he describes the trade in "dead bodies [which are] the Mummie which the Phisitians and Apothecaries doe against our willes make us to swallow."[63] Here the shifting of responsibility and agency onto medical practitioners is an obvious attempt to alleviate apprehensions surrounding the ingestion of corpses. We see a similar move to elide responsibility in surgeon Ambroise Paré's censure of those physicians and apothecaries who cruelly compel their patients, "...to devoure the mangled and putride particles of the carkasses of the basest people of *Egypt*, or of such as are hanged, as though there were no other way to help or recover one bruised with a fall from a high place, than to bury man by an horrid insertion in their, that is, in mans guts."[64] When it comes to eating the most sordid and villainous members of humanity, Paré makes no attempt to hide his physical repugnance; furthermore, in his eyes, those patients who do eat corpses are victims, forced unwillingly into such turpitude by medical practitioners. Still, regardless of cultural queasiness, mummy continued to be valued as a remedy well into the seventeenth-century and beyond.[65]

Despite an understandable skepticism towards apothecaries, physicians and surgeons, and their methods, and an obvious trepidation towards the use of corpses, mummy was dispensed and consumed as a potent remedy, and is frequently alluded to in literature, often satirically, indicating a popular familiarity with its widespread use.[66] The cultural contradiction of the conflicting constructions of the human consumption of human flesh as both taboo and beneficial depending on the circumstances, coupled with the general cultural distrust of medical practitioners, proved irresistible for early modern writers who, as I will show in the following chapters, drew frequently on such uneasy paradoxes. For example in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Falstaff quips, "...the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been when I had been swell'd! I should have been a mountain of mummy" (3.5.16-18); and in *The Duchess of Malfi* Basola mockingly reduces the Duchess to "a salvatory of greene mummey" (4.2.117). The inconsistency is exposed as an absurdity by Sir Thomas Browne who, in his musings on the vanity of embalming, perplexes the fact that, "The Egyptian Mummies, which *Cambyses* or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth, Mummie is become Merchandise, *Mizraim* cures wounds, and *Pharaoh* is sold for balsoms."[67]

As Paul Stevens argues, Browne's paradoxical turns have the ability to "arrest us, to defamiliarize the everyday, and to make us see the world afresh."[68] I share Browne's fascination with the profound cultural complexities of a medical economy heavily invested in the consumption of human corpses in a culture where such behaviour is taboo. George Bataille argues that "Transgression outside well defined limits is rare; within them taboos may well be violated in accordance with rules that ritual or at least custom dictate and organize."[69] In early modern corpse pharmacology the violated human

body— dissected, preserved, dessicated, and distilled—is distanced from its original form, well disguised, and thus made palatable, as a popular ingredient in medicinal concoctions. In this way, the violation of the cannibal taboo is culturally sanctioned and made comfortable; but such cultural complacency is always shadowed by the disquieting existence of the taboo. My next chapter interrogates how the transgressive nature of this familiar, everyday practice is seized upon by the literary imaginations of those who, like Browne, seek to show us the world afresh.

NOTES

[1] Quoted in Edward Jenks, "The Story of the Habeas Corpus," *Law Quarterly Review* 18 (1902): 67.

[2] Samuel Johnson, *Johnson's Dictionary: A Modern Selection*, ed. E.L. McAdam, Jr. and George Milne (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963).

[3] Owsei Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1971) 22.

[4] See P.M. Rattansi, "Paracelsus and the Puritan Revolution," *Ambix* 11 (1963): 24-32, esp. 24.

[5] See Karen Gordon-Grube, "Evidence of Medicinal Cannibalism in Puritan New Encland: "Mummy" and Related Remedies in Edward Taylor's "Dispensatory," " *Early American Literature* 28.3 (1993): 185-221, esp. 201.

[6] See Walter Pagel, *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance* (Basel: Karger, 1958) and also Arthur Edward Waite, ed., *The Hermetic and Alchemical Writings of Aureolus Philippus Theophrastus Bombast, of Hohnheim, Called Paracelsus the Great* (London: James Elliott and Co, 1894) 168-169. For a discussion of the differences between Galenic and Paracelsian pharmacology and early modern medical doctrine in general see Nancy Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1990) and Lawrence Brockliss and Colin Jones, *The Medical World of Early Modern France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

[7] These translated treatises and those written in English reveal a dedication to demystifying medical knowledge and making it more accessible. In the introduction to his 1574 translation of Franciscus Arcaeus' *A most excellent and compendious method of curing woundes in the head*, John Read writes, "Why grutch they Chirurgerie should come foorth in English? Would they have no man to know but onely one?" (London: 1574).

[8] Marsilio Ficino, *Three Books on Life*, ed. Carol V. Kaske and John R. Clark, (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1989) 197.

[9] Dr Christopher Merrett, *A Short View of the Frauds, and Abuses Committed by Apothecaries; As well in Relation to Patients, as Physicians: and of only Remedy thereof by Physicians making their own Medicines* (London, 1670) 38.

[10] *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis*, ed. George Urdang (Milwaukee: Hammersmith-Kortmeyer,1944) 19.

[11] For example John Hartman in his translation of Croll prescribes a goose dung vapour "which will ascend through a chair (the Diseased sitting in a chair) to the Natural parts" for obstruction of the menses. This treatment is consistent with Hippocratic vapour treatments for the removal of female impurities. See Heinrich von Staden's excellent discussion of Hippocratic dirt therapy, in "Women and Dirt," *Helios* 19.1 and 2 (1992): 7-30. A special thanks is due to Dana Medoro for bringing this article to my attention.

[12] von Staden 16.

[13] Piero Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Flesh* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988) 11.

[14] von Staden 8.

[15] von Staden 9.

[16] von Staden 8-9.

[17] Gordon-Grube 194.

[18] Karl H. Dannenfeldt, "Egyptian Mumia: The Sixteenth Century Experience and Debate," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 16.2 (1985): 163-180, esp. 164. Dannenfeldt presents a comprehensive picture of the history of mummy and its role in early modern medicine. It is also interesting to note that Dioscorides includes women's milk, menstrual blood, and man's urine as remedies in his *Herbal*. See *The Greek Herbal of Dioscorides*, ed. Robert T. Gunther (New York: Hafner Pub. Co., 1968).

[19] Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, *History of Egyptian Mummies* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Green and Longman, 1834) 9.

[20] In his article Dannenfeldt carefully maps this process of transference from an ancient to a sixteenth-century understanding of the pharmacological benefits of mummy.

[21] Plinio Prioreschi, *A History of Medicine* (Omaha: Horatius, 1995) 380.

[22] Warren R. Dawson situates the popularity of mummy from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries, but I argue that the pharmacological use of mummy continued well into the eighteenth century, and occasionally beyond. See Dawson, "Mummy as a Drug," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 21.1 (1927): 34-39, esp. 34.

[23] Karen Gordon-Grube, "Anthropophagy in Post-Renaissance Europe: The Tradition of Medicinal Cannibalism," *American Anthropologist* 90.2 (1988): 405-409, esp. 406.

[24] John Schroder, *The Compleate Chymical Dispensatory, in Five Books*, trans. Dr. William Rowland (London: 1669) 506.

[25] Dannenfeldt 173.

[26] Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum: or A Natural History, in Ten Centuries*, (London, 1676) 213. Bacon also advocates mummy and the moss from an unburied man's skull for staunching blood, 210, 213.

[27] For example mummy is listed in *The English-Mans Treasure. With the True Anatomy of Mans Body: Compiled by the excellent Chyrurgion Mr Thomas Vicary Esquire, Sergeant Chyrurgion to King Henry the 8. To K. Edward the 6. To Queene Mary and to our late Soveraigne Qu. Elizabeth* (London: 1633).

[28] Pettigrew 7.

[29] Schroder 520-21.

[30] Robert James, *Pharmacopoeia Universalis: or, A New Universal English Dispensatory* (London, 1747) 511.

[31] James 512.

[32] James 512.

[33] James 512.

[34] James 512.

[35] Barker 201.

[36] It is interesting to note here that the sixteenth-century understanding of the word "anatomy" includes "mummy," creating a semantic link between the act of dissection and preserved bodies. *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.

[37] Quoted in Lynn Thorndike, *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 4th ed., vol. 5 (New York: Columbia UP, 1966) 502.

[38] Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, eds. Brian Parker and David Bevington (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999) 2.2.

[39] Sidney Young, *The Annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (London, 1890) 112.

[40] There are numerous texts attesting to the dubious qualifications of many medical practitioners. For example *A Detection of some Faults in Unskilful Physitians, and unknowing running Chirurgians*, "Written by a Doctor of Physick in Queen Elizabeths Daye," (London, 1662), offers scathing descriptions of the incompetencies of many physicians, surgeons and apothecaries and attests to the frequency of unskilled practices.

[41] Young 320, 346. Similar problems occurred in Padua where autopsies were forbidden because "improprieties had occurred and parts of bodies had been secretly conveyed away from the institution," quoted in Dr Theodor Puschmann, *A History of Medical Education from The Most Remote to the Most Recent Times*, trans., and ed., Evan H. Hare (London: H.K. Lewis, 1891) 333.

[42] Jessie Dobson, "The "Anatomizing" of Criminals," *Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons of England*, 9 (1951): 112-120. See also Sawday 56.

[43] Young, 321, 362.

[44] From *The Pepys Ballads*, ed. H.E. Rollins, vol. 7 (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1929-32) 40-3.

[45] Clarendon Hyde Creswell, *The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh: Historical Notes from 1505-1905* (London, 1926) 192-93.

[46] Creswell 192.

[47] Creswell 52.

[48] Young 218. In general there was a great distrust of apothecaries.

[49] Dobson 3.

[50] W. Burdet, "A Wonder of Wonders," (Oxford: 1651) (British Library E.621. (11)). This story is also cited in Sawday, 61, 220.

[51] James Shirley, *The Bird Cage*, ed. Frances Frazier Senescu (Garland: New York, 1980) 1.1.319.

[52] Merrett 8, 13.

[53] "*A Detection*" 151.

[54] "*A Detection*" 153.

[55] Merrett 50.

[56] Ambroise Paré, *The Workes of that famous Chirurgion Ambrose Parey*, trans. Thomas Johnson (London, 1649) 333.

[57] Mabel Peacock, "Executed Criminals and Folk-medicine," *Folklore* 27.7 (1896) 268-283, esp. 270-71. Also quoted in Gordon-Grube, "Anthropophagy," 407. This method of collecting blood also seems consistent with the cure Paracelsus advocates in his doctrine of epilepsy—Paracelsus prescribes blood from a decapitated man, administered according to certain astrological rules, as a remedy for epilepsy. See Temkin 176.

[58] Thorndike, vol. 8, 536.

[59] Johnson 258-59.

[60] Dannendfeldt 179.

[61] Gordon-Grube, "Anthropophagy," 407.

[62] Thorndike. vol. 8, 414 and vol. 7, 246.

[63] This anonymous account is quoted by Richard Hakluyt in *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, vol. 2 (London, 1599) 2.1.201.

[64] Paré is referring to "new" mummy here and his reference to eating executed bodies reinforces my hypothesis that executed bodies were used for mummy, 145.

[65] Thorndike, vol. 8, 414.

[66] For example Philip Sidney nicely sums up the general suspicion of physicians and their methods: "How often, think you, do the physicians lie, when they aver things good for sickness, which afterwards send Charon a great number of souls drowned in a potion before they come to his ferry?" in *A Defence of Poetry*, ed. J. A. Van Dorsten (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989): 53.

[67] All references to Shakespeare, other than *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello* are from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1974). John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi, The Works of John Webster* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995): Sir Thomas Browne, 312.

[68] Paul Stevens, "The Political Ways of Paradox: Renaissance Literature and Modern Criticism," *English Literary Renaissance* 26.2 (1996) 203-224, 212.

[69] Georges Bataille, *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*, trans. Mary Dalwood (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1957) 71.

CHAPTER 2

EATING MUMMY MAKES HEALTHY CANNIBALS

> Cannibalism is never just about eating but is primarily a medium for nongustatory messages—messages having to do with the maintenance, regeneration, and, in some cases, the foundation of the cultural order.
>
> (Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Divine Hunger*[1])

In 1564 Guy de la Fontaine, physician to the king of Navarre, described to Ambroise Paré how a Jewish merchant who traded in mummified corpses, "marveled that the Christians, so daintily mouthed, could eat the bodies of the dead."[2] These reported words exquisitely express the intense cultural anxiety around the eating of human bodies that haunts the medicinal preparation and ingestion of human corpses. I have argued that modern mummy, the recently preserved pharmacological corpse, is the end product of a gruesome process of bodily abuse and manipulation made possible by a judicial system careless of human life. In this chapter I show how the shared themes of the violated, eaten human body, and what it means to be civilized, played out in the relentless acts of physical defilement and the cannibal conclusion in *Titus Andronicus*, and in Jack's lurid fantasy of physical dissection and being ingested as physic in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, are haunted by the disturbing treatment and consumption of bodies in contemporary medical practice. Corpse pharmacology, in which the violation, exchange, and ingestion of the human body is socially tolerated, underpins these texts which engage the doubtful values of a culture caught up in systematic violence.

In both texts, harrowing acts of physical violence are connected to medical treatments and ingestions of the human body, revealing a contemporary uneasiness towards a form of oral consumption that verges on the cannibalistic. In the fraught

medical metaphorics of *Titus Andronicus* the human body is deployed in savage acts of revenge therapy—that build relentlessly towards a cannibal denouement—to purge the contaminating actions of the "civilized" Roman state. Critics have not attempted to bring together the savage acts of dismemberment and cannibalism in *Titus Andronicus* with the real possibility of cannibalistic practices in early modern England.[3] While Francis Barker does entertain the prospect of English cannibalism, he also evades the issue: "I make no comment on the real incidence of cannibalism in early modern England...."[4] I consider what I identify as macabre comic moments in the play as important instances of early modern English culture's anxiety over corpse pharmacology—comedy is introduced when the tragic horror onstage comes dangerously close to discomforting contemporary practices familiar to the audience. In this political fiction of the warring Romans and Goths, violence, cannibalism and corpse therapeutics[5] are thrown powerfully together in scenes saturated with mutilated bodies —deconstructing conceptions of European civilization that, particularly in the case of England, were frequently mediated through a Roman cultural legacy.[6]

Although he approaches the issue of European cultural hypocrisy in a different way, Thomas Nashe also exploits the precariousness of a "civilized" European cultural identity as defined against stereotypes of the pernicious behaviour of the Jewish Other. In *The Unfortunate Traveller* Jack's at times highly erotic nightmarish hallucinations of his own dissection and ultimate transformation into physic by Dr Zachary are repeatedly intruded upon by descriptions of the primarily Christian European production of corpse drugs. In this way, the text exposes the complicity of Christian European culture in corpse pharmacology, thus destabilizing stereotypes of the Jewish physician as the evil

perpetrator of such hideous practices—represented in Nashe as bloody crimes performed upon an innocent young masculine body. *Titus Andronicus* and *The Unfortunate Traveller* both reveal how stereotypes of the barbaric Other function to assuage early modern European apprehensions over their own dubious behaviour, thus exposing the flawed moral framework of the civilized state.

I.

> Now, now the house will swim in retributive blood. I see swords, hatchets, spears, the royal head split with the heavy blow of the ax. Now crimes are near, now treachery, slaughter, blood—banquets are prepared.
>
> (Seneca, *Agamemnon*[7])

The human body in *Titus Andronicus*—abused, sacrificed, dismembered and finally eaten—mediates the disturbing contiguity between the European medical consumption of human corpses and the barbaric eating of human flesh. The horrible fates of bodies and the cannibal problematic in the play are deeply entangled in the medical ingestion of corpses and the necessary violence towards, and violation of, bodies this practice demands.[8] The therapeutic use of powerful bodily pollutants, discussed earlier, when the blood of violence, menstrual blood, forbidden flesh, and corpse-food can be turned against impurity itself,[9] is of particular relevance to the threatening political contagion and fraught instances of contaminating violence in the play. In an extraordinary attempt to restore political stability to Rome, horrifying acts of revenge perform as harsh homeopathic remedies wherein each savage crime, each act of defiling violence, is countered by another, more savage and more defiling, one. In the absence of legal restitution, a malicious form of personal justice, administered against what René Girard has called, "the dread disease of violence,"[10] becomes a unifying motif of the play.

Polluted bodies, their parts and bloody excretions—by-products of revenge, which uncannily resemble the ingestible by-products of execution that form the early modern pharmacological arsenal—are deployed as powerful agents against socio-political pathogens in a vain attempt to rescue the disintegrating moral framework of Rome. In the end, the grisly challenge posed by *Titus* is the extent to which polluting acts of violence and cannibalism, which breach the moral integrity of the civilized state and thus bring the very nature of that state into question, can have a therapeutic function, and whether we can identify all forms of violence in the play as pollution therapy.

Shakespeare's sharp critique of Roman civility draws liberally on a long tradition of critics of Roman morality, a tradition with which the English Renaissance held an easy familiarity.[11] In particular the play draws insistently on two classical models, Seneca and Ovid, both critical observers of Rome's imperial politics and expansionist encounters with "barbarous" cultures; and both literary explorers of what Gordon Braden calls the "recurrent, compulsive theme" of "imperial pathology":[12] the lawless brutality and political voracity of Roman aristocracy. The imperial history we derive from Latin literature of the first century is one of "radical incompetence...murderous caprice...paranoid logic and arbitrary cruelty that seem to precede and go beyond rational political calculation."[13] Like his literary predecessors, Shakespeare offers a critique of the founding myths of Western European civilization, interrogating the uneasy cultural binaries of civil and barbaric on which Roman imperialism is built, when descriptions of the vicious barbaric Otherness of Aaron and the Goths are called into question by the polluting savagery of the "civilized" Romans. Furthermore, Rome's confrontation with,

and treatment of, a "barbaric" culture—the catalyst for the play's bloody furor—stages issues crucial to an early modern Europe negotiating its own "barbaric" encounters.[14]

In *Titus*, constructions of the barbaric Other that rely on the cannibal distinction are seriously compromised by the savagery of the "civilized" Romans. The categorization of Aaron and Tamora as degenerate cannibals is produced by the regulatory discourse of barbarism in Roman society anchored in ideas of Roman cultural superiority, insecurity about Rome's political future, and Roman imperial practices. Both Aaron and Tamora are identified as barbarians with savage appetites—cannibalistic "enemies of Rome" (1.1.69). Aaron, "a barbarous Moor" (2.3.78), is a "ravenous tiger" and an "accursed devil" (5.3.5), whose "raven-coloured" (2.3.83) body's hue is "Spotted, detested, and abominable" (2.3.73-74). That other "ravenous tiger"(5.3.199), Tamora queen of the "barbarous Goths" (1.1.28), is a "beastly creature" lacking in "grace" and "womanhood" (2.3.182) who, as final evidence of her depravity, gives birth to Aaron's child: "A joyless, dismal, black, and sorrowful issue....as loathsome as a toad / Amongst the fair-faced breeders of our clime" (4.2.66-68). In these racial constructs we have an illustration of what Emily C. Bartels identifies as an early conception of England's cross-cultural discourse, which "began to outline space and close off borders, to discriminate under the guise of discerning, and to separate the Other from the self."[15] Thus "barbarian" and "ravenous tiger" function not only as terms of distinction that imply inferiority,[16] but also signify, within emerging European colonialist discourse, the savage, cannibal Other of the European imagination that threatens civility.[17]

By drawing attention to these discursive practices, *Titus* reveals the instability of such constructed identities. While the Romans clearly situate themselves as superior to

the Goths, Marcus' cautionary imperative to Titus: "Thou art a Roman, be not barbarous" (1.1.374), alerts us to the performative nature of a "civilized" Roman identity and to the fictional status of the barbarous/civilized distinction. Furthermore, in a sweeping deconstructive move, Aaron appropriates the language of racial stereotyping by naming himself "a black dog, as the *saying* is" (italics added) (5.1.122) thus exposing his "identity" as a construct of civilizing discourse. Although their actions are nefarious, both Aaron and Tamora merely employ the disturbed situation they find in Rome—exhibitions of cruel and rapacious imperialism supported by a revenge logic that fuels perceptions of insult and dishonour—to their own advantage. Thus any threat offered by the cannibal potential of Aaron and Tamora is immediately elided by the savage practices of the predacious "civilized" Roman state in its inexorable pursuit of "commonweal" (1.1.114).

The Rome of *Titus*, as many have argued, is a degenerating state: internally threatened by imperial conflicts, corruption, and ruthlessness. In order to naturalize an embattled political institution, Shakespeare resorts to a popular organic model of the source of dangerous cultural corruption: the female body.[18] The idea of Rome as a headless female body with a greedy appetite is introduced early in the play in the image of the uterine tomb, the warehouse of Andronici sons: "O sacred receptacle of my joys," Titus laments, "Sweet cell of virtue and nobility, / How many sons hast thou of mine in store, / That thou wilt never render to me more!" (1.1.192-95).[19] By popular request, the power to remedy this precarious state lies in Titus' hands; but when he fails to "help to set a head on headless Rome" (1.1.186), and thereby to heal "her glorious body" (1.1.197), Rome deteriorates into the torments of "the civil wound" (5.3.87) and the

"broken limbs" of a state spoiled by political furor (5.3.71). As well, the alternative early modern English meaning of "headless" as "Lacking in brains or intellect; senseless, stupid,"[20] has relevance here, especially given Titus' gradual descent into psychological limbo—Rome's affliction of the head is also the affliction of imperial insanity and both sufferings must be cured.[21]

By representing Rome in corporeal terms, Shakespeare associates his political fiction with various discourses of the body, in particular medical discourse and its descriptions of bodily dissections and pollution therapeutics. Here he joins other contemporary political writers who, as Jonathan Gil Harris points out, transformed "the comparison between body and society into a highly sophisticated similitude informed by new developments in anatomical medicine and pathology."[22] In *Titus* references to ingestible medicine, such as the need to "feed [Titus'] humour kindly as we may / Till time beget some careful remedy" (4.3.29-30); Tamora's desire to "feed [Titus'] brain-sick humours" (5.2.71); Lavinia as "the cordial of [Titus'] age" (1.1.166); Titus' hands as "with'red herbs" (3.1.178); and the "physic" Aaron gives to the Nurse (4.2.162), reinforce the dubious motif of healing which valorizes brutal revenge as the purgative for the ailing body politic.

The desire to heal Rome is underpinned by the heavy duty of caring for Rome: a task burdened with licensed killing and the deconstruction of the civilized self this action demands. At the very beginning Titus is established as Rome's loyal caregiver, her "best champion" (1.1.65), who, having sacrificed almost his entire male lineage to "This cause of Rome" (1.1.32),[23] returns triumphant from "weary wars against the barbarous Goths" (1.1.28). The act of killing that is sanctioned by war, Elaine Scarry has argued, is

motivated by "care "for the nation"." The warrior, "in consenting to kill...consents to perform (for the country) the act that would in peacetime expose his unpoliticalness and place him outside the moral space of the nation." In this act of decivilizing himself, he "consents to...empty himself of civil content "for his country." "[24] Thus for "Ten years" (1.1.31) Titus has divested himself of civilization in his obsessively dutiful ministration to the Roman body politic—returning five times "bleeding to Rome" (1.1.34), bearing the taint of violence in each return; and the tragic root of the ensuing grisly events in *Titus* can be located, in part, in the failure to resolve the meaning of the deaths incurred in caring for Rome into social and political well-being. Neither Titus, nor his political rivals, can, as Kirby Farrell has written, "convert the threat of pollution, instability, and nothingness into a source of fertility or productiveness: to make death yield heroic meaning that could sustain society."[25] Instead, with factionalized Rome poised for prudent guidance and change—the Goths defeated and their Queen captured—Titus further pollutes the *polis* by willfully sacrificing Alarbus, "...the proudest prisoner of the Goths" (1.1.96), thereby deconstructing the boundary between sanctioned and unsanctioned killing, and shattering Rome's fragile opportunity for renewal. Hence this act of killing, which under the normal conditions of war is external to the moral space of the nation, becomes an unforgivable, contaminating, internal crime—lacking any healing efficacy, it ignites the force of unremitting vengeance. [26]

Ritual sacrifice frequently performs the role of purging the community of pollutants, with the victim, or "*pharmakos*" serving to incorporate impurity: it is, according to Girard, "an act of violence inflicted on a surrogate victim...absorbing all the internal tensions, feuds and rivalries pent up within the community." Furthermore, the

sacrificial process functions to "prevent the spread of violence by keeping vengeance in check."[27] However, in the performance of "Our Roman rites" (1.1.142-43), the gruesome sacrifice of Alarbus lacks any clear communal efficacy—even as a means of ridding Rome of a dangerous, foreign pollutant—functioning instead as a rather puerile personal revenge rite to punish the Goths for the host of Andronici sons slain in war, as Lucius ruthlessly makes clear:

> hew his limbs, and on a pile
> *Ad manes fratrum* sacrifice his flesh...
> That so the shadows be not unappeased
> Nor we disturbed with prodigies on earth.
> * * * * * *
> make a fire straight,
> And with our swords upon a pile of wood
> Let's hew his limbs till they be clean consumed. (1.1.97-129)

The violation and consumption of Alarbus' body as a remedy for Andronici suffering reveals the true nature of Roman sacrificial ritual as a pernicious whim. Alarbus' sacrifice, against which no Roman voice is raised in protest, attests to the personal vindictiveness of imperial rule that defeats any careful political reasoning and breaches the rules of peace and civility. Any purifying potential of the "entrails [that] feed the sacrificing fire / Whose smoke like incense doth perfume the sky" (1.1.144-45), is overwhelmed by the contaminating heinousness of this crime. The figurative languages of eating—"feed" and "consumed"—and pollution therapy, that construct Alarbus' corpse as both food and prophylactic, signal the complex relation between corpse therapy and eating on which the play revolves. In these terms, in this process of calcination, Alarbus as the sacrificial *pharmakos* is reduced to a powdered quintessence, a pure form of the ingestible mummy *pharmakon* so highly prized in the Paracelsian pharmacy—after all, the main ingredient is consistent with the requirement for a healthy body dead from

an unnatural, violent cause. Moreover, in classical Greek, the *pharmakon* has the dual function of remedy and poison;[28] here the *pharmakos/n* does not heal, but fouls the atmosphere with the uncontrollable urge for revenge.

The harsh irony of such corrupt order, operating alongside a rhetoric of political benevolence—"Kind Rome"(1.1.165)—is not, of course, lost on Tamora, her sons, and Aaron, who experience first-hand Rome's brutal theocracy, and see clearly the "barbarous" nature of "Pius" Andronicus (1.1.23) and "ambitious Rome" (1.1.132), as "cruel, irreligious piety" (1.1.130-31). Titus' careless dismissal of Tamora's well-reasoned pleas for Alarbus' life, that speak the dual anguish of a mother and an imprisoned Queen, shows a fatal lack of political expediency that exposes Rome to vengeance from within. Tamora, now "incorporate in Rome" (1.1.462) and brutally indoctrinated into the Roman way, reveals herself as a skillful student of the revenge logic upholding Roman honor expressed in Saturninus' challenge: "What, madam, be dishonoured openly, / And basely put it up without revenge?" (1.1.432-33). Her response is inevitable: "I'll find a day to massacre them all / And Raze their faction and their family, / The cruel father and his traitorous sons, / To whom I sued for my dear son's life" (1.1.450-53). It is vividly apparent in these words that Tamora's pain, humiliation and fury are channeled into a cool, calculating vengeance which, in the absence of any judicial "curative procedures"[29]—a form of victim recompense designed to soothe the desire for revenge— is released in a cataclysmic cycle of polluting violence as the Goths pursue their own brutal justice on the Andronici.

Suffering what Michael Neill has described as "the terrible frenzies of the revenger,"[30] Aaron's declaration that "Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand, /

Blood and revenge are hammering in my head" (2.3.39) forms a dangerous harmony with Tamora's "sacred wit" which is "To villainy and vengeance consecrate" (2.1.120-21). The Goths are psychologically tormented by their need to remedy the painful loss of Alarbus and destroy the particularly virulent strain of Andronici violence. To this end the brutalized bodies of Lavinia, Bassianus, Quintus and Martius are deployed in the savage process of cleansing that Aaron outlines to Tamora: "Thy sons make pillage of her chastity, / And wash their hands in Bassianus' blood" (2.3.44-45)—abominable violence is treated with even more abominable violence. Aaron's calculated revenge plot, in which Lavinia is the central sacrificial scapegoat for Andronici corruption, cleverly implicates the others, sweeping them up in its destructive force.[31]

In the bloody scene of Bassianus' murder, the play's haunting rhetoric of cannibalism comes powerfully together with the defining motif of pollution therapy in a complex staging of the corpse as consumable flesh—preempting the cannibal moment towards which the play is building. Here the links between barbarism and eating are explicit and expand significances only hinted at in the description of Alarbus' sacrifice and the "consuming fire." The brutal killing of Bassianus attests to the mimetic nature of revenge and this act of reciprocal violence both answers and exceeds the sacrifice of Alarbus in several crucial ways. Firstly Bassianus' death is not a communal ritual of purification; rather he is, like Alarbus, a revenge substitute in a cycle of purging one death with another. Secondly, while the ritualized severing and burning of Alarbus limbs and entrails glance at the culinary, Bassianus's bloody body is explicitly reduced to a butchered carcass of edible flesh—"like to a slaughtered lamb" (2.3.223). Thirdly the significance of the flesh eating fire that "feed[s]"on Alarbus' corpse is powerfully

developed in the starkly cannibalistic nature of the "blood-drinking" (2.3.224), "devouring" (2.3.235), "swallowing" (2.3.239) pit into which Bassianus's corpse is thrown.

Furthermore, Quintus's and Martius's curious inspection of the bloody pit performs a disquieting link between the play's explicit language of cannibalism and savage acts of butchery at this point, and early modern anatomies. Also entrapped in Aaron's brutal plan, Quintus and Martius peer into and explore the "subtle hole...Whose mouth is covered with rude-growing briers / Upon whose leaves are drops of new-shed blood" (2.3.198-200). The comically grotesque voyeurism of this scene strikes an odd resemblance to the behaviour of an early modern anatomist gazing into a body's interior. In public dissections executed corpses—often headed for preservation and ingestion as "modern" mummy—were processed in the quest for epistemological mastery of the body's mysterious internal motions.[32] Displaying the morbid curiosity of an anatomist, Martius, having plummeted into the earthen "womb" (2.3.239) of Rome, inspects the interior recesses of the gaping "bloodstained hole" (2.3.210)[33] to discover its gory secrets: the "ragged entrails of this pit" (2.3.230).

The blood of revenge—dripping, staining, polluting, horrifying, though seductively fascinating—flows frequently and spectacularly throughout the play. Blood is a complex, viscous fluid with powerful pharmacological significations—when drunk, it was believed to have an extraordinary healing function, possessing a "regenerative virtue and salvific power...'miraculous and divine, for the doing of deeds wondrous and grand, which all but raise the dead.' "[34] But blood was also, as Gail Kern Paster argues, "...a discursive site of multiple, competing, even self-contradictory meanings."[35] Thus, not all

bloody flows have positive connotations—according to Girard, blood spilt in violence is attributed with the same polluting properties as violence: "Its very fluidity gives form to the contagious nature of violence."[36] In particular, women's blood, with its connotations of impurity and nasty superfluity, was intellectualized as corrupted and therefore polluting. In fact, the traditional conception of the essential condition of womanhood itself, in a constant cycle of excremental overflowing and forever at risk from "pollution by rape," necessitates impurity.[37] Further, there is a clear connection between the blood of violence and the blood of female sexuality; ironically, menstrual blood is frequently comprehended as a physical representation of sexual violence.[38]

The connection between women, menstrual blood, sexuality, and violence, which can be understood as a barely-suppressed desire to blame all forms of violence on women,[39] helps to illuminate the incomprehensible treatment of Lavinia in the play. Her horrific violation by rape and dismemberment, a drastic departure from the revenge murders of the men, make Lavinia's very femaleness the scapegoat for Andronici violence. Lavinia's troubling womanhood—itself a paradoxical identity which presupposes her as not only a sexually available object of masculine desire, but also, because of her intrinsically polluted condition, as an object of masculine contempt—makes her the enigmatic central figure of reciprocal violence in the play. When Demetrius and Chiron plot Lavinia's rape—and thus her sexual pollution—her womanhood, already understood in gynaecological terms as a flawed and tainted thing, not only justifies their planned violation of her, but in an extraordinary example of misogynistic logic, makes her somehow responsible for their actions: "She is a woman,

therefore may be woo'd, / She is a woman, therefore may be won, / She is Lavinia, therefore must be loved" (2.1.82-84).

But for Demitrius and Chiron, wooing, winning, and loving signify rape, vindicated by what Demitrius describes as Lavinia's partly consumed, and therefore polluted, married state. As a wife she is spoilt goods: "a cut loaf" from whose body it is easy to "steal" and ingest "a shive" (2.1.87). Lavinia is food, bread to be "snatch[ed]" (2.1.95) and forcibly putrified: "enforc'd, stain'd, and deflow'r'd" (5.3.38). In the constant rhetorical jostling of cannibalism and corpse therapeutics in the play, this reference to Lavinia's body as sliced food not only predicts the dismemberment that follows her rape, but also offers Lavinia, like Alarbus and Bassianus, as edible flesh and dubious remedy.

The bloody staging of the polluted and polluting Lavinia affords a powerful vision of the complex investment in violated bodies in which the play is implicated. Raped, dismembered, and haemorrhaging, though still alive, Lavinia's body is at once the conflicted site of violent pollution, and the source for that profound bloody elixir—rich with contradictory significations—that saturates the Roman earth. Marcus' remarkably graphic *blason anatomique* describes to Lavinia how her, "...crimson river of warm blood, / Like to a bubbling fountain stirr'd with wind, / Doth rise and fall between thy rosed lips, / Coming and going with thy honey breath" (2.4.22-25). The use of the word "river" with its alternative meaning, "course," has important semiotic implications here: meaning flow or flux, "courses" is frequently used in early modern English as an alternative to "menses."[40] As well, Lavinia has already been constructed as "the stream" which will cool Demetrius' sexual "heat" (2.1.133-4). Thus she presents a spectacle of

female bodily flow, of vaginal blood, of menstruation—a potent, potentially purifying "cordial" (1.1.166) which gushes forth, "As from a conduit with three issuing spouts" (2.4.30) into the contaminated atmosphere.[41]

This spectacle is indeed a questionable metaphor for catharsis and healing; however, in the light of pollution therapy, the pharmacological power of the defiled and dangerously haemorrhaging woman becomes intelligible.[42] The belief that menstrual blood can produce negative phenomena operates alongside the belief that it also has "considerable agricultural and medicinal power....Menses thus can destroy beneficially or harmfully, can save or kill, can pollute or purify."[43] Therefore, von Staden argues,

> It should not be overlooked that some of the very words used of ritual purification from pollution—*katharis, kathairo*, and their cognates—are used extensively as early as the Hippocratic writings to refer to menstruation: to that monthly catharsis, it seems, of uterine impurities that is essential...to the reproduction of the *polis*.[44]

Lavinia's ambiguously coded body and bloody flows take on the impossible burden of cleansing a *polis* defiled by Andronici crime in order to create, and guarantee the continuation of, a political state desirable to the Goths.[45] However, in the play's polluted atmosphere of unstoppable violence, where a cure becomes increasingly unlikely, the reproductive, cathartic potential of women is barren. Instead, the horrific nature of Lavinia's violation denies efficacy to any remedial measure, and gives destructive power to the belief that menstrual blood can pollute rather than purify. Thus the tragic violence that feeds the play escalates—analogous, according to Titus, to adding "water to the sea" and bringing "a faggot to bright-burning Troy" (3.1.68-69).

As the violent momentum shifts to a new level of horror, a comic onstage moment that plays to the audience's familiarity with dubious medical practices relieves the

tension. The brutal dismemberment of Lavinia stages one of the major concerns of the Barber Surgeons' Company—the unlicensed practice of surgery by unskilled barbers. In fact, Aaron's description of Lavinia's butchering is couched in terms of barbery: "Why, she was washed and cut and trimmed, / And 'twas trim sport for them which had the doing of it" (5.1.95-6). Lucius, picking up on the punning significance of Aaron's words, replies: "O barbarous, beastly villains like thyself!" (5.1.97)—performing the uncanny slippage between barbarism and the medical treatment of corpses that the play persistently negotiates. The fact that the first quarto of *Titus* uses the term "barberous" is crucial here. John Dover Wilson raises the issue of a play on the word "barberous" when he asks "Is a pun intended?"[46] Alan Hughes seems to think not, arguing that, while "It is conceivable that Q 'barberous' was intended as a ghastly pun....an actor could not well distinguish between the vowels in "barbarous" and "barberous" without making the moment ludicrous; thus, the pun is probably a compositor's error."[47] But what if this moment is meant to be ludicrous: is meant to use humour to deconstruct dramatic and moral conventions and highlight complex cultural paradoxes?[48] In this passage the pun on "barber/arous" is open to multiple interpretations, regardless of linguistic inflections, playing on the normal activities of barbery—washing, cutting and trimming—but also on the more violent, surgical treatment of human bodies with which barbers, who frequently transgressed their barbering roles, were associated.

Cultural concerns about the physical dangers of barbers practicing as surgeons complicate and enrich the semantic implications of "barber/arous," making the term ripe for innuendo and punning. The savage and macabre butchery of Lavinia reflects the repeated acts of surgical barbarity and unethical practices by unlicensed and unskilled

barbers. Charges were regularly laid against those barbers who performed surgery on "sick and wounded persons whereby the sick were often worse off at their departure than at their incoming, and on account of the unskillfulness of these barbers were often times maimed to the scandal of the skilled and the manifest harm of the people of our Lord the King."[49] In an effort to improve and control the standards of surgery, an Act of Parliament forbade surgeons from practicing barbery and barbers from practicing surgery, except for drawing teeth.[50] The Act did not, however, resolve the issue and surgeons were continually being called before the Court for "evil dealing," and barbers, as well as other unskilled and fraudulent surgeons, continued to butcher their patients.[51]

In response to the Goth's savage treatment of Lavinia Titus's brutal butchery of Chiron and Dimitrius registers the barber/arous significance of unskilled surgery. In a "logic of outdoing"[52] wherein Titus will "o'erreach them in their own devices" (5.2.143), retribution and healing form a devastating cannibal alliance when revenge is fully unleashed on the Goths—Chiron and Dimitrius are decapitated and their bodies violently transformed into the main dish of culinary vengeance wrought on Tamora. Tamora's unwitting act of pedophagy stages the cannibal denouement towards which the insistent juggling of figurative language and the play's insatiable appetite for revenge has been heading.[53] This is probably the most significant moment in the play, when Titus wreaks exact revenge for his losses by tricking Tamora into "Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred" (5.3.61). Although this gruesome trick is driven by revenge, the competing motive, "For peace, for love, for league, and good to Rome" (5.3.33), underscores the grim therapeutic intention of the banquet. Thus Chiron and Dimitrius form the polluting corpse drugs of Titus' corrective; not only the blood and flesh of revenge, but the crucial

ingredients of early modern pharmacology are deployed for the health of Rome.[54] In what constitutes a graphic reenactment of collecting and drinking the salubrious, recently-shed blood of gladiators and executed criminals, Lavinia holds up a basin to receive the Goths' blood (5.2.183 and 197).[55]

Furthermore, when Titus demands: "prepare your throats" (5.2.196), the full horror of this scene is arrested for the audience by the comic force of the barber/arous pun discussed earlier, which plays a familiar cultural concern for laughs. Having performed the grisly dual role of executioner and anatomist, Titus now becomes the apothecary/surgeon, revealing his own recipe for "mummy": "Let me grind their bones to powder small, / And with this hateful liquor temper it, / And in that paste let their vile heads be bak'd" (5.2.198-200). The simples Titus uses—blood, bone, marrow, and cranium—are those frequently advocated in early modern pharmacopoea, and his recipe parodies popular therapeutic prescriptions for diseases of the head such as epilepsy, as well as the method of preparing mummy in the oven described earlier.[56] While there is a clear connection here with medicinal cannibalism, it is startlingly obvious that the medicinal is revealed *as* cannibalism; in other words, the invocation of actually cooking the corpse for the therapeutic task exposes the barbarity of corpse therapy.

"So now bring them in, for I'll play the cook," quips Titus humorously as he exits with the corpses to an off-stage space of dismemberment, grinding and baking (5.2.204). The comic relief of this moment points to another similar space where the conflicting functions of the dissection of human corpses, and the preparation of food for human consumption, collide. Until 1632 dissections were performed in the kitchen of the Barber Surgeons' Hall, however this transgressed, in a rather troubling way, the proper function

of the kitchen, particularly given the tradition that a special dinner was enjoyed after each anatomical demonstration.[57] In 1632 an urgent demand was made for a special anatomy theatre to rectify the conflict of functions whereby, "...hitherto those bodies have beene a greate annoyance to the tables dresser boardes and utensills in our upper Kitchin by reason of the blood filth and entrailes of those Anathomyes and for the better accomodateing of those anatomicall affaires and preserveing the Kitchin to its owne proper use."[58] Titus' "kitchen" gives form to the fears that underpin the Barber Surgeons' concerns—that anatomized bodies may end up in today's dinner—[59]making it impossible to sustain the important cultural distinction between the pharmacological and the culinary.[60] In other words, how the body mediates the precarious boundary between civility and barbarity, between the therapeutic ingestion of human flesh and the pleasurable devouring of human flesh, collapses.

At the banquet the murderous furor of polluting revenge takes on a force of its own, escalating into the multiple killings of Lavinia, Titus, Tamora and Saturninus—a process of elimination that ensures Rome's "re-capitation" when Lucius is proclaimed "Rome's royal emperor" and "gracious governor" (5.3.140 and 145); and it appears that Marcus' resurrective dream, to "...teach [Rome] how to knit again / This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf, / These broken limbs again into one body" (5.3.70-72) may be possible. The incongruousness of Lucius' proclamation to "...heal Rome's harms, and wipe away her woe!" (5.3.148), is manifest in the curiously androgynous figure of his male head atop the play's dominant corporeal image: the female body of Rome, trapped in a bloody cycle of pollution that he vows to cleanse. As head, the onus is on Lucius to ensure social and political well-being; however, in spite of Marcus' vision of re-

membering, we are left with the sense that this triumph, gained through bloody revenge and rivalry, will continue to have tragic consequences. Lucius represents a continuation of the old order, and any hope that Rome may learn and benefit from these events is jeopardized by ruthless ambition and a moral outrage that scapegoats Aaron as the "Chief architect and plotter of these woes" (5.3.121). While Aaron's death represents an attempt to eradicate contamination from the infected body of Rome, the governing logic of revenge, demanding that he must "be adjudged some direful slaught'ring death / As punishment for his most wicked life" (5.3.143-44), still operates.

In sacrificial terms Aaron, albeit not blameless, is the surrogate victim, the *pharmakos*, for the furor of revenge that troubles the play. Aaron's death is meant to absorb ("wipe away") the contamination of a Rome blind, in this moment of swaggering Andronici triumph, to its own self-destructive imperial pathology; and ironically, Lucius' orders to "Set him breast-deep in earth and famish him; / There let him stand and rave and cry for food" (5.3.178-79) can be seen as a starving of the "ravenous tiger" in order to assuage Rome's own voracious desire for revenge. In early modern pharmacological terms, the arid, shifting sands of Aaron's torment—earlier Titus describes how the "angry northern wind/Will blow these sands" (4.1.107)—resemble the desert landscape in which the highly prized mummy substance is preserved: "torrified under the Sand, by the Heat of the Sun."[61] Aaron, the polluting cannibal threat, will slowly leach the residual violence of Rome's therapy into the Roman soil: providing a double-edged *pharmakon*—Is he remedy or poison, purifier or pollutant?—for a Roman state sustained by revenge. If we understand Rome's entrapment in a cycle of contaminating revenge as a form of addiction, then Aaron's end as an ingestible substance of revenge, like the ends of other

bodies in the play, fatally stages the multiple significations of Lucius' words: "this is our doom" (5.3.181).

In *Titus* Shakespeare lays open for interpretation the troubling paradoxes of his own culture mediated through the lens of his Latin literary heritage. The cannibal problematic, not necessarily a barbaric problematic as Shakespeare shows, provides a way to interrogate received early modern understandings of civilization in the light of how bodies are culturally valorized and deployed. The elaborate rhetorical juggling of medicine and cannibalism in the play is an inevitable consequence of a cultural behavior wherein the "civilized" medical consumption of human bodies and the foreign, abjected and forbidden act of eating human flesh, are profoundly implicated in one another. When Titus attempts, through deception, to construct Tamora as the cannibal, he reveals the precarious artificiality of using cannibalism as a foundation for theorizing cultural superiority. Shrewdly negotiating the competing constructions of cannibalism, the play denies any position that seeks to define cannibalism as taboo in one context and acceptable in another. *Titus Andronicus* is a disavowal of cultural hypocrisy.

II.

> Wherever [the Jews] can secretly curse, poison, or harm us Christians they do so without any qualms of conscience....they remain our daily murderers and bloodthirsty foes in their hearts. Their prayers and curses furnish evidence of that, as do the many stories which relate their torturing of children and all sorts of crimes for which they have often been burned at the stake or banished.
>
> (Martin Luther, "On the Jews and their Lies"[62])

From the very beginning, Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* draws attention to the flawed moral framework of the civilized state,[63] and functions as a powerful counterpart to the interrogation of violence and the deconstruction of European notions of civility that *Titus Andronicus* performs. While Nashe's primary focus is England, the

confusion of events and random acts of bodily violence in his fiction expose the savage undercurrents of European civilization, which are kept in play by "ideological authority and the physical capacity of the state to do violence to its subjects."[64] The text's satirical interrogation of medical doctrines and practices destabilizes Christian European claims to a civilized identity while at the same time highlighting the unflattering stereotypes of the Jews—who are in this instance constructed as cannibalistic procurers, embalmers and traders of corpses for mummy—against which that identity is defined. I focus on the Doctor Zachary incident in order to show how Jack's morbid fear of being dissected and eventually processed into physic by the Jewish doctor challenges attempts to reinforce the anti-Semitic stereotypes of Jews as the perpetrators of horrendous crimes.[65] The anti-Semitic implications of Jack's precarious situation as Doctor Zachary's next dissection victim are undermined by the rhetoric of corpse pharmacology that positions Jack's body in a much larger medical corpse economy. While the linguistic dexterity of Nashe's text exposes such European cultural duplicity, the location of the action in "depraved" Rome creates an illusory geographical distance from which to draw attention to English cultural contradictions.

One of the most pernicious anti-Semitic images, that of the evil Jewish physician,[66] underwrites attempts by early modern medical practitioners such as Ambroise Paré to situate the trade of fraudulent Egyptian mummy primarily in the hands of opportunistic Jewish merchants.[67] "Storytelling has important consequences for how a culture imagines itself in the act of imagining others," writes James Shapiro.[68] Paré's story of the role of Jews in the mummy economy, which derives from the 1564 report of Guy de la Fontaine, physician to the king of Navarre, tells us a great deal about how early

modern Christian Europeans imagined themselves and their medical practices. According to Paré, de la Fontaine investigated the warehouse of one of the largest Jewish traders in mummy:

> Shown a large pile of bodies, the physician inquired about the source and asked for further information about the ancient embalming and burial practices. The merchant laughed at his naivete and informed the physician that he had himself prepared the bodies, between thirty and forty in number, during the last four years. The bodies, now mumia, had been those of slaves and other dead persons, young and old, male and female, which he had indiscriminately collected. The merchant cared not what diseases had caused the deaths since when embalmed no one could tell the difference. He marveled that the Christians, so daintily mouthed, could eat the bodies of the dead.[69]

In Paré's attempts to elide European involvement in the medical corpse economy, the mummified corpse becomes the site of a transference of agency from the "civilized" self to the "barbaric" alien Other. This identification of Jews as immoral traders in tainted corpses for Christian consumption is consistent with, and draws its anti-Semitic punch from, "a powerful and satisfying narrative" of horrendous Jewish crimes—among them child abduction, circumcision, and cannibalism—that served to "explain both conscious and barely understood fears experienced by early modern English men and women."[70] In Paré's description, entrenched anxieties about the manipulation and eating of human bodies by Europeans are here projected onto Jews who, already carrying the burden of early modern European paranoia regarding bodily violations, serve as powerfully seductive scapegoats. Certainly the fact that de la Fontaine (or perhaps Paré?) expresses his own fears about the eating habits of Christians—who consume all kinds of corpses in the name of medicine—through the mouth of the Jewish merchant, reveals an enormous discomfort with what the Europeans were doing.[71]

My point is not that Jews were not involved in the traffic of mummy—they may very well have been—rather I wish to show how the entrenched anti-Semitism of the period serves to shift the moral responsibility of a particularly troubling medical practice away from the Christian Europeans. Curiously, in every discussion of mummy in the medical histories I have consulted—including those recently published—de la Fontaine's story is repeated uncritically; surprisingly even the Jewish medical historian Edward Reichman falls into the same trap and fails to question the validity, or to interrogate the biases; of this account.[72] Thus a general consensus—fueled by myths of Jewish butchery and cannibalism, coupled with stories of Jewish cupidity—has filtered down through medical history unchallenged: that in the ghoulish trade of corpses for medical ingestion, unscrupulous Jews took advantage of a lucrative economic situation.

The Unfortunate Traveller is an intricate montage of diverse ideological and cultural perspectives and discourses that constantly interrupt and contradict each other. The apparent lack of coherence in Nashe's text has challenged many critics;[73] however, in my approach to the work as a similitude of a complex social world, I agree with Ann Rosalind Jones who, arguing for a Bakhtinian reading of the text as a dialogic, multi-voiced novel, notes that, "*The Unfortunate Traveller* makes clear that the world it constructs is a jarring confrontation of contemporary discourses, not the mirror of a world that rises above them."[74] In these terms the juxtaposition of contrasting and shifting points of view adopted by Jack in the Doctor Zachary episode—in which descriptions of widespread European medical practices repeatedly intrude on the Jewish physician stereotype—perplexes any fixed cultural perspective on Jews, suggesting instead an interpretation that challenges such assumptions.[75] References to dissection; the fear of

vivisection; and the pharmacological processing of corpses, fracture the anti-Semitic rhetoric of the episode to offer a commentary on a disquieting, primarily Christian European practice.

Nashe exploits the entrenched myths of Jews as unscrupulous body traders, evil physicians, and eaters of Christian flesh when he has Jack drop, like a "blind man...[who] should stumble on sudden into hell," into the house of Zadok the Jew, and thus into the Jewish body market (288). Zadok, conforming to stereotype, "(as all Jews are covetous)" (288-89), and revealing himself as a purveyor of fine flesh, sells Jack as "body and goods" to Doctor Zachary, physician to the Pope, for his "yearly anatomy" (289). As Shapiro notes, the practice of usury—frequently described as "biting" usury—was deeply entangled in the English imagination with the idea of the Jews as devourers of human flesh.[76] The harrowing descriptions of Jack's capture, imprisonment, and sickening prospects of dissection by his Jewish tormentor, are consistent with the allegations of abducting and killing of children, and of ritual murder and cannibalism leveled at the English Jews, and with the horror that these stories evoked (290). Jack's status as prisoner awaiting Zachary's annual dissection, is shadowed by the story of a yearly Jewish ritual murder circulating in Nashe's England: in this crime the victim is imprisoned, eaten, and attempts made to hide the body and the crime.[77] Jack's nightmarish fears of being dissected alive also register the psychological repercussions of a culture nourished on the terrifying stories about the loathsome activities of Jewish bogeymen used to control English children. [78]

As the stereotypically evil Jew, Zachary takes his place with two other equally abhorrent Jewish figures produced by the English literary imagination: Shylock and

Barabas.[79] All three share an apparent disregard for the lives of Christians, and relish the idea of violating Christian bodies. Jack's "cold, sweating" (290) imaginings of Zachary "slicing down my breast and my sides" (290) resemble the forfeit Shylock proposes to Antonio: "...an equal pound / Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken / In what part of your body pleaseth me" (1.3.149-151). Zachary, a physician of "treacherous intent" who has "much art" in the "sovereign simples, oils, gargarisms, and syrups" of his pharmacological "closet" (291)—enriched by his bodily excretions such as "snot," "spittle," and the drippings from his "rheumatic eyes" (290)—finds his perfidious counterpart in Barabas who also has, "Warehouses stuffed...with drugs" (4.1.68) and has "...studied physic" which he murderously performed "...first upon the Italian; There I enriched the priests with burials" (2.3.184-85). Barabas' warehouse which is overflowing with drugs, evoking as it does Paré's description of the Jewish merchant's warehouse stacked with a surfeit of mummified corpses destined for medical ingestion, suggests that his pharmacological arsenal includes mummy.

But the endurance of the myth of the Jewish violator of flesh is severely jeopardized in Nashe's text by the repeated intrusion of the discourse of corpse medicine that provides an alternative account of the treatment of corpses. When Zadok offers Jack to Doctor Zachary his sales pitch has a familiar ring: "The infection is great, and hardly will you get a sound body to deal upon....I have a young man at home...of the age of eighteen, of stature tall, straight limbed, of as clear a complexion as any painter's fancy can imagine" (289).[80] The striking similarity of this description to the ingredients of Croll's recipe for mummy—a sound, unblemished, young masculine body of sanguine excellence—is reinforced by Zachary's own probing inspection of Jack's body, "to feel

and grope whether each limb were sound and my skin not infected," which he also pierced "to see how my blood ran" (289). Although younger than Croll's twenty four year old corpse, Jack is figured as the ideal candidate, not just for dissection, but also for the process of preserving in the corpse pharmacology of Protestant Paracelsian physicians such as Croll. To have his flesh and blood end up as "physic" (290), after his blood is purged "that it should not lie cloddered in the flesh" (290), is clearly how Jack sees his fate.[81] Jack's anxiety of ending up as an ingestible drug finds expression in culinary terms: in the fear of being eaten as meat for dinner, dying, bleeding, like an animal, such as "a pig or a hog, or any edible brute beast a cook or butcher deals upon" (292)—a concern that also registers the medical and culinary confusion of bodies in the Barber-Surgeons' kitchen discussed earlier. Here, as in *Titus Andronicus*, the distinction between the human corpse as ingestible medicine and the human corpse as food is difficult to sustain. Furthermore the realization that his demise is signaled by this "shrowd turn" (290)—a pun on "shrewd" and "shroud" that richly evokes something sharp and piercing, as well as preservation and mummification—also suggests that Jack pictures himself en route to the apothecary shop and Christian mouths.

The threat of bodily dissolution that obsessively haunts *The Unfortunate Traveller*[82] is sharpened in Jack's feverish evocation of the horrors of live dissection and its ghastly end: a slow bleeding to death. The penetration of the human body with the terrible tools of anatomy comes vividly to life as Jack imagines his live body "cut," "pricked," and "slic[ed]" (290). Jack's fears are justified when we consider John Stowe's 1587 description of an anatomy of an executed felon not yet dead,[83] and Helkiah Crooke's condemnation of vivisection as the "Caniball barbarisme...[of] the dissection or

rather butchery of living men," and his gruesome catalogue of anatomical instruments that includes: "Razors of al sortes, great, small, meane, sharpe, blunt, straight, crooked, and edged on both sides; Sheares or sizers; round and long Probes of Brasse, Silver, Lead; Pincers of all sorts; Reeds, Quils, Glasse-trunkes, or hollow Bugles to blowe up the parts; Sawes, Bodkins, Augers, Mallets."[84] These horrific images come together in Jack's nightmares of his life-blood draining away through "phlebotomy, bloody fluxes, incarnatives, running ulcers"; even the smallest pimple is potentially fatal: "I durst not let out a wheal for fear through it I should bleed to death" (290).

Behind Jack's terror lie suggestively homoerotic stories of Jewish circumcision which, when coupled with the images of medical consumptions of bodily parts and blood that permeate the text, have powerful cannibal overtones. Such concerns were exacerbated by reports from Elizabethan travelers such as Thomas Coryate, who, claiming to have witnessed a Jewish circumcision, describes how a Jew, "drawing forth a little instrument...did with the same cut off the prepuce or foreskin of the child, and after a very strange manner, unused (I believe) of the ancient Hebrews, did put his mouth to the child's yard, and sucked up the blood."[85] In his fantasy, Jack's fears of dissection are expressed in the terms of circumcision, conveying both a sense of exquisite horror and of sexual fascination as he watches—much as spectator in an anatomy theatre does—his passive body tremulously anticipating being "cut like a French summer-doublet" (290) by Jewish "foreskin-clippers" (291). The scene is fraught with bloody phallic flowing and sucking: "Methought already the blood began to gush out at my nose. If a flea on the arm had but bit me, I deemed the instrument had pricked me" (290).

Fear of the "cut"; the sexual significance of the bleeding "nose" and "prick"; the homoerotic implications of the penetrating "instrument" and blood-sucking flea—unavoidably connoting fellatio—come together in a powerfully erotic commentary on Jewish circumcision as a depraved, cannibalistic act of sexual depletion.[86] In Jack's mind's eye, the piercing, blood-sucking flea functions as a potent metaphor for the image of the sodomizing, cock-sucking circumciser that shadows the text, offering a seductive vision of blood, flesh and oral consumption that forms a devastating link with Jack's vision of his "clarify[ed]" (290) blood and flesh being prepared as ingestible physic. The purified sanguinary quintessence of Jack's body mirrors the "sincere, gentle and therefore more excellent" blood of the young "red Man" of Croll's recipe. Here the myth of the Jews as barbaric circumcisers and sodomitic suckers of blood is challenged by the European medical practice of dismembering bodies, ingesting flesh, and drinking blood, to produce a fascinating counter-narrative of the bodily violations and consumptions that haunted the Europeans. The moment reveals a horrifying, and at times highly erotic, fascination with the vulnerability of the human body that taps into "a set of morbid fears which could easily be transformed into a set of barely suppressed desires."[87]

The dangerous idea that in Zachary's hands penile violation will also be his fate, holds a curious erotic excitement for Jack that grows in his fantasy to embrace another part of his body: his breast. Jack's fascination with the vision of his own dissection gains intensity at the thought of Zachary's "smooth-edged razor tenderly slicing" his breast and sides (290).[88] This fetishization of the slice of masculine breast, with its undercurrents of homoerotic desire, as well as food, also occurs in Croll's careful description of the highly desirable flesh of a young male to be sliced, processed, and ultimately ingested as, "This

Mumy (that is Musculous flesh of the Thighs, Breasts, Armes, and other parts)...."[89] Reflected in such voyeuristic fantasies of tender corporeal penetrations of young male bodies being prepared for consumption—the gentle entering of his breast that Jack imagines and the anticipatory tone of Croll's description of sliced, perfect body parts—are elements of masochistic and sadistic desires that focus on the perverted pleasure of penetrating and eating young masculine flesh. Nashe's text provides eloquent testimony that Jack's transgressive fantasy of victimization is indebted to recipes such as Croll's, available throughout Europe and translated into English, and is anchored in the ghoulish reality that the young male victim *is* the main ingredient in the production of corpse drugs.

Although the action is geographically located in the "Sodom of Italy" (308), the reference to the "beadle of the Surgeon's Hall" (290) implies a different scenario of fleshly encounters in which to situate the image of Jack as a body ripe for the Paracelsian pharmacological arsenal. The rhetorical allusion to the beadle and the Surgeons' Hall has a particularly English ring, and resonates with the pharmacological opportunities for the bloody remnants of anatomies conducted at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall in London. This rhetorical intrusion threatens the text's description of a savage procedure about to be performed by a barbaric Other in a corrupt foreign land, suggesting instead another protagonist and location for the action: the English medical practitioner in England. As we have seen, performances of official annual anatomies were also carried out in England, primarily at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall in London. Any attempt to occlude English violence is undermined by the intrusion of England into the episode, thus challenging notions not only of English civility, but also of Christian European civility.

The procedure that Jack imagines is, in Nashe's time, a thoroughly English one, and the possible treatment of his remains can be traced through the Barber-Surgeons' Hall. Ironically, in his fantasy, Jack watches his own body undergo the process that numerous other English bodies—victims of rough justice who have been fed into a *laissez-faire* medical system that is careless of bodies—have undergone.

The evocation of European medical treatments of the human corpse in Jack's fantasy of what the Jewish physician might do to his body, undermines negative constructions of Jews, showing that, at a certain level, such stereotypes function to assuage early modern English apprehension over the treatment of bodies. The construction of Zachary as the savage procurer and dissector of Christians who will end up in the stomachs of the sick, is repeatedly undermined by the fact that corpse pharmacology was primarily a Christian European practice. The myths of Jewish depravity show that such apprehension is frequently expressed as an abjection, but as *The Unfortunate Traveller* makes clear, abjection is, as Julia Kristeva has argued, "as tempting as it is condemned."[90] Europeans' fears about their own questionable practices and desires to reiterate notions of European civility, that give expression to representations such as Paré's of the Jews as violators of and traders in human flesh bound for Christian stomachs, also fuel the anti-papal polemic of Protestant Reformists. The fact that Zachary lives in Rome and is physician to the Pope introduces Protestant Reformist rhetoric that constructs the Catholics as bloodthirsty manipulators and eaters of the body of Christ and the Pope as the anti-Christ. Curiously, as I show in Chapter 3, the complex relationship between anti-papal rhetoric and the debate over the Real Presence

of Christ in the Eucharist, and the Protestant endorsement of corpse pharmacology, raises the question of exactly who are the cannibals.

NOTES

[1] Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Divine Hunger: Cannibalism as a Cultural System* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986) 3.

[2] Ambroise Paré, *Ouvres completes*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1840-1841) III: 481, paraphrased in Dannenfeldt, 170.

[3] There are, however, many fine analyses of the extraordinary violence in the play. See, for example, Eugene M. Waith, "The Metamorphosis of Violence in *Titus Andronicus*"; David Willbern, "Rape and Revenge in *Titus Andronicus*"; Heather James, "Cultural Disintegration in *Titus Andronicus*: Mutilating Titus, Vergil, and Rome"; Philip C. Kolin, " "Come down and welcome me to this world's light": *Titus Andronicus* and the Canon of Contemporary Violence," all in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995) 99-113, 171-194, 285-303, 305-316. Also Albert H. Tricomi, "The Aesthetics of Mutilation," *Shakespeare's Early Tragedies: Richard III, Titus Andronicus and Romeo and Juliet* (London, MacMillan, 1990) 99-113; and Katherine A. Rowe, "Dismembering and Forgetting in *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 45:3 (1994): 279-303.

[4] Barker argues that in *Titus Andronicus* any real representation of "systematic violence" in early modern English culture is elided by the emphasis on cannibalism, 190. However, I argue that the play engages early modern ingestions of corpses made possible by such violence.

[5] Jonson also plays with the themes of cannibalism and corpse therapeutics in *Volpone* when Mosca says: "Sell him for mummia, he's half dust already" (4.4.14). This image, as Brian Parker's note reminds us, "combines the play's 'cannibal' motif with its theme of ambiguous 'disease/cure', " *Volpone*, ed. Brian Parker and David Bevington (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999) 228, 14n.

[6] The Roman past, Copellia Kahn argues, was "legendarily linked to the moment in which Britain itself emerged into history," in *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds and Women* (New York: Routledge, 1997) 3.

[7] Seneca, *Agamemnon*, ed. R.J. Tarrant (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976) 44-48.

[8] I disagree with Albert H. Tricomi's argument that the figurative language of the play is limited to the "gruesome circumstances of the plot" and fails to extend beyond the limits of the stage, in "The Aesthetics of Mutilation," *Shakespeare's Early Tragedies: Richard III, Titus Andronicus and Romeo and Juliet* (London, MacMillan, 1990) 99-113.

[9] von Staden 16.

[10] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1979) 33.

[11] Ronald Broude argues that while Shakespeare's audiences would have admired Rome's accomplishments, they were also well aware of "her vices," in "Roman and Goth in *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Studies* 6 (1970): 27-34).

[12] In his chapter "Stoicism and Empire," Gordon Braden offers a fascinating analysis of the political critique of the "torment of Neronian Rome" in Senecan tragedy, in *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985) 8. Andrew V. Ettin argues that the literary sources for the violence in the play are products of the "Roman" imaginations of Ovid and Seneca, in "Shakespeare's First Roman Tragedy," *ELH* 37 (1970): 325-41.

[13] Braden 8.

[14] Kahn also argues that Shakespeare makes *Titus* a "serious critique of Roman ideology, institutions, and mores," 47.

[15] Emily C. Bartels, "Making More of the Moor: Aaron, Othello, and Renaissance Refashionings of Race," in Kolin, 265-83, esp. 265-66.

[16] See also Anthony Pagden's useful discussion of the image of the barbarian in *The Fall of Natural Man*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge UP, 1992) 15-26.

[17] See Hulme in *Colonial Encounters* for a discussion of the ideological role for early modern Europeans of descriptions of outsiders as eaters of human flesh, esp. 86-87.

[18] For example in *This Worlds Folly*, as Michael Neill has shown, "I.H." locates the corrupted source of the plague—the "Bawdy Players"—in the "feminized body politic of the city, where a literal disease is produced by the taint of metaphoric uncleanness," in *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997) 25. Neill is quoting from I.H., *This Worlds Folly; or, A Warning-Peece discharged upon the Wickedness thereof* (London, 1615), sig. B3.

[19] Woodbridge also makes this point in her description of the tomb as the "dominant stage image...that keeps swallowing Andronici," in *The Scythe of Saturn: Shakespeare and Magical Thinking* (Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1994) 172; and Maurice Charney writes that the tomb offers "an implicit metaphor of the earth swallowing its own increase in burial," in "Titus Andronicus," *Harvester New Critical Introductions to Shakespeare* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990) 96. Willbern also notes that in these lines Titus associates Rome with the mother's womb, 173.

[20] "Headless." *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*. 1993 ed.

[21] Willbern also argues that the restoration of Rome is the goal that underpins the play, 188.

[22] Jonathan Gil Harris, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 35.

[23] Paster identifies Rome's dependence on these "sacrificial victim[s]" who allow "the city, once again, to live," in "To Starve With Feeding," in Kolin, 229.

[24] Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and the Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) 121-122.

[25] Kirby Farrell, *Play, Death and Heroism in Shakespeare* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1989) 10. Also quoted in Neill, *Issues*, 32.

[26] This situation of external peace and internal violence can also be seen in Cicero: "...all the outside is pacified on land and sea by the *virtus* of one man: home-grown war remains, the threats are inside, the hidden danger is inside, the enemy is inside," quoted in Braden, 13.

[27] Girard 7, 18, and his discussion of the role of the *pharmakos* in Greek tragedy, 94-98.

[28] Jacques Derrida offers a complex discussion of the implications of the translation of *pharmakon* as either remedy or poison, in Plato's *Phaedras*, and the impact of this on the tradition of Western Philosophy, in *Dissemination* (Chicago, U of Chicago P, 1981) esp. "Plato's Pharmacy." See also Girard, 95.

[29] Girard 21.

[30] Neill offers an insightful understanding of revenge as an anxious response to death, and the psychological state of the revenger in his discussion of *Hamlet*, in *Issues*, 243-261.

[31] Lavinia and Bassianus are not entirely blameless and their malicious tauntings of Tamora further illustrate Roman malevolence and reinforce Tamora's refusal of Lavinia's pleas, just as Titus refused hers.

[32] In *The Body Emblazoned*, Sawday offers an extensive discussion of the early modern fascination with the internal workings of the human body.

[33] Much has been written about this reference to female genitalia, which ominously signals the rape of Lavinia, and the connection between the Andronici tomb and the "swallowing womb" of feminized Rome. In particular see Marion Wynn-Davies for a persuasive discussion of the gynaecological imagery of the cannibalistic feminine earth, in " 'The swallowing womb': Consumed and Consuming Women in *Titus Andronicus*, in V. Wayne, ed., *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991) 129-51.

[34] Camporesi, *Juice of Life: The Symbolic and Magic Significance of Blood*, trans. Robert R. Barr (New York: Continuum, 1995) 31, is quoting from Fioravanti, *De' capricci medicinali* (Venice: 1602). See also Gail Kern Paster's inspiring discussion of "laudable blood" in which she maps the complex "cultural symbology" of blood in early modern England, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993) 64-112.

[35] Paster, *The Body*, 66.

[36] Girard 34.

[37] See Paster's discussion of the early modern understanding of the "plethoric" nature of women, *The Body*, 79, and von Staden's analysis of the tradition of a belief in female impurity, 13-14 and 20.

[38] Girard 36.

[39] Girard 36.

[40] See for example Helkiah Crooke in *Microkosmografia: A Description of the Body of Man, 1615* (London, 1631).

[41] Paster also identifies Lavinia's blood as vaginal or menstrual, *The Body*, 98.

[42] Von Staden offers an excellent discussion of the gendering of Hippocratic dirt therapy, 7-30. In general this therapy is consistent with the homeopathic nature of Paracelsian medicine and also, as Urdang writes in his introduction to the *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis of 1618*, with the trend away from the polypharmacy of the Galenists towards "Hippocratic simplicity" evident in the *Pharmacopoeia*, 32. Menses, used both externally and internally is a frequently-mentioned ingredient in the early modern pharmacological reserve.

[43] von Staden 14.

[44] von Staden 15.

[45] Further, in this ideology of bodily disintegration, by representing the live dismemberment of Lavinia, Shakespeare also gives form to the idea of live dissection. As Jonathan Sawday notes, "The charge that anatomists were also vivisectionists was to haunt the theatres of dissection throughout the early-modern period." Sawday 80. See also Helkiah Crooke's objection to "living dissections: "...it is not Anatomy but butchery, to mangle the trembling members of a mans body, and under I know not what slender idle pretence of profit, or behoose, to violate the sacred Law of nature, and of religion," 18.

[46] John Dover Wilson, ed., *Titus Andronicus* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968) 148n.

[47] Alan Hughes, ed., *Titus Andronicus* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994) 127n.

[48] In his discussion of *Othello*, Walter Cohen makes the similar point that "Shakespeare's humour shatters the norms of dramatic and moral suitability, implying the artificiality of what is conventionally considered "normal" or "proper," in Stephen Greenblatt, ed., *The Norton Shakespeare* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997) 377. Also there are other places in the play that are played for laughs, for example 2.3.110, 3.1.91, 3.2.29 which Alan Hughes identifies as puns, albeit "atrocious" ones, 127n.

[49] Jessie Dobson, *Barbers and barber-surgeons of London: a history of the Barbers' and Barber-Surgeons' Companies* (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific, 1979) 15.

[50] Dobson, *Barbers*, 34.

[51] Young 318. Numerous complaints were published against unskilled surgeons and imposters. Two examples are surgeon Daniel Turner's *Apologia Chyurgica. A Vindication of*

the Noble Art of Chyrurgery, from the gross Abuses offer'd thereunto by Mountebanks, Quacks, Barbers, Pretending Bone-Setters, with other Ignorant Undertakers (London, 1695), and *A Detection.*

[52] Braden 43.

[53] A.C. Hamilton notes how the "final gruesome banquet is prepared for by the whole play," in "*Titus Andronicus*: The Form of Shakespearean Tragedy," in Kolin, 129-145, esp. 144.

[54] Essential to this reading is the pharmacological recommendation that "the *Cranium* is found by Experience to be good for Diseases of the Head," in James, 53.

[55] At this moment we can also hear Hamlet's words as he battles the contagion of Denmark: "Now I could drink hot blood" (3.2.390). Ironically, we also witness in *Titus* the performance of a phlebotomy, in which the bad humours, Chiron's and Demitrius's "guilty blood," are released and saved.

[56] For example Paracelsus' method for fusing bones: "Take any quantities of bones and burn them into lime. Having done this, carefully pound it. Take of this [a portion]; of quicklime [a portion]. Mix them together in a powder. Afterwards dissolve some bitumen in a moderate quantity of wine, until the whole of it is melted away then place the bones therein, and stir briskly into a thick pulp. Afterwards pour into a mould made of paper," in Waite, 1.365. See also Samuel Johnson's definition, 3n.

[57] It had become customary to provide a dinner after the demonstrations as it was considered exhausting either to give or to listen to the long lecture. These dinners tended to become larger, more elaborate and costly, and from time to time restrictions were introduced.

[58] Young 334

[59] We also see this distinction collapsed in *Twelfth Night* when Sir Toby threatens to "eat the rest of th' anatomy" (3.2.62-3).

[60] It comes as no surprise then that we see a rhetorical slippage of the term "mummy" into cookery: "It must be very thick and dry, and the rice not boiled to mummy." From Mrs. Glasse, *Cookery*, 1733, 152, quoted in Dawson, 38.

[61] James 512.

[62] Martin Luther, "On the Jews and their Lies," trans. Martin H. Bertram, *Luther's Works*, ed. Franklin Sherman, vol. 47 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971) 123-306, 288.

[63] This begins with the pun on "page" and the association of the page with lies. See Margaret Ferguson "Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller*: The 'Newes of the Maker Game,' " *ELR* 11 (1981): 165-82.

[64] Barker 190. Barker's historical study of the number of people executed during the period of Elizabethan and Stuart power is an excellent example of the violence in which early modern English culture was implicated, 169-190.

[65] For a creative discussion of the popular myth of the Jewish physician as poisoner see Harris, *Foreign Bodies*, 79-107.

[66] Note the notorious case of Elizabeth's Jewish physician Dr. Lopez who was tried and executed on the charge of plotting to poison the Queen. See Harris 83, and James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996) 73.

[67] Tales of European travelers record other examples of the supposedly fraudulent practices of Jewish merchants, such as John Ray's observation that, "After all it is vain to think to have pure Civet, for the Jews falsifie it," in *A Collection of Curious Travels and Voyages in Two Tomes* (London, 1693) 178.

[68] Shapiro 91.

[69]Dannenfeldt 170.

[70] Shapiro 111. Shapiro offers a fascinating mapping of Elizabethan notions of Jewish criminality, 89-113.

[71] This is also clearly an ironic reference to the dainty Catholic mouths that eat the real body of Christ in the Eucharist.

[72] Edward Reichman, "The Impact of Medieval Medicine on Medical *Halachah: Mumia*," in *Pioneers in Jewish Medical Ethics*, ed. Fred Rosner (Northvale: Jason Aronson Inc, 1997) 36.

[73] See for example Alexander Leggett, "Artistic Coherence in the Unfortunate Traveller," *Studies in English Literature* 14:1 (1974): 31-46; Raymond Stephanson, "The Epistemological Challenge of Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*," *Studies in English Literature* 23:1 (1983): 21-36; Louise Simons, "Rerouting *The Unfortunate Traveller*: Strategies for Coherence and Direction," *Studies in English Literature* 28:1 (1988): 17-38.

[74] Ann Rosalind Jones, "Inside the Outsider: Nashe's Unfortunate Traveller and Bakhtin's Polyphonic Novel," *ELH* 50:1 (1983): 61-81.

[75] Here I disagree with Laura Scavuzzo Wheeler who itemizes the pejorative stereotypes of the cultural Other on which Jack draws but does not see the text as destabilizing these in any way, in "The Development of an Englishman: Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*," *Historicizing Christian Encounters with the Other* (London: Macmillan Press, 1998) 56-74.

[76] Shapiro explains that this may be due in part to the polysemic nature of the Hebrew word for lending at interest, *neshech*, that also means "to bite," 110.

[77] Shapiro 104-5.

[78] Shapiro describes Maria Edgeworth's novel *Harrington* in his discussion of the effect such stories had on the "English psyche." In the loneliness of his bedroom the child Harrington "saw faces around me grinning, glaring, receding, advancing, all turning at last into one and the same face of the Jew with the long beard, and the terrible eyes, and that bag in which I fancied were mangled limbs of children," 89-90.

[79] William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*. Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. David Bevington (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1997).

[80] The desire for unblemished bodies for dissections has a long history. For example in 1391 it was decreed that the town authorities supply the University of Lérida with the clear corpse of a criminal who had been forcibly submerged in water, in Theodor Puschmann, *A History of Medical Education from the Most Remote to the Most Recent Times*, trans. Evan H. Hare (London, 1891) 247.

[81] Jack's fear of being turned into physic lends strong support to my argument that dissected corpses were turned into mummy.

[82] See Leggatt for a discussion of how a fascination with the vulnerability of human flesh pervades Nashe's text.

[83] Stowe writes that "...after hee was dead to all mens thinking, cut downe, stripped of his apparel, laide naked in a chest, throwne into a carre, and so brought from the place of execution through the Borough of Southwarke over the bridge, and through the citie of London to the Chirurgeons Hall nere unto cripplegate: the chest being there opened, and the weather extreme cold hee was found to be alive, and lived till the three and twentie of Februarie, and then died." Quoted in Sawday 61.

[84] Crooke 18.

[85] Quoted in Shapiro, 116. Shapiro describes such reports as having "sodomitical overtones," 116.

[86] The term "pierce" was frequently used to describe sexual intercourse, and "instrument", "knife" and "blade" were common terms for penis. See Barry Reay's fascinating catalogue of sexual metaphors in *Popular Cultures in England: 1550-1750* (London: Longman, 1998) 19.

[87] Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995) 49.

[88] In his discussion of these words Jonathan Sawday also identifies the "sexual frisson—a hint of transgressive desire—in Jack's dissection fears," 49.

[89] Note the connection to the idea of Lavinia as a sliced loaf: both food and sexual object. As well in *The Merchant of Venice* Shylock seeks his forfeit of flesh to be sliced from Antonio's breast. See Shapiro for an analysis of stories of Jewish circumcision and their implications for *The Merchant of Venice*, 113-130. Shapiro argues that the biblical metaphorics of circumcising the heart underpin Shylock's decision: "Circumcise the foreskin of your heart," and "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart," 127.

[90] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia UP, 1982) 1.

CHAPTER 3

GREEDY CATHOLICS AND STARVING PROTESTANTS

> The divine flesh, transmitter of abstract, impalpable powers that put the soul into communication with the ineffable, was also widely perceived as a mysterious, superhuman nourishment, a sort of divine marrow that would mete out both health and salvation (the two are indistinguishable in the single, ambiguous term *salus*). It was seen as a heavenly manna and balsam, a supernatural *pharmakon*—the "salubrious *elixir vitae* of His blood."
>
> (Piero Camporesi, "The Consecrated Host: A Wondrous Excess"[1])

In 1567 the house of Vitus Jacobaeus published a broadsheet image of the anatomy of Martin Luther (Fig. 1).[2] The image, which depicts the dissection of Luther's corpse, the eating of his flesh, and the drinking of his blood, brings together early modern corpse pharmacology and the Reformation debate about the nature of the eucharist in a tableau of cannibalism. Such an evocative representation of corporeal associations raises the question that underpins this chapter: Is there a discursive overlap between the medical ingestions of corpses, and the denial of the eucharist as corporeal matter, that reveals a residual Protestant hunger for the real flesh and blood of Christ? In this anti-Reformist portrait of a public anatomy, Luther's body, lying like an executed criminal on the anatomist's table, is tortured, dissected and dismembered; his blood drunk and flesh *eaten* by his followers: a group that includes other influential religious Reformists such as Calvin, Zwingli, Viret, Brenz, and Melanchthon. Significantly, although the act of cannibalism is just one of several atrocities the image represents, it dominates the scene, controlling interpretation. One of Luther's legs, still attached to his body, is being eaten, and the long sweep of the raised leg draws the viewer's eye upwards, to be arrested at the

open mouth of the eater chomping down on Luther's foot. Meanwhile another follower is collecting and drinking the blood gushing from the severed stump of Luther's other leg. The eucharistic and culinary implications of the broadsheet are reinforced by the depiction of a spear piercing Luther's side, and an image from the crucifixion of Christ in the upper left corner, while the upper right corner depicts the kitchen scene in which Peter denied Christ—and in the process offering yet another undeniable association between anatomy theatres and kitchens.[3]

The broadsheet representation of the eating of Martin Luther offers compelling evidence that the boundaries between the medical consumption of the human body and the culinary eating of human flesh were almost impossible to sustain. In this tableau the practice of cannibalism that has been abjected and attributed to others, returns to haunt the Europeans. More specifically, we see here the connection I have been exploring between the practice of anatomy and corpse medicine. At the same time the depiction of Luther as food collapses the distinction between the medical and the culinary—the presence of the kitchen making this collapse even more salient. Finally, and most crucially to this chapter, in this parody of the eucharist the clear medical references draw attention to the powerful link between medical ingestions of the human body and religious ingestions of the body of Christ.

If the overt message of the broadsheet is, as Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham argue, "that the punishment for heresy is to be betrayed, chopped up and devoured by your own followers,"[4] the broadsheet also highlights the intriguing multiplicity of Reformation discourses of cannibalism. The uncanny slippage between the medical references, the anti-papal propaganda, and the anti-reformist significance of

the image that keeps in play the deep-seated fear that medicinal and eucharistic consumptions of punished bodies *are* cannibalism, confounds interpretations of the image as simply demonized Protestantism. If part of the purpose of the broadsheet is to parody reformist constructions of the eucharist as a cannibal mass, then ironically it does just the opposite. The startling paradox of the broadsheet's message, resonating as it does with colonialist discourse and early modern illustrations of New World cannibals, lies in its denial of exactly that on which it seems to insist, with the result that cannibalism is *not* only the behaviour of the barbaric Other.

In my discussion of the Errour episode in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, and John Donne's *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*, I show how these texts engage the early modern unease over transgressions of the cannibal taboo that produces the intricate figurative dynamic of medical and eucharistic consumptions of the body identifiable in the broadsheet. The opposing perspectives on the controversy over the Real Presence of Christ's body in the eucharist represented in these two texts reveal how the literary imagination negotiated the complex orthodoxies and heterodoxies of that debate. In Spenser's text, the savage consumption of flesh and blood in the Errour episode that graphically demonstrates the anti-papal propagandist linking of Catholicism with cannibalism and barbarism offers a clear rejection of the Catholic eucharist. Furthermore the episode's abjection of cannibalism evokes the larger cultural presence of deep anxiety towards consumptions of the human body that includes in its range of associations not only the eucharistic consumptions of Christ's flesh and blood, but also the drinking of blood by epileptics, and the medical ingestion of corpses.

In comparison to the intense anti-papalism of Spenser's text, Donne's *Devotions* offer an alternative perspective on the Catholic eucharist, one that is expressed as a profound alimentary longing. In Donne's mapping of his physical and spiritual illness, which is underwritten by a deep residual hunger for Christ's body, the constant rhetorical overlapping of secular and divine physicians and medicine gives form to the tantalizing possibility that the medical corpse provides curious relief for a deprived Protestant appetite that a purely spiritual remedy fails to satisfy. Both in the Errour episode, and in the *Devotions*, corporeal relations are reduced to eating; however, while the figurations of cannibalism in Spenser are mired in disgust, suggesting an appetite satiated with flesh and blood to the point of revulsion, Donne's text reveals an appetite so deeply deprived of its eucharistic nourishment that the boundaries between the medical and the spiritual consumption of corpses become blurred.

I.

> This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.
>
> (St. John 6:58[5])
>
> ...abject and abjection are my safeguards. The primers of my culture.
>
> (Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*[6])

The medical ingestion of corpses and the eucharistic eating of the body of Christ bear an uncanny similarity: both are fueled by a deep need to believe in the mysterious salvatory power of the human body—a need that is compelled by death. The desire to capture and channel the extraordinary energy, the pure essence of life, before it disintegrates in the

nullifying process of what John Donne describes as, "this death of corruption and putrifaction, of vermiculation and incineration, of dissolution and dispersion,"[7] fuels early modern medical beliefs in the efficacy of human matter. Earlier I discuss the Paracelsian pharmacological model as described by physician John Schroder, which is based on the belief that the therapeutically ideal corpse must contain the active properties, the "Balsamick spiritual substance fit to nourish," which "remains a while not separated from its body, till both be dissolved. And it is as it was before it was killed."[8] This urgency to actualize the body's *anima* after death also sustains the Roman Catholic faith in the salvific power of the eaten body of Christ contained in the sacrament of the eucharist. Through an act of divine conversion, the elements of the bread and wine are mysteriously transubstantiated into the real flesh and blood of the sacrificed Christ,[9] in which the supreme substance—the awesome potency of God—is infinitely preserved. Of course the therapeutic efficacy of the human corpse as a drug takes on superhuman dimensions, constituting a different form of salvific swallowing, when the corpse in question is God:

> Doctors acknowledge that a dead man's parts and members can be put to the same parts and members of incurable patients, head to head, mouth to mouth, hand to hand, and will have the power to heal them....Now, if the body of a dead man can possess such virtue, how much more powerful the body of God who is all virtue.[10]

Nevertheless, regardless of the corporeal discrepancy, the secular and religious administration of corpse fragments for healing purposes, either to the patient or to the communicant, share an astonishing certainty in the therapeutic power of bodily matter when ingested and absorbed.

Through his corporal presence in the ingested consecrated matter, Christ becomes the "medicine of immortality and the antidote to death,"[11] making him, in the words of

Piero Camporesi from the epigraph above, a "superhuman nourishment" and "supernatural *pharmakon*." There is a familiarity to the language. These descriptions resonate with similar medical attempts to capture in language the impalpable essence of the human corpse—sovereign remedy; universal panacea; balsamic spiritual substance—easily ingested and incorporated into the living body. In my discussion of *Titus Andronicus* I have shown how the complex performances of the human corpse as medicine and as food (whose distinction from one another repeatedly threatens to collapse) stage the cultural anxiety surrounding cannibalism that haunts the early modern Europeans. In the Roman Catholic eucharist the pharmacological and culinary functions merge and the vocabularies of food and medicine interpenetrate. As William Ian Miller explains, in the eucharist mass "One must ingest holy contaminants—blood and flesh—to be cured and saved. One must eat that which no one would eat in his right mind, or right state of health. The materialism of the doctrine is remarkable in its implicit admission of the doubtfulness of purely spiritual cures."[12]

The flesh and the blood of Christ are both medicine and food for the devout—the divine manna that heals and nourishes not only the ailing spirit, but also the ailing body of the communicant. With his power to restore well-being "through confession, the eucharist and extreme unction,"[13] Christ was seen as the supreme, all-curing physician, and the consecrated host was ascribed with extraordinary therapeutic powers. The practice of administering holy wafers to the sick was common in the Middle Ages. Francis of Sales offers a recipe for *medicina sacramentalis*, a consecrated "cordial wafer...composed of the rarest powder" which had to be taken "at least an hour before the meal."[14] In his research on the pharmacological use of the holy wafer, a drug with the

power to "expel the physical ills of the body," Hymen Saye describes a prescription for consecrated wafers given with apple for the treatment of quartan fever—both the wafers and the apple were formulaically inscribed in Latin to promote healing.[15] Consecrated wafers were stored and carried in a pyx when ministering to the sick,[16] thus constituting a portable pharmacological arsenal of divine flesh. Furthermore *viaticum*, the eucharist food for life's last journey, was administered to those believed to be dying. For Protestant Reformists, the use of the eucharist as a "salve for all diseases"[17] formed part of the catalogue of Catholic eucharistic abuses; in an attempt to eliminate such Catholic superstitions, the specification in the 1552 Prayer Book that ordinary bread be used in the communion service, denied the efficacy of unleavened wafers.[18]

It seems ironic then, that in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century religious and medical controversies, the belief in the corporeal presence of Christ in the eucharist elements was the focus of the most ardent Protestant Reformists' anti-papal attacks which reinterpreted the theophagy of the Catholic mass as abjection—a barbaric and depraved eating. In Maggie Kilgour's words, "in order to delineate themselves as one religious body against another, the Reformers defined themselves in terms of eating: as those who ate spiritually in opposition to the others who ate God literally."[19] Yet at the same time, Paracelsian medical remedies, of which corpse pharmacology was an essential part, were increasingly tolerated and even embraced by the anti-Galenic medical fraternity—comprising mostly Protestant Reformists—as an enlightened alternative to a medical tradition mired in Galenic paganism.[20] Here the ingested human corpse is interpreted, and thus made palatable, as medicine, but this interpretation is put under enormous pressure by the eucharist sacrament, where divine eating constantly jostles against

transgression, threatening to extend the boundary into the realm of horror. "...The question of boundary," as Debora Kuller Shuger writes, "is precisely that of the relation between [interpretive] categories." [21] In Reformation England, the religious beliefs that had held fears of alimentary transgression at bay for so long were profoundly shaken, and in the desire to redefine religious boundaries the shifting ambiguities surrounding the eucharist provided fertile ground for anti-papal propaganda. Thus it is no surprise that the fear of cannibalism that had for centuries haunted the eucharist resurfaces in Reformist anti-papal discourse. But the issue is complicated by shared religious and medical beliefs in the potency of the ingested body, where the distinction between food and medicine is extremely hazy and relentlessly perplexes cultural interpretations of abjection.

There is a clear connection between medical and religious reform, a connection anchored in part by what was for many the attractive idea of a pristine past. Belief that the early moments of Christianity were a time of religious purity, when the truth of Christ's simple words rang clearly, and worship was unadulterated by the excessive rituals and doctrinal errors of mediaeval Catholicism, struck a chord in medical Reformers seeking a way out of the polypharmacal maze of Galenic medicine. The dissatisfaction felt by many late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century medical practitioners towards the entrenched authority of Galenic medicine, and its confusion of remedies, lead to a desire for the Hippocratic simplicity offered by the new "phisicke" of Paracelsus.[22] In the words of John Webster, Galen was an "ignorant Pagan, who...did traduce, and darken the writings of those that preceded him...And yet can the Schools be so willfully mad to adore this Idol, and follow this blind guide."[23] Coincidentally, dissatisfaction with the entrenched authority of the Roman Catholic Church spurred the

vehemence of Protestant Reformists' attacks on the Church's most central doctrine: the eucharist.[24] Attacks on the Catholic mass confirm the close relationship between medical and religious reform when, in their accusations of Catholic idolatry and paganism, religious Reformers adopt a language similar to that of medical Reformers. The connection is reinforced by expressions of animosity towards the use of Latin in religion and medicine: "Papists and the Colledge of Physitians," writes Nicholas Culpeper, "will not suffer Divinity and Physick to be printed in our mother tongue."[25]

Charles Webster argues that, "Paracelsian medicine had been intimately associated with currents of religious thought and particularly Protestant mysticism, from its Reformation origins," [26] and Paracelsus himself makes a clear connection in his writings between his critique of established medicine and anti-popery.[27] According to Robert Burton, "Erastus and the rest of the Galenists" also draw the same connection, vilifying Paracelus for doing "...that in physic, which Luther [did] in divinity."[28] Offering a different perspective, Protestant medical reformist R. Bostocke, in his Paracelsian apology of 1585, describes medical and religious reform as sharing a common goal: a yearning for the simplicity and purity of past practices. The attempt to eradicate the "false and injurious...heathenish Phisicke of Galen" is fueled by the same desire as Reformists' attempts to rid the English Church of "the Clowdes of the Romish religion." For Bostocke, the chemical remedies of Paracelsian medicine afford an opportunity to return to the "former puritie" of a "true and auncient phisicke," a state that resembles "his puritie": the true word of Christ before its adulteration by Rome. Consequently the "corporall and Grosse medicines" of Galen resemble the "impurities" and "outward ceremonies and...corporal exercises " of the Roman Church.[29]

The most frequently maligned "corporal" error of the Roman Church was the much-debated doctrine of transubstantiation—the idea that Christ was physically present in the sacrament as food—which, considered by many Reformists to be an invention of the devil, drew charges of Catholic idolatry and cannibalism.[30] Bishop Coverdale, in "A Treatise on the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ," describes the doctrine of the transubstantiation as satanic, and attributes Catholic doctrinal error to the devil, who corrupted the sacrament with "diverse errors and superstitions."[31] Speculating that the doctrine of transubstantiation influenced a "Crusader ideology" that constructed foreigners as cannibals, Peter Hulme argues that, "boundaries of community are often created by accusing those outside the boundary of the very practice on which the integrity of that community is founded."[32] Ironically, however, during the Reformation this ideology backfired on the Catholics: it was picked up by the anti-papists and used against the Catholics themselves.

The eaten body is at the very heart of the Catholic mass, and the understanding of the flesh and blood of Christ as food is a well-established linguistic paradigm that communicates the experiential and imaginary spirit of the ritual itself. Darwell Stone offers a simple summary of this essential element of the sacrament as, "...such communion with our Lord as is described as eating His flesh and drinking His blood."[33] The ceremony was created from, and powerfully reenacts, that most fundamental of human rituals: eating—Christ instituted the eucharist by attaching a new meaning to the "old rite of the bread and the cup" of the Jewish religious meal that was to be his last supper.[34] With the words, "This is My Body which is for you. Do this for the re-calling of Me," and "This cup is the New Covenant in My Blood. Do this, whenever you drink it,

for the re-calling of Me,"[35] Christ constructs himself as food and drink, investing an old Jewish culinary custom with a radically new significance that encompasses the corporeal and the uncanny.[36] As Elaine Scarry succinctly puts it "...in the Last Supper and in the communion [Christ] enters the food chain, allowing himself to be taken in...as an object of sustenance."[37] Through the simple utterance, "This is my body," bread and wine become the body to be eaten and thus the signs of cannibalism.[38]

The understanding of Christ's body as food is reinforced by the availability of recipes for the special preparation of the host. In the workbook of the fifteenth-century parish priest was a recipe for the baking of hosts, a careful, ritualized process of "collection, washing and drying of the grains, the milling, mixing with water, and baking of the host."[39] Moreover St. Thomas Aquinas argues that Christ deliberately designated that the blood be contained in a cup to indicate that his blood was something to be consumed, as food.[40] Spatially and temporally the sacrament is clearly anchored in the past (memory) and the present (this is) but it also points to the future: as a "*praegustatum*," it offers a foretaste of the final heavenly banquet.[41]

The eucharist offers the opportunity to physically experience unity with God through an intimate act such as eating: a tantalizing vision of well-being in this world and salvation in the next, made possible by Christ's reported words: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life."[42] The bread and wine, changed into the physical body of Christ, becomes what James T. O'Connor calls the "new Food."[43] The link between divine matter as both salvatory and alimentary is succinctly made by the second century theologian Tertullian: "The flesh is the hinge of salvation.... The flesh is

fed on the Body and Blood of Christ, so that the soul may grow fat on God.'"[44] Such images of the eucharist as nourishing sustenance for the soul and the body reinforce the notion of the eucharist as "something good to eat...and no form of assimilation was more direct than that through eating."[45] As well, the inevitable dilemma over the physical consequences of eating Christ—the troubling question of what Camporesi describes as "the obscure intestinal meanders"[46] of the Host, and what Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt call "the problem of the leftover"[47]—has a long history of debate within the Roman Catholic Church.

At the heart of religious controversy was the Reformation debate over the material nature of the eucharist: the question of the Real Presence of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine.[48] The nature of the eucharist was the sticking point between Luther—who in his doctrine of consubstantiation accepted the Real Presence but rejected transubstantiation—and other Protestant theologians who saw very little difference between these two doctrines of presence.[49] Beyond Luther, the Protestant position was that all scriptural sayings about " "the presence of the Lord in the church and about eating him" were to be interpreted "not carnally or corporeally, but spiritually." "[50] "...[O]ur souls," asserts Calvin, "are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ in the same way that bread and wine keep and sustain physical life."[51] And in the words of Archbishop Cranmer:

> The eating of Christ's Flesh and drinking of His Blood is not to be understood simply and plainly as the words do properly signify, that we do eat and drink Him with our mouths; but it is a figurative speech spiritually to be understood, that we must deeply print and fruitfully believe in our hearts, that His Flesh was crucified and his Blood shed for our redemption. And this our belief in Him is to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood, although they be not here present with us, but ascended into heaven.[52]

All corporeal meaning relating to the notion of eating flesh must be drained from the language of "presence," its meaning refined to a purely spiritual presence signifying the "efficacy and power" of the body of Christ.[53] Phrases such as "to eat the Body and drink the Blood" of Christ are reduced from a literal to a figurative meaning in a ritual that is no longer a corporate action—a communal supper in fact—but isolated in "the secrecy of the individual's mind."[54]

The eucharist controversy threw into uncertainty the most central and cohesive religious tenet of early modern Christian culture: the corporeal nature of the eucharist. In Rubin's words, "Within the cultural system of this world and the language of sacramental religion which communicated so many of its meanings, the eucharist offered access to the supernatural, grace, hope for salvation, and a framework for meaning in human relations."[55] Eating the body of Christ allowed that access, making possible a special kind of relation with Christ; the laity's taking of Christ's literal body into their own produced a shared, intimate, intensely physical unity with Christ—as participants in the action of Christ's sacrifice and redemption by him, they entered "the universal Body of Christ throughout time and space."[56]

Protestant Reformists, intent on demarcating religious—and therefore moral—boundaries, capitalized on the conviction of Christ as food and the predicament of the alimentary canal in order to distort and bring into disrepute the central doctrine of the Roman Catholic mass. Protestant representations of the Church of Rome are couched in language of contempt and disgust. Moral judgment, as William Ian Miller argues, "seems almost to demand the idiom of disgust" which, in its attempt to alter and control

"political, social and moral orderings," can be identified as a "culture-creating passion."[57] As part of the effort to shift the religious power base from Catholic to Protestant, anti-papal polemic of the late sixteenth-century frequently depicted the Church of Rome as contemptible and disgusting. The direct embodiment of false religion, Catholicism was constructed as a doctrinally erroneous anti-religion, even associated with Satanism, deliberately distorting and perverting Christianity with its heathen and idolatrous dogma and forms of worship.[58] Furthermore Queen Mary's brutal treatment of Protestants and political dissenters greatly exacerbated anti-Catholic feeling in England, producing a deep and continuing opposition to the Pope as the Antichrist, and to papists as devoid of divinity. Events such as the Spanish Armada and the St. Bartholomew's Day massacres of Hugenots in France fueled passionate Reformist action.[59] The desire to construct the Catholics as savage eaters of human flesh was strengthened by reports of the inhuman treatment of Protestant corpses in the French religious wars, where Protestant bodies were subjected to violent mutilation and their parts sold as food in what Natalie Zemon Davis describes as a "ghoulish commerce." [60]

In the long tradition of theological discourse of the eucharist, the vocabulary of Christ's body as food produced a volatile cultural fantasy ripe for Protestant exploitation. A discourse of alimentary disgust developed around the debate over interpretations of the eucharist: is it the literal or figurative body of Christ that mediates between earth and heaven, and does the receiving of the sacrament constitute a literal or figurative eating and drinking of the divine flesh and blood? The sentiment against the papists' "wicked and monstrous dream of transubstantiation"[61] is neatly captured in the title of Thomas Becon's pamphlet: "Against the gross and fantastical opinion of the Papists, which affirm

that Christ's natural body and blood is carnally eaten and drunken in the Lords Supper."[62] In Chapter 1 I discuss the repugnance expressed by Hakluyt's unnamed explorer and Amboise Paré towards the "forced" medical ingestion of mummy, described as the "dead bodies [which are] the Mummie which the Phisitians and Apothecaries doe against our willes make us to swallow," and "the mangled and putride particles of the carkasses of the basest people of *Egypt*" that patients are compelled to eat. Their feelings strongly resemble the discomfort expressed by John Wyclif towards the eating and drinking of the flesh and blood of Christ in the Catholic eucharist: "If thou [were to] see in liknesse of fleisch and blood that blessed sacrament, thou schuldest lothen and abhorren it to resseyve it into thy mouth."[63]

However, while the dread of cannibalism implicit in Wyclif's attack fueled the early modern Protestant construction of the Roman Catholic priests and communicants as bloodthirsty cannibals, curiously there was no corresponding outrage directed against the prescribers and users of corpse drugs. Karen Gordon-Grube also notes these contradictory attitudes towards cannibalism in her study of the Paracelsian medicine practiced by Puritan poet/physician Edward Taylor, who prescribed mummy, while at the same time rejecting the belief in transubstantiation because, "feed[ing] on Human Flesh and Blood" is "barbarousness." Gordon-Grube asks: "Why was he squeamish with regard to the flesh and blood of Christ? Did he consider it more "barbarous" to eat God, in the Sacrament, than man? Or for that matter, did he consider it less "barbarous" to eat man, as mummy, than God?"[64] As I noted earlier, there was a widespread distrust of medical practitioners and some aversion towards the medical uses of corpses, but the tone was one

of general uneasiness rather than loud condemnation, and corpse therapy appears to have been culturally tolerated as a medical practice, albeit a disquieting one.

In comparison, detractors of the Catholic belief in the Real Presence of Christ developed a discourse of exclusion, which depended on constructing Catholics as the barbaric eaters of human flesh.[65] The literary tradition of describing Christians as devourers of human flesh is well established. As early as the second century after Christ, the stereotype of the cannibal Christian, substantiated by the interpretation of the eucharist as the flesh and blood of Christ, was widespread.[66] Norman Cohn points out that few early Christians would have disagreed with the Council of Trent's defining statement in 1551: "If any one...shall deny that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into (Christ's) body and of the wine into his blood...let him be anathema."[67] However, an uneasiness over the cannibalistic implications of the eucharist has haunted Christianity from the beginning, posing a dilemma for early Christian theologians such as Tertullian: "The fact that we eat God in the eucharist and are truly fed on his flesh and blood is a paradoxical redemption of that most horrible of consumptions: cannibalism."[68]

Centuries later, in his attack on the theory of transubstantiation, Wyclif draws his phraseology of eating from eleventh-century discussions on the nature of the eucharist, calling in particular upon "the confession of Berengar" as an authority.[69] The eleventh-century theologian, Berengar of Tours argued for a figurative, as opposed to a literal, interpretation of the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharist.[70] However, Berengar was forced to recant his position, and take an oath confirming an extreme literal dogma of the Real Presence:

> I believe that the bread and wine which are laid on the altar are after the consecration not only a sacrament but also the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they are physically taken up and broken in the hands of the priest and crushed by the teeth of the faithful, not only sacramentally, but in truth.[71]

In the sixteenth-century, Berengar's confession was taken up by Calvin as "monstrous," and repeatedly reiterated for its graphic, sensationalist power in Calvin's attack against Luther's "popish" view of the Real Presence. For Calvin the issue of the Real Presence focused on the physical act of eating: how can one claim to eat, but not chew—as Luther claimed—the true body of Christ?[72] The corporeal and spiritual distinctions of Wyclif and his followers in the fourteenth-century debate, about how the presence of Christ is manifested in the eucharistic sacrament, were appropriated and taken to their extreme by late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Reformers intent on negotiating a religious power base through the reinforcement of boundaries along the lines of civilized and barbaric.[73] Later in the seventeenth-century, Puritan fears that the doctrine of transubstantiation would be reintroduced by the Laudians were couched in the same rhetoric of disgust; in his attack on Catholic literalism Milton describes the disgusting, humiliating treatment of Christ's body, which is "broken once more and crushed and ground, even by the fangs of brutes."[74]

Rubin argues that, "The juxtaposition of [the] simplest natural act, of eating, with the holiest and most taboo-ridden of nourishments, the human body, associates acts and symbols which in any other context would be abhorrent and unutterable."[75] The temptation to destabilize these boundaries, when what is sacred and speakable in one context is taboo and unspeakable in another, was irresistible for those disparagers seeking to represent the repeated performances of sacramental bodily ingestions as disgustingly

ludicrous. Anti-papal propaganda made much of the physical realities of eating Christ. Becon describes the process in his mocking diatribe against the "popish mass": "...ye tear him on pieces, ye eat him, ye digest him, and send him down by a very homely place."[76] The derision of Margery Baxter that the bodies of God and Christ, "falsely and deceitfully" ordained by priests, are eaten over and over again by communicants who then "emit them from their back side in filthy and stinking pieces,"[77] clearly describes the rudimentary problem associated with ingesting and digesting the true body, and also raises the issue of priestly power and priestly fabrication. Like many Protestant Reformers, Baxter takes the alimentary discourse of Berengar and Wyclif to its next level—the problem of the digestion and the defecation of Christ's body. Here we also recognize Milton's concerns over the defecation of Christ's body, and how "...when it has been driven through all the stomach's filthy channels it shoots it out—one shudders even to mention it—into the latrine."[78] The culinary implications of the Catholic Mass, that underpin the graphically scatological bent of these observations, is articulated clearly in Thomas Turke's frequently quoted poem:

> As on the whale did Jonas, so they eat
> Him up alive, body and soul, as meat
> As men eat oysters, so on Him they feed;
> Whole and alive, raw and yet not bleed
> This cooker, void of humanity,
> Is held in Rome for sound divinity.[79]

Furthermore Protestant Reformists such as Becon had a field day with the idea of Christ as food for the polyphagous priest, who "doth not only with his greasy fingers touch and handle that very self-same body, but he doth also break it, crush it asunder with his teeth, eat it, swallow it down, devour it, &c."[80] In an attempt to construct the papists as savage

barbarians, anti-papal ridicule of the Catholic eucharist sharply profiles the physical reality of eating in all its disgusting stages.

The set piece for the Reformation controversy over the eucharist was the mediaeval Western mass in use in 1500.[81] The familiar form of the mass represented a gradual erosion of the ritual, from the original rite in which all communicants actively and frequently participated, to a rite in which the celebrant alone participated on behalf of the congregation, with the administration of the sacraments to the communicants restricted to an annual Easter event. Thus by the early sixteenth century the laity, previously active participants in the "corporate action,"[82] were passive observers, their role reduced to that of spectators—to seeing and hearing the celebrant's performance of a ritual from which they were even further alienated by the use of Latin. The reduction of the congregation's audio access to the eucharistic devotions was compensated for by an over-emphasis on their visual access. The act of elevating the host, introduced in the eleventh century, exposed the body of Christ to the worshipful gazes of eager communicants, resulting in a perpetual focusing on the moment of sacrifice—the reiteration that "the Son of Man had *died* and *here* was the living memorial of His passion."[83] In this extremely powerful moment worshippers ran about the church, jockeying for a better view, while others came just for the glimpse of Christ and then quickly departed. All of this turned the ritual into a spectacular performance with the priest as the main actor. Possessor of extraordinary agency as God's representative, the priest alone consecrated the host; performed the sacrament; elevated the host; mediated grace and, except for one day a year, repeatedly partook of communion—all of which was conducted in a foreign tongue.[84]

This was the Catholic mass with which the Christian English were familiar, and with which many, Catholics and Reformists alike, were frequently disgruntled. The current form of the mass, with its emphasis on spectacle and sacerdotal privilege, provided further satirical fodder for the Reformists' anti-papal fire. The elevation and adoration of the sacrament was considered to be idolatrous, and the use of Latin to be gibberish. Catholic priests, powerful in their role as mediators between God and the congregation, were believed to be corrupted and corrupting, making them attractive targets for Protestant polemicists such as Becon who names the Catholic priest—the spreader of "poisonful doctrine" who is "always desirous to shed blood"—as a greedy "massmonger" who, in administering his "satanical supper" "giveth not the bread and wine to them that are presenting the remembrance of Christ's death; but he himself devoureth altogether alone."[85] Thus the communicants were denied regular access to the flesh and blood of Christ. Added to this the Catholic Church, with its seductive doctrine, was considered to hold the dangerous lure of a sexually promiscuous woman.[86] The Reformists gave the errors of the Church of Rome their most extreme interpretation for public consumption: the Church itself was the Whore of Babylon; its leader was the Antichrist;[87] its corrupt servants were bloodthirsty gluttons; its most central action was cannibalism; its satanic doctrine was erroneous; its ceremonies were idolatrous; its worship was carnal. Furthermore the communicant's participation in the intimate experience of regularly eating the flesh and blood of Christ in the eucharist sacrament was limited to a spectral moment. Protestant criticisms of the Catholic Church's restrictions of the communicants' regular access to eucharist matter, and charges of priestly gluttony,

produce the conflicting representations of corpse eating—as abjection or as a profound alimentary longing—that we see in Spenser and Donne.

II.

> Then when she wakt, they all gave one consent,
> That since by grace of God she there was sent,
> Unto their God they would her sacrifize,
> Whose share, her guiltless bloud they would present,
> But of her dainty flesh they did devize
> To make a common feast, & feed with gurmandize.
>
> (Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*[88])

Cannibal rituals, Peggy Reeves Sanday suggests, draw on the human body as "the medium for a conceptual framework" to express a "physiologically based ontology that regulates as it regenerates social, psychological, and, sometimes, cosmological categories." Human existence and consciousness are given meaning and social form through such ritualized bodily acts.[89] If we understand the Catholic eucharist as a cannibalistic ritual that had for centuries brought ontological significance and social coherence to the Christian world, then Spenser's assimilation of anti-papal preoccupations with the Catholic Church and eucharist matter into a grisly allegory of cannibalism in the Errour episode of *The Faerie Queene*, in which any form of corporeal eating is rejected, represents an uncompromising denial of that world view. Thus, when Errour's young gorge themselves on the polluted blood of their decapitated dam, the language of alimentary anxiety in the episode is best understood in relation to how the anti-papal discourse proliferating in the poem mediates this denial. However, the macabre mixture of ingested corpse matter and blood that infuses Spenser's anti-Catholic

allegory, also compellingly registers other discourses about bodily consumptions: namely medical discourse, which promotes the ingestion of corpse matter, and colonialist discourse, which abjects the eating of human flesh as the behaviour of the savage Other.

The allegory of cannibalism in the Errour episode is deeply entangled in the period's unease around cannibalistic eating—behaviour which is taboo and beneficial depending on the circumstances. Richard Mallette argues in his study that *The Faerie Queene* brings religion together with other Reformation discourses in a way that "often seems self-consciously to evoke texts, issues, and especially idioms of the Reformation as a means of engaging its controversies."[90] In my study I show how, at one level, the extraordinary emphasis on consuming the body in the Errour episode represents a strong endorsement of the Protestant cause: couched in the popular anti-papal language of disgust and contempt, the episode offers a harsh commentary on the Church of Rome, and its eucharistic solecism and cannibalism. And yet, at another level, Spenser's representations of regurgitated flesh and the drinking of blood from Errour's headless corpse, evokes other cannibalistic images and behaviours of the period, such as mediaeval images of believers sucking blood from Christ's wounds; the blood-drinking of epileptics; the consumption of corpse drugs; and attempts to construct the Irish as the cannibalistic Other.[91] Thus, while the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic as an abhorrent act of Catholic eating is a persistent theme, the episode is equally infused with the cultural anxiety associated with other forms of cannibalistic eating.

As I argue above, there is a strong link between religious reform and medical reform in their shared desire to move beyond the restrictive, and erroneous doctrines of the past. In the Errour episode, the Reformist metaphorics of the Catholics as savage

cannibals are implicated in the practice of the medical ingestion of human matter—a practice tolerated by primarily Protestant proponents of Paracelsian medical doctrine eager for medical reform. In a text that is overflowing with disgusting images of eating flesh and drinking blood, Spenser exposes any consumption of human corpses as profoundly problematic, revealing the paradox present when Protestant polemic holds up for ridicule a cherished ritual of supernatural eating, while at the same time subscribing to a different kind of consumption—the pharmacological ingestion of human matter. However, as Peter Stallybrass and Allon White argue, "disgust always bears the imprint of desire."[92] The episode's fascination with depraved forms of eating, not only raises the possibility that charges of Catholic cannibalism represent a Protestant projection onto the Catholics of their own doubts regarding the medical consumptions of human flesh and blood, but also registers a residual Protestant hunger for what is being denied.

Errour, in all her disgusting glory, appears as the triumphant creation of a Protestant imagination. A "monster vile, whom God and man does hate" (1.13), her "body full of filthie sin" (1.24), Errour is a hideous form of the reviled Catholic Antichrist. Revealed as "Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide, / But th' other halfe did womans shape retaine, / Most lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdaine" (1.14), she embodies all the horrors of Catholicism: false doctrine; carnal worship; gross appetite; revolting progenitor of a degenerate flock; treacherous corrupter of Protestants; and ultimately, in death, satanic cannibal mass. Although Errour is described as an androgynous creature, the use of the feminine pronoun "she" (1.15) clearly marks the creature as female, as demonized womanhood in fact. As Antichrist, Errour's physical complexity, both slimy serpent[93] and grotesque female fecundity, is a dangerous

combination of the Pope, Satan, Rome and the Whore of Babylon—because of his seductive power the Antichrist is frequently feminized and referred to in terms of dangerous female promiscuity—"the great whore...with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."[94]

Against such a fearful cultural danger the use of preaching alone was considered to be inadequate. Thus anti-papal polemicists such as Arthur Dent advocated the inclusion of military force against the Antichrist: "...the Gospell being set abroach, shal detect and discover the Whoore of Rome, and all her abhominable doctrine and filthinesse, which the Christian Princes espying, shall renounce her, make warre upon her, and slay in the field thousande thousands of her soldiers."[95] The desire to destroy Catholicism in England as well as in Ireland was a sentiment frequently reiterated in various forms as J. Rhodes' poetic *débat* attests: "If we were rid of Papists too, Both kingdoms should have lesse to doo."[96] Dent's anti-papal warfare metaphorics provide the framework for the Errour episode in which Redcrosse Knight, like one of Dent's Protestant "Christian Princes," aggressively, and without provocation, attacks then brutally executes, Catholic Errour.

Errour's cave, into which the Redcrosse Knight plunges so recklessly, is the dark womb of papal ignorance: a place of doctrinal and thus spiritual danger. In his violent penetration of Errour's "unknowne" place of "perill without show" that "breeds dreadful doubts" (1.12), Redcrosse exposes himself to grave spiritual epistemological risk. Una recognizes the spiritual naivety that makes Redcrosse vulnerable to the hidden menace of Catholic doctrine, and her warning, "...therefore your stroke / Sir knight with-hold, till

further triall made" (1.12), is underpinned by an acute understanding of human susceptibility to doctrinal coercion, similar to that of Thomas Beard who writes, "how great imbecility is in man, and how easie hee is to be transported into error...and therefore how needful it is to be pressed to the quicke."[97] Una's use of the words "perill" and "breeds," with their connotations of treacherous contagion, introduces the idea that Redcrosse's contact with Errour exposes him to a doctrinal infection that, once it takes hold, threatens spiritual well-being. The idea that Redcrosse repeatedly puts his spiritual health at risk is reiterated in the figurative language of illness throughout Book I: his "carelesse of his health" (7.7) attitude leads him to the state where, in Orgoglio's hands, he becomes "A rueful spectacle of death..."his vitall powres / Decayd, and all his flesh shronk up like withered flowres" (8.40-41).

The motif of Errour as the dangerous spreader of erroneous doctrine is strengthened when the "glistring" light of Protestant truth gives shape to Catholic ignorance (1.14) to reveal Errour nurturing her "ill favored" offspring: the "thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed, / Sucking upon her poisonous dugs, eachone / Of sundry shapes, yet all ill favored" (1.15). Behind this provocative image of Errour and her thousand deformed offspring who daily suck her toxic fluids, is the insulting disparagement of Catholic doctrine, priests, and practices found in the works of anti-papal polemicists, such as Becon, who frequently employ disease imagery to describe the "pestilent, mischievous, and poisonful doctrine" of the Antichrist's "false prophets" that is absorbed by the "many thousands of mass-priests"—the "creeping beasts without all measure" of "antichristian persuasion" who "hath...brast in and overflowed the earth."[98]

As well, the figurative language of Catholic doctrine as a dangerously toxic nourishment, appears elsewhere in Spenser in his description of ignorant Irish Papists who have,

> ...drunk not of the pure spring of life, but only tasted of such troubled waters as were brought unto them, the dregs thereof have brought great contagion in their souls, the which daily increasing and being still more augmented with their own lewd lives and filthy conversation, hath now bred in them this general disease, that cannot but only with very strong purgations be cleansed and carried away.[99]

Consistent with the tainted fluids that originate in Errour's body, the poison is traced here to its corrupted source in the demonized doctrine on which the papists nourish themselves.

The curious image of the Antichrist breast-feeding her brood is also a dark travesty of mediaeval devotional texts and iconography that construct Christ as a nurturing "mother." Both male and female mystics referred to Jesus as "mother," Caroline Bynum explains, because of his "Eucharistic feeding of Christians with liquid exuded from his breast, and his bleeding on the Cross which gave birth to [the] hope of eternal life." Mediaeval iconography frequently represents blood or wine gushing from Christ's stigmata into chalices or mouths, drawing an analogy between his wound and Mary's breast offered to the ravenous mouths of sinners: "Not only was Christ enfleshed with flesh from a woman; his own flesh did womanly things: it bled, it bled food and it gave birth to new life."[100] In this body-centred spirituality, the sacrificial ingestion of Christ's nourishing fluids offers a sense of feasting from Christ, that produces the profoundly seductive images of sucking Christ's holy fluids that we see in the work of Catholic and Protestant writers. For example Richard Crashaw's speaker dreams that he will "suck hidden sweets, which well digested proves / Immortal Hony for the Hive of

Loves" from Christ's body, and John Donne's dying wish is "to *hang* upon *him* that *hangs* upon the *Crosse*, there *bath* in his *teares*, there *suck* at his *woundes*."[101]

The somatic spiritual tradition of gendering Christ's salvific body as female, lies behind the distorted image of Errour, where it is turned on its head in her portrayal as the Antichrist "mother" whose toxic feedings nourish the hungry priests born of her monstrous Roman womb. In medicine, the power of a drug to heal or destroy lies in the nature of matter. As I point out in Chapter 2, the word *pharmakon* is polysemic: translatable as either "remedy" or "poison."[102] Ambiguous in both meaning and function, the *pharmakon* works either to heal or to aggravate illness. According to Paracelsus, poison possessed medicinal value—its power as a remedy or a poison, like all medicines, depending on the dosage, as Donne reminds us: "To take physicke, and not according to the right method, is dangerous."[103] If we understand the body of Christ as the true Christian *pharmakon*, bringing healing and salvation to the bodies and souls of all believers, then the poisonous body of the monstrous Antichrist is *pharmakon 's* sinister uncertainty, with the potential either to heal or to destroy all who partake of it. Thus, with the power to destroy rather than to save, Errour is the dangerous antithesis to the healing body of Christ. As in mediaeval iconography where Christ feeds the hungry flock, the eucharistic implications of Errour's progeny suckling her bodily fluids are clear. Like the "massing monster" of anti-papal doctrine, who alone "severally satisfy himself" "daily"[104] on the flesh and blood of Christ, Errour's brood—established as creatures of gross diurnal appetites—nourish themselves on her body. [105]

The idea of Errour's malignancy as maternal nourishment is crucial to the unsettling climactic scene of cannibalism towards which the episode builds. Mother's

food registers the nexus of cannibalistic associations relating not only to dangerous medical consumptions; the Catholic mass; and Christ's eucharistic nourishing of hungry believers; but also to nurturing the infant in the womb. Lurking behind the image of Errour feeding her brood in the blackness of ignorance—the "darksome hole" (1.14) providing a template for a blind and corrupting womb—is John Donne's vivid description of womb cannibalism:

> There in the wombe wee have eyes and see not, eares and heare not; There in the wombe wee are fitted for workes of darkenes, all the while deprived of light: And there in the wombe wee are taught cruelty, by being fed with blood, and may be damned, though we be never borne.[106]

In the womb, the blind, blood-sucking fetus, feeding and growing in the corrupting blackness of sin and doctrinal ignorance, is first indoctrinated into cannibalism. Likewise, Errour's offspring, born and nourished in her "hellish sinke"(1.22)—the stifling womb of Catholic ignorance from which they never escape—learn the savagery of eucharistic eating as they suckle on the doctrinal poison of the Antichrist. Unlike Donne's infant, for whom knowledge of the true faith provides a ticket out of sin—and by corollary out of its inherited cannibal paganism into civility—fear of the "litle glooming light" of Protestant truth glowing from Redcrosse's armour, forces the brood back into the Errour's sheltering womb of dark ignorance: "Soon as the uncouth light upon them shone, / Into her mouth they crept, and suddain all were gone" (1.15). In a cultural climate hostile to Catholics, in which Elizabeth I had decreed the practicing of Catholicism or the harboring of Catholic priests to be a treasonable offence,[107] Errour's mouth offers her brood a safe haven. This scene of Errour's priests reentering her womb, offers a fascinating reenactment of Rhodes' charges to blood engorged Catholic priests:

"fil'd yourselves like wolves with blood. / You enter not by Christ the doore, / But by the pope, the Romish whoore."[108] Furthermore, building on the insistent imagery of perverted eating in which the episode is mired, Errour's swallowing of her brood powerfully invokes cannibalism.

The cannibalistic behaviour inherited by the brood is graphically revealed when Redcrosse's Protestant stranglehold on Errour functions as a severe vomitory, forcing her to " [spew] out of her filthy maw / A floud of poison horrible and black" (1.20): the dangerous toxins of her vomit—consistent with the poisonous fluids with which she nourishes her brood—exposing her inherent corruption. The grisly catalogue of the contents of Errour's stomach, in which the tell-tale signs of cannibalism come first: "Full of great lumpes of flesh and gobbets raw / Which [stink] so vildly" (1.20),[109] also reveal her as the depraved eater of divine flesh. This graphic synecdoche of the body of Christ, fragmented, eaten, partly digested, and now regurgitated, offers an alimentary tale of the intestinal journey of the bloody fragments of Christ's flesh—which Margery Baxter imagines in its final disturbing moment as the "filthy and stinking pieces" of Catholic defecation (quoted earlier) and Camporesi describes as the mediaeval Christian dilemma of introducing "global fragments of heavenly flesh into their infamous bowels."[110] The meaty contents of Errour's effluvia also enacts one of the worst fears underpinning a priest's denial of the sacrament to any communicant with an upset stomach: the dreadful possibility that they might vomit up Christ.[111] Furthermore there is an historical resonance between the lumps and gobbets of raw flesh found in Errour's vomit, and the reported acts of Catholic cannibalism in the French religious wars discussed earlier, when parts of mutilated Huguenots were publicly traded and consumed by French Catholics.

The continuing inventory of Errour's disgorgement reveals her vomit as "full of books and papers... / With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke" (1.20). It is frequently argued that the textual content of Errour's vomit represents, at one level, anti-Protestant propaganda directed towards Elizabeth I.[112] Also, as many have pointed out, the description of the reptiles owes its graphic effectiveness to Revelation 16.13.[113] However, in the terms of my argument, the texts are also the poisonous doctrine of the Catholic Church—the "pernicious pestilence"[114] propagated by the Antichrist which Errour's brood absorb in their mother's milk. Like the Antichrist's mass, Errour's "hellish sinke" (1.22) is "the sink of all evils, out of the which flow forth with great abundance false religion, heathenish superstition, idolatry, evil opinions, ungodly worshippings, infinite and intolerable errors."[115] The sightless frogs and toads brought to light here, are blind Catholics propagated in the belly of the Antichrist who—unlike the child in Donne's cannibal womb with the hope of birth into knowledge and salvation—remain imprisoned in the dark ignorance of those who are never born. In the terms of anti-papal rhetoric they bring to mind Becon's description of ignorant Catholics: the "locusts that came out of that stinking bottomless pit," who are the "blind guides of the blind."[116]

Of all Catholic rituals, the eating and drinking of the flesh and blood of Christ is the most central. Likewise in the Errour drama, where the pivotal alimentary moment, anxiously anticipated by the pervasive cannibal semiotics of the episode, is the Satanic supper in which the Antichrist's brood "Devoure their dam" (1.26). In a ghoulishly satirical performance of the Catholic Mass, after Errour's savage decapitation, her "heaven accurst" (1.26) brood "...flocked all about her bleeding wound / And sucked up

their dying mothers blood, / Making her death their life, and eke her hurt their good" (1.25). This defiling moment, when the cannibal priests seek eternal redemption from the satanic manna flowing from Errour's stigmata, reverberates with the words of John Bridges in his sermon of 1571: "O cruell *Canibali*, O barbarous Priests."[117] In this grotesque perversion of the Catholic mass and the eucharistic belief in the remedial and salvatory power of divine matter, Errour's monstrous priests feed greedily on the "cole black bloud" that had "forth gushed" from her sacrificed "corse" (1.24). And the final gruesome action of the episode performs the dangers of such greedy gorging when the "deformed monsters"(1.22) self-destruct: "Having all satisfied their bloudy thurst, / Their bellies swolne...with fulnesse burst, / And bowels gushing forth" (1.26). Here the episode's thematizing of the Catholic eucharist as cannibalism, through the allegorical association of Errour and her brood with all kinds of transgressive eating, is taken to its semantic limit. Both Errour's brood and Spenser's text—and we sense Spenser also—have reached a dangerous point of satiation: a peril to which the brood's physical disintegration offer proof and warning.

Yet in spite of these obvious signs of Catholic perversion, the cannibalization of Errour's corpse is rich with other hermeneutic possibilities. In this transforming moment, Errour's corpse becomes significant matter that demands further interpretation, particularly in its resonation with other Reformation discourses of cannibalism, namely medical and colonialist discourses that reveal the period's ambiguous relationship to eating human bodies. The cannibalism of Errour's offspring, who "drunke her life" (1.26) in search of the salubrious benefits of the sanguine cordial of their mother's corpse ("Making her death their life") suggests both the religious and medical administration of

corpse matter for healing purposes. But in Spenser both religious and secular forms of salvatory ingestions of blood become savage eating; there is no spiritual or physical remedy in this demonic feeding, rather the poisonous blood of the Antichrist is the anti-remedy, the impure matter that pollutes. The sense of revulsion and disgust with which the scene is charged graphically reflects the cultural uneasiness about religious and pharmacological ingestions of human corpses that underpin the Errour episode.

Furthermore, there is an uneasy similarity between this Protestant description of depraved matriophagy, and a scene of Irish Catholic pedophaghy described elsewhere in Spenser, to which the Errour scene offers a curious reversal. In an attempt to construct an ancient Scythian lineage for the Irish, Spenser describes a moment following the execution of the Irish "traitor" Murrogh O'Brien, when "an old woman which was his foster mother took up his head whilst he was quartered and sucked up all the blood running there out, saying that the earth was not worthy to drink it."[118] Spenser's descriptions of the offspring sucking the mother's blood and the mother sucking the son's blood, also resonate in a fascinating way with the mediaeval Catholic image of Christ as nurturing "mother" exemplified in Crashaw's compelling lines: "Suppose he had been Tabled at thy Teates, / Thy hunger feels not what he eates: / Hee'l have his Teat e're long (a bloody one) / The Mother then must suck the Son."[119] Behind Spenser's anti-Catholic images hover, not only images of Christ's eucharistic feedings of hungry believers and the eucharist sacrament itself, but also colonialist mythologizing of the cannibal Other; blood drinking epileptics; and the executed criminal as the source for English mummy.

The Errour scene's preoccupation with drinking blood also metonymically suggests the eucharistic chalice, invoking the Protestant identification of the Whore of

Babylon with the contaminating cup of false Communion—an expansion of the biblical description in Revelation of the Whore of Babylon, drunk on the blood of saints and martyrs, holding a "golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication."[120] In Reformist rhetoric the whore's cup "was often used in Protestant discussions as a synecdoche for the Mass itself."[121] Furthermore, it comes as no surprise that depictions of female evil and sexual promiscuity were also frequently associated with social pathogens such as venereal disease.[122] The enormity of Errour's brood not only intimates that she is licentious, with the implication of the transmission of sexual diseases, but also that she is dangerously prolific. This image of the scarlet harlot that embodies both the anti-papal construction of the Catholic mass as abject, and the Catholic church as pathologically deviant, immorally spreading its contagious doctrine, is a powerful motif in Book I where the allegorization of Errour as the Whore of Babylon and her association with the poisonous blood of the chalice finds its polemical complement in the apocalyptic figure of Duessa, whose "golden cup" contains "secret poyson" (1.8.14).[123]

As well, shadowing this act of Catholic matriophagy are the ghoulish stories of Catholic Irish cannibalism perpetuated in English anti-papal and colonialist discourses, such as the story of Irish pedophagy discussed above, and the tale attributed to the Jesuit martyr, Edmund Campion: "The Irishe were great gluttons, eaters of man's flesh, and counted it honorable for parents deceased to be eaten up of their children."[124] In these tales, anti-papal and colonialist discourses overlap in an effort to attribute abhorrent eating practices to the savage colonial Other, and are deeply entangled in the binary oppositions in Book I that define cultural and religious Otherness: for example, the true

religion of Protestantism versus the anti-religion of Catholicism, and the civilized culture of England versus the barbaric culture of Islam. With its crucial positioning as the first adventure in *The Faerie Queene*, the Errour episode introduces a form of civility structured in terms of eating that underwrites the rest of the poem: frequently resurfacing in cannibalistic imagery such as "Ate," that other monstrous eater of human flesh in Book IV, and the "salvages," the Irish cannibals who threaten Serena in Book VI. In this way Spenser's poem participates in what Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh describe as "various modes of othering [that] may have helped to define a Protestant, English national identity, within an emerging proto-imperialist formation."[125]

However, Spenser's figurative language of blood drinking perplexes attempts to interpret events as simply anti-papal propaganda or colonialist constructions of Otherness. Like the Luther broadsheet, Errour's devoured corpse opens up for interrogation, not only anti-papal descriptions of eucharistic savagery and cannibalism, but also other forms of corpse violations and consumptions of the period. While the cannibalism of the episode powerfully reiterates anti-papal concerns regarding Catholicism, the eucharist, and barbarism, the force of Spenser's allegory depends upon the potent resemblance between eucharistic and medical eating of human matter. The yearning of Errour's brood to conserve their health by consuming her life's fluids is underpinned by the desire for the quintessential remedy shared by secular and religious medicine. The process of cultural denial that makes medicinal cannibalism possible—where the ingestion of human flesh is repressed and transferred onto the cultural Other—is violently confronted in the Errour episode. The persistent reiteration of transgressive eating in the episode, that keeps the alimentary boundaries constantly in crisis, goes beyond the Protestant religious

imperative to insist on both eucharistic *and* any other kinds of consumptions of the human corpse as fraught acts of cannibalism.

III.

"Truth, Lord; but I have marred them; let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."
"And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?"
"My dear, then I will serve."
"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."
So I did sit and eat.

(George Herbert, "Love (3)"[126])

Are the Protestants starving? This question, and my discussion of John Donne's *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*, is sparked by the curious fact that, as the Protestant eucharist is emptied of the eatable body of Christ, the ingestible medical corpse rises to darken the Protestant doorstep. The close connections between religious reform, which ultimately denied the role of the natural body in sacramental eating, and medical reform, which advanced the pharmacological ingestion of corpses, raises the intriguing possibility of the medical corpse as uncannily appeasing a residual Protestant hunger.[127] In my discussion of *The Faerie Queene*, I show that the issue of European cannibalism haunting the Errour episode—at the heart of which is the Reformation debate over the Real Presence—is not only charged with the language of eucharistic anxiety, but also registers the uneasiness surrounding a socially tolerated medical practice. In the Errour episode, the eating of bodies, either spiritual or medical, is abjected: both practices constituting disgusting and potentially fatal acts of polluted eating. The eucharistic tension identifiable in Spenser's text is coupled with an outright rejection—the text seems to

allow no middle ground—of any suggestion that a different form of corporeal eating might appease a lingering Protestant appetite. Such a vehement refusal, wherein sacrificial eating and medical consumption are culturally caught up in one another, is powerfully suggestive, raising the specter of what is being denied: the unthinkable possibility of the pharmacological fragment as a potent trace for the lost presence of eucharistic matter.[128]

There is an interesting, almost symbiotic, relationship between early modern religion and medicine: while many religious images are inspired by the medical benefits of Christ's body, medical advancement frequently has a religious motivation. Grell and Cunningham argue that, "the deeply religious nature of attitudes to diseases and their causes and cures held by physicians and other practitioners" reveal that religious inspiration lay behind many innovations in medical practices. [129] Certainly religious beliefs were a strong stimulus for the incorporation of Paracelsian medical doctrine into mainstream English medicine: both medical and religious reform were driven by a corresponding antagonism towards the "heathenish" practices of Galenism and Catholicism. This required a radical shift in medical thinking and practice, from Galen's cure by contraries, to Paracelsus' "like cures like" with its central belief that the quintessential medicine for man was man's body. The eucharistic echoes here, of the transubstantiated flesh and blood of Christ as the supreme drug for humanity, are unavoidable. Moreover, while Paracelsian doctrine certainly had its detractors, the inclusion of Paracelsian corpse pharmacology in the officially-sanctioned *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis* of 1618 is evidence that the "new" medicine was accepted into ordinary medical practice.

The intriguing correlation between the Protestant move from a literal to a figurative eating of Christ, and the increased popularity of a medical practice that privileges the ingestion of corpses, return us to my original question: Are the Protestants starving? Allow me to pose several questions relating to the repercussions of weaning oneself from centuries of communal nurturing on a divine diet. Can corporeal significance be so easily expunged—and thus consigned to memory—from the language of presence, which has for centuries made the body of God palpably available to the communicant, without enduring vestiges of meaning and desire? In a world that understands itself in terms of a symbolic matrix built on the ritual of the eaten body, what happens when the very nature of the sacramental matter of that ritual is subjected to such intense reformulation that the "superior type of food which satisfied a special hunger,"[130] nourishing, comforting, and sustaining Christian communities throughout the ages, is disembodied and reduced to figurative food for the individual? If we can no longer understand ourselves in an intimate, physical relation with God achieved through oral incorporation, how *do* we understand ourselves? Does the ingestion of the healing corpse suggest a lingering taste for the flesh and blood of Christ?

A profound nostalgic hunger and thirst is expressed in the writings of many of those who turn away from centuries of the alimentary satisfaction produced by the belief that they were literally eating the body of Christ. Such yearning for lost nourishment reveals that the Protestant theological position on the Real Presence is never fully resolved—it becomes in fact a profoundly disturbing absence.[131] This absence finds its frequent expression in early modern literature and sermons. A voracious thirst for every last drop of the denied blood of Christ overwhelms George Herbert's poem "Lucus 34

(To John, leaning on the Lord's breast)," in which he petulantly demands his share of the divine fluid being greedily sucked by others: "Ah now, glutton, let me suck too! / You won't really hoard the whole / Breast for yourself! Do you thieve / Away from everyone that common well?"[132] Similarly, in the anti-papal criticism of Bishop Coverdale, the actions of Catholic priests who deny Christ's blood to the laity constitute a cruel stealing of half of the communicants' rightful nourishment:[133]

> For whereas the sacrament of the blood ought to be distributed to the people, as it appeareth by the express commandment of the Lord, they decree that the people ought to be contented with the one half part. So are the miserable Christians by most wicked guile robbed of the benefit that God gave them; neither is it any small benefit to have the communion of the blood of the Lord to nourish us withal: and it is too much cruelty to take that thing violently from them, unto whom it belongeth of right.[134]

An outraged sense that "man cannot live on bread alone" underpins this Protestant outrage at the selfish guzzling of Catholic priests. But there is an odd contradiction in Coverdale's position—common to much of the anti-papal polemic focusing on the eucharist—whereby on the one hand he denounces the priests, who act according to Catholic doctrine, while on the other hand he champions the deprived Catholic laity's right to Christ's blood, which, according to that same doctrine, is the real blood of Christ. As a Protestant Bishop, Coverdale obviously subscribed to a Reformist theology that disembodies the eucharist, and yet this passage exposes an interesting slippage between the Protestant desire to paint the priests as selfish and deluded guzzlers of Christ's blood, and the urgent call to share that divine liquid with the laity, behind which lingers an alimentary longing to quench an acute Protestant thirst. As well, in Coverdale's use of words such as "benefit" and "nourish," that acknowledge Christ's blood as both food and a curative elixir for the promotion of spiritual and physical healing, eucharistic eating is

also medical eating. With the removal of the corporeal from the eucharist, divine matter, with its nurturing and healing potency, becomes a symbolic sign.

There is much speculation about Donne's own theological position in relation to the doctrine of the eucharist, with strong claims made for the various influences of Roman Catholic, Calvinistic and Anglican doctrine on his eucharistic imagery.[135] Eleanor McNees, arguing for Donne's allegiance to Anglican doctrine, writes that he avoids taking a position on the nature of the eucharist and that his divine poems "stop just short of actual communion in the eucharistic meal, and thus they neither commemorate the eucharist as mere symbol nor assert it as miraculous transubstantiation." Rather, McNees continues, Donne stresses that a union with Christ's body in the eucharist is only possible through an individual's identification with Christ's sacrifice.[136] The *Sermons* tell a similar story, their shifting perspectives on the issue of the Real Presence[137] revealing Donne's own ambiguity towards the mysterious nature of eucharistic food: "in the sacramental supper of the Lamb it is very hard to tell what we feed upon...how the body and blood of Christ is received by us at that supper in that sacrament is hard to be expressed, hard to be conceived for the way and manner thereof."[138]

Donne's reluctance to commit himself to a position of eucharistic disembodiment is compatible with the intensely body-centred nature of his writing and worship—what Terry G. Sherwood identifies as Donne's epistemology of the body:

> Few writers keep the eye so keenly trained on the body as he does; few observe with such dissecting intellect its sweaty hands, resident insects, tears and sighs, excretions, lingering illness, decay and dissolution; few submit their dissections so vigorously to the unflagging control of logical similitudes that refer the body and the details of its experience to the soul, to the material world, or to the social world.[139]

Such microscopic observations of the body and its mysterious workings go hand in hand with the fascination with, and broad knowledge of, medicine, in particular Paracelsian medicine, that Donne's texts reveal.[140] His treatment of Paracelsus in the anti-Catholic satire, *Ignatius his Conclave*—where he has the demonized Catholic Machiavelli satirically decry the Protestant Paracelsus as a "cadaverous vulture...practiced in the butcheries, and mangling of men"[141]—reveals a skeptical tolerance of the "new" medicine, consistent with his back-handed praise of Paracelsus' influence on contemporary medicine: "the world hath turned upon new principles which are attributed to *Paracelsus*, but (indeed) to much to his honour."[142] However in spite of Donne's apparent ambivalence towards Paracelsus—which is probably intentional, given his penchant for paradoxes—his work is saturated by medical imagery that draws enthusiastically on Paracelsian doctrine.[143]

Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions, Donne's intensely personal and vividly graphic description of a long and dangerous illness, brings together his fascination with the human body and medicine more vividly than do any of his other works. This careful clinical narrative of the fluctuating stages of Donne's illness—in which his body is a constant source of surprise and betrayal—is mapped against his own theological system, in which the true nature of Christ's presence in the sacrament, and how it is manifested in the individual, remains remarkably ambivalent.[144] And yet, as the *Devotions* show by their obsessive dwelling on the sacramental eating and drinking of corporeal matter, uncertainty over the absence or presence of Christ's body in the sacrament has implications for Donne's experiences of his own body, creating epistemological and ontological anxieties that the text attempts to negotiate. In Donne's corporeal

epistemology, experiences of the body are also configured as experiences of the soul: "in the state of my *body*...thou dost *effigiate* my Soule to me" ("22. Expostulation," 119).[145] Thus Donne's obsessive focus on his most intimate bodily experiences of suffering yields knowledge of the suffering of the soul—bodily corruption reveals spiritual corruption, and each calls for powerful medical intervention: both secular and divine.

However, the distinction that the *Devotions* attempts to make between secular and divine medicine is increasingly difficult to sustain, and the possibility of the medical corpse as an alimentary replacement for the lost body of Christ becomes compelling when Donne's anxious desire for a special kind of eucharistic matter, and the ingestible corpse remedy prescribed for Donne in the final stages of his illness, converge. The text offers a fascinating catalogue of the early modern physician's pharmacological arsenal—their "...*munition*, their *cordials* to *defend*" ("19. Expostulation," 99)—that includes various elixirs, purgatives, a pigeon poultice, and ultimately mummy—administered in the fight against Donne's illness. In *Devotion 22* Donne's intellectualization of the physician's use of the mummy corpse physic, essential to "cure the *disease its selfe*" ("22. Meditation," 117), graphically emphasizes Paracelsian homeopathic doctrine: that the most powerful healing properties lie in the dead body of another. In his hypothesis of the pharmacological relationship between the eater and the eaten, Donne explains the superior curative value of ingesting dead human flesh:

> ...(no part of my *body*, if it were cut off, would *cure* another part; in some cases it might *preserve* a sound part, but in no case *recover* an infected) and, if my *body* may have my *Physicke*, any *Medicine* from another *body*, one *Man* from the flesh of another *Man* (as by Mummy, or any such *composition*,) it must bee from a man that is dead....There is nothing in the same *man*, to helpe *man*, nothing in *mankind* to helpe *one another*, (in this sort, by way of *Physicke*) but that hee who *ministers* the *helpe*, is in as

> ill case, as he that *receives* it would have beene, if he had not had it; for hee, from whose *body* the *Physicke* comes, is *dead*. ("22. Meditation," 117)

The message that healing cannot come from within the self is consistent with Donne's assertion in his sermon at The Hague that "no man can renew himselfe, regenerate himselfe."[146] For Donne the remedy is simple and homeopathic: the power to restore his health lies, not within his own body, but externally within someone else's corpse, and its effectiveness requires the incorporation of that "*Physicke*" into the self. The mysterious healing virtue of the human corpse is a gift from God, "who has imprinted all medicinall virtues, which are in all creatures" ("11. Prayer," 61) and who makes Donne's recovery possible.

Yet any reading of this passage in purely secular terms is jeopardized by the fascinating lexical confusion in the text between secular physicians and the divine Physician, and the vocabulary of their physical and spiritual roles and remedies, which constantly shifts between the literal and the metaphoric to perplex understandings of the nature of illness, drugs and healing. This rhetorical slippage produces a polysemic complexity wherein the physicians heal Donne's body, but are themselves compelled by the divine healer ("20. Expostulation," 109); physic is at once the remedy prescribed by Donne's physician, the eucharist, and the illness itself that is God's spiritual corrective ("11. Prayer," 61; "15. Expostulation," 89); and the secular physicians carry out bodily purging, while the divine Physician purges the soul ("20. Prayer," 109). This is further complicated by the fundamental principle with which Donne struggles: that the body/soul duality is the contagious seat of physiological and spiritual pollution: "...we may wel consider the *body*, before the *soule* came, before *inanimation*, to bee *without sinne*; *Sinne*

is the *roote*, and the *fuell* of all *sicknesse*, and yet that which destroies *body & soul*, is in *neither*, but in *both together*; It is in the *union* of the *body* and *soule*." ("22. Expostulation," 118).[147]

Within this dichotomy of physical/spiritual sin, illness is God's curative for the sinner and any sign of healing, like the illness itself, has twofold implications:

> ...thy *correction* hath wrought *medicinally* upon mee, presume I upon that *spirituall strength* I have; but as I acknowledge, that my *bodily strength* is subject to every *puffe of wind*, so is my *spirituall strength* to every *blast of vanitie*. Keepe me therefore still...in such *proportion* of both *strengths*.... ("21. Prayer," 115)

The inseparability of physical and spiritual disease calls for the administering of special kinds of treatments that go beyond the obvious physiological problem to address the more complex equilibrium of the body/soul relation.[148] While the physicians address the physical "*root*, the *fuell*, the *occasion* of my *sickness*"("22. Expostulation,"118), the "deeper" cause, which "lies in my *soule*," requires the attention of the "great *Physitian*" who alone has the power to address and effect a complete cure—which he does through redemption and salvation "by *glorifying* these *bodies* in the next world" ("22. Meditation," 117; "22. Expostulation," 118).

The supreme remedy for both body and soul, offering eternal redemption and salvation, is the eucharist. To eat that "...heavenly *food* and *Physicke*" ("15. Prayer," 81) is to incorporate Christ's salvatory power as Donne makes clear in the *Sermons*: "There was no salvation, except they did eat and drink that Flesh and Blood."[149] In the *Devotions* God's ability to be the "great therapist"[150] is described as a mysterious manifestation in the body of Christ in the sacrament: "thou in thy *Son* art the *Phisician*, the *applyer* of both" spiritual and bodily health, (" 4. Prayer," 23) and the provider of the "*Cordiall*

Blood" drunk for "my recoverie." ("11. Prayer," 61). With this mediaeval description of Christ, who, through his presence in the sacrament, is the divine healer—resonating as it does with Donne's imperative that the only path to salvation is divine eating and drinking—Donne comes dangerously close to a theology of the Real Presence. While there is the possibility that Christ's healing presence is to be found in the communicant, not in the sacrament, as Johnson argues,[151] this interpretation comes under pressure in the face of the persistent suggestion that, behind the textual tensions over eucharistic eating, the mediaeval idea of God's physical presence as Physician and remedy in the embodied Host hovers provocatively.

The trace of the physical body of Christ is constantly present in the *Devotions*, and Donne's anxious relinquishment to God of any responsibility for interpreting what he really tastes and eats in the eucharist raises the possibility that what Donne longs to savor is divine corporeal matter, now relegated to absence in the Protestant communion:

> O *eternall*, and *most gracious God*, who gavest to thy servants in the wilderness, thy *Manna*, bread so conditiond, qualified so, as that, to every man, *Manna tasted like that, which that man liked best*, I humbly beseech thee, to make this correction which I acknowledg to be part of my *daily bread*, to tast so to me, not as I would but as thou wouldest have it taste, and to conform my tast, and make it agreeable to thy will. ("7. Prayer," 39)

The complex paradox of this passage describes God's correction, the sickness with which Donne struggles—that is identified elsewhere as God's "*Physicke*" ("15. Expostulation," 80)—in terms of the sacrament: as food to be tasted. Donne's reluctance to take any position on the real or figurative presence of Christ is obvious. The constitution of the bread depends, not on Church doctrine, but on Christ's words at the Last Supper. Instead of an Anglican emphasis on the sacrificial that McNees identifies in Donne's work,[152] the

focus here is on the physical, on God's power to control the flavour of the eucharist and to conform Donne's taste according to God's will. Thus the ambiguity of the eucharist is preserved: it is whatever food God wants for us, or, in other words, whatever food we think God wants for us. The nostalgic tone of Donne's desire for manna with a particular flavour—a taste that he asks God to define—forms a gustatory link with the different, superior taste of the food "that man likes best," while also hinting at a more physically and spiritually satisfying food. The bread that offers Donne complete satisfaction is threefold: "the *spirituall bread of life*, in a faithfull assurance in *thee*; the *sacramental bread of life*, in a worthy receiving of *thee;* and the *more reall bread of life*, in an everlasting *union to thee*" ("21. Prayer," 115); and it is this "real" bread— with its unavoidable semantic implications of the Real Presence—which, by bringing the eater and the eaten into one another, will finally satiate corporeal longing.

As do many of Donne's other writings, the *Devotions* describe his desperate desire for a relation of dependency with God that becomes even more urgent during this time of sickness. During the course of his illness Donne has doggedly negotiated a dependent patient/filial relation with the divine Physician/Father, and his terror that God will abandon him and thus bring about a relapse, is clear in his appeal to God at the end of his ordeal:

> My *God*, my *God*, my *God*, thou mightie *Father*, who hast beene my *physitian*; Thou glorious *Sonne*, who hast beene my *physicke*; Thou blessed *Spirit*, who hast *prepared* and *applied* all to mee, shall *I alone* be able to overthrow the worke of *all you*, and *relapse* into those *spirituall sicknesses*, from which your infinite *mercies* have withdrawn me? ("23. Expostulation," 122)

"The fear of being left alone," writes Shuger, "and the corresponding desire for any contact with God, even painful, forms a steady refrain in Donne's writings."[153] Shuger introduces psychological theory to explain Donne's longing for dependence on a power figure, an emotion that resembles the simultaneous anger towards, and need for, "the all-powerful yet terrifyingly absent parent" expressed by "the infant who screams for his mother's breast." [154] The argument, that Donne's desire for a relation of dependence has its source in the denial of the maternal breast, has fascinating implications for my study that Shuger does not explore: that the loss of the mother's breast is analogous to the loss of the nourishing, healing body of Christ in the eucharist—each absence creating a deeply rooted oral nostalgia and dependency. Thus what we identify in the *Devotions* as Donne's alimentary longing reveals a profound hunger to eat and drink from the originary body of Christ. The painful nostalgia for the lost alimentary union with Christ—which we see expressed in the "*suck* at his *wounde*" passage from *Death's Duel* quoted earlier[155]—underpins the subtle interchange of the figurative language of medicine and food that the *Devotions* perform in an attempt to mediate a special kind of oral union.

The relation between the individual and God is part of a universal corporeal chain in which what happens to an individual body has an intense impact on all other bodies. While illness is an alienating experience, one that separates the invalid from the healthy community, in Donne's economics of human connectedness, death is a universal loss which has the profound effect of lessening each and every one of us: "No Man is an *Iland*, intire of it selfe...Any Mans *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankinde*; And therefore never send to know for whome the *bell* tolls; It tolls for *thee*" ("17. Meditation," 87). And yet there is a life-enhancing benefit to this loss. As Donne's

illness progresses his sense of alienation and his need for God becomes more pronounced; facing death, he turns to the dead for the healing message of meaning and hope carried in the bell: "I, by the meditation of *his death*, produce a better *life* in my selfe...If the death of this man worke not upon mee now, I shall die worse, than if thou hadst not afforded me this helpe: for thou has sent *him* in this *bell* to me...that in this weaknes of *body*, I might receive spiritual strength." ("18. Expostulation," 94-95). Here the dead body of another, transferred to Donne through the ringing of the bell—not to be eaten but to be conjured up and meditated upon—is spiritually efficacious, serving an important salvific function in the healing of Donne's soul.

The Paracelsian "like cures like" undertones recognizable in Donne's description of the spiritually therapeutic role of the dead, are also evident in "22. Meditation" (quoted above) when the physicians turn to the human corpse itself for Donne's physical healing in the final days of his illness. In a text saturated with the figurative language of the eucharist and medicine, in which Donne's "inability to grasp hold of Christ's body or to nourish his own"[156] sharpens a profound, unfulfilled hunger for divine corpse food, "Mummy" mediates the absence of the divine body in the sacramental meal. This finds sequential support in the significant fact that Donne's rationalization of the corpse drug in "22. Meditation," immediately follows his fervent anticipation of receiving the sacrament in "21. Prayer." In this ritual setting, the body administered to appease Donne's eucharistic hunger is not Christ's absent body, but the metonymically suggestive pharmacological corpse. I. M. Lewis argues that, "where a tabooed negative action—eating human flesh—acquires positive force, the ritual consumption of parts of the human body enables the consumer to acquire something of the body's vital energy." This form

of cannibalism "is perhaps *the* prototype of sacrificial communion."[157] In these terms, the ingested pharmacological corpse, provider of the quintessential remedy for a whole host of physical ills, carries the salvific burden of that far mightier corpse: the supreme source of spiritual and physical salvation. Furthermore, similar to the communicant's incorporation of Christ's power in eucharistic eating, in Donne's explanation of corpse pharmacology, healing power resides, not within one's own body, but in the body of another that must be incorporated into the body of the self through ingestion. In the end, the only natural body available for eating is the dead body from which "the *Physicke* comes."

This provocative suggestion of the medical corpse as a eucharistic trace returns us to the Luther broadsheet image with its fascinating interplay of medical and eucharistic cannibal references. The image of the anatomized Luther being dissected and eaten by his followers is mired in the medical and Catholic practices relating to the eaten body that Spenser and Donne negotiate in their texts. The very fact that Spenser and Donne bring these different forms of bodily consumptions together registers their cultural connectedness. While Spenser's text reveals a morbid fascination for the startling similarities of Catholic and medical bodily sacrifices, violations and flows, his uncompromising rejection of both forms of eating as abject suggests a hidden attraction to what is being denied. A different kind of desire underpins Donne's complex corporeal and spiritual manipulations in his effort to alleviate a troubling Protestant hunger: a hunger mediated by the medical corpse that provocatively suggests the divine corporeal absence in his eagerly anticipated communion. In the final analysis, what shadows both of these texts, and my final chapter, is the human corpse, ripe for spiritual or medical

eating. In Chapter 4 I argue that the idea of the ingested human corpse that Spenser's and Donne's texts keep in play—behind which hovers the seductive belief in its pharmacological potency—has powerful implications when it is enlisted into a gendered socio-medical discourse underwritten by a deeply embedded cultural distrust of the nature of women, their bodies, and their sexuality.

NOTES

[1] Piero Camporesi, "The Consecrated Host: A Wondrous Excess," *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, ed. Michel Feher, vol. 1 (New York: Zone, 1989) 220-238, 221.

[2] Reproduced here from Walter L. Strauss, *The German single-leaf woodcut, 1550-1600*, vol. 3 (New York: Hackner Art Books, 1975) 1184. Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham also discuss this image for its powerful connection between religion and medicine, however the focus of their study is quite different from my own. See *Medicine and the Reformation* (London: Routledge, 1993) 2-3.

[3] See Grell's and Cunningham's identification of the participants and the smaller scenes depicted in the broadsheet, 2-3.

[4] Grell and Cunningham 2.

[5] All biblical citations are from *The Holy Bible*, King James Version (Grand Rapids: World Publishing).

[6] Kristeva 2.

[7] John Donne, *Deaths Duell*, *John Donne Selected Prose*, ed. Helen Gardner and Timothy Healy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967) 382.

[8] Schroder 506.

[9] The doctrine of transubstantiation and its terminology became dogma at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 which resolved that, upon the priests words, the eucharist substance, the bread and wine, would be transformed into the flesh and blood of Christ, but the accidents, the appearance of bread and wine, would remain the same, in Stone 1.313. See Preserved Smith, *A Short History of Christian Theophagy* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co, 1922) 85; Jaroslav Pelikan, *Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700)* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1984) 193.

[10] Quoted in Camporesi "Consecrated Host," 221, from P. Clemente Simoncelli, *Guida de morabundi* (Naples: Tomasi, 1962) 120.

[11] The words are Ignatius' quoted in James T. O'Connor, *The Hidden Manna: A Theology of the Eucharist* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988) 17. For my understanding of the complicated theology of the Catholic Eucharist I draw on O'Connor, Pelikan, as well as Darwell Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1909); Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: Dacre Press, 1945); Robert Sokolowski, *Eucharistic Presence: A Study in the Theology of Disclosure* (Washington: Catholic U of America P, 1993); Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).

[12] William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997) 156.

[13] Camporesi, "Consecrated Host," 221.

[14] Quoted in Camporesi "Consecrated Host," 221.

[15] Hymen Saye, "Holy Wafers in Medicine," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 3 (1935): 165-167.

[16] Rubin 43-44.

[17] Thomas Becon, *Prayers and Other Pieces*, The Parker Society, vol. 19 (Cambridge, 1844) 372.

[18] Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner, 1971) 52.

[19] Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990) 82-83. See also Kilgour's discussion of the Catholics as cannibals, 83-84.

[20] For a discussion of the fluctuations of interest in Paracelsian medicine in England see P. M. Rattansi, "Paracelsus and the Puritan Revolution,"*Ambix* 11 (1963): 24-32; Allen G. Debus, *The English Paracelsians* (London: Oldbourne, 1965).

[21] Debora Kuller Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1990) 9.

[22] See Urdang's introduction to *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis of 1618*, 32; also Debus, 58.

[23] John Webster, *Academicarum Examen* (London, 1654) 73. Quoted in C. Webster, "English Medical Reformers of the Puritan Revolution: A Background to the 'Society of Chymical Physitians,' " *Ambix* 14 (1967): 16-41, 18.

[24] Rubin writes that "The most concentrated, heated and violent attention was paid to the eucharist in the religious contests of the sixteenth century, as symbolic worlds clashed, as people strove to discredit and annihilate the worldview of their adversaries," 354.

[25] Nicholas Culpeper, *A Physicall Directory, or, A translation of the London Dispensatory* (London, 1649). Quoted in Webster, 18.

[26] Webster 26. Rattansi also argues that the history of Paracelsian medicine in England cannot be separated from religious and political history, 24-32, 25.

[27] See Webster, "Paracelsus: medicine as popular protest," in Grell and Cunningham, 57-78.

[28] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, vol. 2 (London, 1936) 240. Also quoted in Debus.

[29] Debus 58-61. Debus is quoting from R. Bostocke, *The difference between the auncient Phisicke...and the latter Phisicke* (London, 1585). The official *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis of 1618* also reflects this desire for the Hippocratic simplicity Paracelsian doctrine offered as an alternative to the confusing polypharmacy of Galenic medicine, indicating that the spheres of medical infuence in England were open to Paracelsian medicine. See Urdang's introduction to the *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis*, 32.

[30] See Rubin for a discussion of the early debate on the nature of the eucharist in terms of substance and accidents, 24-25. Also for an excellent discussion of the transubstantiation debate see Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995) 196-205.

[31] Myles Coverdale, *Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter*, ed. Rev. George Pearson, The Parker Society Ser. 10 (Cambridge, 1844) 450.

[32] Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, 84-85. Also cited in Kilgour, 265.

[33] Stone I.20.

[34] Dix, 76. Dix argues that this meal was probably not the Passover supper, but a Jewish religious evening meal that took place twenty-four hours before Passover: probably the formal supper of a *chabûrah*, a group of close friends, 50. Stephen Greenblatt, also drawing on Dix, makes this point as well in, Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000) 139.

[35] I Corinthians 11:24-25.

[36] See Dix for a comprehensive discussion of the meaning of Christ's words in the context of the *chabûrah* supper, 50-78.

[37] Scarry 216.

[38] For a fascinating discussion of language and the eucharist, of the utterances, signs, and representations that surround the mystery of the eucharist, and the miracle of transubstantiation, see Louis Marin, *Food for Thought*, trans. Mette Hjort (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1989).

[39] Rubin 42.

[40] St Thomas Aquinas, *Suma theolagiae III* 78 3 ad 1, quoted in Sokolowski, 98-98, n. 19.

[41] O'Connor 291.

[42] St John 6 53-54.

[43] O'Connor 274.

[44] Tertullian, *De Resurrectione Mortuorum*, VIII, 2; CCSL, 2, p. 931. Quoted in O'Connor, 270.

[45] Rubin 28.

[46] Camporesi, "The Consecrated Host," 229.

[47] Gallagher and Greenblatt 141.

[48] See Pelikan for a comprehensive discussion of the different theological positions adopted by Reformists, esp. 187-203.

[49] Pelikan 200-01.

[50] Pelikan 201.

[51] Quoted in Jeffrey Johnson, *The Theology of John Donne*, Studies in Renaissance Literature, vol. 1 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1999).

[52] Thomas Cranmer, quoted in Malcolm Mackenzie Ross, *Poetry and Dogma: The Transfiguration of Eucharistic Symbols in Seventeenth Century English Poetry*, (New York: Octagon Books, 1969) 56.

[53] Pelikan 201.

[54] Dix 623-24.

[55] Rubin 13.

[56] Dix 623-24.

[57] See Miller's Introduction, xi.

[58] See Anthony Milton, 173-76.

[59] C.T. Onions, *Shakespeare's England: An Account of the Life and Manners of His Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916) 55.

[60] Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1975) 179. Davis notes that bodies were thrown to dogs and body parts were sold as meat (liver and tripe) in various towns. In Lyon in 1572 "an apothecary rendered fat from Protestant corpses and sold it at 3 blancs the pound," 324, n. 100. See also Claude Rawson's discussion of these events, and their memorialization in the work of Michele Montaigne and Agrippa d'Aubigné, in " "Indians" and Irish: Montaigne, Swift, and the Cannibal Question," *Modern Language Quarterly* 53.3 (1992): 299-365.

[61] Becon, *Prayers*, 369.

[62] Thomas Becon, *The Early Works of Thomas Becon*, The Parker Society Ser. vol. 10 (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1968) 418.

[63] From Wyclif's *Elucidarium 25*: (c. 1400). Quoted in Miller, 156.

[64] Karen Gordon-Grube, "Evidence," 207.

[65] See Peter Hulme for a discussion of how the discourse of savagery has constituted 'otherness' historically, *Colonial Encounters*, 21.

[66] In his deconstruction of the cultural fantasy of the existence of a clandestine, anti-human society, Norman Cohn traces the roots of such a fantasy from the stereotype of Christians as a conspiratorial organization which practiced such atrocities as infanticide, incest and cannibalism, in *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom* (London: Pimlico, 1993) Chapter 1.

[67] Quoted in Cohn, 8. For a detailed description of the decisions of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) as they relate to the eucharist see Stone II.86-100

[68] Paraphrased in Carolyn Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianiy, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia UP, 1995) 41.

[69] Pelikan 54.

[70] For a discussion of Berengar's contribution to the debate see Rubin, 16-20.

[71] Quoted in Rubin 19-21.

[72] See Pelikan 199-200.

[73] Anti-papal writings in general were a major feature of English Protestant discourse. Milton notes that in the pamphlet controversies between the Church of England and Rome over 500 works, by approximately 150 different authors, were published between 1605 and 1625, 31-32.

[74] See Achsah Guibbory for a discussion of Puritan resistance to Roman Catholicism, in *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, Religion, and Cultural Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 35-37. John Milton, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.28, in *The Complete Works of John Milton*, ed. William Alfred et al. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1973) 6.553-54. Also quoted in Kilgour, 84.

[75] Rubin 359.

[76] Becon, *Prayers*, 261.

[77] Rubin 328, is quoting from *Heresy trials of Norwich*, pp. 44-55.

[78] Milton 6.553-54. Also quoted in Kilgour 84.

[79] Thomas Turke, *The Holy Eucharist and the Popish Breaden God*, quoted in Ross, 77.

[80] Becon, *Prayers*, 370.

[81] Dix 615.

[82] Dix 1.

[83] Dix 622.

[84] See Dix for a discussion of the form of the eucharist in the Reformation, 615-625; also Peter Marshall, *The Catholic Priesthood and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) for a discussion of the role of the celebrant, 35-85.

[85] Becon, *Prayers*, 358-364.

[86] Guibbory notes that, "With the Protestant Reformation, fear of seduction to the whoredom of idolatry gained new currency as the Church of Rome was identified with the Whore of Babylon," 166. As Harris argues, since the Reformation English writers frequently employed the figure of the Whore of Babylon as an image of the Catholic Church, 64. See for

example Thomas Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon*, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, 5 vols. Ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953).

[87] Milton offers a useful discussion of the pope as Antichrist, 93-127.

[88] Spenser 5.8.38.

[89] Sanday xii.

[90] Richard Mallette, *Spenser and the Discourses of Reformation England* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1997) 6.

[91] I agree with Kenneth Gross's point that we need to be careful in identifying representations of cannibalism in *The Faerie Queen* as simply a "demonic parody" of the eucharist, in *Spenserian Poetics: Idolatry, Iconoclasm, and Magic* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1985) 105.

[92] Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1986) 191.

[93] The description of Errour as half-serpent, and her serpent brood, suggests a popular anti-papal iconography of the antichrist in serpent form. Spenser's image is similar to a broadside picture of approximately 1624, "The Popes Pyramides," which depicts a pyramid of entangled, smaller serpents coiled around a large serpent. The smaller serpents wear monks' tonsures and cardinals' hats and the words of sin, such as "Cruelty," "Rebellion," "Envie" come from their mouths. Part of the caption describes the picture as "A *Pyramis*, of Serpents poysonous broode; / (*Rome,*) here behold, erected is on high / Upon heaven hills, where once thy glory stood / Sad Monument of thy Impietie." In Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991) 156.

[94] Revelation 17:2. Mallette also makes this point in his discussion of Duessa, 157.

[95] Arthur Dent, *The Ruine of Rome* (London, 1603) 254. Quoted in Mallette, 148.

[96] J. Rhodes, "An Answere to a Romish Rime," *Select Poetry Chiefly Devotional of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, The Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1865).

[97] Thomas Beard, *Antichrist the Pope of Rome* (London, 1625). Quoted in Milton, 98.

[98] Becon, *Prayers*, 361 and 375.

[99] Edmund Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970) 85.

[100] Caroline Walker Bynum, "The Female Body and Religious Practice in the Later Middle Ages," *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, ed. Michel Feher, vol. 1 (New York: Zone, 1989) 176 and 185. See also Paster's use of Bynum in *The Body*, 107-8.

[101] Richard Crashaw, *Sospetto D'Herode. The Complete Poetry of Richard Crashaw*, The Stuart Editions, ed. George Walton Williams (New York: New York UP, 1972). Quoted in Richard Rambuss, *Closet Devotions* (Durham: Duke UP, 1998) 33. See Rambuss for an insightful discussion of the masculine homoerotic implications of poetic representations of feeding from Christ. John Donne, *Deaths Duell*, in *Selected Prose*, 392.

[102] See Harris for a discussion of the Paracelsian doctrine of poison, 51-52. As Harris argues, "the curative power of poisons...is implicitly inscribed in—if not derived from—the many European languages in which the words for "medicine" and "poison" are interchangeable: amongst them, Greek (*pharmakon*); Latin (*medicamentus*); old German (*das Gift*)."

[103] John Donne, "Devotion 20," 108.

[104] Coverdale 453; Becon, *Prayers*, 377, 379.

[105] Curiously there is also an echo here of Becon's urges to Protestant clergy to "suck out venom" from the breasts of parishioners who have absorbed the "wicked doctrine" of Catholicism, *Prayers*, 291.

[106] Donne, *Death's Duel*, 376.

[107] Guibbory 167.

[108] Rhodes, "An Answer to a Romish Rhyme."

[109] Similar language is used in Canto 11 when the undigested food in the Dragon's mouth is described as "...trickling blood and gobbets raw / Of late devoured bodies..." (11.13).

[110] Camporesi 233. Also it is curious to note the difference between this anti-papal polemic of disgust and the euphoric mediaeval description of the passage of Christ's body through the communicant: "...when He passes through the soul which receives Him corporeally, [he] leave[s] in it a kind of balsam and very agreeable scents, certain signs that He was there." Quoted in Camporesi, "Consecrated Host," 223. Camporesi is quoting from Giovanni Battista Sangiure, S.J., *Erario della vita Cristiana e religiosa*.

[111] See Marshall for a discussion of situations in which priests could deny the sacrament, 185-188.

[112] For example this is the gloss given in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, ed. M.H. Abrams, 6th ed., 2 vols., (New York: Norton, 1993) 633.

[113] "And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." Also glossed in *Norton*, 633.

[114] Becon, *Prayers*, 377.

[115] Becon, *Prayers*, 389.

[116] Becon, *Prayers*, 389-990.

[117] John Bridges, "A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse" (1571) 126. Quoted in Gallagher and Greenblatt, 154.

[118] Spenser, *A View*, 62. Note here also the resemblance between the mother feeding on her executed son's body and the executed body as a medical ingredient.

[119] Crashaw "Luke II. Blessed be the paps which Thou has sucked," *The Complete Poetry*.

[120] Revelation 17:4, 6.

[121] D. Douglas Waters, *Duessa as Theological Satire* (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1970) 65. Also quoted in Gross, 105.

[122] Harris 64.

[123] See also Guibbory 159. In a sense Errour anticipates both the Whore of Babylon figure, Duessa, and the Antichrist figure, Orgoglio.

[124] In James P. Myers, *Elizabethan Ireland: A Selection of Writings by Elizabethan Writers on Ireland* (Hamden: Archon, 1983) 26.

[125] Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh, ed. *Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period* (New York: Palgrave, 2001) 4.

[126] George Herbert, "Love (3)" *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Sixteenth Century, The Early Seventeenth Century*, ed. M.H. Abrams, 7th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000) 1614.

[127] Gordon-Grube makes a similar conjecture: "Perhaps for Protestants of this period, healing with mummy and blood on some level fulfilled a substitute function to that of the transubstantiated flesh and blood," in "Anthropophagy," 408. Also, in the terms of my argument for a residual Protestant hunger for the real body of Christ, see Scott Dudley's study of the residual cultural potency for Protestants of the Catholic belief in the power of the relic, in "Conferring with the Dead: Necrophilia and Nostalgia in the Seventeenth Century," *ELH* 66 (1999): 277-294.

[128] Here I draw on Derrida's notion of the "trace" as explicated by Spivak: "The structure of the sign is determined by the trace or track of that other which is forever absent," in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976) xvii.

[129] Grell and Cunningham, 1.

[130] Rubin 337.

[131] See Ross's chapter "The Anglican Dilemma" for a discussion of the effect of the eucharist controversy on the seventeenth-century poetic symbol.

[132] George Herbert, *The Latin Poetry of George Herbert: A Bilingual Edition*, trans. Mark McCloskey and Paul R. Murphy (Athens: Ohio UP, 1986). Quoted in Rambuss, 37.

[133] As Rubin shows, throughout the twelfth century the chalice, the offering of Christ's blood, was removed from lay communion, and, although this practice lingered for a time, it was forbidden at the Council of Constance of 1415, 70-72. By the time of the Reformation the lay sacrament consisted of bread alone and the drinking of consecrated wine was a sacerdotal privilege, strongly criticized by both Catholics and Protestants.

[134] Coverdale 457.

[135] See Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study of English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale U P, 1954); Anthony Raspa, *The Emotive Image: Jesuit Poetics in the English Renaissance* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian UP, 1983); Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979); Eleanor McNees, "John Donne and the Anglican Doctrine of the Eucharist," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 29 (1987): 94-114.

[136] McNees 94-95.

[137] For discussions of Donne's propensity towards multiple points of view see P.M. Oliver, *Donne's Religious Writing: A Discourse of Feigned Devotion* (London: Longman, 1997) 243-245; and Charles Monroe Coffin, *John Donne and the New Philosophy* (New York: Columbia UP, 1937).

[138] *The Sermons of John Donne*, eds. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson, 10 vols. (Berkeley: U of California P, 1953-62) 7:303. Also quoted in Oliver's discussion of Donne's habit of offering a "multiplicity of viewpoints" in his writing, 244.

[139] Terry G. Sherwood, *Fulfilling the Circle: A Study of John Donne's Thought* (Toronto: U of Toronto P) 63. In general see Sherwood's discussion of the body's role in Donne's world view in Chapter 3.

[140] See Don Cameron Allen for a discussion of Donne's extensive medical knowledge and vocabulary, in "John Donne's Knowledge of Renaissance Medicine," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 62 (1943): 322-342.

[141] *Ignatius His Conclave*, in *Selected Prose*, 60. The implication of the medical use of corpses is obvious here.

[142] From a letter to Sir Thomas Lucey, quoted in Allen, 323. Allen argues that Donne's grudging praise of Paracelsus was unusual in comparison to many of his literary contemporaries who criticized Paracelsus, 323. However, Donne's attitude is consistent with the position of many Protestant physicians who, as I argue, supported Paracelsian medicine.

[143] See Allen for discussions of Donne's poetic debt to Paracelsian medicine. Also Thomas Willard, "Donne's Anatomy Lesson: Vesalian or Paracelsian?" *John Donne Journal* 3.1 (1984): 35-61

[144] Johnson discusses Donne as an influential theologian in his own right, 139-147. While Johnson's discussion that Donne's position on the nature of Christ's presence in the

sacrament is consistent with the Church of England is convincing, I argue that the examples he gives from the Sermons reveal just as much about Donne's *lack* of any fixed position on this issue.

[145] Also quoted in Sherwood, 66.

[146] Sermon, 2:305. Also quoted in Johnson, 124.

[147] Johnson, drawing on the Sermons, also points out that for Donne "neither a body alone, nor a soul alone constitutes a person" 124.

[148] See Sawday for a discussion of the body/soul duality in Renaissance medicine, 16-22.

[149] Sermon, 3:221.

[150] Camporesi 221.

[151] Johnson 142.

[152] McNees 94.

[153] Shuger 190.

[154] Shuger 191. Shuger draws on the work of Joan Riviere, "Hate, Greed, and Agression," in Joan Riviere and Melanie Klein, *Love, Hate, and Reparation* (New York: Norton, 1964) 8-9.

[155] Also quoted in Shuger, 194.

[156] McNees 106.

[157] I. M. Lewis, *Religion in Context: Cults and Charisma*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996) 90.

CHAPTER 4

THE *FILLE VIÈRGE* AS PHARMAKON

> The inside of the body is the temple, the place where the awesome powers reside; internal body states are imagined in intense detail....Any body is awesome, but the female body, possessor of the mystery of fertility and nurture, is the most awesome.
>
> (Anna S. Meigs, *Food, Sex, and Pollution.*[1])

> I am not of that feard *Impudence* that I dare defend *Women*, or pronounce them good; yet we see *Physitians* allow some *vertue* in every *poyson*. Alas! Why should we except *Women*? since certainely, they are good for *Physicke* at least, so as some *wine* is good for a *feaver*.
>
> (John Donne, Paradox 6: "That it is possible to find some vertue in Some Women."[2])

Within the pharmacological corpse economy inscribed by male physicians, the mummy of the *fille vièrge* was represented as the most therapeutically valuable form of mummy. Subscribing to a gendered cultural and medical ideology, the traveller Pietro della Valle (1586-1652) unequivocally states: "the best [mummy] comes from the maidens and the bodies of virgins ."[3] Attesting to the pervasiveness of this medical motif, in his 1824 *Des sepultures nationals*, Jean Baptiste de Roquefort also notes that mummy from embalmed virgins was considered to be especially efficacious and was therefore more expensive.[4] These observations—that dead girls offer the best cure—seem extraordinary. However, such medical privileging of the embalmed virginal corpse can be understood in light of the powerful regulatory myths of the female body, the cultural touchstone for which is the belief that the real flesh of Christ "was created from a virgin by the Spirit, without coition."[5] The persistent reiteration of these myths serves to reinforce cultural stereotypes about the dangerous instabilities and secrets of female corporeality, while also shoring up

what Gail Kern Paster has described as "the culture's notorious obsession with female chastity."[6] In these terms the medical representation of the *fille vièrge* as the ideal mummy remedy is a troubling symptom of a masculine pathology exhibited as an obsessive need to know and control the female body and female sexuality. Given the masculine scientific desire for epistemological mastery of such a threatening corporeality, evidenced by the numerous gynecological and obstetrical texts in circulation,[7] and the insatiable fascination with penetrating and discovering the female body in early modern anatomy theatres,[8] it is no surprise that the virginal female body, pure of heart and unblemished, was represented as possessing an unequaled potency—more efficacious and more exquisite than any other corpse could yield. Such a belief is possible within the larger context of what Marie H. Loughlin describes as, "the powerful, pervasive, and enduring cultural fiction of the unbroken hymen as the surety of a woman's sexual innocence."[9]

In early modern literature, the seductive idea of an ingestible virginal female corpse, replete with pharmacological potency, underpins fetishizations of female corpses, frequently conceived of as at once salvatory and sacrificial. But the socio-medical privileging of the preserved and contained *fille vièrge* mummy as a highly desirable curative stands in direct opposition to constructions of the uncontrolled female body as a decidedly undesirable form of mummy. For example, at the very beginning of John Webster's *The White Devil*, "Mummia" is described as an "unnaturall and horrid Phisicke," one that induces vomiting rather than healing (1.1.16-18).[10] Later on, in his attempt to construct Vittoria as a whore, Monticelso's description of Vittoria's body as analogous to all the gross and undesirable contents of a "Poticaries shop" (3.2.105)—that

includes in its associative range the corpse drugs of the apothecary's medical arsenal—registers the negative description of mummy with which the play begins. John Donne, in "Love's Alchemy" also expresses anxiety over the female body as a mine for undesirable mummy: "Hope not for mind in women; at their best / Sweetness and wit, they are but mummy, possessed" (23-24).[11] The image of Vittoria's body as whorish mummy (among other things) and Donne's use of mummy as a metaphor for what lies hidden in women, reinforce cultural fears about the dangers of female sexuality—what happens to men if women's bodies are not controlled?—and provides the oppositional support for the medical and cultural privileging of the concept of an ingestible female body forever embalmed in its virginal state.

Both Shakespeare in *Othello*, and Donne in the *Anniversaries*, employ a metaphorics of medicine in order to imagine the female body as the *fille vièrge* panacea for sick masculinity; but efforts to interpret these texts as diagnostic are repeatedly frustrated by the fact that the texts themselves seem to feed on the corpses of virtuous women, thus rendering the play and the poems as symptomatic of the culture's anxiety about women's sexual behaviour. The female corpse is semiotically critical in these texts where myths of female chastity, and representations of the salvific healing power of ingested virginal corpse matter, fuse into powerful themes of female sacrifice and male salvation. In Shakespeare and in Donne, representations of dead women are connected to the medical treatment of corpses, and to the cultural construction and subjection of women's bodies. Obsessive in their efforts to alleviate acute masculine anxiety and disillusionment, both texts bring medical representations of the potency of the ingested vital essences of the virginal body together with a desire to regulate female sexuality. To

this end both texts target women's bodies as sites for masculine intervention and consumption; however each text imagines and positions the female body in different ways, and produces different consequences.

The performance of masculine jealousy in *Othello*, that has its culminating moment in Othello's vision of Desdemona's body as the efficacious corpse drug, contained and preserved in all its purity, is the product of a deeply-rooted epistemological anxiety over the true nature of women and their bodies, and a pathological need to control women's bodies. The figurative language of cannibalism in the play, that imagines men as consumers of women's bodies, and systematically builds on the image of the virginal bodies that pigment the handkerchief, reveals the masculine investment in Desdemona's corpse in which the play is disturbingly involved. Desdemona's corpse is the end product of a relentless process of attempts to contain the female body that is driven by acute masculine paranoia towards women—exhibited in the play as irrational jealousy, possessiveness, and insecurity. While masculine anxiety and female chastity are also prevailing themes of the *Anniversaries*, the poems reveal a different kind of fixation—manifested as intense spiritual and physical desire—that deploys the idea of the chaste female body in a different way. In the *Anniversaries* there is no body; rather the virginal Elizabeth Drury is imagined in life as already distilled into Paracelsian mummy—the vital source that her body contains—and in death as that source's lingering trace:[12] a barely-definable essence, co-opted for Donne's poetic project of being the sole author on whose writing the recuperation of the spiritually sick world depends. However, in the *Anniversaries*, the eroticized virginal quintessence is sublimated into the pages of the poems to form a eucharistic salvatory offering for the ailing masculine soul. In this way,

in both Shakespeare and Donne, women are metaphorically defused, preserved in an innocent, and therefore non-threatening to men, state of chastity, thus forming a powerful pharmacological arsenal of sexual purity to be ingested in the service of cultural (read masculine) well-being.

I.

> ...from a curious inspection into the Mumies brought from *Aegypt*, it may be concluded, that the Aegyptians and their followers had two sorts of Embalming, the one curious, and costly for great and rich Men; the other cheap, for the common and poorer sort. In the costly way, they used as well outwardly for anointing and dipping the linen Shrowds in, as for stuffing the three Ventricles, divers aromatick Spices, which by their innate Balsamick Virtue, by their bitterness also, and odeous Sulphur, or the penetrability of their volatil Salt, resist putrefaction; and by their sweet Smell prevent stench and offensiveness; such as *Opobalsamum*, Oil of Cedar, Aloes, Myrrh, Saffron, Cinamon, *Cassia*, etc. This was for the Rich. For the poorer sort, they used either *Asphalltus*, which is the *Bitumen Judaicum*, that comes off the dead Sea; or *Pissasphaltum*, which is a mixture of Pitch and *Bitumen*.
>
> (Dr Alexander Read, *Chirurgorum Comes*[13])

Othello is haunted by medical consumptions of the female corpse; a haunting that is uncannily performed both in the play's language and thematics. The flesh of the female corpse is semiotically critical in *Othello* where the myths of female chastity, and the salvific healing power of the ingestible virginal corpse, operate alongside the rhetoric of cannibalism in which men are identified as eaters of women. The play interrogates the uneasy boundary between a culinary practice associated with "barbaric" Otherness, and a "civilized" European medical practice. Desdemona's corpse perplexes the cultural contradiction of condemning cannibalism while at the same time consuming human bodies. Victim of the pathological condition of masculine jealousy that troubles the play,

Desdemona is figured as at once a therapeutic trope offering an ingestible remedy, and as food for men; thus her corpse stages the cultural uneasiness, that what is rejected as foreign and taboo is at the same time disconcertingly familiar. However, the frustrating paradox of the play lies in the fact that ultimately, there is no masculine healing precisely because the belief that the female corpse offers a cure is actually a symptom of the very pathology that the *fille vièrge* is supposed to cure. In other words, the myth of dead virgins as remedy is fueled by the pathological fear of, and desire to regulate, women's bodies. Moreover the disturbing implication in *Othello* is that, in the absence of any masculine healing, the rhetoric of cannibalism in the play offers a powerful alternative vision of the investments in Desdemona's corpse in which the play is involved.

The symbolic significance of Desdemona's corpse in *Othello* derives from several sources: a therapeutic model in which the pharmacological power of the ingested body is central; a gynecological model which constructs the female body as dangerously unstable and insatiable; and a medical economic model which privileges the healing power of the embalmed virginal female corpse.[14] When Iago declares, "So will I turn her virtue into pitch" (2.3.355), we witness, not only Iago's vengeful design to "enmesh them all" (2.3.357) by blackening Desdemona's reputation, but a more sinister masculine "thaumaturgic-cum-pharmacological logic"[15] that prescribes the curative virtues of the ingested virginal female corpse and its by-products, mediated and transformed through various processes—execution, violation, dissection, preservation and distillation. In terms that resonate with Read's description of Egyptian embalming in the epigraph above, Iago imagines his scheme for Desdemona's destruction as an alchemical metamorphosis of her virtuous body into what Read identifies as the "poorer sort" of

mummy preserved in bitumen and pitch. As the play develops, we witness Iago's sinister fantasy—to transform Desdemona's "goodness" (2.3.356) into the black tar-like substance found in embalmed bodies—ripen into Othello's tortured vision in which Desdemona is progressively figured as mummy.

In *Othello* masculine jealousy, exhibited as irrational fluctuations between morbid suspicions of, and fantasies of women, is the chief symptom of a fear of the intolerable nature of women. Iago, whose own jealous imaginings of Emilia "gnaw" at his bowels "like a poisonous mineral" (2.1.295), stirs the shared paranoia towards women that drives the play. Exploiting Othello's weakness to jealousy, Iago plots to "pour this pestilence into his ear" (2.3.351) thus goading Othello with insinuations about Desdemona to "a jealousy so strong / That judgment cannot cure" (2.1.299-300). This fear is mediated through the regulation of women's bodies, and the threat to women lies in the destructive potential of such dangerous masculine logic. Shakespeare associates his saga of pathological masculine anxiety with other discourses of the body, in particular cannibalism, and European medical discourse, with its descriptions of epilepsy and mummy, and its dangerously gendered economics. In the play, the discourse of cannibalism, deployed simultaneously with the discourse of female virginal mummy, offers a reading of the medicinal use of the female body as cannibalism. Thus, in this corporeal equation, Desdemona's corpse is "*fille vièrge*": as the aromatic, embalmed virgin corpse of Othello's imagination, she is the fictional embodiment of the supreme mummy remedy.

A threatening metaphorics of cannibalism permeates the play, with characters constructed as both eaters of human flesh, and human flesh to be eaten; thus bodily

integrity is repeatedly reinscribed and the eater/eaten boundary is constantly shifted, giving us a moveable feast, so to speak. Supporting Desdemona's appeal to accompany him to Cyprus, Othello denies his cannibalistic intent when he argues that he desires her presence, "...not / To please the palate of my appetite" (1.3.263); however, this is immediately contradicted when she becomes the viscid "honey" "sweet[ner]" to his "comforts" (2.1.203-206) upon their arrival in Cyprus. In the terms of my argument for the semiotic connection between cannibalism and the medical use of the body in the play, Desdemona's melliferousness is significant: honey, attributed with a special cleansing power, was an important ingredient in the early modern pharmacological store.[16] In this form, Desdemona is both a sugary treat, and a soothing, purifying drug for Othello's "tempest[s]" (2.1.183). Iago, on the other hand, fueled by his own sexual perversity and appetite for harm, sees the relationship between Desdemona and Othello, where each is at once eater and eaten, as a cannibalistic sexual banquet which will soon turn rancid: "The food that to him now is luscious as locusts shall be to him shortly as acerb as coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body..." (1.3.348-351). And yet the women never identify themselves as sexual cannibals; rather they are constructed as such by the men who, in Othello's words, identify women as a whole race of "delicate creatures" whose "appetites" (3.3.273-4) men wish to contain.

Ultimately the metaphorical eater/eaten boundary demarcates men as the cannibalistic consumers who, in their downward spiral of insecurity, are imagined as, and imagine themselves as, eaters of the flesh of women. This is clearly the case when Othello, incensed by the fear that Desdemona would "cuckold" him, threatens to turn butcher and convert her into dissected food, and "...chop her into messes" (4.1.196).

Furthermore, the point is brought home even more powerfully by Emilia who registers men as the cannibalistic eaters of women when she declares: "They are all but stomachs, and we all but food: / They eat us hungerly, and when they are full / They belch us" (3.4.105-107). Here the play's discourse of cannibalism is explicit: the flesh of women is the food for the jealous appetites of men whose stomachs are the greedy zones of corporeal mediation and conquest—women's nourishing goodnesses are greedily snatched, gnawed and ejected as wind.

Emilia's wary recognition of the dangerous appetites of men, directly following as it does her witnessing of the handkerchief confrontation between Desdemona and Othello, makes Othello's description of the missing handkerchief ominously significant. At this crucial juncture, Emilia also draws the connection between Othello's jealousy—"is not this man jealous?" (3.4.100)—and the masculine hunger for women's bodies that the play performs. The jealous paranoia suffered by Othello, figured as epilepsy, is a symptom of an obsessive cultural distrust of women's sexual fidelity. In a society where men are consumed by such distrust, it seems inevitable that this anxiety should be mediated through women's bodies; therefore the attempt to capture and preserve some kind of pure essence in the female corpse comes as no surprise. However, the inescapably dangerous corollary to this trope is that the live female body contains the potential for the most desirable healing flesh, a priceless essence realizable only in death and ultimate consumption. Moreover, and herein lies the disquieting threat to women, the construction of the virginal female corpse as the ideal remedy is used to insinuate that the only truly chaste female body is a dead, embalmed one. In these terms, when Othello

describes the complexities of his mother's handkerchief to Desdemona, his words, like the handkerchief, are interwoven with sinister implications for women and their bodies.

As a marker of Desdemona's sexual chastity, what Linda Boose calls the "disturbing handkerchief"[17] signifies the quintessence of women: the female body preserved in its fullest potential—unblemished, virginal, chaste—reduced to a post-human derivative. It is significant to my argument that Desdemona constructs her own body in terms of contained purity: "If to preserve this vessel for my lord / From any hated foul unlawful touch / Be not to be a strumpet, I am none" (4.2.85-87). However, preserving female chastity is a bloody task. Saturated with female corpses, the handkerchief is heavy with the portentous message of women's voices. Mediated through Othello, we hear the warning chorus of the sybil; the Egyptian charmer; Othello's mother; and, most telling for Desdemona, the virgins whose pure bodily essences are contained in the dissected, embalmed hearts that give colour and pharmacological power to the handkerchief: "there's magic in the web of it. [...] it was dyed in mummy, which the skilful / Conserved of maidens' hearts" (3.4.71 and 76-77). The threat to Desdemona is obvious. The dyeing of cloth is a deliberate and careful process; but here it is destabilized by the bodily violence that underpins the bloody production of the handkerchief. The ominous punning significance of "dyed," with its connotation of death, shatters what appears to be the magical charm of the handkerchief. In its multivalence "dyed" also suggests dead women; mutilated female bodies; staining virgins' blood; and of course male orgasm.

In this context, the menacing message to Desdemona is that there are those with the skills and sadistic desires to execute, violate, penetrate, dissect and embalm the bodies

of virtuous women, thus forever ensuring their preservation and submission in a state of chastity. Moreover the direct references to the corpse drug, "mummy"— replete with intimations of the dead female body as ingestible remedy—is inarguably threatening to Desdemona. This is reinforced by contemporary medical prescriptions for epilepsy that subscribe to understandings of the healing power of virginal blood and human hearts. As Schroder claims, "*Menstrual Blood* of Virgins Dryed, is good inwardly against ...Epilepsie," and "*The Heart* dryed, and drunk, cures Epilepsie."[18] The danger that Desdemona will be transformed into mummy is reinforced for the audience when Othello vows that her bed "shall with lust's blood be spotted" (5.1.36). In this violent image of polluted bedding, the careful process of dyeing returns in a form of chaos—"spotting"—thus creating a clear connection between the female bodies of the blood-stained handkerchief, and the imagined bloody defilement of Desdemona's body.[19]

The allusion to the eviscerated virgins' hearts that impregnate the handkerchief offers a sinister commentary on the troubling epistemology of female corporeality in which the play is heavily invested. The heart in particular, as Michael Neill points out, had an important allegorical significance beyond its biological existence and was understood as the locus of impenetrable psychological truths concealed by physiognomical appearances.[20] For example, the hearts of drawn and quartered traitors were frequently displayed as a sign of their hidden treachery.[21] Part of Othello's frustration lies in the fact that, denied access to the imagined "villainous secrets" (4.2.22) of Desdemona's heart, he is forced to rely on external appearances and innuendo as proof of her sexual fidelity. Although Desdemona's "complexion," like a "young and rose-lipp'd cherubin" (4.2.62-63), offers external proof of her innocence, Othello is spurred on

by Iago's provocative warning that, "Her honour is an essence that's not seen" (4.1.16).[22] The epistemological dilemma faced by Othello in his ignorance of Desdemona's chastity is akin to the challenge that faced early modern anatomists in search of the unbroken hymen,[23] and raises the question: "How would one know that the *fille vièrge* was truly virginal?" The answer, that there is no visible external proof, underpins the contemporary masculine paranoia we see performed in the play, and feeds the uncontrollable desire to command women's chastity at all costs. Thus, as the vivid emblems of women's elusive chastity, the mummified hearts gouged from the bodies of young virgins permeating the handkerchief—that include in their associative range the medical production and ingestion of corpses—serve as a timely reminder that the desperate search for proof of a woman's virtue lies a mere knife-cut away.

The insidious insinuations in the handkerchief story are not lost on Desdemona, and it is revealingly ironic that Othello's "travailous history" (1.3.140) has the power to both nurture and wound. As Judith Butler writes, "If language can sustain the body, it can also threaten its existence."[24] Desdemona has already, "with greedy ear" (1.3.150), absorbed the "wonderous pitiful" (1.3.162) tale of "the cannibals that each other eat" (1.3.144). Then, revealing her discomfort with certain aspects of Othello's story, part of her confused but fascinated reaction was to wish "she had not heard it" (1.3.163). Now, we see a similar reaction, although much more determinedly renouncing, in her shocked response to the handkerchief story: "Then would to God that I had never seen't!" (3.4.79), thus revealing how clearly she *does* see the handkerchief as the sinister signifier for her sexual chastity, and the danger to herself if it is lost. But to see is also to recognize, and in the charged atmosphere of cannibal metaphorics of the play, the story of cannibals

comes dangerously close to home for Desdemona when she identifies the full import of the handkerchief. Collapsing a behaviour that is constructed as foreign and abhorrent with a corpse pharmacology that is unnervingly familiar, the play exposes the cultural contradictions surrounding cannibalism: contradictions that are clearly not lost on Desdemona.

As we have seen, in early modern European corpse pharmacology, the human body, transformed and mediated through a whole host of practices, was swallowed, ingested and digested in the quest for the healing benefits of its balsamic essence. In attempts to bring relief to the sick, physicians drew extensively on a primarily Paracelsian pharmacological arsenal of corpse drugs. Although we have every reason to doubt Iago's integrity, he diagnoses Othello's two collapses as "epilepsy" (4.1.50).[25] Epilepsy, or the "falling sickness," was frequently treated with corpse therapeutics: with human blood, mummy and cranium.[26] Drinking hot blood was commonly prescribed as a treatment for epilepsy, although, as Schroder makes clear, a possible side effect was the risk of inducing an epileptic seizure: "*Blood* drunk hot, cures the Epilepsie [...] (drink fresh or in powder). [...] Be wary of drinking of blood, for it makes them tremble that take it, and sometimes brings Epilepsies."[27] Significantly, when we witness Othello's first epileptic seizure, his cry, "O blood, blood, blood!" (3.3.454), makes a desperate demand, not only for revenge, but also for the curative power of blood, the most salvific of all bodily elixirs.

The pharmacological significance of the handkerchief and its relationship to epilepsy becomes particularly telling in this context, and functions at different levels. Not only is the handkerchief saturated with the corpse drugs used for epilepsy, but,

insofar as it was sewn in a "prophetic fury" (3.4.74) by an ancient sibyl, epilepsy is also implicated in the handkerchief's production and purpose. In 1602, the physician Jean Taxil refers to the phenomenon of "possessed" epileptics who, "in the *fury* of their affliction...were seized by epileptic convulsions" (emphasis added), and he gives as his examples, "the Sibyls who were convulsed, fell down, frothed and were tormented when possessed by the devil."[28] In general a strong connection between epilepsy and Arabic prophets is made in medieval writings; as well Neoplatonic authors such as Ficino describe many instances of the curious connection between epilepsy and those possessing prophetic powers.[29] Possibly Othello's father, described as unpredictable in his relationship with Othello's mother and in need of "subdu[ing]," was also an epileptic (3.4.61-65), and perhaps the "Egyptian" "charmer" knew this when she gave the handkerchief to Othello's mother (3.4.58-59).[30]

Entangled in the fury and prophetic power of epilepsy, and the medical treatment of epilepsy, the handkerchief is a potent emblem of Othello's illness. When Othello complains of "a pain upon my forehead" (3.3.288), Desdemona instinctively offers to "bind it hard" (3.3.290) with the handkerchief, before she is even aware of its portentousness.[31] Drenched with the blood of virgins, the handkerchief suggests the "blood-soaked plasters"[32] of the early modern pharmacological reserve, and Desdemona's proposed treatment of Othello is consistent with van Helmont's prescription that, "...some external Medicines bound about the head, do preserve from an Epileptical fall and fit...."[33] Othello's words, "Your napkin is too little" (3.3.291), which offer both a rejection of any form of recuperation by or for Desdemona, and a trivialization of the

healing power of the handkerchief, create a prophetic moment in the play.[34] Helplessly enmeshed in Iago's scheme, Othello foresees his own chronic condition as fatal and beyond healing. The Greek physician Aretaeus offers a similar understanding of the persistent nature of epilepsy: "...if the mischief lurk there until it strike root, it will not yield either to the physician or the changes of age, so as to take its departure, but lives with the patient until death."[35] The healing potential of the handkerchief, with its complex conflation of powers, comes too late for the mischief that lurks in Othello. The handkerchief is dropped, and its ensuing exchanges and manipulations enable the successful culmination of Iago's portentous design.

The already complex relationship between the handkerchief and Desdemona's bed linen becomes even more metonymically significant with Desdemona's insistence that, in the event of her death, she be shrouded in her wedding sheets.[36] Her instructions to Emilia to, "Lay on my bed my wedding sheets" (4.2.107) and "If I do die before thee, prithee shroud me / In one of these same sheets (4.3.22-23), set the stage for her "mummification" and reveal Desdemona's own sibylline powers as she understands Othello's sinister plan for her.[37] Her directive that she be bound in her bed linen uncannily connotes the ritual wrapping of the corpse in linen of Egyptian funeral rites, while registering starkly against Othello's refusal to be bandaged by the Egyptian handkerchief. Here the arrangement to shroud her body brings Desdemona dangerously close to the mummified female corpses of the handkerchief. As Read's epigraph above tells us, the wealthy Egyptian corpse was preserved in aromatic spices possessing intrinsic balsamic virtues, then bound in linen shrouds soaked in the same fragrant fluid. Desdemona's direction, that she be shrouded in linen, represents the final stage of a

preservation process that reflected a desire for permanence and renewal: to arrest the corruptibility of the flesh. Believing in Desdemona's physical corruption—that she is "a whore" (5.2.132)—Othello's vision of her corpse, her flesh embalmed and memorialized in a state of purity, petrified and made incorruptible in death, where he will "not shed her blood / Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow / And smooth as monumental alabaster" (5.2.3-5), suggests the Egyptian practice of arresting physical corruption.[38] For Othello, Desdemona's body, as Mary Douglas has written elsewhere, is "an imperfect container which will only be perfect if it can be made impermeable."[39] I agree with Neill's argument that this image represents Othello's fear of what he might find if he makes an incision upon "Desdemona's immaculate body";[40] however Othello's epistemological purpose here is overwhelmed by his obsessive need to control and fix Desdemona's body in a permanently sealed state of unmarred chastity, like the "chaste stars" (5.2.2) audience of his soliloquy.

While questions have been raised regarding whether or not their marriage is consummated, this has little relevance for Othello's understanding of Desdemona's "virginity" as a fixed bodily state, conditional on her sexually chaste behaviour.[41] As Loughlin points out, "...although English Renaissance culture is wholly involved in constructing the virginal body as transitional, as naturally and physiologically intended for marriage, the anatomical search for the hymen also seeks to create a fixed and absolute body that can be defined as virginal in and of itself."[42] Othello's need to contain Desdemona in a "virginal" state becomes crucial, not only to his own well-being, but in an act of universalization, to the well-being of "more men!": in other words, all men in danger of "betray[al]" (5.2.6) by women. Hence Othello is trapped in a dangerous

masculine pathology within which the *fille vièrge* is imagined as salvatory, and Desdemona will be sacrificed in order to, in the words of George Bataille, "save the rest from a mortal danger of contagion."[43]

In his disturbed, necrophilic reverie over the sleeping Desdemona, Othello envisions her as contagion's antithesis: a fragrant, embalmed, virginal corpse replete with salvific essences. At some level Othello seems to acknowledge and seek the intrinsic "virtue" and "goodness" of Desdemona that Iago describes and callously exploits (2.3.356). Here he resembles an apothecary morbidly seeking to grasp and preserve the quintessence of a "virginal" female body. In this vision, Desdemona's body will not "rot and perish" (4.1.178) as it does in Othello's earlier revenge vision, but yields a profound drug: "O balmy breath" (5.2.16).[44] With his mouth on hers he inhales, tastes and ingests the therapeutic properties of her body like a drug.[45] If we tease out the pharmacological significance of the term "balmy," we have several interpretative possibilities. Desdemona's body is fragrant, but with the connotation of "balm" it is also a powerful medicament with the potential to heal, soothe and calm. Furthermore, following the OED definition of "balm" as a "fragrant and medicinal exudation from certain trees" (1), and an "aromatic preparation for embalming" (2),[46] "balm" is clearly connected to the "Arabian trees" whose "medicinal gum" (5.2.348-49) Othello's tears resemble. Thus Othello is inextricably linked to the medical preparation and preservation of corpses. The disquieting irony of this scene, with its devastating implications, registers Brabantio's uneasiness expressed earlier when he associates Othello with the fraudulent practices of perfidious apothecaries who misuse "drugs or minerals" (1.2.74) and "medicines bought of mountebanks" (1.3.62). Then, Brabantio feared that Othello had drugged Desdemona.

Now, outstripping Brabantio's worst fears, Othello constructs Desdemona herself as a drug.

In this crucial moment, Othello performs the treacherous apothecary who not only mines but also samples the pharmacological possibilities of the human corpse. Fully savoring and assimilating the pure distillations of Desdemona's body, he consumes her life into himself; like the elusive essence of a corpse captured in that brief moment before the onset of decay, Othello figures her as a rose he inhales "on the tree" (5.2.15) whose perfection is contained in this living moment because, once plucked, he "cannot give it vital growth again" (5.2.14).[47] This innocent form is how Othello envisions Desdemona preserved in her death: "Be thus when thou art dead and I will kill thee / And love thee after" (5.2.18-19): embalmed forever in a quintessential state of virginity. Ironically, this coda is an alarming manifestation of Othello's earlier yearning to preserve the perfection of their reunion in Cyprus: "If it were now to die / 'Twere now to be most happy" (2.1.187-88), when he acknowledges (also with a kiss) the therapeutic benefits—the "content so absolute" (2.1.181, repeated in 189 and 194)—that he derives from the "sweet powers" (2.1.193) of Desdemona's physical presence.[48] Suspended in the pristine moment of death, Desdemona's body becomes "the true pharmaceutical mumia" of the Paracelsian pharmacological arsenal: a healthy body which suffered an unnatural death, potent in its power to heal epilepsy. In this instant of arrested corporeal purity she too resembles the youthful, unmarked corpse required for medicinal preservation and preparation, such as Oswald Croll's recipe describes: "whole (not maimed) clear without blemishes."[49]

Desdemona's corpse, figured as remedy, carries the terrible salvific burden of Othello's pathological paranoia. Yet any masculine healing in *Othello* is impossible because the superior curative power of the virginal female corpse is a medical and cultural fiction that reiterates the powerful regulatory myth of female chastity, threatening and controlling insurgent female corporeality. In a sense the play becomes the handkerchief, tightly woven with the disease of masculine epistemological anxiety, manifested as epilepsy, and soaked with the blood of good women. Like the murdered, dissected, mummified and eaten female bodies that saturate the handkerchief, women are violated and destroyed within the "highly charged and hysterically invested"[50] masculine culture of the play. The handkerchief, which, like Desdemona's corpse, is compromised by the sinister masculine agenda of constructing and policing women's bodies through an obsessive process of mythologizing and violating, can thus have no therapeutic power. Significantly then, Emilia's rhetoric of cannibalism, quoted earlier, serves as a powerful counter to the reading of Desdemona as salvific virgin, and highlights the complex juggling of figurative language that the play performs. Thus, Desdemona's famous refusal of Othello's agency as the murderous consumer of her body: "Nobody. I myself" (5.2.122), can also be understood as a denial of a corpse economy in which women's bodies are constructed, as either food or remedy for men, as well as an attempt to redefine and reinscribe the powerful significance of her own body.

II.

> Distance—woman—averts truth—the philosopher. She bestows the idea. And the idea withdraws, becomes transcendent, inaccessible, seductive. It beckons from afar (*in die Ferne*). Its veils flout in the distance. The dream of death begins. It is woman.
>
> (Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*[51])

> Mortuary cannibalism...passes on the vital essence of the newly dead so that it will not be lost from the general pool available to society.
>
> (Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Divine Hunger*[52])

It is curious that in a poetic enterprise that keeps the mind's eye fixed firmly on the human body, Elizabeth Drury's virginal body and corpse repeatedly dissolve into the larger personal spiritual purpose of John Donne's poetic *corpus*. Unlike Desdemona, whose final words, "Nobody. I myself," reject masculine constructions of her body, the young virginal female subject of Donne's *Anniversary* poems "expir'd" (*FE*, 74) before she had the opportunity to define her own corporeal integrity in language.[53] Because she died before she became an object of masculine exchange in marriage, while "the world studied whose this peece should be," in death, "...she can be no bodies else, nor shee" (*FA*, 71-72): neither wife, nor woman, she is denied both voice and agency.[54] And, with the subtle pun on "nobody" and "no body" in the expression "no bodies," not only is she stripped of her identity as a woman, but also her dead body is drained of its corporeality. While Othello perceives Desdemona's corpse as the embodiment of preserved, pharmacological virtue, Elizabeth Drury's materiality is missing from the start, and she is conceived instead as her body's vital essence to be administered as an antidote for the

deep masculine spiritual disillusionment that underpins Donne's poems. Turning loss into gain—the benefits of Elizabeth Drury's virginal death to the masculine world are clear—the discourse of medicine in the *Anniversaries* is deployed simultaneously with the discourse of sustenance for the soul; and what the poems persistently prescribe as a remedy for the world's spiritual affliction is the virginal quintessence of the "shee" of the poems. In this form, the pharmacological power of the *fille vièrge* mummy of the early modern medical imagination is poetically deployed as a universal curative for the ailing masculine soul; thus, as an object of spiritual exchange, "shee" becomes "everyman's."[55]

It is reported that an exchange occurred between Ben Jonson and Donne in 1619 in which Jonson told Donne that if *The First Anniversary* "...had been written of ye Virgin Marie it had been something," and Donne replied, "...that he described the Idea of a Woman, not as she was."[56] These words, which have shadowed interpretations of Donne's poems ever since, offer a clue to what is so frustrating about the poems: their repeated elision of the female body. In the *Anniversaries* Donne seizes the occasion of the anniversary of Elizabeth Drury's death, and the idea of her virginity—in death she is completely at his creative disposal—to explore the state of the soul. This intense probing of the human condition, figured in the poems as a spiritually decayed world, is somatic: symbolically and ritually mediated, not through Elizabeth Drury's body, but through a repeated denial of her body.

And yet at one level the search for spiritual aid is carried out through a fantasy of sexual intercourse that has a remedial function; thus gratification of the body serves to alleviate the troubled masculine soul.[57] This eroticisation of the path to spiritual well-being is performed in the speaker's fantasy of having discovered and penetrated the

treasures of Elizabeth Drury's virginal female body *before* her death—bringing a tinge of sexual bizarreness to the poems. Consequently, while the *Anniversaries* are generally considered to be epideictic works, the praise of the dead is also deftly deployed to erotic ends. Unlike the fraught gender politics of *Othello*, where the only solution to men's obsessive jealousies of women is their death—as a corpse, Desdemona is forever preserved *for* Othello and *from* other men—in the *Anniversaries*, spiritual crisis and healing is played out as a sharing: the exquisite, because virginal and virtuous, essence of Elizabeth Drury is generously passed around, metaphorically and textually, for the health, pleasure, and gratification of Donne's masculine readership.

The eucharistic implications of Elizabeth Drury as a salvatory offering for the sick soul of the world—that brings to mind the *viaticum* administered to the sick and dying as food for life's last journey—are unavoidable, especially in light of the six opening lines of *The First Anniversary*:

> When that rich soule which to her Heaven is gone,
> Whom all they celebrate, who know they have one,
> (For who is sure he hath a soule, unlesse
> It see, and Judge, and follow worthinesse,
> And by Deedes praise it? He who doth not this,
> May lodge an In-mate soule, but this not his.) (1-6)

The key lies in the word "celebrate," the meaning of which goes beyond "commemorate" to embrace also the ritual process of spatial and temporal reenactment of the Eucharist mass celebration.[58] However, Elizabeth Drury is not the corporeal matter for which the *Devotions* hunger; rather, in her representation as distilled essence, physical access to her is denied and she is symbolically offered as communal medicine for the ailing souls of Donne's male celebrants—an exclusive group restricted to those faithful who recognize

that they have one. Here Donne's theology seems particularly Protestant in its flavour,[59] and the profound alimentary longing for the body of Christ that overwhelms the *Devotions* is not immediately recognizable in the *Anniversaries*, where the possibility of Elizabeth Drury as an ingestible body, either medical or eucharistic, is repeatedly elided. And yet the persistence of this elision raises the logical possibility, not that a residual Protestant hunger for Christ's body is absent from the poems, but that a virginal female body is simply the *wrong* body to satisfy such an appetite—forbidden *manna* so to speak. In the *Anniversaries* the possibility of Elizabeth Drury as food for the suffering masculine soul is consistently thwarted by the troubling fact of her gender; thus she hovers, in life and in death, as a disembodied healing trace that beckons seductively from the pages of Donne's poems.

Elizabeth Drury, a specimen ripe for preservation and purification, is embalmed and distilled in the *Anniversaries* in the virginal moment of her death. While other corruptible human bodies "will not last out" a lengthy anatomy (*FA*, 436), her virtuous quintessence is contained within the restorative space of the poems, sealed off from the putrefaction of life and death. In *The First Anniversary* she is preserved and memorialized forever when Donne, playing the divine undertaker, takes on this "great Office"of "trying to emprison her" (470) in "song" (444):

> Which when I saw that a strict grave could do,
> I saw not why verse might not doe so too.
> Verse hath a middle nature: heaven keepes soules,
> The grave keeps bodies, verse the fame enroules (471-474).[60]

Here Donne's verse, with its immortalizing power, is a textual crypt, clearly superior to any physical tomb. This logic of the grave continues in *A Funerall Elegie* where, "...to

trust a Tombe with such a ghest, / Or to confine her in a Marble chest" (1-2)—and thus to inevitable physical decay—represents a loss to the world which is avoidable if the corpse is disinterred from its earthly tomb and reinterred, to be preserved and distilled, in verse.

While *A Funerall Elegie* begins by questioning the enduring power of verse to shroud and preserve so precious an object:

> And can shee, who no longer would be shee,
> Being such a Tabernacle, stoope to bee
> In paper wrap't; Or, when she would not lie
> In such a house, dwell in an Elegie? (15-18)

the hesitancy is half-hearted, and easily shrugged off with the words: "But 'tis no matter; we may well allow / Verse to live so long as the world will now" (19-20). As Elisabeth Bronfen argues, preserving the female body in representation "circumvents a dissolution and corruption of the body" and places her into "the 'masculine' symbolic realm of eternal unchanged forms."[61] Hence, for the duration of the world of the *Anniversaries*, the virginal corpse will be preserved, shrouded and refined in the fine vellum pages of Donne's incorruptible verse. Furthermore, in what also constitutes a plug for the regenerative potential of his own creative powers, in Donne's poetic "grave [that] shall restore / Her, greater, purer, firmer, then before" (45-46), Elizabeth Drury will exceed her own natural virtuousness.[62]

Donne's personal spirituality depended on a balance between the spiritual and the sensual: "God hath made us of both" body and soul, he argues; "we understand all things...by benefit of the senses."[63] In other words, external bodily experiences and sensations are essential to inward spirituality. The *Anniversaries* negotiate the tension between the importance of the masculine bodily experience, including sexual experience,

to spiritual wholeness and the belief in women's bodies as impure. In Donne this tension is played out as an ideal masculine spiritual state that depends on experiencing the ideal feminine physical state, conceived in the poems as virginal—a socially and culturally determined ideal that goes hand in hand with the notion of virginal spirituality. The seductive idea of perfect womanhood (physically and spiritually virginal) whose vital essence, as I will show, has the power to heal and regenerate the world, confronts accepted understandings of the destructive, emasculating potential of the female body which, in *The First Anniversary*, is "...sent for mans reliefe and [is] cause of his languishment"(102):

> For that first mariage was our funerall:
> One woman at one blow, then kill'd us all,
> And singly, one by one, they kill us now.
> We doe delightfully our selves allow
> To that consumption; and profusely blinde,
> We kill our selves, to propogate our kinde.
> And yet we doe not that; we are not men. (105-111)

Women are "principall[s] in ill" (104), and their legacy from Eve, a power over life and death, dangerously coupled with a propensity for evil, represents a fatal end for biologically determined masculinity which is—and the absurdity is not lost here—by its very nature, suicidal.[64] The misogynistic derision of this passage, an example of what Lewalski describes as the "satiric element" in *The First Anniversary* "produced by a highly sophisticated complex of tones and devices,"[65] draws on commonplace sexual humour. The repetition of "kill" is a seventeenth-century pun on "die," signifying male orgasm; and the linking of harm to men with female sexual excessiveness, and the wasting of masculine life from orgasm, belong in a culturally familiar discourse that derogates women.[66] In general sex with women is a risky business for men: a point

Donne perplexes in *Paradox 6*: "For I have seldome seene one which consumes his *substance* and *body* upon them, escape *diseases*, or *beggery*."[67]

The desire to establish a model of virtuous—and therefore safe—femininity, absolute and immutable in its sexual and spiritual integrity, is played out as an investigation of Elizabeth Drury's state of mind and her choices, not only as a woman but to *be* a woman, which verify her purity:

> She, of whom th'Auncients seem'd to prophesie,
> When they call'd virtues by the name of she,
> She in whom vertue was so much refin'd,
> That for Allay vnto so pure a minde
> Shee tooke the weaker Sex, she that could driue
> The poysonous tincture, and the stayne of *Eue*,
> Out of her thoughts, and deeds; and purifie
> All, by a true religious Alchimy. (*FA*, 177-182)

In this coalition of science and women's sexuality we see any possibility of Elizabeth Drury's sexualized body elided by psychological integrity. Within this paradigm, her gender, her body, and her sexual history, defined as virginal and thus without the stain of fallen womanhood, are coded as a freely chosen purity of mind; in other words she chooses to deny her own corporeality. Donne capitalizes on the cultural obsession with female chastity in his construction of women's propensity to sin as an autonomous decision. Thus Elizabeth Drury becomes a model of female virtue for all women when both her physical and spiritual virginal state, and the very fact of her femaleness, represent a deliberate choice that positions her as impervious to the weaknesses and temptations of her sex, and as superior to fallen—and therefore polluted—womanhood. Furthermore, this ironic empowerment of Elizabeth Drury has far-reaching implications because, in the process of distillation of her body in which the poems are implicated, her

virtue is potentially a universal spiritual purgative for "All." In other words, to preserve one's virginity in death has positive benefits for the world of men.

Paradoxically, although consistent with the idealization of female virginity in the poems, in a period of Protestant commitment to marriage as the natural state for, and chaste purpose of, women, Donne represents marriage as an infirmity for women.[68] Not only does she deliberately avoid her destiny of flawed female sexuality and the contamination of Eve, but Elizabeth Drury also escapes the debilitating yoke of marriage, with its dangerous sexual demands on women. In *A Funerall Elegie* the speaker explains the dilemma of marriage, which, though it does not contaminate, mars virginal purity: "For mariage, though it doe not staine, doth dye. / To scape th'infirmities which waite upone / Woman, shee went away, before sh'was one" (76-78). Again there is the sexual pun on "dye" and significantly, echoing the multivalences of "dyed" in *Othello*, connotations of death, as well as blood and orgasm.[69] Thus the rupture of the hymen in marriage unleashes a dangerous chain of events that are beyond a woman's control.

However, while the perils of marriage to women are manifold, choosing to escape the loss of virginity is equally fraught. In one of the several curious suicidal moments in the poems, Elizabeth Drury is represented as the author of her own death: she chose death over lost virginity and the intolerable burdens of womanhood. Hence her voice is not raised with those "poore mothers" who lament, "We are borne ruinous... / That children come not right, nor orderly, / Except they headlong come, and fall upon / An ominous precipitation" (*FA*, 95-98). Rather, in her dead purity, she is locked away in the poems from the gross distortions and the physical risks that beset the female body in marriage, and is preserved instead as the representation of ideal womanhood. That Elizabeth

Drury's death constitutes an act of self-sacrifice in the name of physical and spiritual purity is crucial to Donne's poetic project. The idea of her body, selflessly stripped of its corporeality and thus of its feminine weaknesses—neither corrupt, nor corruptible, nor corrupting—is seductively attractive as an ideal of womanhood and a universal panacea.[70]

Curiously, while the *Anniversaries* attest to Donne's fascination with medicine and the human body, it is not to Elizabeth Drury's body that Donne turns in search of an answer to spiritual disillusionment; and it is ironic that, in poems saturated with a metaphorics of medicine (both pharmacological and anatomical) that insist on the corporeal, Elizabeth Drury's corporeality, and thus her potential not only to do harm but to be harmed, is elided by the construction of her death as a personal vote for virginity and her body as virginity's quintessence. Instead Donne's spiritual investigations are mapped onto an anatomy of the world—conceived of as an ailing body in the throes of death—and pursued through meditations on the body in its various stages of illness.[71] Most commentators on Donne's medical knowledge would agree with Don Cameron Allen's observation that, "We could establish a dictionary of medical terms based on Donne's writings."[72] This is particularly pertinent to the *Anniversaries* that richly attest to Donne's familiarity with, and frequent skepticism towards, not only contemporary medical doctrines, but also anatomical dissections. Allen remarks that in many of his writings Donne's ideas draw on the medical authority of Paracelsus;[73] certainly the figurative language of medicine employed by Donne in his anatomy of the afflictions of his world is particularly Paracelsian in its flavour, despite his barb at the "new phisicke" (*FA*, 160), and although his dissection poetics remain wholly Vesalian.[74]

What makes the *Anniversaries* so fascinating is the fact that Donne brings his knowledge of contemporary medicine and anatomical practices together with accepted beliefs in the pharmacological power of the human corpse, and medical constructions of the efficacy of the female virginal corpse, in an attempt to treat the spiritually empty and disintegrating human condition with the elusive spirit of one young woman. As the healing quintessence for the sick world, Elizabeth Drury resembles Donne's understanding of mummy as a drug to be ingested when "our natural inborn preservative is corrupted or wasted."[75] The way to heal or regenerate humanity is to grasp and absorb the latent "vertue," or life-giving principle, of her body; and in this form Elizabeth Drury is true Paracelsian mummy. It is through her salvific trace that Donne attempts to purge the diseased core of human nature, and the dangerous frailty of the human condition.

Through an anatomical exploration of the ailing world, the *Anniversaries* seeks to fathom the mysteries of human existence —what Sherwood identifies as physical creation and the soul itself. [76] The speaker tells the world that, in order to analyze, to learn from, and to heal the world's disease, it is necessary to perform a dissection: "...to gaine by thy Anatomy" (60) in order "...to succour thee" (55).[77] Like early modern anatomies, the *Anniversaries* are fuelled by the astonishing and persistent belief in some kind of energy that remains after death. After Elizabeth Drury's death, the "force" (*SA*, 8) that struggles to survive within the dying world, is graphically illustrated in the sustained simile of the final contortions of the decapitated man:

> ...as sometimes in a beheaded man,
> Though at those two Red seas, which freely ran,
> One from the Trunke, another from the Head,
> His eies will twinckle, and his tongue will roll,
> As though he beckned, and cal'd backe his Soul,

> He graspes his hands, and he puls up his feet,
> And seems to reach, and to step forth to meet
> His soul.... (*SA*, 9-17)

This macabre image performs in naturalistic detail the vitality of the human body as it struggles in the transitional moment between life and death, and which medical methods attempt to understand and capture.[78] Furthermore, in this physiological reminder of the mysterious energies that drive the body, we cannot fail to notice the crucial elements of the Paracelsian pharmacological model: the violent death; the sanguine fluid; and the "Balsamick spiritual substance," of life captured in the corpse drug.[79]

This graphically physical analogy of how the world "strugles...now shee is gone" (*SA*, 21) offers a stark contrast to Donne's attempts to describe Elizabeth Drury as anything but corporeal as he endeavours to deny the world any kind of physical access to her. In the constant rhetorical moves that successfully elude attempts to nail down her physical existence, Elizabeth Drury's body dissolves into Donne's poetic *corpus*, leaving us with the sense that even before her death she had no life, no identity, no body. The use of shifting time and space in the *Anniversaries*, which keeps the ostensible subject of the poems in a state of infinite suspension—to be co-opted at appropriate moments into Donne's poetic project—functions to evade the issue of Elizabeth Drury's corporeality. In a pattern that uncannily suggests the spatial and temporal symbolism of the eucharistic sacrament that I discuss in Chapter 3, the *Anniversaries* hover between the past (before Elizabeth Drury's death) and the present (the anniversary of her death) but they also, in their vision of a spiritually renewed world, look to the future. Within these spatial and temporal frames for which death is the defining moment, the poems imagine the world in relation to Elizabeth Drury, as sustained by her life; debilitated by her death; and in need

of her as a regenerating source. In the *First Anniversary* Donne constructs an extraordinary memory of Elizabeth Drury as the vital essence intrinsic to the world's being: an image that is underpinned by the Paracelsian belief in the human body as the source of precious drugs for curing the bodies of others. The speaker tells the world that during her life, Elizabeth Drury's "name defin'd thee, gave thee forme and frame" (37), and that she was "Thy'ntrinsique Balme, and thy preservative" (57); but now with her death, "thou has lost thy sense and memory" (28). Here, in the fraught masculine culture of the poems, where even in life she is denied corporeality, Elizabeth Dury appears as the virginal quintessence—metonymically suggesting medical representations of the *fille vièrge* mummy—essential to the well-being of the world.

Eloquently shadowing the construction of Elizabeth Drury as the virtuous essence of corpse pharmacology, is the eucharistic construction of Christ as a "supernatural *pharmakon*" whose body could miraculously nourish and remedy all spiritual and physical ills; thus registering Elizabeth Drury as alimentary—medically and eucharistically consumable. In life Elizabeth Drury was already the *elixir vitae* that nourished the world, and the spiritual wasting created by her death is embodied as a form of physical starvation and deprivation. Without her the world is overcome by a "great consumption"; weakened by the "wound" of her loss; and in a state of "fever," suffering "fits," and the loss of identity (*FA*, 19-28). Until her death, Elizabeth Drury sustained this world which was, in the speaker's reminder, "Nothing but she and her thou hast o'repast" (*FA*, 32). There is obviously a sense in the term "o'repast" of the world having passed over, or outlived and forgotten Elizabeth Drury, or, as Frank Manley argues, that since she was the world's identity, the world has outlived its own death.[80] But the cannibalistic

appetite of the world for Elizabeth Drury is revealed in the punning possibilities of "over-repast," especially in light of the previous "consumption."[81] If the world has sustained itself on her life, then her death represents an over-consumption on her body; and now, deprived of its regular sustenance, the world self-consumes. This image of Elizabeth Drury as consumable is powerfully reinforced in *The Second Anniversary* where she offered herself as food: "Shee, shee embrac'd a sickness, gave it meat, / The purest Blood, and Breath, that ere it eat" (147-48). "Sickness" here is ambiguous, connoting both the illness that killed her and the world's state. The autophagy of the world is clearly connected in the poem to the state of spiritual starvation described in the proviso that, "except thou feed (not banquet) on / The supernaturall food, Religion, / Thy better Grouth growes withered, and scant" (187-189)[82]—bringing the poem dangerously close to describing Elizabeth Drury as eucharistic matter.

But *The First Anniversary* rapidly retreats from any interpretation of Elizabeth Drury as ingestible matter, either natural or supernatural, by banishing her to the margins of memory. If, during her lifetime, Elizabeth Drury was already distilled as quintessence to be consumed by a greedy world, what does she become in death? The problematic linguistic process of defining Elizabeth Drury, while at the same time denying her any corporeality, is further strained in the attempt to express what is almost inexpressible: something that is less than quintessence. This is what Sawday is getting at when he identifies the ambiguity of "She" as the source of the "poems' obstinate refusal to allow themselves to be subjected to the forms of investigation which they themselves seem so eloquently to enunciate."[83] In the challenge of describing Elizabeth Drury without really describing her, she becomes a trace: "a glimmering light," that reflects "on them which

understood / Her worth...A faint weake love of vertue and of good, " from which the ailing world draws its remaining vitality (*FA*, 70-72). Now, in death, released from "the carcasse of the old world" she is "The twi-light of her memory"(*FA*, 74-75) and her lingering "vertue" ("the matter and the stuff") will mingle with "our practice" ("the forme") to create a "new world" (*FA*, 76-78). Yet still, even in this uncanny form, neither body nor quintessence, but as quintessence's elusive memory—"her example, and her virtue"(*FA*, 457)—Elizabeth Drury is prescribed as remedy: the "last, and best concoction" for this world (*FA*, 456). It is ironical then that as a barely detectable presence in the pressing spiritual project of the poems, whose personal history is consigned to the twilight zone, she carries the enormous burden of healing and regenerating Donne's readers: "you her creatures, whom she workes upon (*FA*, 455).

The full pharmacological power of this virginal curative is compromised, however, by the spiritual corruption of a world that jeopardizes its soul's communications with heaven. In an ideal world of spiritual wholeness, "If this commerce twixt heaven and earth were not / Embarr'd" (*FA*, 399-400), the residual efficacy of Elizabeth Drury would be maximized, and "Shee,"

> Would worke more fully'and pow'rfully on us.
> Since herbes, and roots by dying, lose not all,
> But they, yea Ashes too, are medicinall
> Death could not quench her vertue so, but that
> It would be (if not follow'd) wondred at. (*FA*, 401-406)

Like dead medicinal plants of the pharmacological arsenal, whose healing essences linger in their dried and powdered form, Elizabeth Drury is a medical drug of sexual and spiritual virtue, whose salvific essence endures beyond death to be deployed, when the moment is right, as a curative for the world. However, while the ideal conditions for full

spiritual renewal are absent from this world in its present state of alienation from heaven, Elizabeth Drury's pharmacological potency cannot be "fully" utilized. In addition, the idea of Elizabeth Drury as a distilled corpse drug, consistent with the *fille vièrge* mummy motif, also draws on early modern medical prescriptions that advocate excretions from the virginal female body, such as the ingestion of and external application of the dried menstrual blood from virgins, for a whole slew of ailments.[84] But such prescriptions themselves are symptomatic of, and heavily invested in, cultural attempts to assert female virginity as fixed and therefore knowable—a model of femininity in which the *Anniversaries*, with their immortalizing representation of the essence of Elizabeth Drury's body as virginal, are also deeply implicated.

Unlike the opaque linens that will hide Desdemona's body in mummification, the paper shroud of Donne's poems is transparent, and Elizabeth Drury's virginal quintessence lies invitingly open to the fascinated gaze of the masculine reader, and thus vulnerable to repeated penetrations and violations. There is an obvious resemblance between Othello, who hovers like an anatomist over Desdemona's body desperately seeking signs of her purity, and the speaker of the *Anniversaries* who, having adopted the role of anatomist, investigates the elusive trace of Elizabeth Drury anxious to locate and identify the cultural marker of her sexual innocence: the unbroken hymen on which *any* representation of her virtuousness must depend. As an emblem of virtue, the intact hymen is evidence of the young woman's purity. As a model of virtue, the virginal body, as Loughlin argues elsewhere, "bears the unequivocal sign of its sexual inexperience and...[its] spiritual/moral integrity in the unbroken hymen."[85] In "A Funerall Elegie" the "cleare body" (59) of Elizabeth Drury, "Cloath'd in her Virgin white integrity" (75), is

eminently knowable, "so pure, and thin" she is guilelessly transparent to any kind of reading, "Because it neede disguise no thought within" (59-60).[86] Here corporeality, the body's density and secrets, is stripped away in a poetics of epistemological certainty, where knowing the mind's purity is directly linked to physical translucence, and thus provides ready access to the proof of virginity. This construction of the internal Elizabeth Drury as eminently knowable, offers a stark contrast to the impenetrable mystery of Desdemona's body that thwarted Othello's epistemological quest for proof of her chastity—what Michael Neill, in his discussion of Renaissance stage anatomies, describes as "the maddening opacity of human flesh."[87] Furthermore, in the description of Elizabeth Drury as a "cleare body...so pure, and thin," evoking as it does the unleavened consecrated wafer of the eucharist which is also, "without a blemish...clean, wheaten, thin,"[88] we catch another glimpse of the eucharistic longing that haunts the poems.

But in the masculine sexual economy of the poems, virginal translucence and potency beckons seductively—the sexual implications of "best concoction" cannot be ignored—offering an irresistible challenge to Donne who slips into the past before her death, to penetrate and discover all the virginal pharmacological joys Elizabeth Drury had to offer; thus becoming the explorer, as well as the metaphorical lover who ventures where no other man has been. Insisting that her "faire body" (221) only signifies in terms of its contents, in *The Second Anniversary* Elizabeth Drury's intrinsic treasures are eagerly identified and shared. With all the excitement of geographical explorers plundering riches, "wee"—Donne's masculine readers are invited along—reveal their "large Discoveree, / Of all in her" (231-32) as they chart the internal depths of, "Shee, in whose body...The Westerne treasure, Esterne spiceree, / Europe, and Afrique, and the

unknowen rest / Were easily found, or what in them was best" (226-230). Like a well-mapped international trade route, along which the riches of the world are easily plundered and procured, her body yielded the most desirable foreign treasures. Already highly prized, these commodities will gain potency, "when w'have made this large Discoveree, / Of all in her some one part there will bee / Twenty such parts" (232-33). Thus, these rare ingredients, the "plenty and riches" of her body, have the potential to explode twenty-fold into a regenerative force powerful enough "to make twenty such worlds as this" (233-34): virginal quintessence is excitedly conceived as an atomic force with the power to reproduce worlds. Our experience of *déjà vu* at the note of elation here is not surprising. The moment is orgasmic, and we cannot fail to recognize in this barely-disguised erotic coveting, echoes of the triumphant shout of another of Donne's lovers as he gains the treasures (and the pleasures) of the female body: "O my America, my new found land...My mine of precious stones, my empery / How blessed am I in this discovering thee!"[89]

Within the process of masculine spiritual healing that the poems imagine, and consistent with Donne's bodily epistemology, this sexualized act of penetration has a spiritual outcome: experience of the virginal quintessence is good for the soul. Figuratively drained of her corporeality and freed by death from her dangerous sexual inheritance as a woman, Elizabeth Drury contains within herself the incorruptible regenerative seed with the power to beget incorruptibility, thus providing a safe site for anxious imaginings of sexual exploration, penetration and procreation—one that rejuvenates rather than debilitates the masculine soul. This is brought home in *The Second Anniversary* that imagines the young woman before death as a purified spiritual

repository, so virtuous and soothing that, "a soule might well be pleas'd to passe / An Age in her" (*SA*, 222-23). Here again we see the Catholic longing for the body of Christ that haunts the poems. The sexually ironic image of a masculine soul spending an eternity in Elizabeth Drury, evokes the belief (discussed earlier) that the eucharist affords an intensely physical oneness with God in which the communicant enters the body of Christ throughout time and space. However, in the absence of Christ's perfect masculine body, her sexualized essence (but not her body) "might"—the equivocation is teasingly telling—provide a pleasant haven for a man's soul.

While the aim of Othello's fantasy of knowing and controlling the hidden secrets of Desdemona's body is, as Michael Neill points out, "spiritual possession,"[90] the aim of Donne's sexual fantasy of penetrating Elizabeth Drury is spiritual sharing. The erotic agenda of the geographical and spiritual penetration in *The First Anniversary*, where the parts and *anima* of Elizabeth Drury's body as progenitors of foreign riches are displayed, is one of generous access. The topoi of the blazon are the treasures created by:

> ...shee whose rich eyes, and brest,
> Guilt the West Indies, and perfum'd the East;
> Whose having breath'd in this world, did bestow
> Spice on those Isles, and bad them still smell so,
> And that rich Indie which doth gold interre,
> Is but as single money, coyn'd from her. (229-234)

Suggestive of the scene where Othello inhales Desdemona's "balmy breath," the speaker savours Elizabeth Drury as a balm, whose eyes and breasts oozed olfactory and gilt-edged pleasures across the world, infusing and enriching vast regions with her powerful essence. This seductive image mirrors Donne's description of the enchanting essences secreted from another woman's breast in "The Comparison": "As the almighty balm of th' early

east, / Such are the sweat drops of my mistress' breast" (3-4), and foregrounds the lost erotic possibilities of the virginal body. The world's rare ingredients that lived deep within Elizabeth Drury's body provided, during her life, the perfect energy to give external form to such riches, thus the precious commodities of the world were made more precious because their very being depended on her progenitive power. All the riches of the world were born from this seed contained within her body. In a convergence of international trade with pharmacy, of anatomical science with sexuality, the contents of the virginal body, in life, is eroticized, commodified, and textually distributed as an exotic spiritual drug, rarefied by its virtuousness.[91]

Because she is never treated as a real body, but as a tissue of metaphors, the confident exposure and identification of Elizabeth Drury's internal substances reveal an anatomical and pharmacological sure-footedness—and a sense of wishful thinking—at odds with the epistemological uncertainty raised in *The Second Anniversary* regarding the mysterious and frequently disgusting internal functionings of the human body. In this much-quoted passage the limits of anatomical knowledge are exposed:

> Knowst thou but how the stone doth enter in
> The bladders Cave, and never breake the skin?
> Knowst thou how blood, which to the hart doth flow,
> Doth from one ventricle to th'other go?
> And for the putrid stuffe, which thou dost spit,
> Knowst thou how thy lungs have attracted it? (269-274)

The contrast between the anxiety revealed in these lines regarding the mysterious internal processes of the human body, and the epistemological certainty about the contents of the virginal female body is startlingly revealing. Here the body is constantly under threat and in a state of flux, and the desire to know is linked to a dangerous corporeal instability,

where stones enter, blood flows and corrupt fluids mysteriously congregate in the lungs.[92] In comparison there is an easy familiarity with Elizabeth Drury's internal substances, and a sense that her body is well mapped—that the speaker has been here before and knows what he will find. The focus of the speaker's perplexity in the above lines, the unknowable and insurgent physical body with its frequently offensive motions, stands in stark relief to the eminently knowable and thus controllable—because distilled in representation to a quintessence—bodily contents of this "Immortal Maid" (*SecAnn* 516). Thus the internal analysis and cataloging of one, "in whom all white, and redde, and blue / (Beauties ingredients) voluntary grew" (*FA*, 361-62),[93] is a form of verification, presenting an aesthetics of purity which predictably defines the desirable ingredients of her body in terms of spiritual and physical incorruptibility, and harmony. Elizabeth Drury's quintessence, secure in its hymenal surety and untroubled by corporeal grossness, is Donne's poetic creation that brings an adamant and inviolate model of coherence and refinement to challenge the vision of universal decay and flux in the poems.[94]

In the end, Elizabeth Drury and her healing and regenerative potential are sublimated into the poems themselves and Donne's poetic project. In the *Second Anniversary*, Donne's *corpus* is prescribed as the mighty *elixir vitae* that will preserve the world and, in a cunning appropriation of the birthing function that Elizabeth Drury is represented as having willingly renounced, Donne will give birth to a whole literary tradition in her name:

> Immortal Mayd, who though thou wouldst refuse
> The name of Mother, be unto my Muse,
> A Father since her chast Ambition is,
> Yearely to bring forth such a child as this.
> These Hymes may worke in future wits, and so

May great Grand-children of thy praises grow.
And so, though not Revive, enbalme, and spice
The world, which else would putrify with vice.
For thus, Man may extend thy progeny,
Untill man doe but vanish, and not die.
These Hymns thy issue, may encrease so long,
As till Gods great Venite change the song. (33-44)

The *double entendre* of these lines is an example of Donne's wit at its sharpest. His invocation is an imperative to Elizabeth Drury to impregnate his "Muse" with the annual inspiration of more "Hymes" of spiritual enlightenment. Already constructed as the *anima* of the world's richest stores, she is now imagined as the "fecundating force"[95] of Donne's own creative powers to engender an entire *corpus* of hymns. However, at the same time, the pun on "hymes/hymns," while also connoting hymen, draws her into a male coterie of "hims," comprising the poet, the imagined masculine readers of the poems, and the "future wits," or the poems' literary inheritors.[96] In this oddly ironic scenario Elizabeth Drury, now fantasized as masculine sperm, is called upon to inseminate Donne's creative womb, propagating his literary *corpus*. Furthermore this fantasy, textual proof of Donne's poetic dexterity, will entertain the poem's masculine audiences, present and future.[97]

And yet, in spite of the sexual irony, Donne imagines an even mightier function for his poems. The *Anniversaries* will sustain Donne's readers until Judgement Day when "Venite change the song," at which time, like Donne's own "insatiate soule," they will slake their spiritual thirst "with Gods safe-sealing Bowle" (*SA*, 45-46), which is, as A.J. Smith argues, "the cup of Christ's blood, which safely seals our salvation."[98] The allusions to Christ and his blood in the chalice of eucharistic wine offers the reader an invitation to participate in a textual reenactment of the Roman Catholic mass, offered

through Donne's poems. Holy anorexia, the speaker warns in the proviso quoted earlier, will be the lot of those who do not eat "the supernaturall food, Religion." In the final analysis, the eucharistic offering is Donne's poems themselves, the "ragges of paper" (*FE*, 11), metynomically suggestive of the wafer-like Elizabeth Drury and the consecrated eucharist wafer itself, that administer a blueprint of her—a "patterne" (*SA*, 524) on a page—for prosperity.

Donne's *Anniversaries* serve as fascinating, while at the same time frustratingly ambiguous, texts with which to conclude my study, because they try so hard to elide the ingestible medical and eucharistic corpses that shadow them, and that I have tried so hard to expose. Although corpse pharmacology and a longing for the body of Christ underwrite the language and thematics of the poems, and although the poems offer both remedy and communion, they remain curiously empty of healing corporeal matter: either medical or eucharistic. That the cannibalized bodies that show themselves (albeit often reluctantly) in the other literary texts discussed in my study remain strangely shy in the *Anniversaries* is puzzling, given Donne's attraction to the body and medicine, and the alimentary need which the poems reveal. The dilemma for Donne lies in the fact that, while what the poems seek is the body of Christ as grist for the troubled masculine soul, what the poems have is the corpse of a young virginal woman. This is problematic, not only because her corpse is not up to the enormous poetic and spiritual task that Donne sets for the poems, but also because representations of virtuous female corporeality are complicated, as we see in *Othello*, by cultural anxieties surrounding the troubling female body.

Like the other texts that have provided eloquent substance for my study, *Othello* and the *Anniversaries* encapsulate how early modern literary imaginations eagerly seized upon the complex cultural implications of corpse pharmacology in order to respond to a broader set of ideological concerns. If we understand all of the works discussed as linguistic reflections of a social world, we can see in them the numerous ways in which cultural anxieties and changes, particularly as they relate to medical, religious, colonial and gender politics, are incorporated into their figurative forms. My study shows how early modern literature, by engaging the shifting cultural contradictions of its historical moment, contributes to the production of cultural meaning. The works in my study, in their preoccupation with the implications of corpse pharmacology, highlight the paradox of a cultural identity that, on the one hand performs as civilized, while on the other hand participates in a behaviour that destabilizes the boundaries of a civilized identity. In this way literature, by exposing the ideological underpinnings of cultural contradictions regarding cannibalism, brings a shadowy historical trace to light as the early modern eaten body.

NOTES

[1] Anna S. Meigs, *Food, Sex, and Pollution: A New Guinea Religion*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1984) 128, 131. Also quoted in Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Divine Hunger: Cannibalism as a Cultural System* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986) 59.

[2] *Selected Prose*, 11.

[3] From *The Journeys of Pietro della Valle, the Pilgrim*, trans. George Bull (London: 1989) 60. Quoted in Prioreschi, 381.

[4] Jean Baptiste de Roquefort, *Des sepultures nationals* (Paris, 1824) 141, quoted in Dannenfeldt, 174. No source is quoted for Roquefort, but these historical "facts" often draw uncritically on previously cited opinions and it is conceivable that he draws on della Valle.

[5] Paschasius Radbert, *De corpore et sanguine domini*, quoted in Rubin, 15.

[6] Paster, *The Body*, 66.

[7] For a discussion of these texts see Audrey Eccles, *Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

[8] For a discussion of the anatomy of the female body see Sawday, esp. ch. 7.

[9] Loughlin provides a fascinating study of the socio-medical and anatomical construction of virginity and its representation in early modern drama, in *Hymeneutics: Interpreting Virginity on the Early Modern Stage* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1997) 29.

[10] John Webster, *The White Devil. The Works of John Webster*, ed. David Gunby, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995).

[11] John Donne, "Love's Alchemy," *John Donne: The Complete English Poems*, ed. A.J. Smith (London: Penguin, 1986). References to Donne's poems other than the *Anniversaries* are from this volume.

[12] Again, in an attempt to pin down what is almost inexpressible in Donne, I draw on Derrida's use of the word "trace" in his work on the ineffability of Heidegger's concept of Being: "Man in his essence is the memory (memorial) of Being"

[13] In *Chirurgorum Comes: or the Whole Practice of Chirurgery Begun by the Learned Dr Read*, completed by a member of the College of Physicians in London (London, 1687), 709.

[14] See Paster for discussions of the greedy nature and dangerous unreliability of the female body, in *The Body*, esp. 23-63. Also for perceptions of the female body as "wantonly open, permeable, and unconfined," see Margaret R. Miles in *Carnal Knowing: Female Nakedness and Religious Meaning in the Christian West* (Boston: Beacon, 1989) 166.

[15] The term is Camporesi's, *The Incorruptible Flesh*,11.

[16] See Nicholas Culpeper, *Culpeper's Complete Herbal: A book of natural remedies for ancient ills: 1653* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1995) esp. 441-447.

[17] For an excellent discussions of the symbolism of the handkerchief see Linda Boose, "Othello's Handkerchief: "The Recognizance and Pledge of Love," " 55-67; also Karen Newman, " "And wash the Ethiop white": Femininity and the Monstrous in *Othello*," 124-143, esp. 135-138, both in *Critical Essays on Shakespeare's Othello*, ed. Anthony Gerard Barthelemy (New York: G.K. Hall, 1994).

[18] Schroder 506-521.

[19] Linda Boose also makes the connection between the stained bed sheets and the bloody napkin, 56-57.

[20] Neill, *John Ford: Critical Re-Visions* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988) 156-57.

[21] Neill, *John Ford*, 157.

[22] Neill argues that it is precisely because her adultery cannot be seen which seems to prove its existence for Othello, in *Issues* 152.

[23] Loughlin outlines the fascinating debate over what she describes as "the veracity of this powerful and pervasive cultural fiction," 30-39.

[24] Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997) 5.

[25] Othello's symptoms certainly match with early modern descriptions of epilepsy, however, a detailed analysis of Othello's illness and early modern constructions of epilepsy are beyond the scope and the present focus of this paper.

[26] Walter Pagel, *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance* (New York: Karger, 1982) 329. Also see Temkin who notes that human blood and bones were still respected epileptic drugs at the beginning of the eighteenth-century, 146. Significantly there is a clear connection between the handkerchief's Egyptian roots and Egyptian funeral rites that facilitated the availability of mummies, and Egyptian medical practices that were part of the cross-cultural influence on Hippocratic medicine.

[27] Schroder 518. The use of blood for curing epilepsy has ancient medical roots in the Roman notion that blood drunk hot from a gladiator's wounds could cure epilepsy. Quoted in von Staden, 16.

[28] Quoted in Temkin 139.

[29] Temkin 150-151.

[30] Strawberries, which are embroidered on the handkerchief, also had a healing power: their juice, when distilled was "a sovereign remedy and cordial in the panting and beating of the heart." In Culpeper 247.

[31] Carol Thomas Neely also comments on Desdemona's action as instinctive, in "Women and Men in *Othello*," in Barthelemy, 68-90, esp. 83.

[32] In Camporesi, *Juice of Life: the Symbolic and Magic Significance of Blood*, trans. Robert R. Barr (New York: Continuum, 1995) 50.

[33] Temkin 171.

[34] Neely makes the similar point that Othello's refusal to be healed by the handkerchief creates the breach that culminates in Desdemona's murder, 84.

[35] Quoted in Temkin 63.

[36] Neill provides the fascinating context for Desdemona's request in the practice of early seventeenth-century women to have "one's corpse wound in the sheets from the wedding night." See "Unproper Beds: Race, Adultery, and the Hideous in *Othello*" in Barthelemy, 187-215, esp. 199. I argue further that the image of Desdemona's corpse shrouded in linen can also be linked to another funerary ritual, the preparation of mummy.

[37] A further sign of Desdemona's uneasiness and ability to foresee her fate at this moment is her reflection upon the story and "The Willow Song" of Barbary. The willow was considered a powerful drug: owned by the moon, it was prescribed for a whole host of ailments. Crucial for my argument is its power to "stay the heat of lust in man or woman, and quite extinguish it, if it be long used," in Culpeper 271-72. As well, "The Willow Song" on which the play draws, anticipates death, bidding "adieu" to life and prescribing an epitaph: "Write this on my tomb, / That in love I was true," thus striking a dangerously close chord to Desdemona's situation. *Shakespeare's Musick: Songs and Dances from Shakespeare's Plays*, Musicians of the Globe, Philips, 1997.

[38] An interesting historical aside is that unmarked corpses were highly prized by anatomists. In Venice dissectors demanded "the corpse of a criminal who had been put to death by forcible submersion in water, in order that the body should be completely uninjured." In Puschmann 247.

[39] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966) 157-158. Also quoted in Linda Woodbridge, "Palisading the Elizabethan Body Politic," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 33.3 (1991): 327-354, esp. 341.

[40] Neill, *Issues*, 144.

[41] For example Neely persuasively argues that Othello's love is an ideal to which sex is secondary, and that his relationship with Desdemona "remains symbolically—and perhaps literally—unconsummated," 72, 85.

[42] Loughlin 29-30.

[43] Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, trans. Robert Hurley, vol. 1 (New York: Zone Books, 1991) 59.

[44] Desdemona's salvatory breath resembles that of Du Bartas' personification of "*Prayer*," from whose "lips there fumes *Nard, Incense, Mummy*, and all rich perfumes," in Joshua Sylvester's translation of *Du Bartas his Second Weeke: The Schisme. The Third Booke of the Fourth Day of the II Weeke, of Bartas*, ed. Alexander B. Grasard (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1967) 1046-1049.

[45] The stage directions to Act 5, scene 2, note that Othello *"smells then kisses her."*

[46] "Balm," *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 ed.

[47] Othello's action also resembles Thomas Browne's description of ancient funeral rites where mourners "suck'd in the last breath of their expiring friends" in the belief that the "spirit of one body passed into another," *Hydriotaphia*, 301.

[48] While "sweet powers" may be a reference to pagan classical gods as Honigmann's Arden note states, I suggest that the term resonates with implications of the healing nature of honey—a few lines later, as I argue earlier, Desdemona is described as "Honey" and "sweet"—and the hidden pharmacological powers of the human body.

[49] Croll 156.

[50] The description is Linda Singer's, from *Erotic Welfare: Sexual Theory and Politics in the Age of Epidemic* (New York: Routledge, 1993) 63.

[51] Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1979) 87-89.

[52] Sanday 32.

[53] "*Anniversary* poems" encompasses *The First Anniversary. An Anatomy of The World, The Second Anniversary* and *A Funerall Elegie*, which will be abbreviated as *FA, SA* and *FE*.

[54] W. Milgate interprets these lines as "no man's wife, nor (as a human being alive on earth) herself," in *John Donne: The Epithalamions, Anniversaries and Epicedes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) 153.

[55] The distinction between "us" (males) and "they" (females) and the male coterie implied in the tone of the line, "One woman at one blow, then kill'd us all / And singly, one by one, they kill us now" (*FA*, 106-107) clearly addresses a male readership. H.L. Meakin also makes this point in *John Donne's Articulations of the Feminine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) 210.

[56] "Conversations with Drummond of Hawthornden," *Ben Jonson*, ed. C.H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-1952) 1, 133.

[57] See also Meakin for her excellent discussion of the "textual sexualization" of the Elizabeth Drury's body, 236. Meakin touches on several of the issues regarding the seductive attractiveness of the virginal body that I elaborate in my own reading, although I come to them via a different path.

[58] Manley also identifies the eucharistic implications of Elizabeth Drury being "celebrated only by those who know they have a soul; and *celebrated* in this sense means not only *memorialized* but also *reinacted, reperformed*, as in the celebration of the mass," 17.

[59] As Pelikan notes in his discussion of Reformist arguments against the presence of Christ: "the ascension of Christ to the right hand of God precluded his bodily presence in the elements of the Eucharist, since it was to the "advantage" of his disciples and of the church in all ages that they should no longer have direct physical access to him," 158.

[60] See also Antony F. Bellette who argues that the reference to the poetic act reinforces the important role of poetry and that the poet is God-like, creating the song and giving enduring form to "her." In "Art and Imitation in Donne's *Anniversaries*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 15 (1975): 83-96, esp. 84-85.

[61] Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 68.

[62] This promotion of the power of poetry to improve on nature is consistent with the Elizabethan poetic theory put forward by Philip Sidney: "the poet...lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow in effect another nature, in making things...better than nature bringeth forth," in *A Defence of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989) 23.

[63] Quoted in Guibbory, 20. See Guibbory in general for a discussion of the role of the body in ceremonial worship in the Church of England, 20-28. In this sense Donne's spirituality strongly resembles mediaeval spirituality that was, as Bynum notes, "peculiarly bodily...because theology and natural philosophy saw persons as, in some real sense, body as well as soul," in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on gender and the human body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone, 1991) 183.

[64] Maureen Sabine also identifies a nervous tone here brought on by the idea of the power of the female body over life and death, in *Feminine Engendered Faith: The Poetry of John Donne and Richard Crashaw* (London: Macmillan Press, 1992) 92.

[65] Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Donne's Anniversaries and The Poetry of Praise: The Creation of a Symbolic Mode* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1973) 231.

[66] Robert Adams and George M. Logan note that "this exaggerated antifeminism went hand in hand with an equally exaggerated idolizing of women," in "The Early Seventeenth Century (1603-1660)," *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, gen. ed. M. H. Abrams (Norton: New York, 1986) 1:1093. For discussions of the sexual innuendo of the passage see also Patrick Cruttwell, *The Shakespearean Moment and its Place in the Poetry of the 17th Century* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1954) 52, and Manley, 135.

[67] *The Complete English Poems* 12.

[68] Donne's position here is curiously patristic in his resemblance to early Christian authors who privileged virginity because marriage and childbearing was difficult and dangerous for women, in Miles, 67, see esp. 53-77 for a discussion of early Christian literature of female asceticism. Also for discussions of Renaissance attitudes towards marriage for women see Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980) 84 and 85, and Loughlin, 28.

[69] See also John T. Shawcross, ed., *The Complete Poetry of John Donne* (New York: Doubleday, 1967) who argues that "marriage removes virgin whiteness, but does not corrupt," 288; and Milgate who argues similarly, 154. Also Donne registers here the dangers to women of lost virginity in marriage that is taken to its extreme in *Othello*.

[70] In this way she resembles early Christian female ascetics who renounced sexual activity and motherhood, as well as the Virgin Mary who is excluded from the universal rubric of

original sin. See Sabine for a discussion of the *Anniversaries* as Donne's honouring of, and farewell to, the Virgin Mary, esp. 78-110.

[71] As Marjorie Nicolson argues, *The First Anniversary* offers a "lament over the body—the body of man and the body of the world—a meditation upon death and mortality" and *The Second Anniversary* offers a "vision of the release of the soul from its prison" in, *The Breaking of the Circle: Studies in the Effect of the 'New Science' Upon Seventeenth Century Poetry* (New York: Columbia UP, 1960) 65-66, 88-104.

[72] Allen, esp. 322.

[73] Allen 325.

[74] Manley notes that, "new phisicke" probably refers to doctors who were sympathetic to Paracelsian doctrine, 139. For a discussion of the *Anniversaries* through a primarily Paracelsian lens see Willard, 34-61.

[75] From a letter to Goodyere. Quoted in Allen 341.

[76] Sherwood 64. As I note in Chapter 3, Sherwood also discusses knowledge of the body and its experience as crucial to Donne's investigations of the soul and the material or social world, 63.

[77] As many have pointed out, in his satire "Upon Mr Thomas Coryat's Crudites" Donne makes another reference to the educational value to society of anatomized corpses: "Worst malefactors, to whom men are prize, / Do public good, cut in anatomies," (53-54). *The Complete English Poems*, 173-75.

[78] Edward Le Comte describes this as the "most medical passage," in *The Second Anniversary*, in *Grace to a Witty Sinner: A Life of Donne* (New York: Walker and Co., 1965) 133. Also Sawday notes that the belief in, and an analysis of, the body's essence was imperative to any understandings of the significance of the body's materiality, 16.

[79] Schroder 506.

[80] Louis L. Martz ed., *The Meditative Poem: An Anthology of Seventeenth-Century Verse* (New York: Doubleday, 1963) 96; Shawcross 272; Smith, 594; also Manley 130.

[81] "O'repast" appears in most editions of the poem and no variant of the term is reported in the remarkably comprehensive textual apparatus in Gary A. Stringer ed., *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995) 44. However "o'erpast" does appear in Smith, 271.

[82] Full bodied eating and nourishing is implied here, rather than snacking. Manley, drawing on the seventeenth-century usage of "banquet" to describe a "dessert of nuts, fruit, and wine," identifies the distinction as "eat" rather than "pick at," (142).

[83] Sawday 127.

[84] Schroder 517.

[85] Loughlin 29.

[86] Meakin also notes that Elizabeth Drury is transparent and contains no secrets, 210.

[87] Neill, *Issues*, 373.

[88] Quoted in Rubin 39.

[89] "Elegy 19, To His Mistress Going to Bed," (27-29), *The Complete English Poems*, 124. Meakin also describes Elizabeth Drury's body as "seductive" (212).

[90] Neill, *Issues*, 171.

[91] Harris offers a fascinating discussion of exotic drugs as metonymies for the foreign goods imported into England in, "I am sailing to my port, uh! uh! uh! uh!": Pathologies of Transmigration and Foreign Trade in *Volpone*," presented to the Shakespeare, His Contemporaries and Medicine Seminar, Shakespeare Association of America Conference, Montreal, 8 Apr. 2000. See also Sawday's excellent discussion of how the poetic tropes of the English blazon reflect early modern discourses of anatomical science and trade, 188-207, esp. 198.

[92] See also Sawday's discussion of Donne's anatomical doubt, 17-19.

[93] As Lewalski notes, these colours represent theological virtues such as "faith, charity, and hope," 258. See also Manley, who argues similarly, 160, and Smith who proposes white as the colour of innocence, purity and holiness; red as the colour of love; and blue as the colour of heavenly love, of truth, and of the Virgin, 603.

[94] For a discussion of the "cosmology of corruption" and Donne's disillusionment with a world that lacks harmony and beauty see Victor Harris, *All Coherence Gone*, (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1949) 121-27.

[95] The term is Milgate's, 156.

[96] Manley also notes the pun here, arguing that "hymns are also males, which may impregnate others," 176. Similarly Patrick Mahony identifies in this passage the multiple sexual ironies of puns on "Hymes," as songs, males, and hymen; "Mayd," as "Father"; and "die" as copulation, in "The Heroic Couplet in Donne's *Anniversaries*," *Style* 4 (1970): 107-117, esp. 112-113.

[97] Louis Montrose discusses the recurring reinforcement of the father's powers in a "fantasy of male parthenogenesis" in Donne's era, in ' "Eliza, Queene of shepheardes," and the Pastoral of Power,' *ELR*, vol. 10 (1980): 153-82, esp. 73. Sabine, 100 and Meakin, 221-22, using Montrose's phrase, argue similarly.

[98] Smith 68.

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