Digestive Tracts:
Early Modern Discourses of Digestion

by

Jan Katherine Purnis

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Department of English
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This project explores early modern conceptualizations of the body, offering a cultural history of the belly. I apply the tools of literary, historico-cultural, and discourse analysis to textual depictions of the digestive organs and the processes of digestion they perform. Concentrating particularly on the nexus of body, culture, and language, and continuously foregrounding the material underpinnings of linguistic expression, I argue that representations of the digestive organs serve to naturalize ideology and that digestion is itself an apt metaphor for the processes by which ideology is internalized. In my first chapter, I argue that the stomach is a central site through which hierarchies of gender are expressed and assimilated. I analyze Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* in the context of early modern cultural metaphors associated with the stomach and in the context of medical theories of digestion, according to which hotter male digestion is superior to colder female digestion. Drawing upon Marx’s economic theory and his less-noted physiological rhetoric, in Chapter Two I trace how increasing commodity exchange and concomitant changes to social relations are reflected in, and promoted by, a paradigm shift in medical interpretations of the physiological functions of the liver. Chapter Three offers a more detailed and literary analysis of this process, demonstrating how Spenser’s allegory of the body in Book Two of *The Faerie Queene*
participates directly in the ideological work necessary for the transition to capitalism by naturalizing the consumption and production of commodities driving it. The focus of Chapter Four is on the use of bodily metaphors of excretion in colonialist propaganda to legitimate the enforced migration of those described as England’s “excrements” to the colonies. Influenced by Norbert Elias’s theory of the “civilizing process,” I read these metaphors in light of altering social attitudes towards literal excrement, and I demonstrate how representations of the body’s excretory organs in Phineas Fletcher’s *The Purple Island* mirror the social processes of the “civilization” and discipline of self, nation, and Other.
Acknowledgements

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A Note on Citations

In quoting from early modern sources, I have retained original spelling except where I have used modernized editions, though I have silently altered the long s. Quotations from Shakespeare follow *The Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans et al., and quotations from Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene* follow the Penguin edition, edited by Thomas P. Roche and assisted by C. Patrick O’Donnell. For both authors, I have consulted other editions. These are included in the list of works consulted and noted as appropriate elsewhere. Quotations from the Christian Bible are from The Authorized King James version. Quotations relating to word definitions are, unless otherwise noted, from *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*, hereafter the OED. Individual word entries have not been included in the list of works consulted.
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**Introduction**

Digestive Tracts

“I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too [...].”

Queen Elizabeth I, 1588

In her speech to rally the English troops at Tilbury against the invading Spanish Armada, Queen Elizabeth distinguishes between her external and internal body, calling attention to the importance of internal organs like the heart and stomach in early modern perceptions of selfhood and identity.¹ Linking the heart and stomach with “and,” Elizabeth assigns equal value to the two organs in such perceptions, and, indeed, the words *heart* and *stomach* share some metaphorical meanings in the period, including “courage.” While today many of *heart’s* figurative associations persist, the majority of *stomach’s* figurative connotations have become unfamiliar or obsolete, reflecting changes in medical and cultural models of the body and of its relationship to the mind and self, changes largely arising as a result of the scientific revolution. In this dissertation, I explore some of these earlier conceptualizations of the body by offering a cultural history of the belly: I focus on the stomach and related digestive organs and on the processes of digestion they perform. Concentrating particularly on the nexus of body, culture, and language, I analyze the ways in which representations of digestion and of the digestive organs work to naturalize social conditions and ideology.

Elizabeth’s strategic assertion that she had “the stomach of a king, and a king of England too” provides an example of the intersections of digestive organs, societal attitudes, and linguistic expression that I trace throughout my dissertation. In the post-Cartesian model of selfhood that is still influential today, the mind tends to be distinguished from the body and

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¹ For background on dispute about the actual words of Elizabeth’s speech, see fn. 56, page 206 of Carole Levin’s *“The Heart and Stomach of a King”: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power.* My epigraph comes from Levin’s quotation of the speech (144).
Although emphasis is placed on the brain by cognitive science, as George Lakoff writes in *The Political Mind*: “The brain extends throughout the body via the nervous system. All meaningful perception and action is mediated by our brains, whether physical, social, emotional, or interpersonal. But brains alone without bodies and physical and social interactions do nothing. It is the brain connected to the body functioning in the physical and social world that gives meaning and grounds real reason” (232).
assigned to that region of the body in the production of the “mental interior” of early modern
individuals, an importance stressed in the humoral medicine inherited by the early moderns
from the tradition extending back to Galen, who was himself influenced by an older tradition
stretching back at least to Hippocrates. According to this ancient theory, digestion took place
primarily through heat: the term most commonly used for digestion, concoction, literally
means “to boil together.” In the stomach, ingested food was converted into chyle, which was
then conveyed by means of the small intestine and meseraic veins to the liver, where it was
made into blood for assimilation by the rest of the body, while the excrements arising from the
digestive process were removed by the large intestine. Digestion involved not only the
transformation of food into a form suitable for assimilation by the body but also the
production of spirits and humours: black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood. The stomach
and digestion were linked to mental and emotional experience since the proportion of these
humours within an individual affected temperament, making a person melancholic, choleric,
phlegmatic, or sanguine, respectively. As Gail Kern Paster stresses, the humours “constituted
the material basis of any living creature’s characteristic appraisals of and responses to its
immediate environment; they altered the character of a body’s substances and, by doing so,
organized its ability to act or even to think.” The jurist John Selden’s comment in Titles of
Honor that the “Minds inclination follows the Bodies Temperature” was, Paster adds, “a
Galenic commonplace of the age” (Humoring 13).

3 Gail Kern Paster clarifies that blood was “simultaneously a simple substance in the body and the
compound containing it” (Body 69). Spirits were thin substances made from the blood. “Spirit,” Robert Burton
writes in The Anatomy of Melancholy, is “the instrument of the soul, to perform his actions,” a “common tie
betwixt the body and the soul, as some will have it” (129). There were three kinds of spirits corresponding to
the three principal parts of the body and to the tri-partite soul. The natural spirits were produced in the liver and
dispersed through the veins to perform the natural actions, including nourishment. The vital spirits were made
in the heart from the natural spirits and transported by way of the arteries throughout the body; if they ceased,
then life ceased. The animal spirits were formed in the brain from the vital spirits and, dispersed by the nerves
“to the subordinate members, give sense and motion to them all” (129). If concoction did not function properly,
then “unpure” spirits and harmful vapors were produced that could ascend to the head and “disturbe and hurt
the brayne & minde” (Lemnius 10).

4 Foregrounding differences in understandings of thought processes prior to the Cartesian mind-body
split, Bruce Smith explains in The Key of Green: Passion and Perception in Renaissance Culture that before
Descartes, “thinking color, like thinking anything else, was a whole-body experience” (3).
categorized as hot or cold and wet or dry, and different foods were suitable for different complexions—was considered fundamental to overall health.5

Reflecting the greater importance of the digestive organs in mental and emotional experience, stomach, for example, could be used like heart, bosom, or breast “to designate the inward seat of passion, emotion, secret thoughts, affections, or feelings” (OED, def. 6a), a meaning for which it is especially well suited because it is a hollow receptacle situated in the centre of the body. Expressions like “to utter (the bottom) of one’s stomach” and “to fish out the bottom of a person’s stomach” make clear this sense of the stomach as a locus of thought and feelings, especially deep and hidden ones. Stomach could also be used to mean “temper, disposition” or “state of feeling with regard to a person” (def. 7a). Because it was one of the organs associated with choler, stomach could refer not only to courage or bravery, but also to pride or stubbornness, anger or ill-will (def. 8), all characteristics of choler. The verb form of stomach and many now-obsolete forms including stomachate, stomachous, stomachful, and stomaching were most often connected to feelings of anger and resentment. Quoting from Horace, sixteenth-century Dutch author Levinus Lemnius explains in The Touchstone of Complexions (“Englished” by Thomas Newton) that choleric people are “testy” and “not entreatable”: “Of stomacke very stoute: / Not thinking lawes were for them made, / But fight and blade it out” (132).

Despite John Donne’s claim that “[w]e know the receipt, the capacity of the ventricle, the stomach of man, how much it can hold” (8 April 1621, 299), the stomach was not a standardized, value-neutral organ.6 Contrasting her “weak and feeble” female body with the

5 For example, beef was universally accounted “cold and dry” as well as “gross” and “hard,” and usually considered of poor nourishment, dangerous to melancholics, leading to dry skin diseases and depression. The English, though, took a certain amount of national pride in their beef eating, and bull’s beef, which was a luxury, was thought by the English to impart masculine vigor and aggression, vestiges of which are found in the term “bully” (Appelbaum 61, 62). Garlic and onions were believed by some to give rise to “gross fumes” that troubled the mind and made men mad (Burton 1.2.193), whereas doves, as Pandarus makes clear in Troilus and Cressida, had an aphrodisiacal quality; eating them “breeds hot blood, and hot blood begets hot thoughts, and hot thoughts beget hot deeds, and hot deeds is love” (3.1.128-130).

6 In this sermon, Donne differentiates the stomach, the “receptacles of blood,” and “the other conduits and cisterns of the body” from the “infinite hive of honey, this insatiable whirlpool of the covetous mind” that “no anatomy, no dissection hath discovered to us” (299).
heart and stomach of a masculine monarch, Elizabeth implies that there is an assumed difference between male and female stomachs, with female stomachs perceived to be ordinarily as “weak and feeble” as female bodies. In addition, by emphasizing that she has not only the stomach of a man but specifically of a “king,” Elizabeth indicates the embeddedness of political and economic structures in notions of the stomach. And finally, Elizabeth’s assertion that she has the stomach of a king “of England” links the stomach to nationality. My dissertation is structured around these foci of gender, socio-economic, and nationalist (and related colonialist) ideology. Similarly, although the digestive process as a whole is important throughout, I focus on the stomach, liver, and intestines.

As defined by Sacvan Bercovitch, ideology in its broad sense is “the system of interlinked ideas, symbols, and beliefs by which a culture—any culture—seeks to justify and perpetuate itself; the web of rhetoric, ritual, and assumption through which society coerces, persuades, and coheres” (635). Because it has the ability to make ideology appear natural, the body is a powerful site through which a culture can “justify and perpetuate itself.” One means of naturalizing ideology is through figurative comparison of social structures to the body’s parts and processes, while another related, and often less obvious, means is through the integration of cultural values into medical interpretations of the body and its functions. Ideology “functions best,” Bercovitch explains, “through voluntary acquiescence, when the network of ideas through which the culture justifies itself is internalized, rather than imposed, and embraced by society at large as a system of belief” (635, my emphasis). Bercovitch’s example emphasizes the internalization of ideology, of the “network of ideas through which the culture justifies itself,” into the mind as “a system of belief,” but internalize, and even more so incorporate (repeatedly used in definitions of internalize), point to the relationship between mental and corporeal experiences and to an important additional means by which ideology is naturalized through the body—in bodily practices, or habitus.

I suggest that the belly offers an especially productive region of the body upon which

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7 While this section of Elizabeth’s speech is frequently quoted, only its gender implications receive brief attention. For more on the socio-economic and national/ethnic implications of Elizabeth’s use of stomach, see my forthcoming “The Stomach and Early Modern Emotion.”
In biological sciences, the concept of internalization is somewhat different. See the OED.

8 In biological sciences, the concept of internalization is somewhat different. See the OED.

...
puns and language games of all kinds, a fascination shared by many early modern writers: Harington’s “Ajax,” a pun on “a jakes,” or a privy, is just one instance. More than just a play on words, however, the double significance of *tract* serves to foreground the materiality of language and the complex interrelationship that exists between the body and language more generally and between the physical body and its textual and linguistic manifestations more specifically. In exploring this interrelationship, I consider representations of the digestive organs in the context of lived corporeal experiences, including those of starvation, enforced labour, early modern dietary changes and dining practices, and defecation.

Medical writers, who were involved in translating medical texts into the vernacular and in explaining medical terminology retained from the Greek or Latin, had a special sensitivity to word meanings, pointing out to their readers, for instance, that the duodenum is so called because “it is extended the length of twelve fingers” (Paré 3.15.105) and that *pylorus* means “porter” or “janitor” (“doorkeeper”) (Fletcher, *Purple Island* 2.37, mn.l). Describing the musculature of the belly region, located below the diaphragm and rib cage, Crooke suggests in *Mikrokosmographia* that the English “imitation” of the term *Pulpa à palpando*, used for the fleshy parts on either side of the spine (the loins), is “Fillet, as it were Feele-it” (2.2.65). Of the mesentery, the connective tissue supporting the intestines, which was also called the midriff, he writes: “In the middest of the Guttes is scituated the Mesenterie, *which we may call not the Midriffe, but the Midruffe, for it is most like vnto a gathered ruffe*, sustayning the winding reuolutions of the Guttes in their proper places, and conuaying vnto them the Meseraicke veins” (3. Preface. 94-95, my emphasis). Crooke’s play on words here is relevant to my project in a number of ways. His suggestion that the midriff might better be called the midruff because it resembles “a gathered ruff” locates his anatomical text within a specific historical and cultural context and points to the ways in which you can glean significant information about a culture, including our own, by how the interior of the body is imagined. Ruffs, worn around the neck by both men and women, are one of the most distinctive features

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9 At the time Crooke was writing, *midriff* could refer to the diaphragm, or as here, to the mesentery. In his early modern dictionary, Elisha Coles defines *mesentery* as “the Double skin fastening the bowels to the back and one another, enclosing a number of veins which nourish the guts, concoct the juice of meat, and convey it to the liver to be made bloud.”
of Elizabethan and Jacobean clothing, and they are interlaced with many of the issues important to my exploration of the ideological implications of representations of digestion in the chapters that follow: the socio-economic transition from feudalism to capitalism (and resistance to international commerce and increased consumption of luxury goods); class and gender hierarchies (and challenges to them); and the interplay between state and social discipline. Critical of Elizabeth society, the Puritan Phillip Stubbes, for example, includes a lengthy attack on the fashion for ruffs in his anatomy of the ailments of the social body, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583). See especially Dviii. (See also Alchin, “Elizabethan Ruffs”). Ruffs were linked to gender roles and criminal activity in the example of Anne Turner, tried in November, 1615 for her involvement in the Thomas Overbury murder plot. Turner had popularized the fashion for the yellow starched ruff, which to many contemporaries “seemed the quintessentially transgressive item in the modern woman’s wardrobe: its unusual colour and its oversized, starch-assisted dimensions made it typical of a fashion sense more concerned with novelty, sensuality and profligacy than with the ideal, modest use of clothing recommended by moralists of a variety of religious stripes” (Bellany 157). The yellow ruff was additionally connected to national concerns by critics who saw the ruff as epitomizing “the corruption of the nation by ‘foreign’–popish, Irish, Scottish–influences” and courtly excesses that “polluted the manners of the people,” while wasting money better spent on the poor (Bellany 159). More positively, in his 1617 recipe book, *A Daily Exercise for Ladies and Gentlemewomen*, John Murrell notes the popularity for the yellow ruff in his comparison of fashions in clothing with fashions in culinary dishes. In his dedicatory epistle, he writes: “Wee alter our *Fashions* and outward *Habits* daily; the *whitest Ruffe* being not long since thought the purest wearing; then the *blew*; and now the *yealow*: So, our *Cookery, Pastry, Distillations, Conserues, and Preserues*, are farre otherwise now, than not long since they were” (A4). (See also Hunter 47).

My study is informed by, and contributes to, recent scholarship on the body in early modern culture. Foregrounding the metaphorical uses of the body in early modern literature, Richard Halpern notes an at-that-time under-explored connection between new historicism and fashion, and demonstrates the link between fashion and traditional legal structures in the form of sumptuary laws and emergent forms of social regulation. Sumptuary laws, he writes, were partly an effort to minimize the destabilizing effects of fashion by giving it “the stability of a juridical form” (40) and partly “a defense of specifically feudal class distinctions that the fashion system did not protect” (40). Importantly, however, “what Tudor lawmakers and moralists saw as mere anarchy was in fact a nascent bourgeois form of social order”: fashion is “perfectly capable of both registering and reinforcing class distinctions, even in the absence of legal regulation” (40). Style as “a mode of imaginary discipline,” he argues, was new to the early modern period (44).
David Hale, in *The Body Politic: A Political Metaphor in Renaissance English Literature*, and Leonard Barkan, in *Nature’s Work of Art: The Human Body as Image of the World*, both published in the 1970s, examine variations of the ancient analogy comparing the state to the body and the related perception of the body as a microcosm of the world. As Hale explains, there are “two kinds of organic analogies which have been used politically, though the types are sometimes mixed in practice”: “The first considers the bodies natural and politic to be composed of parts which are in certain structural and functional relationships to each other,” often hierarchical, while the second “considers man as composed of four humors, which correspond to the four elements of earth, water, air, and fire.” Imbalance causes disease in the individual and social body (15). In the Fable of the Belly version of the body politic, the belly is accused by the other members of consuming all of the body’s nourishment while not sharing in the labour required to maintain bodily health. When the members decide to withhold food from the belly, they quickly realize that they are an interdependent system of members and cannot function without the belly performing its crucial role of supplying the rest of the body with sustenance. In this tradition, the belly “always stands for some seemingly useless element of society, and the moral is not only that the nobles, or senators, or clergy, are indispensable but also that the amputation of any one part of the body politic is fatal to all the others” (Barkan 96).

In the past few decades, early modern scholars have increasingly turned to the physical body itself, demonstrating the cultural underpinnings of even supposedly “objective” medical interpretations of the body’s parts and physiological processes. In his study of the impact of the developing medical practice of human dissection in the early modern period, *The Body Emblazoned*, Jonathan Sawday offers a “history of the creation of the body as a cultural field of enquiry in the European Renaissance” and stresses the “historically specific” nature of our understanding of the internal organs, which takes place “within a larger mental framework which may be a product of culture just as much as it is a function of biology” (6). Similarly, David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, editors of *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, explain that in early modern Europe “the multiple traditions of medical and anatomical description, of Petrarchism, of religious and cultural iconography, converged
to give individual parts of the body more semiotic complexity than they had ever had before” (xviii). Concentrating specifically on theories of disease, Margaret Healy and Jonathan Gil Harris have both insightfully explored what Healy calls “the socio-culturally constructed nature of explanations of disease, and literature’s important participation in that process” (Healy 2), updating treatment of the metaphor of the body politic and drawing attention, most extensively by Harris, to the relationship between the discourses of pathology and economics.12

In her highly influential work on the early modern period, Gail Kern Paster urges the need to practice “interpretive literalism” when reading early modern texts because what is “bodily or emotional figuration for us, preserved metaphors of somatic consciousness, was the literal stuff of physiological theory for early modern scriptors of the body” (“Nervous” 111). Taking an historical phenomenological approach to humoralism, Paster highlights the difference that pervasive accounts of physiology make to “the subjective experience of being-in-the-body”; “no matter what the physical facts of any given bodily function may be,” she writes, “that function can be understood and experienced only in terms of culturally available discourses” or in terms of culture’s “more politically conceptualized cognate, ideology” (Body 3, 4). Humoral discourse, as Paster illustrates, and as Elizabeth I’s speech corroborates, is inflected with gender and class hierarchies, and, as Mary Floyd-Wilson has traced in her study of what she calls “geohumoralism,” it is “culturally inscribed with ethnic interests” (Ethnicity 12).13

Stressing that the body is a powerful site for the “operations of ideology” because “we experience our bodies as natural and because we experience them as belonging to us—we ‘proprio-percept’ them—all the time (Body 4-5, original italics), in The Body Embarrassed

12 Disease is also the subject of a collection of essays edited by Stephanie Moss and Kaara L. Peterson, Disease, Diagnosis, and Cure on the Early Modern Stage.

13 Historical phenomenology is described in the introduction to Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion, edited by Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson, as a methodology that puts “pressure on the fact that the period’s most categorically ‘scientific’ discourses on the passions are in themselves not only socially invested representations but also cultural scripts” and suggests that “the very language of physiology [...] helps determine phenomenology,” that the “way we describe the workings of our bodies and minds, and how we characterize our habitation in the world, may shape and color our emotional experiences” (16).
Paster usefully complicates Mary Douglas’s theorization of the relationship between the social and physical body by distinguishing between the social and physical outer body and the social and physical inner body. She thus differentiates the bodily *habitus*, “the gestures, bearings, behaviors, and techniques described by Marcel Mauss,” into what she calls the “external habitus” and the “internal habitus” (3). Quoting Pierre Bourdieu’s argument that societies “set such store on the seemingly most insignificant details of *dress*, *bearing*, physical and verbal *manners*,” because “treating the body as a memory, they entrust to it in abbreviated and practical, i.e. mnemonic, form the fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of the culture” (5, original italics), Paster adds that while “Bourdieu is arguing here for the silent and invisible formation of the external habitus,” we can “reasonably infer an equal or even greater hiddenness and efficacy in the social formation of the internal habitus, in, as Mary Douglas says, the ‘continual exchange of meanings between the two kinds of bodily experience’” (5).

Although Paster employs Louis Althusser’s notion of “interpellation” in her discussion, “internalization,” or the “incorporation,” of ideology perhaps better expresses her own emphasis on “the social formation of the internal habitus” and Bourdieu’s explanation, in the passage from which she quotes, that social “principles” are “em-bodied” and social values are “given body, *made* body by the transubstantiation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy through injunctions as insignificant as ‘stand up straight’ or ‘don’t hold your knife in your left hand’” (5, original italics).

Despite the critical attention to metaphors, medical interpretations, and experiences of the early modern body, there have been relatively few full-length treatments of digestion or of the digestive organs in scholarship on the period. Bruce Boehrer’s *The Fury of Men’s Gullets: Ben Jonson and the Digestive Canal* and Michael Schoenfeldt’s *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* are two significant exceptions. In *The Fury of Men’s Gullets*, Boehrer theorizes...

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14 *Cultures of the Abdomen: Diet, Digestion, and Fat in the Modern World*, edited by Christopher E. Forth and Ana Carden-Coyne, is a recent collection focusing on the belly, but although there is some discussion of the early modern period in the introduction, the collection’s articles deal with later periods.
Jonson’s “enduring fascination with alimentary matters” in the context of the “socio-historical significance of food” in early seventeenth-century England (3). Outlining three major theoretical models twentieth-century writers have used in analyzing “alimentary motifs” in early modern English drama—the Freudian, the Bakhtinian, and the anthropological (influenced by Pierre Bourdieu and Mary Douglas)(8)—he adds to these approaches his own perspective, based on the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatarri. In particular, Boehrer examines Jonson’s “fondness for interrelated tropes of alimentary and literary behavior” by using the Deleuzian model, which “provides space for inconsistency, fluidity, and difference” (39). Although my focus is not on digestion as a metaphor for literary production and my approach is closer to the anthropological than the Deleuzian, like Boehrer I explore the relationship between metaphors of digestion and social practices, including those of manners and sanitation.

In *Bodies and Selves*, Schoenfeldt foregrounds the role of digestion in early modern subjectivity; reacting against New Historicism’s emphasis on the individual as “a victim of the power that circulates through culture,” he stresses individual agency in shaping the self through dietary and therapeutic choices (11) and concentrates on the “productive function of discipline” (13), on “the self-control that authorizes individuality,” rather than on control by the state (11). Adapting Stephen Greenblatt’s term “self-fashioning” to internal bodily functions, he argues that “in early modern England, the consuming subject was pressured by Galenic physiology, classical ethics, and Protestant theology to conceive all acts of ingestion and excretion as very literal acts of self-fashioning”(11). Furthermore, in contrast to scholarship that draws on the Bahktinian notion of the grotesque body, such as Paster’s treatment of the humoral body’s “corporeal flux” in *The Body Embarrassed*, he claims that humoral theory “encouraged not carnivalesque liquifaction but rather the careful maintenance of constitutional solubility” (15). Like Paster, Schoenfeldt emphasizes the inseparability of the psychological and the corporeal in pre-Cartesian thought, but where, in his opinion, Paster tends to “pathologize the leaky body,” he argues that Galenic medicine instead makes the “obstructed body the source of mortal pathogens” (15). Schoenfeldt’s study is an important one, and while I share his focus on the centrality of digestive processes in early modern self-
experience, I differ from him in my insistence on the need not to lose sight of power relations (though not necessarily only of state power) when considering discourses and practices of the body and in my related insistence on the imbrication of external and internal forms of discipline. Although I agree with Schoenfeldt that the early modern self, with its “physiological underpinnings,” is “far more than just an effect of discourses, or the product of socio-cultural discourses, institutions, and practices” (12), I ascribe a greater role to ideology in the understandings of those underpinnings and in the formation of that self than he does.

Two final studies I wish to mention briefly here are the complementarily entitled *Shakespeare’s Entrails*, by David Hillman, and *Shakespeare’s Brain*, by Mary Thomas Crane. Focusing on the body’s internal organs (not solely those of digestion), Hillman examines Shakespeare’s plays in the context of shifting understandings of human embodiment in the early modern period, what he calls “the somatic precariousness of the age,” by which he means “the radical instability in the relations between the mind and body” as well as “the gradually changing understanding of the relation of the body to its environment, a shift that eventually cordoned off the interior of the body from the surrounding cosmos in ways which profoundly influenced the birth of modern subjectivity” (1). He suggests that the “gradual displacement of the corporeal interior from its position as the central locus of consciousness, emotion and transcendent meaning to its ‘scientific’ understanding, post-Renaissance, as a merely physical system, the technological centre of a breathing, pumping, digesting machine whose consciousness lies either in the brain or soul” resulted in “a kind of aesthetic repression” of “the body’s innards” (16-17) and therefore in the “visceral unconscious” of the modern subject (18). Although I discuss some of the same body parts as Hillman, my approach is very different from his. He is interested in questions of interiority, knowledge, and skepticism, rather than in gender, class, and nationalist ideology, and he draws heavily upon psychoanalytic and philosophical traditions. My final chapter, which deals extensively with the intestines, does, however, consider aspects of the “aesthetic repression” of the body’s internal organs of digestion, although I do so in the context of early modern colonialism and nationalist/colonialist ideology.

In *Shakespeare’s Brain*, Mary Thomas Crane applies recent research in cognitive
science, including that of George Lakoff and Antonio Damasio, to her study of patterns of words in Shakespeare’s plays and suggests that cognitive theory can provide a framework for negotiating between individual agency and cultural constructivism, between, in relation to authorship, “those who assume an author with conscious control over the text he produces and those who assume that cultural construction leaves little or no room for authorial agency” (16). In cognitive theory, “the power of culture to shape individual selves must be filtered through the material, biological constructs of the brain” (23), the physical shape of which “social and cultural interactions” may materially alter (10). In this model, meaning is “anchored (ambiguously and insecurely) by a three-way tether: brain, culture, discourse” (24). For cognitive linguists like Lakoff, Crane explains, metaphor is “a basic component of thought and language” (9), and it is profoundly linked to bodily experience and brain function. Arguing that “the brain constitutes the material site where biology engages culture to produce the mind and its manifestation, the text” (35), Crane explores “linkages and connections between words, and thus, between cultural concepts and between brain, language, and environment” (31) and the ways in which wordplay “registers complexities of meaning and ambivalences of feeling that disrupt simple ideological structures” (33).

My approach to early modern texts is similar to Crane’s in the attention I give to words and their cultural import and to the interaction of language, culture/ideology, and the body.15

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15 In Fictions of Disease, Margaret Healy also suggests the usefulness of the metaphor theory of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson when considering the ways in which the body, social structure, and texts interact. Healy points to how “[t]ropological language, particularly that associated with the richly symbolic medium of the body, has the power to disrupt stable meanings and disseminate them across domains (material, psychic, social) and beyond the boundaries marking specialized discourse” (12). The editors of Culture, Body, and Language explain that in the understanding of embodied cognition proposed by Lakoff and Johnson, “metaphor and metonymy are not purely imaginative leaps for the purpose of mere aesthetic sense-creation, they are rather more fundamentally rooted in and motivated by the bodily experiences of humans” (Sharifian et al. 8). The essays in the collection undertake to consider more fully the role of culture in the relationship between metaphor and the body by including studies on diverse languages and on different historical periods, and although early modern Europe is not a focus, the intentions of the collection are relevant to my study of early modern conceptions of the body’s internal organs. One of the assumptions of cultural psychology, Cliff Goddard notes in his contribution to the collection, “is that the semantic constructs of different languages provide culture-specific cognitive frameworks (cultural models, in the sense of Holland and Quinn) through which people interpret their interpersonal experiences, encode them in memory, and negotiate them in narratives of life experience. Everyday words and expressions thus form part of the ‘implicit meanings (the goals, values, and pictures of the world) that give shape to psychological processes’” (76). Susanne Niemeier, another contributor, writes that a cultural model “combines a variety of single and often contradictory
In my focus on the belly rather than the brain as the site of this interaction, however, I am more influenced by the early moderns than by cognitive scientists. In the early modern period, discourse was repeatedly imagined as something assimilated (to varying degrees) into the mind by way of the digestive tract. In *Julius Caesar*, for example, Cassius says of Casca that his “rudeness is a sauce to his good wit, / Which gives men stomach to digest [sic] his words / With better appetite” (1.3.300-302), while of written texts, Francis Bacon famously advises: “Some bookes are to bee tasted, others to bee swallowed, and some few to bee chewed and digested: That is, some bookes are to be read only in partes; others to be read, but cursorily, and some few to be read wholly and with diligence and attention” (“Of Studies” 40). Equally famously, in *Areopagitica* Milton argues against censorship by claiming:

> For books are as meats and viands are; some of good, some of evil substance [...].
> Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomach differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unappliable to occasions of evil. Bad meats will scarce breed good nourishment in the healthiest concoction; but herein the difference is of bad books, that they to a discreet and judicious reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate. (341)

Milton adds that “when God did enlarge the universal diet of man’s body, saving ever the rules of temperance, he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dieting and repasting of our minds; as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his own leading capacity” (342). Alongside this commonplace trope of books as food and reading or learning as eating and digesting, there were instances of literal ingestion of the written word. For example, in the metonymic and metaphorical views, crystallizing in a more dominant conceptual frame” (350), adding that cultural models, as Holland and Quinn contend, “are at the basis of metaphor, and not the other way round as Lakoff claims.” Because culturally based, such models often contradict scientific knowledge (350).

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16 Other examples include Brutus’s request for time for consideration regarding Caesar’s growing greatness, in which he tells Cassius, “Till then, my noble friend, chew upon this: / Brutus had rather be a villager / Than to repute himself a son of Rome / Under these hard conditions as this time / Is like to lay upon us” (1.2.171-175). Similarly, Othello explains how Desdemona would listen to his tales with “a greedy ear” and “devour up” his “discourse” (1.3.149-50), while in *Merchant of Venice*, Lorenzo and Jessica integrate dining and conversation. When Jessica suggests they go in to dinner at Belmont, Lorenzo says, “Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach,” to which she responds, “No, pray thee, let it serve for tabletalk; / Then howsome’er thou speak’st, ‘mong other things / I shall digest it” (3.5.87-90).
1573 siege of Sancerre, during the French Wars of Religion, people were forced by hunger to cook and eat leather. When the leather had all been eaten, however, “people turned to trying parchment ‘not only white blank parchment, but also letters, title-deeds, books printed and hand written, having no difficulty in eating even those a hundred or a hundred and twenty years old.’ They were soaked, chopped, boiled for a day and a half, and then they were fricassee like tripe, or cooked with herbs and spices” (Cunningham 229), most likely as a “sauce” to give “men stomach to digest” the pages and “words / With better appetite.”

As in the cognitive model, where language and culture are understood to interact with the physical structures of the brain, in these examples and numerous others, words and their cultural values are substances one ingests, digests, and assimilates or resists (they might remain undigested), and they have a very visceral impact on the body’s digestive system, as do social experiences. Expressions like “to pierce one’s stomach,” “to sink (deep) into one’s stomach” or “to stick in one’s stomach,” which were used of things that made a lasting impression on the mind, especially a painful one (“stomach” def. 6c), capture not only the perceived intrinsic connection between the stomach and the mind but also the material alterations of the stomach and other digestive organs resulting from the negotiation of self and society through language. Like the cognitive model, the digestive model also allows for mediation between cultural

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17 The Book of Revelation contains the following passage directly linking ingestion of a book to absorption of its contents:

And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, “Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.”

And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth as sweet as honey.

[...]

And he said unto me, “Thou must prophesy again about many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” (10:8-9,11, original italics)

18 Rather than digesting texts, Spenser’s Error vomits “bookes and papers”: “Her vomit full of bookes and papers was, / With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke, / And creeping sought way in the weedy gras” (1.1.20.6-8). In The Arte of English Poesie, George Puttenham gives the use of “I cannot digest your unkinde words” to mean “I cannot take them in good part” (3.16.148, original italics) as his first example of metaphor. The sense of the visceral impact of words, of words as substances that are very literally assimilated into the bodily system by way of the digestive tract, is an ancient one. Proverbs 18.8, for example, describes how: “The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly,” and an Assyrian treaty includes the following curse for disobedience: “[...] just as bread and wine enter into the intestines, [so] may they (=the gods) make this oath enter into [your] intestines and into those of [your] so[ns] and your [daught]ers” (Parpola 72, original []).
constructivism and individual agency. While a degree of choice exists for which books one reads and which ones one “tastes” or “chews,” just as a degree of choice exists for which foods one eats and how much—Schoenfeldt’s argument about self-fashioning—nonetheless not all individuals have access to an equal range of dietary selection. And while not all food and drink that is consumed is assimilated during the digestive process but some parts are excreted, conscious control over the process is considerably limited. Finally, whether foods are classified as “good” or “evil” is largely decided by what Robert Burton refers to in The Anatomy of Melancholy as “a jury of Physicians” (1.2.190), locating dietary self-discipline within socio-political disciplinary structures.19

The belly was not only a site through which language and its ideological implications were digested and assimilated; it could also be a site from which language issued. From ancient times through the early modern period, ventriloquism was associated not with the lips, as now, but with the belly: the terms ventriloquist, engastrimyth, and engastriloque all literally mean someone who speaks out of or from the belly, stomach, or abdomen, a “belly-talker.” Into the eighteenth century, “ventriloquism was deeply embedded in Christian discourses about demon possession, necromancy, and pagan idolatry [...] and it long held a place among many other specialized markers for different types of divination, prophecy, and conjuring” (Schmidt 277).

Leigh Eric Schmidt explains that during the early modern period, skepticism about the ability of supernatural forces to speak through individuals was increasing, though discussions of ventriloquy remained torn, as Thomas Blount’s entry under ventriloquist in his Glossographia (1656) illustrates: “one that has an evil spirit speaking in his belly, or one that by use and practice can speake as it were out of his belly, not moving his lips”(Schmidt 280-281, my emphasis). In his 1694 translation of Rabelais’s depiction of Pantagruel’s visit to the court of Master Gaster and his encounter there with the Engastrimythes, who claim descent from the ancient Ventriloqui, “Southsayers, Enchanters, Cheats, who gull’d the Mob, and seem’d not to speak and give Answers from the Mouth; but from the Belly” (4.58.227), Peter Motteux

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19 Burton’s reference appears in his description of the qualities of hare and venison: “Hare, a black meat, melancholy, and hard of digestion; it breeds incubus, often eaten, and causeth fearful dreams; so doth all venison, and is condemned by a jury of Physicians” (1.2.190).
suggests in his explanatory remarks that these Engastrimythes are “Parasites, and all those whom their hungry Bellies cause to say many things against their Consciences; so that they may be said to speak from the Belly: The word Engastrymithe also means one who by use and practice can speak as it were out of his Belly, not moving his Lips; and finally one who has an Evil Spirit speaking out of his Belly” (lix). Motteux here adds a figurative interpretation of belly-talking as speech motivated by hunger to interpretations of ventriloquism as evidence of deliberate trickery or demon possession, providing an example of an increasing metaphorization of bodily phenomena.

In recent years, writes Charles B. Davis, ventriloquism “has almost become a dead metaphor; absorbed into academic jargon as a general term for any variety of speaking for or through a represented Other. The situations described by this metaphorical ventriloquism range from blatant cultural appropriation to the most well-intentioned attempts at giving a ‘voice’ to marginalized groups” (133). He adds that the trope “has come to stand for the postmodern mistrust of both mimetic and sociopolitical representation” (133) and suggests its applicability to questions of authorship and “the speaking subject”: “Foucault’s conception of the author as ‘ideological product’ suggests that all speaking subjects are mouthpieces for a master discourse produced by power structures, and that these structures are intrinsic to the forms of language itself” (150-151). Current theoretical use of the trope of ventriloquism, including Davis’s, is based on the assumption that the ventriloquist speaks through a dummy or puppet, rather than through his or her own belly. Ventriloquism, as it was understood in the early modern period, while equally relevant to the debate between cultural constructivism and individual agency—supernatural possession or conscious voice projection—focuses that debate on the body, literalizing, for example, Margaret Healy’s reference to the body’s “locutory” function (233).

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20 In “Reading the Ventriloquist’s Lips: The Performance Genre behind the Metaphor,” Davis responds to the “predominately negative analogy” of ventriloquism (133) with the suggestion that the “semiotic complexity of ventriloquist performances makes it an apt analogy for the precarious navigation of multiple subject positions faced by each speaker, particularly in pluralistic or intercultural contexts.” In addition, ventriloquism provides a “model and an example of the kind of self-reflexive framing needed to orient audiences to listen and localize rather than identify and universalize” as well as an “awareness” of the “multiplicity of voices” and “selves” within each person (151).
My dissertation is in many ways a study of how individuals and culture speak through the belly, whether through digestive metaphors, medical representations of the organs of digestion, or through bodily practices. Like the skeptics of the period under study, I approach these speeches with a hermeneutics of suspicion, with an ear to their ideological inflections. In “Stomaching Gender and Gendering the Stomach: Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew,*” I demonstrate some of the ways in which the literal and figurative stomach serves in the early modern period as a site through which hierarchies of power are established and reproduced. While I focus on gender relations—and especially marital relations—other hierarchies of power, including those between rich and poor, master and servant, sovereign and subject were also frequently negotiated through the stomach. In addition to perpetuating social hierarchies, the stomach was used by some writers to challenge and critique structures of inequality through figurative use of the “cannibal motif,” a technique Shakespeare employs in many of his plays. Throughout the chapter, as in all of my chapters, I highlight the material practices underlying linguistic expression, in this case expressions relating to the stomach.

My second chapter, “‘The store-house and the shop of the whole body’: The Economics of Digestion,” turns to the liver, an organ that has not received any extensive critical discussion. Shifting my focus from gender hierarchy to economic ideology, I draw upon Marx’s economic theory and his own physiological rhetoric to trace how the transition from feudalism to capitalism was internalized into, and naturalized by, changing representations of physiological functions related to the liver. I concentrate on medical texts and on the paradigm shift in medical theory, the shift from Galenic to “modern” medicine, that was part of the scientific revolution. My argument, that modes of production receive perhaps their greatest naturalization when embedded in medical paradigms, is as applicable to current medical theory as it is to its ancient and early modern manifestations.

Chapter Three, “Concocting Commodities: Spenser’s Allegory of Digestion,” offers a more-detailed and literary example of the theoretical perspective presented in Chapter Two. In my study of the Castle of Alma section in Book Two of *The Faerie Queene,* which, surprisingly, has not received much in the way of economic analysis, I outline how a close reading of Spenser’s allegory of the belly reveals his participation in the project of legitimating
the “moderate” consumption of luxury goods, despite his depiction of the evils of luxurious living throughout the book of Temperance. Spenser’s comparison of the blood produced in the liver to achates, sugary desserts linked to the new economics of commercial exchange, familiarizes commodity consumption, at the same time reflecting the internalization of exchange taking place within the social body. Spenser’s choice of allegorical equivalent for blood is, I suggest, prescient, and it points to the complex interrelationship of medicine and economics: just as over the centuries sugar became a staple of the Western diet, so sugars like glucose were found important to the healthy functioning of the body and the term blood-sugar was coined.

In “‘England’s Excrements’: Bodily Functions and Colonialism,” I focus on the intestines and on the physiological process of excretion, rather than on the processes of ingestion, blood production, and assimilation. I examine how bodily metaphors are used not to promote the incorporation of new products but to validate the expulsion of unwanted persons from the national body and undesirable behaviours from the social and individual bodies. Exploring overlaps between discourses of excretion and discourses of colonialism and nationalism, and between literal and figurative excrement, I read early modern experiments in the transportation of the criminalized poor, felons, and political prisoners—described as “Englands excrements”—to the colonies to serve as indentured servitude in the context of the Galenic emphasis on the need to evacuate surplus humours to achieve health and attempts to address concerns about human waste in urban centres. Influenced by Norbert Elias’s theorization of the connection between state discipline and self-discipline, and of the “civilizing process” at work in the early modern period, I also point to similarities between the evacuation of England’s figurative excrement from the national body and the increasing shame related to the bodily functions of excretion. I conclude with an analysis of how these phenomena are depicted in Phineas Fletcher’s representation of the belly in The Purple Island.
Chapter One

Stomaching Gender and Gendering the Stomach: Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew

In her important study, “The Heart and Stomach of a King”: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power, Carole Levin includes a discussion of Elizabeth’s speech to the English troops at Tilbury, obviously central to her title, writing that “Elizabeth, though she might have ‘the heart and stomach of a king,’ had a woman’s body. Yet Elizabeth as queen and king, as both powerful and female, blurred the definitions of gender and role expectation in her particular position as ruler of Renaissance England” (148, original emphasis). Levin does not, however, address the specific appearance of the word stomach in Elizabeth’s speech or the significance of that digestive organ to “definitions of gender and role expectation” in the early modern period. It is precisely this significance that I explore in this chapter, focusing particularly on Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew, a play in which the definition of gender roles is of central importance.

While stomach-related metaphors still exist in English, they have largely become dead metaphors, eviscerated, over time, of their actual bodily organs. Scholars like Gail Kern Paster and Michael Schoenfeldt, though, have done much to revive awareness of the importance of experiences of corporeality in the early modern period. Yet Paster’s highly influential work on bodily shame, The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England, foregrounds gender but does not deal extensively with the stomach, whereas Schoenfeldt’s study of physiology and inwardness, Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton, pays a great deal of attention to the stomach and digestion but is not especially interested in gender. In what follows, I argue that although it is not as obviously gendered as, for example, the reproductive organs, the stomach (in both its literal and its figurative connotations) is nonetheless a significant site through which hierarchies of gender are expressed.

Always a crucial organ, especially when food is scarce, the stomach had a particularly important place in the medical and cultural model of the body that predominated in the early
modern period. In Galenic medicine, digestion, which occurred primarily through heat, involved not only the transformation of ingested food into a form suitable for assimilation by the body, but also the production of the humours affecting temperament: melancholy, cholera, phlegm, and blood. Although heat was crucial to digestion, early modern medical theory considered the temperature of individual stomachs variable. A seventeenth-century English translation of Ambroise Paré, famous sixteenth-century French surgeon, explains this variability: “The temper of the ventricle [the technically correct name for the stomach] in men of good habite, is temperate, because it is almost composed of the equall commixture of sanguine and spermaticke parts; or according to Galens opinion, it is cold of its selfe, and by the parts composing it; and hot by the vicinitie of the bowels. But in some it is hotter, in others colder, according to the diverse temper and complexion of diverse bodies.”

A hot stomach better digests hard meats than soft meats which it “corrupts and turnes into belchings” whereas a colder stomach “desires much meate, but is slow in concocting them” (3.14.103, original italics).

Despite individuality in stomach temperatures and variability in humoral complexities, certain generalizations were made. Middle aged men, for example, “delight in the moderate use of contraries to temper the excesse of their too acride heate”; old men, whose “solid parts” grow increasingly “cold and drie” should eat “hot and moist meates” to heat and moisten those parts; and young people, since they are temperate, “are to be preserved by the use of like things” (Paré 1.15.34). Women were said to be categorically colder than men, thus gendering digestion. The “defect of heat” theory, which was used to explain differences in male and female genitalia and which argued that women lacked sufficient heat to push the genitals outward, was also understood to contribute to differences in digestion, which in turn was used to explain menstruation. Paré writes that

> Because a woman is more cold, and therefore hath the digestive faculty more weake, it commeth to passe, that shee requireth and desireth more meate or foode than shee

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1 Under stomach the OED editors note that “[s]ome of the earlier anatomists (following, ultimately, Galen) attempted to restore to the word its original Gr. sense of oesophagus or gullet, and to give the name ventricle to what is ‘improperly’ called the stomach” (def. 2)
can digest or concoct: And because that superfluous humour that remaineth is not digested by exercise, nor by the efficacy of strong and lively heat, therefore by the providence or benefit of nature it floweth out by the veines of the wombe, by the power of the expulsive faculty, at its owne certaine and prefixed season or time. (24.49.946)

Paré emphasizes his point when he adds that:

one dramme (that I may so speake) of a mans blood, is of more efficacy to nourish and encrease, than two pounds of womans blood, because it is farre more perfect, more concocted, wrought, and better replenished with abundance of spirits: whereby it commeth to passe that a man endued with a more strong heat, doth more easily convert what meat soever he eateth unto the nourishment & substance of his body; & if that any superfluity remains, he doth easily digest and scatter it by insensible transpiration. But a woman being more cold than a man, because shee taketh more than shee can concoct, doth gather together more humours, which because shee cannot disperse, by reason of the unperfectnesse and weaknesse of her heat, it is necessary that shee should suffer, and have her monethly purgation especially when shee groweth unto some bignesse; but there is no such need in a man. (24.50.947)

This explanation of menstruation makes clear the ways in which gender hierarchy is naturalized through medical descriptions of the stomach and digestion. Simply put, men as a rule digest better than women, their “strong heat” making them better able to make use of the food they eat and to incorporate it into the “substance” of their bodies. Masculine strength, liveliness, and perfection are contrasted with female weakness and imperfection. Men are constructed as active people who exercise or perform labour, whereas women are implicitly passive and idle. Women are also depicted as inherently greedy and wasteful since they consume more than they are able to digest. In addition, because involuntary, menstruation becomes to some degree “a punitive process” (Paster, *Body* 82), a providential disciplining of

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2 In discussing the effect of labour and diet on menstruation elsewhere, Paré does distinguish between more and less active women (24.49.946).
the female body which must “suffer” (not just “have”) monthly “purgation.”

Similar gender ideology is manifested in a number of early modern representations of
the stomach and digestion. For example, linguistic slippage in the period between the words
womb and belly further contributed to the sense that women had excessive appetites. Womb
could refer to the specifically female uterus, but it was also frequently used for the stomach,
bowels, or belly, while belly could similarly be used not just for the belly region, the stomach,
or the bowels, but could also mean the uterus. What this slippage means is that female bodies
could be understood to have two stomachs requiring feeding, just as the vagina was sometimes
understood as a second mouth. It is exactly this female doubleness that underlies Apemantus’s
comment early in Timon of Athens that ladies “eat lords” and so “come by great bellies,” in
which he conflates the uterus and the digestive organs, female sexual and gustatory appetite
(1.1.206-207). In his 1616 text on childbirth, Jacques Guillemeau describes the uteruses of
women suffering from “wandering womb,” a condition in which it was believed that the uterus
had the ability “to ‘wander’ through the body, seeking gratification, and in the process,
applying pressure to various organs and causing a variety of symptoms” (Gutierrez 17), in
terms that make them appear gluttonous. He writes: “in some Women the wombe is so greedy,
and lickerish that it doth euen come down to meet nature, sucking, and (as it were) snatching
the same, though it remaine only about the mouth and entrance of the outward orifice thereof”

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3 In the chapter called “Laudable Blood” in The Body Embarrassed, Gail Kern Paster provides a fuller
treatment of menstruation and the gendering of blood.

4 In Sauny the Scot, Sauny regularly uses wame (a variant of womb) to mean stomach/belly.

5 Thomas Lacquer’s important study, Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud,
includes a discussion of the ambiguity of the word uterus (27). While Lacquer focuses on gender and the body,
he is much more interested in the reproductive organs than the stomach and digestive organs. He does,
however, point to the “defect of heat” theory as it was applied to the genitals in his outline of the “one-sex
model”of the ancients, and he does so in his analysis of Galen’s comparison of the female genitals not with
shrews but with moles (27-28). Quoting Carl Jung, Merral Lewellyn Price writes in Consuming Passions: “The
figure of the devouring mother is the negative side of the mother archetype, a conflation of not just womb and
stomach, but also of mouth and vagina, connotated by that which ‘devours, seduces and poisons, that which is
terrifying and inescapable’—the vagina dentata” (97).

6 I am grateful to Alexander Leggatt for drawing my attention to Apemantus’s remark.
Gutiérrez explains that this belief originated with the ancient Egyptians and was popularized in the works of Hippocrates. Some of the symptoms of “wandering womb” included “disruption in the female reproductive system and emotional disequilibrium” (17).

Lickerous and lecherous are etymologically related.

There is some ambiguity in the phrase “the dearest morsell of man.” While “dearest” emphasizes a pregnant wife’s longings for the most expensive goods available, that the longings are for a “morsell of man” emphasizes that this extravagance is perceived as financially and otherwise threatening to the “man” of the house and to his household.

George Puttenham, for example, refers to this proverb in his explanation of metalepsis, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 3.

In “Allegory, Materialism, Violence,” Gordon Teskey considers the elements of allegory in the context of Aristotle’s *De generatione animalium* in which “the male provides the ‘form’ and the ‘principle
The dangers of female appetite are perhaps best exemplified in the story of Eve’s transgression of divine dietary prohibition in Genesis. With disastrous results for humanity, Eve eats the forbidden fruit because she saw “that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise” (3.6, original italics). Although not specifically mentioned in the Genesis version, several early modern interpretations of the story highlight the effect of Eve’s actions on human digestion. While Galenic medicine theorized that women had weaker digestions than men, in Johannes-Baptista van Helmont’s seventeenth-century theorization, Eve’s eating of the forbidden fruit resulted in weaker human digestion generally, causing disease and death. Van Helmont, who was strongly influenced by the sixteenth-century works of Paracelsus, presented a theory of digestion that contrasted with what he called, in the words of a seventeenth-century English translator, the “exsecrable heresie of medical Doctrine,” “the grey-haired dreams of the Grecians,” which had “drawne the whole Christian World after them, into a servitude, that is ridiculous, lying and pernicious to humane society” (Catarrhi13,11). Walter Pagel traces how in van Helmont’s understanding of things, before the Fall digestion involved the complete dissolution of food, but eating the apple meant that the sensitive soul came between the human and the divine, seriously impairing the digestive process. Lust was the reason Adam “ate his own death” by also partaking of the apple, which, according to van Helmont, contained an aphrodisiac and led to the loss of Eve’s virginity (116). After the Fall, food then became “a kind of contagium or contamination” containing “dangerous invaders” that the weakened power of digestion” was unable to “subjugate” completely (Pagel 102).

Most well-known of literary interpretations of the Fall is, of course, Milton’s retelling of the Genesis story. In his chapter called “The Alimental Vision in Paradise Lost,” Michael Schoenfeldt writes of Milton’s extended treatment of the Fall that “[o]ne of the bitterest jokes suffusing Milton’s portrait of the first dietary transgression is the fact that it causes indigestion,

I have chosen this spelling from numerous alternatives for van Helmont’s full name.
as if the body rejects in part the assimilation of its own corruption. At the Fall, humanity not only troubles its own house but also inherits the wind”; “[t]he original act of intemperance introduces the illnesses that intemperate eating was thought in contemporary physiology to produce” (Bodies 159). Sleep, for example, rather than being “airy light, from pure digestion bred, / And temperate vapours bland” (5.4-5) becomes for Adam and Eve “grosser sleep / Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams / Encumbered” (9.1049-51). The “fallacious fruit” causes a heat that inflames carnal desire as well as causing “unkindly fumes” that disturb sleep (Schoenfeldt, Bodies 150); fumes were “vapours rising from stomach to brain, especially after drinking alcohol. Fumes were inevitable, but their quality was critical: when dense, they produced grosser sleep.”13

Milton’s bitter “joke” about the digestive consequences of the Fall is not unique: an earlier one appears in John Fletcher’s play, The Woman’s Prize. Disgruntled when his beloved Olivia begins to treat him unkindly, Rowland engages in the following conversation with Tranio:

Rowland: Yes, pray can you tell me Tranio,
Who knew the devill first?
Tranio: A woman.
Rowland: So,
Were they not well acquainted?
Tranio: May be so,
For they had certaine Dialogues together.
Rowland: He sold her fruit, I take it?
Tranio: Yes, and Cheese
That choak’d all mankinde after.
Rowland: Canst thou tell me
Whether that woman ever had a faith
After she had eaten?
Tranio: That’s a great Schoole question.

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13 See Fowler’s note to this passage on page 530 of his edition of Paradise Lost. The italics are his.
Fletcher gives the story of the Fall an additional economic aspect: Eve doesn’t just eat the fruit from the forbidden tree because the serpent suggests it, but she specifically buys it, thus, on one level, making the Fall a fall into commerce; from the beginning, apparently, women are almost driven to shop. On another level, the Fall is, as in Paradise Lost, a fall into indigestion. The cheese Eve buys, rather than providing nourishment, “chokes” humanity ever after, although cheese was generally thought to aid in post-lapsarian digestion. The fruit she buys is described in terms of traditional Galenic categorizations of foods: it is “cold fruit” and it gives Eve “cholick vowes” and “windy promises.” Apples, for example, were “of a cold and moist temperature, abounding within a superfluous, crude, and windie moisture” (Venner qtd. in Schoenfeldt, Bodies 151). As a noun, colic refers to griping pain in the belly, but as an adjective, it means “pertaining to the colon” or “[a]ffecting the colon” (OED). In Rowland’s opinion, women are not only indiscriminate shoppers but also indiscriminate eaters, and Eve gets a bad case of flatulence as a result of her food choice. Rowland emphasizes his disgust with women not by conflating female mouths and vaginas but by conflating female mouths and anuses.

At the same time that women’s appetites are emphasized in these representations, their role in food preparation and other labour is silently erased in descriptions of the body’s inner workings where digestion was traditionally compared to cooking and imagined as a labour-intensive process. In Galen’s On the Usefulness of the Parts, for example, the body is likened to a city and the stomach to a storehouse where workmen sort wheat before it is carried off by porters to the liver to be baked as in a public bakery. The stomach and liver are also

14 Later in The Woman’s Prize, Petruchio uses similar language to his second wife, who undertakes her own taming program. He says, “Was it not sinne enough, thou Fruiterer / Full of the fall thou eat’st: thou devils broker [...]” (4.2.110-11).

15 In Troilus and Cressida, for example, Achilles calls Thersites “my cheese, my digestion” and asks, “why hast thou not serv’d thyself in to my table so many meals?” (2.3.41-42).
These comparisons are discussed more fully in the next chapter. In these comparisons, however, the digestive organs are predominantly gendered masculine. The tradition of masculinizing the digestive organs is continued in the early modern period by Spenser, in his allegory of digestion in Book Two of *The Faerie Queene*, by Shakespeare, in Menenius’s version of the Fable of the Belly in *Coriolanus*, and by medical writers, including Batman’s sixteenth-century *Vppon Bartholome*, in which he describes the stomach as “the purueiour and husband of all the body”(5.38.57v), choosing husbandry over housewifery for his comparison, although at the time a housewife’s responsibilities included baking, brewing, and distilling home medicinal remedies, all activities elsewhere conceived as similar to digestion.

It is an interesting phenomenon of gender relations that when the stomach and other digestive organs are presented as engaged in productive labour they are personified as masculine, but personifications of the empty and starving stomach like Famine in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* or Dearth in Du Bartas’s *Divine Weeks and Works* are personified as feminine. As Margaret Kelleher has pointed out, when the effects of famine are given detailed descriptions, “where the individual spectacle of a hungry body is created, this occurs, predominantly, through images of women” (8). Kelleher sees this tendency in famine literature as another example of a long tradition in which the female is what Marina Warner calls “a vehicle of attributed meaning,” the projection onto the female body of “the fantasies and longings and terrors of generations of men and through them of women, in order to conjure them into reality or exorcize them into oblivion” (Kelleher 8). “Shrew” literature is yet another example of this tradition of projecting cultural anxieties onto the female body, with “shrews”

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16 These comparisons are discussed more fully in the next chapter.

17 The increasing number of cookbooks aimed at a female audience indicate that women had an important role to play in food preparation, even if bakers and cooks were traditionally male and brewmistresses were being replaced by brewers. See, for example, Wendy Wall’s *Staging Domesticity*, Joan Thirsk’s *Food in Early Modern England*, and Kim Hall’s “Culinary spaces, colonial spaces: the gendering of sugar in the seventeenth century.”

18 Margaret Kelleher’s *The Feminization of Famine: Expressions of the Inexpressible*, while dealing with nineteenth and twentieth-century literature, opens with an epigraph from Ovid’s depiction of Famine in Book Eight of *Metamorphoses*. Du Bartas’s depiction of Dearth, which I discuss more fully in the conclusion, appears in the third part of the first day of the second week in *Divine Weeks and Works*.
The stomachs of shrews have been the subject of considerable interest in recent years; this interest, however, has largely been among empirical scientists researching such things as what shrews eat, how female mammals respond to food-deprivation, and the mechanisms of vomiting (because house musk shrews are able to vomit easily they are used in studies of motion sickness). Although diet, food deprivation, and vomiting are also relevant here, I am concerned not with the stomachs of these small mammals but with those of the women described in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as “shrews” because thought to share a similar malignancy, and with those of their husbands. Focusing particularly on Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew*, but reading the play in the context of the anonymous *The Taming of A Shrew*, Lacy’s *Sauny the Scot*, and Fletcher’s *The Woman’s Prize*, I suggest that the significance of the stomach in *The Shrew* and other “shrew” plays and tales deserves further consideration than it has yet received in literary critical attention where the tongue has tended to be the body part most often discussed. In an approach somewhat similar to mine, Michael Harrwood has recently examined Shakespeare’s use of the word *stomach* in the *Henry VI* plays. Where he deals specifically with class and competition-based relations among men, however, I deal with marital relations, relations which in the play and in early modern thought have larger political, economic, and religious implications. I concentrate on Katherina’s stomach in this section and on Petruchio’s in the next.

The *OED* editors suggest that the word *shrew* may be related to a Middle High German word, *schröuwel*, or devil, and as a verb, *shrew* means “to curse.” Although not always gendered, at the time of *The Shrew*’s composition, *shrew* was a term primarily used

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19 The keywords *shrew* and *stomach* in *Scholars Portal* bring up a list of numerous scientific articles on the topic.

20 For an overview of scholarship on the tongue/female speech and *The Shrew*, see pages 9-11 of Dana Aspinall’s introduction to his collection of critical essays on the play.
to describe a woman “given to railing or scolding or other perverse or malignant behaviour; freq. a scolding or turbulent wife” (n2. def. 3a). Thus “shrews” were women who did not fit into the patriarchal model of female silence and submission, and as such they were demonized. In *Sauny the Scot*, for example, when Margaret, the shrewish wife, argues with her husband, Sauny says to his master, “Now the Deel’s a cruppen intul her Mouth, Sir, you may see a little of his Tail hang out; it looks for aw the World as is were a Sting, Sir” (4.41).

This image of the unruly female tongue as the devil’s backside draws explicit connections between diabolic forces and shrewishness by interpreting a mouth opened in rebelliousness as an entry point for the devil himself. Sauny’s comment may be an allusion to Eve, whose rebellious eating is linked to the devil and to sin, but it may also be an allusion to a tradition in medieval iconography of depicting the devil entering Judas’s mouth as he is eating the Last Supper. Based on John 13:27—“And after the sop Satan entered into him”—and I Corinthians 11:29—“He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself”—in some illustrations Satan is depicted entering Judas as a miniature devil and in others as a blackbird (Schiller 34-35).

“Shrews,” also known as “scolds,” were not only demonized but criminalized. In her study of the gendering of particular crimes like scolding in the early modern period and of the gendered punishment and shaming of “shrews,” Lynda Boose includes the following 1675 legal summary:

A Scold in a legal sense is a troublesome and angry woman, who by her brawling and wrangling amongst her Neighbours, doth break the publick Peace, and beget, cherish and increase publick Discord. And for this she is to be presented and punished in a

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21 In one of his sermons, Roger Edgeworth specifically describes the devil as a “shrew” and, also relevant to my particular focus, he describes the devil's appetite in significant detail. He writes:

But the wylie Pie, the false shrew, in his begininge will pretende a goodlie and Godlie matter, as for the glorie of God, for a common welth, or for some worke of merci or some other. Albeit in his processe he will exorbitate, he wyl go awry, he will compas the matter so, that it shall finallie ende in a money matter. For to get landes or possessions, or for to rob men of their luings, or some such deuylishse purpose. The deueil (sayth S. Peter) goeth aboute lyke a rorynge Lyon, sekynghe for his praye whome he may devoure and incorporate to him selfe, making him one bodie with him selfe, for the Dyvell hath hys mistical bodie, compacte and made of suche as he hath rauende and swalowed vp by theyr sinnes, they be counted and taken as his lymmes and me[m]bres. (cccix)
Leet, by being put in the Cucking or Ducking-stole, or Tumbrel, an Engine appointed for that purpose, which is in the fashion of a Chair; and herein she is to sit, and to be let down in the water over head and ears three or four times, so that no part of her to be above the water, diving or ducking down, though against her will, as Ducks do under the water. ("Scolding" 136-137)

Such punishments, Boose continues, are part of the “wider growth of a ‘law and order consciousness,’ the increase of fundamental concern about social order that manifested itself in the growing severity of criminal statutes directed primarily against vagrants and female disorder. In other words, what had sprung into full operation was a social anxiety that came to locate the source of all disorder in society in its marginal and subordinate groups” (143). The “connections between body and state” made “control of women’s speech a massively important project” and even “such extreme measures as the strange instrument known as the ‘scolds’ bridle’ or ‘brank’” could therefore be justified (144).

While present-day literary scholars are less interested in the stomachs of shrews than their scientific counterparts, early modern authors frequently draw attention to “shrew” stomachs, connecting them to unruly speech and shrewish behaviour. Richard Allestree, for example, writes that those who “represent Meeknes and Submission as a silly sheepish quality unfit for women of breeding and spirit” are “false punctilioes of honor” because “stubbornness is the mark only of a great stomac [sic], not of a great mind” (1.2.40-41),22 and in George Chapman’s Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fools, Rustico claims that it is not possible to tame a “shrew” by violence because “the more you strive to break their stomach, the more it grows” (3.2.45). In The Taming of A Shrew, when Ferando offers Kate meat on his dagger and then takes it away because she has not thanked him, he later adds, “I know your stomach is not yet come down, / Therefore no marvel thou canst not eate” (9.42-43), but when Kate decides to agree with him about whether it is the sun or the moon in the sky, he exclaims, “I am glad, Kate, your stomach is come down” (12.13). What these examples make

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22 Importantly, Allestree implies that “Meeknes and Submission” are only deemed “a silly sheepish quality” for certain women: reflecting class ideology, “spirit” and “greatness of mind” are associated with “breeding” and “nobleness.” Allestree, however, dismisses any admiration for female spiritedness, defining such behaviour as “stubbornness,” which he links to the stomach and contrasts with the mind.
clear is that the taming of rebellious women is as much about the taming of their stomachs as it is about the taming of their tongues. In *A Shrew* disobedience is directly linked to a raised stomach and obedience to a lowered one: female stomachs that are *up* must be brought *down*. Women with stomachs that are up are understood to be transgressing hierarchical boundaries of authority, seeking to rise above their socially constructed placement in the larger order of things.

The connection between transgression and stomachs that are “up” was not confined to “shrews” in the early modern period. For example, in his study of appearances of the word *stomach* in Shakespeare’s *Henry VI* plays, Michael Harrawood discusses the falconing scene in *Part Two*, in which the King says to Gloucester and Winchester, who have been exchanging insults, “The winds grow high; so do your stomachs, lords” (2.1.58). What Harrawood says of these “high-stomached lords” is also relevant to “shrews” who have stomachs that are “up.” He writes:

Here, ostensibly, the King means that the continued quarreling is a breach of decorum and is ruining the sport. The reference to his lords’ high stomachs refers also to a set of passions that forgets and overcomes decorum itself. As when Richard II says of Bolingbroke and Mowbray “High-stomach’d are they both and full of ire” (*Richard II* 1.1.18), the King here is hoping to check his lords’ impertinent self-assertion, their implacable shared will to confrontation, their non-stop mutual verbal abuse, and their apparent eagerness to fling themselves into mortal combat [...]. (82-83)

Quarrelling lords, like shrewish wives, are not behaving as they ought to according to the rules of social etiquette, which encourage self-restraint and decorum.

Harrawood goes on to suggest that the verticality in the notion of high stomachs is paralleled in the rhetoric of early modern medical texts where the digestive organs “jockey for position” within the body just as, he suggests, nobles do at court (84). In addition, it was

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23 Andrés de Laguna includes the following very detailed rationale for hierarchy among bodily organs and makes specific mention of competitiveness and rivalry (in the arena and in business):

Furthermore, to prevent any quarrel from arising between the kidneys or any envy from being created should they encroach upon each other—for rarely do those who practice the same profession agree, especially if their houses face each other, as we may see particularly among physicians among whom (to say nothing of druggists and barbers) there exists such a great rivalry, jealousy, and lust, a very
believed by some that the stomach was capable of rising above its normal position within the body (in a way similar to the womb’s ability to wander from its normal position in cases of “wandering womb”): “The stomach’s role in the administration and redistribution of the body’s nutritive wealth also requires that it move about, rising above its place to receive food being swallowed” (84). As an example, Harrawood includes Christopher Langton’s discussion of this rising movement, in which he makes reference to the pike, “whose stomach was popularly believed to rise into its mouth during feeding”:

. . . Summe thinke that . . . there is a peculyer power in the nutrityue partes, as in the stomacke and the lyuer whyche doo provoke it, as in the fyshes that be called pykes, whan they followe theyr praye, sumwhat gredely, they be so mooved by verye feruente desyre, to ouertake it, that theyr stomacke ryseth up to theyr mouthe, in the whyche example, the nature of gluttons is verye well paynted as I thyncke, and trueley for the most part they be rauenars and great eaters, which hath shorte neckes and wyde mouthes. (84)

That the stomach might rise out of desire for food, as in the example of gluttons, appears to contradict Ferando’s suggestion that it is not surprising that Kate cannot eat because her stomach has not yet come down. He may, however, be merely finding an excuse to continue withholding food, or he may be implying that the stomach could physically rise within the body for reasons other than hunger, like anger. In a study on bodily metaphors in Japanese, Brian McVeigh writes that “in Japanese one’s belly takes on all sorts of meanings that involve social interaction and character development” (38); particularly relevant here, the expression *hara ga tatsu*, “to become angry,” literally translates as “one’s stomach stands” (40, table 3).

Linking shrewish behaviour to physiology, and figurative to literal stomachs, “shrews” were thought to suffer from an excess of choler, the humour believed to provoke anger and
irritability. Choler could itself be gendered. In defending women, Owen Felltham affirms a physiological grounding in male and female behaviour, but questions the validity of double-standards. He writes:

‘Tis certain, they [women] are by constitution colder than the boiling man: so by this, more temperate: ‘tis heat that transports man to immoderation and fury: ‘tis that, which hurries him to a savage and libidinous violence. Women are naturally the more modest: and modesty is the seat and dwelling place of virtue. Whence proceed the most abhorred villainies, but from a masculine and unblushing impudence? What a deal of sweetness do we find in a mild disposition? When a woman grows bold and daring, we dislike her, and say, ‘she is too like a man’: yet in our selves, we magnify what we condemn in her. Is not this injustice? (289)

In the section “Of Meekness” in The Ladies Calling, Richard Allestree urges that since women by nature have “less of fire and consequently of choler” in their “compositions,” their “heats of that kind” are therefore “adventitious and preternatural”; this fact, combined with their “native feebleness,” which makes them “unable to back and assert their angers with any effective force,” means that nature seems to have “indicted” them against the ridiculousness of an “impotent rage” (1.2.43-44). Because the characteristics of choler—heat and dryness—were stereotypically masculine qualities, female challenges to patriarchal gender norms as exemplified by so-called shrewishness or refusal to be submissive might then be said to be reflected in, and explained by, what was represented as being “too like a man” physiologically. In other words, not only do “shrews” refuse to conform to prescribed gender roles in their outward behaviour but also in their inward behaviour; socially they do not conform to a model of feminine meekness nor do they do so physiologically by having a colder temperature and thus “weaker” digestion. Paré’s explanation for young women who are healthy but do not menstruate (and therefore on a physiological level also do not behave as women “ought”) provides some corroboration for what I am suggesting. He speculates that

24 In describing the “Receipt,” or recipe, for how Dame Nature originally made a “scold” or “shrew,” Humphrey Crouch explains that to make the “shrew” more “Churlish,” Nature “cut a Vein under the Tongue of the Dog-Star, drawing thence a Pound of the most cholerick Blood” (153-154).
such women “must necessarily be hot and dry, or rather of a manly heat and drynesse, that they may so disperse and dissipate by transpiration, as men doe, the excrements that are gathered, but verily all such are barren” (24.51.947). The “manly heat and drynesse” in these female bodies means that they further resist patriarchal norms by not reproducing.25

Before turning to The Taming of the Shrew, my final example of early modern conceptions of “shrew” stomachs comes from William Burton’s early seventeenth-century English version of Erasmus’s “A Dialogue Between a Good Woman and a Shrew.” Drawing upon the commonplace analogy between husband/wife and Christ/Church, and giving “shrew” tales religious significance, the “good” woman, Eulalia, explains how Paul preached the need for women to submit themselves to their husbands. In response, the “shrew,” Xantippe, remarks that he also instructed men to love their wives as Christ loved the Church, going on to say, “Shall I call him husband that taketh me for his servant?” To this, Eulalia observes, “Oh that word servant sticketh sore in your stomach”(H4v).26 Eulalia’s observation is an example of the way in which digestion, the process of assimilating what is foreign into the self, frequently serves as a metaphor for other forms of incorporation like thought. Digestion is also, as I have suggested, an apt metaphor for the processes by which ideology is internalized. It is specifically the word servant that sticks in the stomach of the “shrew” in this version of the dialogue, emphasizing that “shrews” are women who have not “properly” digested and assimilated the gender ideology that makes women inferior to men and binds wives to serve their husbands (the gender hierarchy instituted, in the Bible, as a punishment of Eve’s disobedient ingestion, when Eve in a sense ate her own subjection). The stomachs of “shrews” figuratively resist internalizing gender hierarchy—female servitude remains undigested—just as they literally resist internalizing it physiologically.

I.i

The stomach of Shakespeare’s “shrew” shares many of the characteristics associated

25 Gail Kern Paster explores the gendering of body temperature in detail in her chapter entitled “Love Will Have Heat: Shakespeare’s Maidens and the Caloric Economy” in Humoring the Body. See especially pages 129-134 for her treatment of The Shrew.

26 A marginal note in Burton’s version indicates that the “good” woman’s comment I’ve included is in a section that is not found in Erasmus’s original text.
with “shrews” generally. When they finally arrive at his home after leaving their wedding banquet without eating and after having numerous difficulties along the road, Petruchio says to his new wife, “Come, Kate, sit down, I know you have a stomach” (4.1.158, my emphasis). The word *stomach* in this line is regularly glossed by editors as having the double sense of “appetite” and “temper,” and Petruchio’s use of the word here demonstrates his understanding of the perceived connection between the behaviour of “shrews” and their stomachs. Like other “shrews,” Katherina is described as being choleric and thus physiologically hot. Although he earlier compares himself and his bride-to-be to “two raging fires” (2.1.132), in the wooing scene Petruchio pretends that Katherina is nothing like what she has been made out to be, telling Baptista, “She is not hot, but temperate as the morn” (2.1.294), indicating that she has in fact been described as “hot” by others, a fact which is corroborated when Curtis later asks Grumio if their new mistress is “so hot a shrew as she’s reported?” (3.2.21).\(^ {27}\)

As the title of Shakespeare’s play suggests, however, *The Taming of the Shrew* dramatizes the transformation of a “shrew” into an obedient wife, and I wish to focus on the role Katherina’s stomach plays both in effecting and expressing her digestion and assimilation of gender hierarchy. As a number of scholars have demonstrated, Petruchio’s strategy of “shrew” taming differs in several ways from earlier taming tales and from the practices of social discipline, including the use of cucking stools and scolds’ bridles, described by Lynda Boose. Surveying source material for *The Shrew*, Brian Morris suggests that Shakespeare’s original contribution to the “shrew” tradition appears to be the way in which Petruchio tames his wife (75), and Emily Detmer points out that “[w]hile Petruchio uses physical violence with other males,” he “controls and dominates Kate through other means” (279). She proposes that his behaviour towards his wife conforms to early modern literature arguing against wife-beating but emphasizes that this literature was nonetheless merely “reformulating permissible and impermissible means for husbands to maintain control over the politics of the family, without, however, questioning that goal” (274). In her study of *The Shrew* in the context of the economics of emergent capitalism, Natasha Korda argues that “[p]rior to Shakespeare’s play,

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\(^{27}\) Grumio responds with, “She was, good Curtis, before this frost; but thou know’st winter tames man, woman, and beast” (4.1.22-23).
shrews were typically portrayed as reluctant producers within the household economy, high-born wives who refused to engage in the forms of domestic labor expected of them by their humble tradesman husbands” (277-78). Reflecting the increase in the range of consumer products in this period of economic transition, though, “Petruchio’s taming strategy is accordingly aimed not at his wife’s productive capacity—he never asks Kate to brew, bake, wash, card, or spin—but at her consumption. He seeks to educate Kate in her new role as a consumer of household cates” (279). Like Korda, I am interested in Petruchio’s focus on Katherina’s consumption, but particularly her consumption of food rather than more abstract commodities.

Upon their first meeting, Petruchio tells Katherina, “For I am he am born to tame you, Kate, / And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate / Conformable as other household Kates” (2.1.276-278). Outlining his strategy, Petruchio explains to the audience:

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,
And ‘tis my hope to end successfully.
My falcon now is sharp and passing empty,
And till she stoop, she must not be full-gorg’d
For then she never looks upon her lure.
Another way I have to man my haggard,
To make her come, and know her keeper’s call,
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.
She eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;
Last night she slept not, nor to-night she shall not[.](4.1.188-98)

Perpetuating the social perception of “shrews” as threatening, Petruchio compares the taming of a disobedient wife to the taming of a falcon, a wild, predatory bird. Describing the politics of his “reign,” he also introduces another analogy between husbands and sovereigns, wives and subjects. *Stoop* is a word used of hunting birds like hawks and falcons to mean “to descend swiftly on its prey, to swoop” or “to descend to the lure” (*OED* def. 6a), but it is also used of humans and in the early modern period figuratively meant “to ‘bow’ to superior power
or authority; to humble oneself, yield obedience” (def. 2a). While sleep-deprivation is a part of Petruchio’s strategy, food-deprivation plays a more central role in the text and in the performance of Katherina’s taming. In order to make his wife “stoop,” Petruchio directly targets her shrewish stomach by starving her, for as Martin Parker puts it in a poem responding to the 1630s famine in Germany, hunger “makes tame things wild” but it also “makes wild things tame” (qtd. in Cunningham 226).

Petruchio’s choice of disciplinary method has larger political, religious, and social implications. Severe dietary restrictions were a legalized form of discipline in the early modern period for a number of “crimes.” Despite the underlying economics of primitive accumulation, which resulted in large-scale unemployment, social intolerance for those considered idle and thus threatening to social order was widespread in the period. In his chapter entitled “Bloody Legislation against the Expropriated,” Marx draws attention to a statute from Edward VI’s reign. The 1547 Act for the Punishing of Vagabonds ordains that “if anyone refuses to work, he shall be condemned as a slave to the person who has denounced him as an idler. The master shall feed his slave on bread and water, weak broth and such refuse meat as he thinks fit. He has the right to force him to do any work, no matter how disgusting, with whip and chains” (Marx 897). Also reflecting intolerance for idleness, John Donne draws upon the Bible in one of his sermons in a way that legitimates starvation as a punishment for those who do not work. He writes that an “idle body, is a disease in a State; an idle soul, is a monster in a man. That body that will not work, must not eat, but starve[.]” 28 In The Woman’s Prize, when Petruchio is subjected by his second wife to a treatment similar to the one he administered to his first wife, he says, “Wil ye starve me here: / Am I a Traytor, or an Heretick. / Or am I grown infectious?” (3.5.43-45), indicating that starvation was also a usual punishment for these particular threats to political, religious, and social order.

As with internal threats to society, external threats to the nation were also frequently

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28 This quotation is from Donne’s sermon delivered before King Charles I, 12 February 1629 (4, original italics and parentheses). The words in italics are from 2 Thessalonians 3:10 (Carey 398). Donne goes on to say, “We have seen Estates of private men wasted by Inconsideration, as well as by Riot; and a soul may perish by thoughtlessness, as well as by ill thoughts” (4), focusing his attention on the wealthy idle rather than the unemployed poor.
subjected to starvation, which was used against military enemies to weaken their resistance and
against war captives to demonstrate supremacy and ensure subordination. A literary example
of this tradition appears in Tamburlaine’s treatment of Bajazeth, the captured emperor of the
Turks, in Marlowe’s Tamburlaine, a play that has echoes in A Shrew and The Shrew. In 4.4,
Bajazeth is caged and starved, except for some instances when he is teased with food, like the
“shrews” are, including being offered meat on a dagger’s point, as Kate is in A Shrew.
Tamburlaine asks Bajazeth if he has any “stomach,” punning, as Petruchio does, on the
word’s double meaning of both “appetite” and “anger”(4.4.10).29 The once powerful but now
fallen Turkish emperor provides insight into the physiological impact of severe hunger, saying:

My empty stomach, full of idle heat,
Draws bloody humours from my feeble parts,
Preserving life by hasting cruel death.
My veins are pale, my sinews hard and dry,
My joints benumbed; unless I eat, I die. (4.4.92-96)

Excess heat in the stomach caused by having nothing to work upon (but also possibly linked
to the heat of choler) is here vividly presented as dangerous to the health of the body because,
in attempting to save itself, the stomach weakens the other parts.30 Describing this excess heat
as “idle,” though, provides a microcosmical version of the “idle body” that Donne and others
represent macrocosmically as a “disease” in the state. Asked by his wife, “Why should we live?
Oh, wretches, beggars, slaves!” and bitterly lamenting that his “crown,” “honor,” and “name”
are “[t]hrust under yoke and thraldom of a thief,” Bajazeth commits suicide by bashing his
brains out on the bars of his cage (5.2.185,197-198).

In a letter describing English military activity in Ireland, Oliver Cromwell’s description
of the English treatment of Irish prisoners bears some resemblance to the dramatization of
starvation in Tamburlaine but even more so to that in The Shrew and A Shrew. Cromwell

29 See Ribner’s gloss.

30 This is exactly what happens in the Fable of the Belly when the other bodily members try to
withhold food from the belly because they believe it is not participating sufficiently in the labour required to
sustain life.
writes:

The next day the other two towers were summoned, in one of which was about six or seven score, but they refused to yield themselves; and we knowing that hunger must compel them, set only good guards to secure them from running away, until their stomachs were come down. [. . .] When they submitted, their officers were knock’d on the head, and every tenth man of the soldiers kill’d, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes. Dublin, Sept. 17, 1649. (qtd. in Stock 211)

Both the goal of bringing rebellious stomachs “down” and the strategy for doing so through a direct attack on the organ itself resemble Petruchio’s and Ferando’s. For the real-life Irish captives, the options upon submission are violence, death, or indentured servitude in the colonies.

Entire nations could also be subjected to food deprivation as discipline for disobedience, expanding the religious dimension of the starvation enacted in *The Taming of the Shrew* and other “shrew” plays. Both the Adam and Eve story and the list of curses in Deuteronomy 28 articulate interconnections between eating, disobedience, and punishment. In Genesis, Eve’s dietary indiscretion ultimately means her husband will rule over her and Adam’s means that he will have to labour to produce food. In Deuteronomy 28, the curses threatened against the Israelites for disobedience of God’s commandments include plagues, invasion by enemies, sieges, and famine so severe that fathers and mothers will eat their own children in secret, not sharing with one another. While disobedience is symbolized by transgressive eating in Genesis, transgressive eating is one of the punishments for disobedience in Deuteronomy. That famine and dearth were sent as divine punishments was known as “the doctrine of judgements” (Cunningham 222). 31 Mark Thornton Burnett formulates that one of the changes in the socio-political world of early modern England was a gradual, and by no means universal, transition from a spiritual to an economic understanding of food shortage: “As changes in agricultural production, developments in distribution, and the growth of effective mechanisms of poor relief secured and diversified the economy, so did perceptions

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31 In this context, it is worth noting that Tamburlaine is described as “The Scourge of God” in the full title of the play.
of dearth lose their Old Testament fervor and acquire a keener sense of the power of human interventions” resulting in increasing references to the role of the rich in “precipitating insufficiencies” (25). But the religious interpretation held sway for a considerable time.

Shrewish wives who are starved as part of their taming share certain similarities with those suffering from famine. The rhetoric in Arthur Golding’s early modern translation of Calvin’s March 26, 1556 sermon on Deuteronomy 28 is similar to that found in “shrew” literature. Those who will not “yeeld” themselves to God are described, like shrewish women, as “froward” and “stubborn”(996) and are urged to “bridle” their affections (999) (rather than “take the bridle in their teeth” as their enemies do [995]). Calvin encourages his listeners to acknowledge that they “deserve to be so tamed by him” (995) and to “submit” to be “governed” by God and “fall downe” before His judgement seat (1000). God undertakes such severe measures as famine, Calvin explains, to make those disobedient to him “stoope” (995). While less explicit in *The Shrew*, both *A Shrew* and *Sauny the Scot* make specific references to famine conditions and to the lengths to which a person will go to survive, connecting these “shrews” to the tradition of what Kelleher calls “the feminization of famine.” In *Sauny*, Margaret explains of her enforced hunger, “I cou’d have eaten my Shoe-soles, if I might have had ‘em fry’d” (4.48). During times of food scarcity it was not uncommon for people to prepare and eat the leather from their shoes and belts. Of the siege of Sancerre, for example, Donne writes in his elegy “The Comparison”: “Or like that scum, which, by need’s lawless law / Enforced, Sanserra’s starved men did draw / From parboiled shoes, and boots, and all the rest / Which were with any sovereign fatness blessed” (9-12). In *A Shrew*, when Sander is teasing Kate by offering her meat that he then says he is unable to give her for various reasons, Kate says, “I tell thee villain, I’ll tear the flesh off thy face and eat it and thou prates to me thus” (8.21-22). While this allusion to transgressive eating mirrors Kate’s transgressive behaviour (and sounds like Ferando’s comparison of her to Thracian flesh-eating horses [6.44]), it also alludes to the grim possibility of cannibalism as the last resort in times of food deprivation. Both of these plays also make reference to Eve: in *A Shrew*, Kate includes in her

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32 For Jean de Léry’s first-hand account of the siege as a possible source for Donne, see D.C. Allen. There is some discrepancy in editions of Donne’s poems in the numbering of the elegies.
External discipline, as Norbert Elias and Michel Foucault have argued, is complexly interconnected with internal discipline. For Foucault, “governmentality” is the “contact between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self” (“Technologies”16). Food is just such a point of contact between these technologies. Considering early modern medical and dietary practices and their relationship to understandings of the self in light of Foucault’s work, Michael Schoenfeldt writes:

To choose one’s diet is an act of self-fashioning in the most literal sense. The regulation of what goes into and out of the stomach provides a central site of what Michel Foucault terms “the care of the self,” those techniques by which individuals make themselves into subjects by a deliberate exercise of discipline over appetite. Deciding what foods are most appropriate to one’s own particular humoral balance, moreover, requires intense self-scrutiny. (“Fables” 251)

Schoenfeldt concentrates on the positive aspects of disciplinary power in Foucault’s later work, on the way in which “individual subjectivity, and individual liberty, is secured through the individual’s exercise of self-discipline” (Bodies 13). Of Galenic medical practice he therefore asserts, “[n]ecessarily situating dietary authority within, the early modern consumer becomes ‘a law unto himself,’ cultivating a self whose unique experience and temperament mandate axioms superior to the prescriptions of external authority” (“Fables” 252).

Not all early modern individuals possessed the degree of agency regarding dietary choice that Schoenfeldt assumes, however, as demonstrated by the above examples, and internal discipline is never as removed from external discipline as Schoenfeldt appears to imply. Additionally, in response to Schoenfeldt’s concentration on male eaters, in her study of female food refusal in the early modern period Nancy Gutierrez asserts that male and

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33 The Woman’s Prize, too, is full of religious allusion, including Petruchio’s reminder that Maria is a descendent of Eve: “The blessing of her grandam Eve light on her, / Nothing but thin fig leaves to hide her knavery” (3.5.83-84).
female responses to food and diet differed significantly. She writes:

self-control has a different meaning for women than it does for men. Although men are able to fashion selfhood through the careful monitoring of diet and physical regimen, women’s opportunities for such behavior are both limited and understood in distinctly different ways. The reasons for this disparity rest fundamentally on the subordinate position of women to men in all areas of life. Because their physiology and mental capabilities are identified as inherently weaker than those of men, women are deterministically acknowledged as inferior to men in family, social, and political hierarchies. (4)

Schoenfeldt’s choice of pronoun in expressing how the early modern consumer becomes “a law unto himself” illustrates his elision of issues of gender, but at the same time partially corroborates Gutierrez’s point because, relative to women, men had more legal and prescriptive authority generally, although class cannot be overlooked when considering available food choices.34 Writing in the later sixteenth century, Jean Bodin provides an extreme example of this gender discrepancy when describing a husband’s legalized control over his wife’s consumption in Roman times: “But for drinking of wine it was much more manifest that it was cause sufficient by the Roman lawes for the husband to put his wife to death; wherein all the auntient writers agree; which was not only the custome of the Romans, but also (as Theophrastus writeth) of the auntient inhabitants of Marseiles in Province, and the Milesians, who used the same law against their wives that had drunke wine, judging that the disordered desires of the women subject to wine, would also make her drunke, and so afterwards an adultresse” (1.3.17).35

The food deprivation used as a technique in the discipline of others becomes a technique of self-discipline when it takes the form of fasting, but extreme abstinence was strongly discouraged by “English moralists and church leaders” in the early modern period.

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34 As Boose says of the The Shrew, “every man is made into potential lord in his own castle, confirmed in a status analogous to that of the landowner by the marriage covenant that guarantees him private husbandry over the wife/servant who is compelled to ‘serve, love, honor, and obey’” (“Husbandry” 214).

35 I am grateful to Mary Nyquist for this reference.
Gutierrez explains that “guidelines for fasting were very specific, so as to suggest neither an excessiveness that would point towards Roman asceticism on the one hand, nor, on the other hand, an individualistic proclivity that would challenge the authority of the established church. An inner abstinence was more worthy, a kind of self-regulation that resulted in spiritual rather than physical self-denial” (Gutierrez 10, original emphasis).

While temperance, or moderation in diet, was recommended as the best approach to overall health—both extreme fasting and gluttony were discouraged—Gutierrez argues that this principle of moderation did not apply equally to men and women. She writes:

A highly-charged comment by Joannes Vives in his *Instruction of a Christen woman* advocates fasting as a means for parents to protect their daughters’ virginity, but his language describes this self-restraint, not as moderation, but as acute repression: ‘moche fastynge shall be good’, says Vives, ‘which dothe nat feble the bodye, but brydell it, and presse it downe, and quenche the heate of youthe’. The verbs of control in this passage (‘brydell’, ‘presse’, and ‘quenche’) are pronounced, and the inference is clear: women’s bodies are dangerous and potentially destructive, so therefore are not harmed by such rigorous restraint, but rather, as Vives says, ‘shall kepe better theyr helthe’. Later in the century, Barthélemy Batt, in *The Christian Mans Closet*, describing ‘howe a maiden ought to be brought up, which shall be a Christian’, states the following: ‘Let her not eate openly (that is to say) in the feastes & banquetes of her Parentes, lest shee see such meats as shee mighte desire and lust after: Let her not learn to drinke wine, wherein is all excesse and riotte.’ Batt equates an appetite for food with an appetite for sex; controlling the former prevents sexual license. Thus, whereas men are encouraged to practice a ‘middle way’ in their eating habits, the message to women is that they should be excessively austere in regulating their diet, since they are more in danger of losing control of their physical cravings, whether for food or sex. (14)

In Vives’s description, young female bodies are all fundamentally shrewish: they are hot, require bridling, and need to be pressed “downe.” Excessive restraint regarding food intake becomes a socially perpetuated form of specifically female control, a tradition related to the
For contextualization of early modern female food refusal in relation to other periods, see the introductory section of Gutierrez’s full-length study. She explains, for example, that one reason for scant scholarly attention to the phenomenon in the early modern period is that, “unlike the modern and medieval periods,” it “lacks the exemplar of the lone individual who refuses food, for this period is inhabited by neither the medieval saintly woman denying herself food out of religious devotion nor the modern, middle-class teenage girl starving herself to attain the cultural ideal of female beauty” (6). Gutierrez suggests that when female characters in early modern drama refuse food, “questions about desire, gender, hierarchy, and autonomy—the most important questions of the age—immediately become part of the rhetorical and dramatic situation” (24). Of female food refusal in later German literature, Anna Richards asks, “Could such voluntary abstinence from food and the resulting physical decline sometimes have represented a rejection, rather than an acceptance, of the rules of ‘proper’ feminine behaviour?” (42).

For more on this process at work in early modern drama, see Paster’s The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England. I discuss the “civilizing process” as it relates to the bodily function of excretion in greater detail in the final chapter.
For it engenders choler, planteth anger,
And better ‘twere that both of us did fast
Since of ourselves, ourselves are choleric,
Than feed it with such overroasted flesh. (4.1.170-75)\(^{38}\)

Petruchio uses the language of humoral theory to justify withholding food from Katherina, claiming that because she suffers from an excess of choler, she must not eat the food that is burned and overcooked. While choleric people were advised to avoid overeating, spicy foods, mustard, and burned or dry foods (Draper 51), there is no reason to believe that the food placed before Petruchio and Katherina is “overroasted” or “dried away.” One early modern writer advocated a day of fasting for various medical reasons, doing so in language that highlights the disciplinary, corrective character of food deprivation and that is in accord with Petruchio’s targeting of Katherina’s stomach as part of her taming: “through hunger, the faults of the stomache which haue beene taken eyther by much drinking or surfetting, or by any other meanes, may be depelled and remoued” (qtd. in Gutierrez 12, my emphasis). Galenic medicine becomes the way in which Petruchio essentially forces Katherina to impose self-discipline, to “choose” fasting rather than eating food that is “forbid,” but his enforcement of this “choice” highlights the underpinnings of external discipline in internal discipline.

A similar pattern is at work in Sauny the Scot. In this version of “shrew” taming, Petruchio pretends that it is because Margaret has of her own accord chosen to fast that she confuses the old man for a young woman (a confusion hunger could well have caused). Margaret denies Petruchio’s words by saying, as mentioned earlier, that she would have eaten her shoe soles if she could have had them fried (4.48). Written significantly later than either The Shrew or A Shrew, Sauny is somewhat more modern in its allusion to food deprivation for aesthetic purposes. Petruchio tells his wife that because she is “empty” her new gown “will fit handsomely” (4.40).

In The Shrew, Petruchio’s regulation of what he and his wife eat counters what Wendy Wall describes as the usual state of affairs within a household. According to Wall, “[s]ince

\(^{38}\) John Draper optimistically sees the taming exercise as the beneficial administration of humoral therapy, which cures Katherina of her choleric disposition (53).
each food was thought to contain properties that affected the balance of humors in the body, the housewife manipulated diet as part of medical care” (3), and “[w]hile the husband was sovereign over the household, [...] he found himself in the uncomfortable position of submitting to his wife’s and servant’s medical ministrations”(7). Petruchio’s assumption of control over home remedies counters the tradition of female control in this domestic arena but resembles male domination of the field of medicine in society generally. In this context, the hierarchy of husband/wife is parallel to that of physician/patient, particularly in the viewpoint of someone like van Helmont, who not only denigrated Galenic medicine for its reliance on “the sober rules of Diet” and “kitchen physick” (7), but also lamented that Galenic physicians “never release the sick out of their hands: but perpetually oblige them, like purchased Bondslaves, to the irksome observance of their Precepts; though with manifest despair”(13, original italics). Van Helmont’s analogy of the relationship between physician and patient with the relationship between master and slave is relevant to the relationship between husband and wife in which the wife is required to be the “servant” of her husband (although Eulalia distinguishes between “bond or hired” servants and “free” servants, arguing that wives fall into the latter category [4-5]). In this case, then, servitude is in a sense already implicit in the medical treatment Petruchio makes Katherina follow in order to make her stoop, or “yield obedience.”

Asking if Petruchio married her specifically to “famish” her, Katherina complains that she is reduced to a level below that of a beggar, for beggars have better success in receiving nourishment than she has. She explains that “[b]eggars that come unto my father’s door / Upon entreaty have a present alms, / If not, elsewhere they meet with charity; / But I, who never knew how to entreat, / Nor never needed that I should entreat, / Am starv’d for meat, giddy for lack of sleep” (4.3.4-9). According to Gremio, it is because the sexton’s beard “grew thin and hungerly / And seem’d to ask him sops as he was drinking” that Petruchio threw the sops in the church officer’s face during the wedding ceremony (3.2.175-176), yet Petruchio will not feed his wife. As Lynda Booze puts it, “every time Kate resists submission in the arena of gender, she is punished by degradation in the arena of class” (“Husbandry” 219), which includes having to beg her servant for food.
Imitating his master’s methods, though, Grumio continues to deploy the same medical excuse for withholding food from his mistress. Instead of feeding Katherina, Grumio tantalizes her with the names of dishes that he then goes on to say would be too choleric for her:

Gru. What say you to a neat’s foot?
Kath. ’Tis passing good, I prithee let me have it.
Gru. I fear it is too choleric a meat.

How say you to a fat tripe finely broil’d?
Kath. I like it well, good Grumio, fetch it me.
Gru. I cannot tell, I fear ’tis choleric.

What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?
Kath. A dish that I do love to feed upon.
Gru. Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.
Kath. Why then the beef, and let the mustard rest.
Gru. Nay then I will not, you shall have the mustard,
Or else you get no beef of Grumio.
Kath. Then both or one, or any thing thou wilt.
Gru. Why then the mustard without the beef.
Kath. Go get thee gone, thou false deluding slave,
Thou feed’st me with the very name of meat.
Sorrow on thee and all the pack of you
That triumph thus upon my misery! (4.3.17-34)

In entreating Grumio for food, Katherina is willing to eat anything, regardless of whether it is medically categorized as hot or cold, “so it be wholesome food” (4.3.16). It is worth noting, however, that with the exception of mustard, the foods Grumio offers Katherina but then withholds would, in England, have been considered appropriate foods for a choleric stomach.

Elyot writes:

Wherefore of men, which use moch labor or exercise, also of them, which have very cholericke stomaches here in Englande, grosse meates may be eaten in a great quantitie; and in a cholericke stomacke biefte is better digested than
In Italy, where Petruchio and Katherina ostensibly live, however, things might possibly have been different. “As for gross meats that are dry and hard as cow’s Beef and such like,” Grataroli [an Italian] writes in his advice to educated eaters, “I utterly disallow: because beside many other harms that it bringeth by reason of the hardness of it, and difficulty to be digested, this namely is one, that it inferreth harm to the reasonable part of man which is the mind” (Appelbaum 3).

Another of the strategies that Petruchio employs for taming his wife (along with sleep deprivation) is to deny her the clothing she wishes to wear, but even this is connected to his larger strategy of food deprivation. In the haberdasher and tailor scene (4.3), Katherina is not only subjected to the dismissal of the fine clothes she had thought to wear to her sister’s wedding, but when she is desperately famished, the faults found with the clothes she is unable to have are figured in terms of food. The cap that Katherina likes is “moulded on a porringer” (4.3.64), or porridge bowl; it is “a velvet dish” (4.3.65), “a custard-coffin,” and “a silken pie” (4.3.82). A sleeve of the gown is “up and down carv’d like an apple-tart” (4.3.89). Describing the cap and gown in terms of banqueting desserts, or “cates,” blends literal and figurative consumption and extends the domain over which a husband has power to include the consumption of goods. It also links food and fashion, much as Schoenfeldt does when he argues, as quoted earlier, that choosing “one’s diet is an act of self-fashioning in the most literal sense.” Katherina is unable to freely fashion either her external self (through clothing choices) or her internal self (through dietary choices); agency is denied her.

In Korda’s reading of the tailor scene, “[i]n likening the commodities that are brought in after supper to banqueting conceits, commonly known as ‘voids’ or ‘empty dishes,’
Petruchio again emphasizes the commodity’s lack of substance. To consume such cates is to consume a void. [...] Status objects, he teaches, are not so much things as no-things” (126). In her very interesting but highly abstract discussion of the commodity form and symbolic capital, however, Korda overlooks the unkindness involved in constantly referring to delicious foodstuffs in front of a person who is extremely hungry; this teasing, which is meant to be comic but which underscores Katherina’s powerlessness, resembles the banquet scene in Tamburlaine during which the starvation of the conquered and caged Bajazeth becomes “a goodly show” for the guests at Tamburlaine’s banquet, who are specifically consuming luxurious “cates” (4.4.56, 106).

The importance of food to the struggle between husband and wife is further underscored in the disagreement that takes place between them just after the dismissal of the tailor. Petruchio insists that they will arrive at Baptista’s house at “dinner-time,” but Katherina, still crossing him, assures him dinner time will have passed and they will not arrive until “supper-time” (4.3.188-190). The distinction is likely a point of real concern to Katherina, for dinner was a more substantial meal in early modern England than was supper. Because she has a much better chance of eating while in the relatively more public space of her father’s house than in the more private space of her husband’s, it is the meal at which Katherina would most like to be in attendance.

I.ii

Petruchio’s fashioning of Katherina from a “shrew” into an obedient wife is not only largely brought about through control over her stomach, but her stomach also provides important evidence that her incorporation of gender ideology has been successful; it is what Petruchio calls “more sign of her obedience / Her new-built virtue and obedience” (5.2.117-118). Lynda Boose describes Katherina’s final speech in the play as her “ventriloquization of male superiority” (“Husbandry” 193) and elsewhere quotes George Bernard Shaw’s discomfort about the “lord-of-creation moral implied in the wager and the speech put into the woman’s own mouth,” in which he too implies the same notion of ventriloquization (“Scolding” 131, my emphasis). Ventriloquism has been adopted as a trope by scholars “interested in the polyphony of discrepant ‘voices’ within texts and in the problem of authorial
voice” (Schmidt 275, fn 1).\(^{40}\) Boose’s choice of rhetoric is fitting here not only because Katherina’s speech is an example of the appropriation of the female voice by a male author similar to that described as ventriloquism by Elizabeth D. Harvey in her study of purportedly female-authored texts actually written by men, but also because Katherina’s lines would have been spoken by a male actor.\(^{41}\) Boose’s rhetoric is also unconsciously fitting for my focus here because, while in present times ventriloquy is associated with the lips, etymologically it is connected to the digestive organs through its root in the Latin word *venter*: it literally means speaking out of or from the belly, stomach, or abdomen.

In the early modern period, ventriloquy was strongly associated with witchcraft, demonic possession, prophecy, and the belly region, although, as Schmidt has explored, skepticism about the ability of supernatural forces to speak through individuals was increasing. “Shrews” have a way of becoming examples of “women as ‘bearers of meaning, not makers of meaning,’ through whom others’ words take form” (Kelleher 6),\(^{42}\) or vehicles for ventriloquy; in *Sauny the Scot*, when Margaret resists becoming an obedient wife by continuing to challenge her husband, he explains her harsh words—she says she will be his “Tormentor”—by drawing on the traditional understanding of ventriloquy, saying, “‘tis a Damon speaks within her Body” (5.64), and in the tailor scene of *The Shrew*, Katherina claims that Petruchio means to make a “puppet” of her (4.3.103).\(^{43}\) Although Petruchio denies his

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\(^{40}\) See also Annabel Patterson’s “‘They Say’ or We Say: Protest and Ventriloquism in Early Modern England.”

\(^{41}\) See Harvey’s *Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts*. Queen Elizabeth’s speech was also complicated in terms of gender because, as Carole Levin explains, the speech was “read and reread aloud the next day by officers and by Leonel Sharp, chaplain, to all the soldiers who had not been able to hear Elizabeth, adding even more to levels of ambiguity” (144). She thus observes: “Here is a woman’s speech, calling herself a king, read aloud in a male voice, further complicating the response to the issue of gender and power” (145).

\(^{42}\) Kelleher explains in a footnote that the phrase “bearers of meaning” comes from Laura Mulvey’s “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (14, fn. 29).

\(^{43}\) *Puppet* had a number of meanings in the early modern period. Aside from meaning “[a]n image of a human being or a person or thing resembling one,” including dolls and figures with jointed limbs moved by wires and strings, it could also mean someone who impersonated another or “[a] person, esp. one in a prominent position, whose actions are controlled by some other agency, despite appearing to be his or her own.” Particularly relevant to the tailor scene, it could also be used in a derogatory sense to mean “[a] person,
wife’s accusation, Katherina does end up saying exactly what he wants her to say (and doing exactly what he wants her to do) in a performance that earns him a sizeable sum.

In what is almost a literalization of the trope of ventriloquy in its etymological and early modern sense, Katherina’s stomach plays a key role in her “ventriloquization of male superiority” in the wager scene at the end of the play. At the end of her speech on the “duty” women “owe their lords and husbands” that Petruchio instructs her to give (5.2.131), she says to her sister, the widow, and by extension womankind:

Why are our bodies soft, and weak, and smooth,
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,
But that our soft conditions, and our hearts,
Should well agree with our external parts?
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My heart as great, my reason haply more,
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;
But now I see our lances are but straws,
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are. (5.2.165-175)

In this section of the speech, Katherina promotes the ideological construction of women as inferior to men because they have bodies that are weaker, softer, and smoother, and adds to this that women are not physically suited for labour, and are thus dependent on their husbands for their “maintenance” (5.2.148), an argument Korda reads in light of the changing class-based role of housewives in the period. Katherina then proceeds to deduce that because women are externally weak, they are logically meant to be internally weak as well, and applies this ideology to the internal organs themselves: “our soft conditions, and our hearts, / Should well agree with our external parts[.]” The interior “mind” and “heart,” with all of their

esp. a woman, whose (esp. gaudy) dress or manner is thought to suggest a lack of substance or individuality” and in this sense is related to poppet, of which puppet is a variant, and has overtones of the sense of doll or puppet figure (OED).
metaphorical implications, ought not to attempt to be “big” or “great” because this will lead women to engage in losing battles with men, who are bigger, greater, and stronger. Having repeatedly emphasized female weakness and the uselessness of resistance, Katherina concludes her speech by saying:

Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband’s foot;
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready, may it do him ease. (5.2.176-179)

Katherina’s finale makes additionally clear that the stomach plays an absolutely central role in the battle of the sexes that is waged so overtly in this and other “shrew” plays and tales, and the consistent tendency of editors to gloss “vail your stomachs” as “lower your pride” does not do justice to the multiple valences at work in the word stomach’s appearance at this crucial moment in the play.

Vail does mean “to lower” making “vail your stomachs” an expression similar in meaning to Ferando’s “I am glad, Kate, your stomach is come down” in A Shrew. By starving Katherina, Petruchio empties out her stomach, quite literally weakening her, but also making it a space into which gender hierarchy can be projected. By vailing her stomach, Katherina indicates on an internal level (especially recalling that stomach could mean “the inward seat of emotion or secret thoughts”) that she has accepted her position below that of her husband: the word servant, and the servitude it implies, is not sticking in this shrewish wife’s stomach but has been digested. Physiologically, her obedience indicates that in “treating” his wife’s choler, Petruchio has fashioned her stomach into a more feminine physiological model that is colder, weaker, and inferior, a model she adopts, but one which Queen Elizabeth resists by distinguishing between her “weak and feeble” female body and her “heart and stomach of a king.”

“Vail your stomachs” is more than a figurative expression, though; reading it as “lower your pride” or even as lowering the stomach within the body overlooks Boose’s important point that Katherina accompanies her words with a literal lowering of her stomach to the ground before her husband. By prostrating herself, she “rearranges the sexual space onstage”
and “reconfigures the iconography of heterosexual relationship not merely for herself but for all of those ‘froward and unable worms’ inscribed within her interpelling discourse” (“Scolding” 131-132). Interpreting Katherina’s gesture in the context of the verbatim “serve, love and obey” of a bride’s wedding vows included earlier in the speech, Boose claims that it is in keeping with “the ceremony that women were required to perform in most pre-Reformation marriage services throughout Europe. [...] Kate’s prostration before her husband and the placing of her hand beneath his foot follow the ceremonial directions that accompany the Sarum (Salisbury) Manual, the York Manual, the Scottish Rathen Manual, and the French Martene (Ordo IV) for the response the bride was to produce when she received the wedding ring and her husband’s all-important vow of endowment” (133). Thus, at the end of the play, Katherina does even more than “stoop” in both its literal and figurative senses; her stomach is the very opposite of an “up” or a “standing” stomach.

But there is another “referential context” (Boose, “Scolding” 133) for Katherina’s prostration. The majority of the OED definitions and quotations related to vail demonstrate that it was a verb used in the early modern period primarily to connote not only respect but surrender and submission. Prostration is an age-old gesture of military conquest, and it may well be that the physical gesture lies behind the expression of proud, stubborn stomachs being brought “down.” Early modern visual depictions of prostration in this sense of conquest include such illustrations as the one opening book seven of the second volume of John Foxe’s popular Acts and Monuments, which depicts the Pope lying prostrate under the feet of a seated Henry VIII, or the statue displayed in Amsterdam of the Duke of Alva standing on two prostrated enemies (Cunningham 159, pl. 3.27). A literary example contemporary with Shakespeare’s play and more similar in terms of gender appears in Marlowe’s The Massacre at Paris, which has as its context the French Wars of Religion. Intending to attack Paris, King Henry III says to Henry of Navarre and other supporters:

Then here we’ll lie before Lutetia walls,

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44 For the material on military prostration, the Henry VIII illustration, and the symbolic connection between prostration and things that creep (like the worms in my next paragraph), I am greatly indebted to Mary Nyquist’s unpublished essay, “Servility, Prostration and Nation.”
Feminizing Paris (Lutetia is its ancient Roman name) and making it into a “strumpet,” Henry’s depiction of the city is not all that different from traditional depictions of shrewish wives. The similarity in methods of taming are evident in the targeting of the stomach in both the marital and the military endeavours. The goal of the military siege as outlined here is to make the city “cast her hateful stomach to the earth.” “Casting her stomach” to the earth implies, as does “vail your stomachs,” lowering the body into a prostrate position to indicate surrender and submission. “To cast your stomach,” however, could also mean “to vomit,” which works with the idea of “surfeiting” on arms and demonstrates the absolute control the victor has over the body of the conquered. Aside from the puns here, though, the actual stomachs of those in Paris and in other cities under siege during the Wars of Religion were subjected to the very opposite of “surfeit”: in these sieges, “the defenders of a town were subjected to the torture of famine as a military strategy” (Cunningham 231).

When used with a bonnet or hat, *vail* meant “to doff or take off,” but again, primarily in the sense of removing one’s hat or bonnet specifically as a sign of respect or “to manifest submission; to acknowledge oneself overcome or surpassed; to yield, give way” (def. 2b). In this context, then, Petruchio’s instructions to Katherina to “throw” her cap “under-foot” because it does not suit her take on additional significance beyond demonstrating that he has as much control over her attire and state of dress or un-dress as he does over what she eats (5.2.121-22). The gesture of removing her cap from her head and throwing it “under-foot” is one of vertical descent from the highest body part to the lowest. It acts as a prequel to when she acknowledges that a husband is his wife’s hierarchical superior by comparing him to her “head” and by throwing her stomach down to the ground, placing her hands “below” her husband’s “foot” as a “token” of her “duty” to him and as an acknowledgement of her position at the bottom of the hierarchy of body parts were the head is noblest and the feet are basest.

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45 In his editorial notes, Ribner points out this line’s double sense of lowering one’s “proud resistance” and vomiting, but not its sense of prostration.
(in Coriolanus, for example, Menenius calls the first citizen the “great toe” of the assembly because “being one o’th lowest, basest, poorest” of the rebellion he goes “foremost” [1.1.144, 146-7]). Katherina’s description of disobedient women as “froward and unable worms” also prepares the audience for her visual perpetuation of gender hierarchy by placing herself at foot level. Not only are worms soft-bodied and weak and essentially composed almost entirely of a mouth and one large stomach, making them apt symbols of consumption (rather than production), but they also crawl on their bellies in a kind of permanent prostration (risking being crushed underfoot), just as the serpent in Genesis is cursed to do as a punishment for its role in human transgression of divine authority.

The military connotation of “vail your stomachs” is in keeping with the political and military language contained within Katherina’s speech and elsewhere in the play. A shrewish wife is “a foul contending rebel” and a “graceless traitor”(5.2.159, 160); the “field is won”(4.5.23) and a wife owes “tribute” (5.2.152) and “payment” (5.2.154) to her husband; women shamefully “offer war where they should kneel for peace” (5.2.162); and the other “froward wives” become “prisoners” to Katherina’s “womanly persuasion” (5.2.120). Katherina in a sense throws down her stomach as a symbol of her surrender to her “lord,”“king,” “governor,” and “sovereign,” whom she also describes as her “life” and “keeper,” both terms that allude to the power of life and death a conqueror was understood to have over a war captive (5.2.138, 147, 146).

Shakespeare’s analogy in The Shrew between husbands and rulers, wives and subjects was a commonplace one in the early modern period, but the political implications of his additional comparison between wives and captives, and therefore between subjects and captives, deserves further consideration in light of Mary Nyquist’s argument about the influence of the “Roman doctrine of war slavery” on Hobbes’s theorization of sovereignty (2). This “juridico-military doctrine”(2) features “the military victor’s life-or-death decision-making

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46 Military language is also used in The Woman’s Prize, but the power dynamic is reversed: Petruchio is encouraged, for example, “to grant conditions or the Kingdom / Will have no other talke but this” (2.4.87-88).

47 For more on war slavery doctrine and issues of sovereignty, see Mary Nyquist’s “Hobbes, Slavery, and Despotical Rule.”
power over those who have been vanquished” (2) and derives from “the doctrine that chattel slavery originates in military defeat and is therefore a life-preserving alternative to death” (2). According to Nyquist, Hobbes makes “slave-mastery the prototypical form of sovereignty” (10) and “theorizes submission to absolute, sovereign power as an act of voluntary self-servitude that is simultaneously an act of self-preservation” (13) and uses war-slavery “to synthesize absolutism, civil society, contractual servitude, and self-preservation” (14). As I indicated earlier, in the 1606 English version of Erasmus’s dialogue between the “good woman” and the “shrew,” Eulalia undertakes to aid Xantippe in digesting the word servant by distinguishing between “bond” or “hired” servants and “free” servants, explaining that wives are in the nature of “free” servants to their husbands, as are subjects; but the military-style surrender and submission implied in Katherina’s words and gesture at the end of the play make Shakespeare’s wife (and subject) more like a “bond” servant than a “free” one. Petruchio thus very “politically” begins his “reign” by threatening Katherina with starvation until she “stoops,” essentially offering him what Hobbes would describe as her “covenanted” service (Nyquist).

II

The history of the world, my sweet,

Is who gets eaten, and who gets to eat!

Sweeney Todd to Mrs. Lovett in Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

Katherina’s stomach is not the only stomach through which gender relations are articulated in The Shrew. When informed early in the play that Petruchio intends to woo and wed “curst Katherine,” Signior Gremio responds by saying, “O sir, such a life, with such a wife were strange; / But if you have a stomach, to’ t a’ God’s name” (1.2.193-94, my emphasis). While stomach implies inclination or even courage for the undertaking—marriage

48 As Nyquist underlines, however, for theoretical reasons “Hobbes’s wives enjoy a privileged position, being spared the threat of patriarchal force, including the sentence of death, to which subjects of absolute power are vulnerable” (21).

to a “shrew”—it can also be read, I suggest, as the organ not just of assimilation but also of appropriation. In this context, but applied metaphorically and in conjunction with other images of food, the word illustrates the power dynamic in gender relations by positing men as eaters and women as food. While the term man-eater is recorded by the OED as first entering the English language in 1600, there was a great deal of woman-eating taking place.

There is a long tradition of understanding marital and sexual relations through figurative use of the stomach and eating. In his study of cannibalism and literature, Claude Rawson writes:

One of the commonest cannibal metaphors is that which associates eating with sexual activity, and vice versa. It is a commonplace to students of anthropology as well as of literature. Lévi-Strauss, who devotes an important passage to this “analogie très profonde,” says that it is found throughout the world. He notes that in Yoruba “to eat” and “to marry” are expressed by the same word meaning “to acquire,” and reminds us that the French “consommer” may apply both to marriage and to meals. (227)

Of this “cannibal motif,” Marina Warner suggests that it “conveys a threefold incorporation: sexual union, by which a form of reciprocal devouring takes place, pregnancy, by which the womb encloses the growing child, and paternity, which takes over the infant after birth in one way or another” (165). When economics play a key role in marital and sexual relations, however, as in prostitution and its culturally legitimated form, arranged marriage, these relations become less about “reciprocal devouring” and more about “who gets eaten, and who gets to eat.” In the early modern period, a groom stood to “acquire” (to borrow from Yoruba) much more than a bride, and it is worth remembering that in early modern physiology, a man, because of the heat and strength of his stomach and digestive system, was believed more easily able to “convert what meat soever he eateth unto the nourishment & substance of his body” than a woman (Paré 24.50.947).

Myriad examples of Shakespeare’s use of the trope of ingestion to describe marriage

50 Other examples include the Portuguese word comer (to eat), which figuratively means “to copulate” (Madureira 124). The central desert groups of the Australian Aboriginal people use “have you eaten?” to mean “have you had sex?” (Pickering 57).
and sexual relations exist, but I will mention just two here before returning to *The Shrew*. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedick’s resistance to marriage is ascribed to a “queasy stomach” (2.1.83). After hearing that Beatrice is in love with him, however, he turns his mind to matrimony, saying “I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have rail’d so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age” (2.3.235-239). Benedick’s comment here is related to Galenic medical theory, too, for as indicated in the earlier quotation from Paré, different foods were considered appropriate for different ages because stomach temperature altered with years. Margaret also equates marriage with eating, saying of Benedick that “[h]e swore he would never marry, and yet now in despite of his heart he eats his meat without grudging” (3.4.88-90). Similarly, when Claudio is sullen because he thinks the duke has wooed Hero for himself, Benedick teases him saying, “‘Twas the boy that stole the meat, and you’ll beat the post” (2.1.199), and in the disastrous failed marriage ceremony between Claudio and Hero, Claudio accuses Leonato of trying to give him a “rotten orange” (4.1.32), or bad merchandise.

One of Shakespeare’s most powerful expressions of gender relations through metaphorical use of the stomach appears, of course, in *Othello*, when Emilia tells Desdemona, upset by her husband’s changed behaviour, that

‘Tis not a year or two shows us a man:
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;
They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
They belch us. (3.4.103-106)

Through synecdoche, Emilia transforms men entirely into stomachs, digestive organs able to exercise power over the food they ingest. Expanding on the treatment of women by men, she envisions men not just consuming women but belching up what is surplus. Aside from its obvious meaning, *belch* could also mean “to vomit” (*OED*). Either way, the image becomes a very vivid one of taking what is wanted and of throwing away what is not wanted, of transforming women not just into food for nourishment but also into superfluous waste, waste increasingly regarded with loathing in a society developing greater standards of politeness. The
idea of vomiting up women also makes this act of ingestion into an act of conspicuous consumption reminiscent of Spenser’s depiction in *The Faerie Queene* of the Gulfe of Greediness: “That deepe engorgeth all this worldes pray: / Which hauing swallowed vp excessively, / He soone in vomit vp againe doth lay, / And belcheth forth his superfluity” (2.12.3.5-8). Indeed Othello becomes increasingly all stomach; he wants to “chop” Desdemona into “messes” for her supposed infidelity and asserts that “had all his [Cassio’s] hairs been lives” his “great revenge had stomach for them all” (4.1.200, 5.2.74-75).

In *The Shrew*, Shakespeare’s use of *stomach* to describe Petruchio’s willingness to marry a “shrew” draws attention to the consumption that is a fundamental aspect of arranged marriages whereby grooms enlarge their estates through the incorporation of wealth and/or land from dowries. It is appropriate that in the play the word *stomach* is specifically applied to Petruchio’s nuptial plans, for he is the bachelor for whom wealth is an unabashed motivation in his wooing; for him, to “wive it wealthily” is to wive it “happily” (1.2.75-76),

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51 Shakespeare also regularly makes use of ingestion imagery when representing prostitution. In *Pericles*, for example, prostitutes are described as a “joint” on a “spit” from which a “morsel” may be cut (4.2.130-31). The increasing importance of advertising in consumer society generally is evidenced in relation to prostitution in the play when the bawd and Boul describe the marketing of their newest “product,” Marina. When the bawd asks Boul if he has “cried her through the market,” he responds saying, “I have cried her almost to the number of her hairs, I have drawne her picture with my voice” (4.2.93-95). Of the response this has created, he claims there was “a Spaniard’s mouth wat’red, and he went to bed to her very description” (4.2.99-101). Patricia Parker has pointed out the economic aspects of various rhetorical strategies used in describing the female body. For her analysis of links between rhetoric and property, see her chapter called “Rhetorics of Property: Exploration, Inventory, Blazon” in *Literary Fat Ladies*.

Marx uses the metaphor of prostitution to express capitalist relations. Marjolein van der Veen explains his early theorization of the metaphor: “The labouring (commodified) body is represented by the prostitute who sells her body and becomes a commodity, an object. The desiring (consumer) body is represented by the client, who is a sensuous human being with hungers, needs, emotions, sufferings, and passions. The two together form the prostitute/client relationship, which produces a metaphor of the (economic) body in which commodities of desire and *commodification is the driving force of capitalism*. The prostitution relationship serves as a metaphor for capitalism, and this metaphor is sustained through the signifier of commodification (39, original emphasis). Marx later re-theorized the metaphor, articulating it as a sale of a service and thus of labour power rather than of a body (42).

52 Although Gremio’s description of his own failed bid for Bianca’s hand is in terms of food, “my cake is dough” (5.1.139), he also provides an image of himself as possible nutriment for Bianca, arguing that “tis age that nourisheth” (2.1.340). Marriage with Bianca would bring wealth and land, but it is not a motivating factor for any of her suitors. In fact, the one who can provide her with the most is granted her hand by her father though she opts out of the arranged marriage and marries for love. Of the Bianca plot, Randall Martin writes that it “re-enacts the Induction’s association between appetitive and materialistic desires, but in a realistic context that openly satirizes those popular notions of love that venerate ‘young modest girls’ while treating
and in his show of bravado immediately after the wedding, he asserts of his wife that she is “my goods, my chattels, she is my house, / My household stuff, my field, my barn, / My horse, my ox, my ass, my any thing” (3.2.230-32). While Katherina assimilates female servitude and inferiority through her stomach, Petruchio assimilates material goods and power through his. Not only does Petruchio gain a significant amount of wealth through his marriage to Katherina, but transforming her from a “shrew” into an obedient wife, the proverbial “sheep,” from a wild animal of no market value to a domesticated, marketable, (and edible), one earns him additional sums in the wager scene.

The particularly strong economic aspect and investment potential of marriage to a “shrew” is made explicit in Humphrey Crouch’s seventeenth-century “England’s Jests Refin’d And Improv’d.” One of Crouch’s jests tells how

Two Persons [...] meeting on the Road, one ask’d the other how he did, he told him, He was very well, and was Married since he saw him: the other reply’d, That was well
Similar to Epicoene Captain Otter asserts that rather than marry a wife, he “married with six thousand pounde” (4.2.69). Though under the tyrannical rule of his wife, he also claims not to have a “wife,” but to have “a cook, a laundresse, a house-drudge, that serves my necessary turnes, and goes under that title” (4.2.46-49, original emphasis)

Crouch’s misogynistic jest demonstrates not only the appropriative power of husbands in marriage but also the way in which women could be used as scapegoats for anxieties arising from changing economic conditions like greater speculation and profit-seeking.

The appetitive nature of a man’s relationship to his wife in arranged marriages, in which women were treated as commodities to be consumed, is also reflected in The Shrew in the number of times Katherina is represented as an edible. Although “sweet” is a term of respect not necessarily gender specific, in The Shrew it is predominantly ascribed to women. Petruchio repeatedly employs “sweet” when addressing Katherina and calls her his “honey love”(4.3.52) and “sweeting” (4.3.36), a kind of apple as well as a term of endearment. She is also described as being “as brown in hue as hazel nuts and sweeter than the kernels”(2.1.255). Most importantly, in the first encounter between Petruchio and Katherina, Petruchio puns on her name, calling her “my super-dainty Kate, / For dainties are all Kates” (2.1.188-89). In her insightful reading of Petruchio’s pun in the context of nascent capitalism,

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55 Similarly, in Epicoene Captain Otter asserts that rather than marry a wife, he “married with six thousand pounde” (4.2.69). Though under the tyrannical rule of his wife, he also claims not to have a “wife,” but to have “a cook, a laundresse, a house-drudge, that serves my necessary turnes, and goes under that title” (4.2.46-49). Concentrating on her consumption habits—what she spends on perukes and cosmetics—he downplays his own dependence on her. Refusing to call her “wife” and metonymically replacing her identity with the six thousand pounds she represents, Otter distances himself from reciprocal obligations and turns the marriage into a financial transaction. Shannon Miller’s “Consuming Mothers/Consuming Merchants: The Carnivalesque Economy of Jacobean City Comedy” provides a reading of the way “certain playwrights invoked images of the female body and strategies for controlling it as a mechanism for understanding, and assuaging anxiety about, a transitional economy” (75). See also Karen Newman’s “City Talk: Women and Commodification in Jonson’s Epicoene” and Patricia Parker’s Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property.
Natasha Korda stresses that “cates” were not only “delicacies” but goods that were specifically “purchased” rather than “produced at home,” thus “commodities properly speaking” (277).

Baptista and Tranio further emphasize the commodification of women in their comments after the hasty arrangement of the marriage between Katherina and Petruchio:

Baptista Faith, gentlemen, now I play a merchant’s part,
And venture madly on a desperate mart.

Tranio ‘Twas a commodity lay fretting by you;
’Twill bring you gain, or perish on the seas. (2.1.326-29)

Korda’s reading of “fretting” stems from its link to “fressen,” which in German means to eat, gnaw, or decay: “In describing Kate as a ‘fretting commodity,’ as a commodity that not only consumes but consumes itself, Tranio emphasizes the tension between her [Kate’s] position as a cate, or object of exchange, between men and her role as a consumer of cates” (285). The economic motivations like those underlying Baptista’s were criticized by people like Robert Cleaver, who chastised such parents for their “most unnaturall and cruell part . . . to sell their children for gaine and lucre” into “bondage” (qtd. in Mikesell 143).

Just as Katherina and her stomach have larger social implications, so too do Petruchio and his stomach. The hierarchical relationship of husband and wife in the play parallels that of master and servant (both bond and free), conqueror and conquered, king and subject, and the appropriative and exploitative nature of the stomachs of those in positions of power are frequently conceived through ingestion imagery. In the early modern period, enclosure, for example, transformed social relations to the detriment of the poor, who were dispossessed of their lands and traditional livelihoods. Enclosure itself operates much like a containing stomach, and early modern writers often make use of the “cannibal motif” to illustrate and critique the power structure underlying relations between the rich and the poor in this form of domestic colonization. Reflecting on his enclosing activities, the earl of Leicester, for instance, writes, “I am like the ogre in the old tale, and have eaten up all my neighbors” (qtd. in Halpern 72), and Phillip Stubbes asserts that enclosures were “the causes why rich men eat vp poore men, as beasts doo eat grasse” (qtd. in Siemon 21). Examples in Shakespeare’s plays are numerous and include the parable of the fishes in Pericles. When the third fisherman asks
his master how the fishes live in the sea, the first fisherman replies:

Why, as men do a-land; the great ones eat up the little ones. I can compare our rich misers to nothing so fitly as to a whale: ‘a plays and tumbles, driving the poor fry before him, and at last devour them all at a mouthful. Such whales have I heard on a’ th’ land, who never leave gaping till they swallow’d the whole parish, church, steeple, bells, and all. (2.1.26-34)

When tracing primitive accumulation and the exploitative nature of slave-owners, feudal barons, and capitalists, Marx also uses ingestion imagery. He writes that “we may say that surplus-value rests on a natural basis, but only in the very general sense that there is no natural obstacle absolutely preventing one man from lifting from himself the burden of the labour necessary to maintain his own existence, and imposing it on another, just as there is no unconquerable natural obstacle to the consumption of the flesh of one man by another” (647).

Like enclosure, land appropriation on an international scale, most often achieved through military and/or colonial activity, could also be figured as motivated by the stomach, site of the body’s figurative and literal hunger. In describing Caesar’s conquest of England, for example, Spenser writes in The Faerie Queene: “And warlike Caesar, tempted with the name / Of this sweet Island, neuer conquered, / And enuying the Britons blazed fame, / (O hideous hunger of dominion) hither came” (2.10.47.6-9). In this sense, Shakespeare’s use of stomach to describe Petruchio’s wedding plans is similar to his later use of the word in Hamlet to describe Fortinbras’s military ambitions. While Fortinbras’s arms and hands are of course an important part of his physical identity and make for a good pun, Horatio surmises that young Fortinbras, Of unimproved mettle hot and full, Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there Shark’d up a list of lawless resolutes For food and diet to some enterprise

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56 For more on Marx’s use of ingestion imagery, see also Jerry Phillips, “Cannibalism qua capitalism: the metaphorics of accumulation in Marx, Conrad, Shakespeare, and Marlowe.”
That hath a *stomach* in’t, which is no other,
As it doth well appear unto our state,
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost; and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land. (1.1.95-107, my emphasis)

Fortinbras and Petruchio are both choleric, “hot” men, and their martial and marital campaigns are both enterprises that have “a stomach” in them, a stomach with an appetite for expansion and suited for incorporation of what is ingested. The Riverside editors tentatively suggests “relish of danger (?)” or “demand for courage (?).” David Bevington describes the enterprise as one “of considerable daring,” and the Norton, based on the Oxford edition, has *stomach* meaning “courageous action; challenge to the pride (of both the Prince and his men).” Vlas Kozhevnikov suggests that “the true meaning of the word ‘stomach’ is revealed by itself: it is something which covers some secret intentions. The enterprise has a stomach *in it*, i.e. some *inner* receptacle of secret thoughts” (72).

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57 For *stomach* here, the *Riverside* editors tentatively suggests “relish of danger (?)” or “demand for courage (?).” David Bevington describes the enterprise as one “of considerable daring,” and the *Norton*, based on the *Oxford* edition, has *stomach* meaning “courageous action; challenge to the pride (of both the Prince and his men).” Vlas Kozhevnikov suggests that “the true meaning of the word ‘stomach’ is revealed by itself: it is something which covers some secret intentions. The enterprise has a stomach *in it*, i.e. some *inner* receptacle of secret thoughts” (72).
These similarities between Petruchio and Fortinbras further the parallel between husbands and rulers/conquerors made explicit by Katherina in her final speech, referred to elsewhere in The Shrew, and commonplace in early modern culture. Reflecting gender ideology, Katherina’s choler is depicted in negative terms while Petruchio’s is depicted in positive terms; although his behaviour at his wedding earns him temporary social disapproval, his ultimate success in taming his wife’s “stomach”—not his own—is rewarded.58

But this metaphorical appetite for material gain and power is in stark contrast to the very real hunger of the Norwegian “lawless resolutes,” hunger that allows Fortinbras to make use of these men in order to satisfy his own hunger for territorial expansion. While both Q1 and Q2 describe these men as “lawless,” reflecting Horatio’s view of them, in the folio edition, they are “landless resolutes,” providing a more specific reason for their enlistment (Norton Ed. n.7). They are hungry because they have been the victims of past struggles over land possession by other “stomachs.” As in The Shrew, gain for one stomach is directly linked to loss for another, and Katherina’s hunger is like that of the victims of military sieges and the victims of class exploitation.59

Studies of hunger and dearth in the early modern period are greatly outnumbered by studies of food and eating. Two scholars who do specifically address representations of hunger in English drama of the period, Mark Thornton Burnett and Catarina Albano, do not include “shrew” plays in their studies. But because starvation and dietary control are part of the “shrew” taming strategy in The Shrew, A Shrew, and Sauny the Scot, elements of social critique related to questions of food distribution appear in these plays and similar tales. For example, in the The Lazy Lass, the Scottish tale that Brian Morris considers in relation to “shrew” plays, the husband gets his unproductive wife to work by switching food with his servants for a week. The point he makes to his wife is that because the servants work harder,

58 As Paster argues, “Petruchio finds a way to make his own choler socially productive by directing it against an even less socialized, even more disruptive object than himself. In this respect, Taming of the Shrew is a clear demonstration of the asymmetries of humorality and gender ideology working in tandem, because the choleric man could be tasked with taming the choleric woman, not the reverse” (Humoring 130).

59 In Fletcher’s retelling of Shakespeare’s taming play, the women put themselves under siege, removing themselves from the men, but are plentifully stocked with goods, making feasting an act of rebellion.
they require better food: “It is the serving-men who have need of good food; they earn it, but seeing that we do not work, food that is not so good will suffice for us” (Morris 74). The strategy is successful, for the lazy wife promptly desires to undertake laborious tasks in order to get better food. The irony, of course, is that while the logic of the husband’s argument holds, it is not actually put into place because diet does not reflect need, but means, and the husband, after his success, returns to eating the food his servants should actually, according to his own argument, continue getting.

Because, in the early modern period, divine punishment was still considered a primary explanation for dearth, I would also like to suggest bearing this cultural and religious dimension in mind when reading the plays. The plays might be said to settle blame for hunger on those who are hungry by tracing that hunger back to a transgression of God’s laws and to a rebelliousness threatening to the hierarchical order of society and to their masters as God’s representatives. On the other side, however, there is also a way of reading these plays as influenced by the increasing awareness of economic and human, rather than divine, understandings of dearth as traced by Burnett. While Petruchio may be a lord, he is not THE Lord—despite taking the role upon himself—nor is the lord from the induction scene. The random feasting of Sly juxtaposed with the punitive fasting of Katherina highlights the role that those in power play in food distribution, reflecting, I suggest, these conflicting understandings of scarcity.

In her study of 2 Kings 6, which describes the siege of Samaria and includes the story of two mothers who, out of desperation, arrange to take turns eating their children, Gina Hens-Piazza highlights the connection that exists between literal and figurative hunger. She writes that cannibalism is

yoked to a prevailing socio-political structure of domination and control. The hunger for food that would motivate citizens to cannibalize coincides with sovereigns’ voracious appetites for power and dominion. The insatiable craving on the part of the powerful reigns over the hunger of the powerless, who eventually resort to cannibalizing in the face of threat. [...] In the case of these biblical women their only identity, “cannibal mothers,” makes them particularly objectionable and ensures their
“otherness.” Portraying women as eaters of their own children effectively obscures their status as victims and immunizes almost everyone against the sympathies their plight evokes. Moreover, their brief and delimited identification as “cannibalizing mothers” elicits shock, gasp, and rapt attention that curtail notice of the more gluttonous consumptions on the part of those responsible for the women’s horrific circumstances. (86-87)

While Shakespeare’s “shrew” does not engage in cannibalism, Kate threatens to in A Shrew and in Sauny Margaret indicates a willingness to eat what is not normally human food, shoes. The starvation that is employed as a means of taming Katherina and these other “shrews” focuses attention on their hunger, thus diverting attention from the appetites of their husbands for material gain. Comparing disobedient women to falcons, worms, flesh-eating horses, and even “shrews,” transforms them into creatures who are all appetite, and threatening appetite at that.

The psychoanalytic concept of projection provides one way of explaining the phenomenon outlined by Gens-Piazza and evident, I argue, in “shrew” plays. Maggie Kilgour summarizes the concept as follows:

According to Melanie Klein, whose studies focus on the oral phase of development, the infant’s fear of being devoured by the parent is a reaction against its own desire to assimilate and possess what is external to the self, while recent studies of imperialism and “colonial discourse” have indicated how a society’s desire to appropriate other cultures can be disguised through the projection of that impulse onto the other. To accuse a minority that resists assimilation into the body politic of that body’s own desire for total incorporation is a recurring tactic.[5] (5)

I would like to suggest a reading of “shrew” plays that brings the concept of projection into the domestic realm, only here the domestic Other is the wife, rather than the parents. This would mean that shrew-tamers are in a metaphorically oral phase, correspondent with primitive accumulation and early phases of capitalism. I do wish to emphasize, however, that although it is difficult to attribute economic motivation to infants, economic motivation in the sense of a more conscious strategy than the psychoanalytic concept implies needs to be kept
in mind here.

To further obscure this dynamic at work in the relations between men and women in arranged marriages, while female appetite is emphasized in Shakespeare’s play, the men of Katherina’s social status are distanced from literal appetite. At the banquet scene, for example, Petruchio’s reaction is “Nothing but sit and sit, and eat and eat!” (5.2.12) as if it is the last thing he wants to be doing, which it may be since the wager begins when the eating has finished. Earlier, when Tranio, disguised as Lucentio, warns Baptista that because of the late hour he will likely only be able to provide him with a “thin and slender pittance,” Baptista claims, “[i]t likes me well” (4.4.61-62). Negotiations for the marriage of his second daughter apparently absorb his appetite for real food. Meanwhile, early in the play Lucentio’s appetite is represented as being of the figurative sort. He longs to “quench” his “thirst” through study, to “suck the sweets of sweet philosophy” and of other subjects as his “stomach” serves him (1.1.24-40).

A similar process of obfuscation is often evident in relation to those other domestic Others, servants, who, while not bringing dowries with them, provide crucial labour to serve the needs of their masters. In Epicoene, for example, when Morose calls for his servants, he says, “Barre my dores! barre my dores! where are all my eaters? my mouthes now?” (3.5.28-29), reducing them to consumption in a way that covers over the labour they perform so that he can consume. Likewise, in The Merchant of Venice, Shylock, more concerned with “feeding” his revenge and amassing wealth than with eating regular food, describes Launcelot as “kind enough, but a huge feeder” (2.5.46). In “shrew” plays, Grumio, Sander, and Sauny are all presented as frequently hungry and concerned with their next meals, and Sauny repeatedly makes it clear that there is plenty of cold and hunger in Scotland.

In her reading of The Shrew in “The Taming of the Shrew, Good Husbandry, and Enclosure,” Lynda Boose argues that “despite its seeming lack of any of the ‘political’ markers of the history plays, this play is every bit as much a dramatization of English history as are the Henry VI plays, which were written at very nearly the same time” (197), and she concludes her essay with a reference to the line in which Bartholomew, as Sly’s wife, says that the play they are going to see is “a kind of history.” In full agreement with Boose, I would like to add
that the play Sly, Bartholomew, and the audience watch is the kind of history that Sweeney Todd is talking about, the age-old history of class struggle, of “who gets eaten and who gets to eat,” but it is also the age-old history of gender struggle. By calling Mrs. Lovett “my sweet,” just as Petruchio so often calls Katherina, Sweeney makes it clear on which side of the eater/eaten divide he intends to be.

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While the stomach plays an important role in The Shrew and other “shrew” plays in articulating marital relations, it can also be used to express the relationship among “shrew” plays themselves. Maggie Kilgour, for example, highlights the use, especially pervasive in the early modern period, of “digestive metaphors for poetical imitation, imitatio,” writing that a common way of expressing the relationship between a poet and an earlier source was in terms of eating. In order to create his own poetic identity, the later poet absorbs the substances of his predecessors. So, in his Discoveries, Jonson claims that the poet must “be able to convert the substance, or riches of another poet, to his own use. [...] Not, as a creature, that swallows, what it takes in, crude, raw, or indigested; but, that feeds with an appetite, and hath a stomach to concoct, divide, and turn all into nourishment.” (104-105, my ellipsis)⁶⁰

In comparing an author’s relationship with his predecessors to the stomach’s conversion of food into material the body can incorporate, Jonson’s rhetoric makes explicit the appropriation involved in this conversion, paralleling it with economic conditions in which the “riches” of others are incorporated into the self; just as Petruchio has “a stomach” to incorporate Katherina’s dowry, converting it “to his own use” and improving on it through his successful wager, Sauny the Scot: or, the Taming of the Shrew is described on the frontispiece as “Written Originally by Shakespeare” but “Alter’d and Improv’d by Mr. Lacey.”

Audience members, too, even when part of an induction or frame, are consumers, which Sander’s substitution of “commodity” for “comedy” in A Shrew underscores (1.58).

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⁶⁰ In his dissertation, entitled Recipes for Authorship: Indigestion and the Making of Originality in Early Modern England, David Goldstein looks at connections between theories of digestion and ideas about originality. He includes cookbooks/recipe books in his study along with drama and poetry. I am grateful to the Palgrave reader of my article version of this chapter for this reference.
Had the prologue to *Epicoene* been the prologue to *The Shrew*, it would have added food for thought to Petruchio’s pun on Kate’s name since the play is described as a “feast” of “cates” prepared by the poet for the audience. Including a reference to the proverbial female preference for expensive goods, the Prologue explains: “The Poet prays you then, with better thought / To sit; and, when his cates are all in brought, / Though there be none far fet, there will deare-bough / Be fit for ladies [. . .]” (19-21). Also envisioning plays as things to be consumed (and things that consume), the Prologue in *Troilus and Cressida* explains that the action begins in the middle of things and then starts “thence away / To what may be digested in a play” (28-29), implying that limitations on what an audience can absorb in one sitting affect the amount of material a play can incorporate. What authors and audiences ingest is, among other things, ideology.

Scholarship on *The Shrew* can itself be conceptualized in terms of consumption and digestion, not only because scholars assimilate the work of other scholars. Of the wide-spread urge by literary critics to re-imagine the ending of *The Shrew* so as to emphasize a mutual attraction between Katherina and Petruchio and thus recuperate the institution of heterosexual marriage, Lynda Booze writes that such “revisions have characteristically desired not so much a way of undoing Kate’s ventriloquization of male superiority as a way of making it more palatable” (“Husbandry” 193, my emphasis), or, in other words, easier to swallow and to stomach. Similarly, Emily Detmer writes that “[r]eading Shakespeare’s civilized shrew-tamer as enlightened and positively kindly underscores the humanist preference for a nonphysical expression of dominance but ignores the harm inherent in domination. Petruchio’s method may be superior to wife-beating, but it is also more insidious and surely no less oppressive. Therefore, what is significant is not that Shakespeare deploys a less oppressive method but that he highlights a more palatable method for subordinating a wife” (293, my emphasis).

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61 For more on Jonson as cook, see Don Hedrick’s “Cooking for the Anthropophagi: Jonson and His Audience.”
Chapter Two

“The store-house and the shop of the whole body”: The Economics of Digestion

Darwin has directed attention to the history of natural technology, i.e. the formation of the organs of plants and animals, which serve as the instruments of production for sustaining their life. Does not the history of the productive organs of man in society, of organs that are the material basis of every particular organization of society, deserve equal attention? Karl Marx, Capital

Hauing in the former Booke dismantled this Castle of the Bodye, and particularly the lower Region, wee are now arrivied at that work-house of Nature, wherein she hath built her Engines and Instruments by which she doth not onely nourish and sustain the whole Family, but also perpetuate Mankinde by Propagation... Helkiah Crooke, “Of the Parts Belonging to Nutrition or Nourishment,” Mikrokosmographia

In Volume One of Capital, Marx writes: “The circulation of commodities is the starting-point of capital. The production of commodities and their circulation in its developed form, namely trade, form the historic presuppositions under which capital arises. World trade and the world market date from the sixteenth century, and from then on the modern history of capital starts to unfold” (247). The early modern period thus played an important role in the gradual, uneven, and inequitable transition from feudalism to capitalism. The transition from a domestic and feudal economy to an international and capitalist one did not happen without debate, however; it required significant ideological preparation. As Laura Mandell suggests in her study of eighteenth-century novels and capitalism, the “desire to produce profits and the desire to own commodities is not simply ‘natural.’ Capitalist desire had to be made palatable” (2). One of the most powerful ways of making socio-economic conditions appear “natural” is, naturally, to compare them to the healthy functioning of the human body, either by comparing economic structures to bodily processes or, conversely, by comparing

1 Capital. Volume One. 493, fn. 4.

2 Book Three. Preface. 94.
bodily processes to economic structures. While Mandell’s focus is on later literature and on the ideological work done by representations of gender, her choice of adjective, “palatable,” is particularly relevant to the focus in this chapter: how representations specifically of digestion worked to naturalize the transition from feudalism to capitalism, encouraging the social assimilation of capitalist ideology.

In European feudalism, land was divided into large estates occupied by lords, serfs tilled the land for the lord, paid rent in kind rather than cash, and could not leave without permission. The rest of the land was divided among the villagers, who each had a share in the common lands and who spent most of their time engaged in the cultivation of wheat and other grains. From the peasants, lords received services in the form of labour; produce or, very rarely, cash as payment for dues and taxes; and tolls for use of the only grain mill, oven for baking bread, and wine and cider press, which he controlled (Wallbank et al. 236-39). Contrasting this society with Robinson Crusoe’s island, Marx writes that “instead of the independent man, we find everyone dependent—serfs and lords, vassals and suzerains, laymen and clerics” (170); this structure of dependence is based on “direct relations of dominance and servitude” (172). In such societies, labour primarily takes the form of production for direct consumption, and personal dependence “characterizes the social relations of material production as much as it does the other spheres of life based on that production” (170). Because the social system is based on relations of personal dependence, labour and its products do not “assume a fantastic form different from their reality” but appear in social transactions as services and payments in kind. Labour takes its “natural form” of particularity rather than universality (170).

Put simply, the transition from feudalism to capitalism involved the transition from a society based primarily on the production of goods for direct consumption to one based primarily on the production of commodities for exchange on the market. Alongside this transition came changed social formations and labour practices, including the commodification of labour and of land. By contrast with the transparency of feudal relations of production, in capitalist societies qualitative, concrete labour becomes abstracted into quantitative, homogenous labour, known as wage labour. In societies based on commodity exchange,
money is the predominant medium of exchange, and it “conceals the social character of private labour and the social relations between the individual workers, by making those relations appear as relations between material objects, instead of revealing them plainly” (168-69) as relations of power and exploitation. Marx calls this concealment of the social relations of production commodity fetishism, where the focus is on the qualities of the product rather than on the nature of labour that produced it, obscuring the relationship between producer and consumer. Contributing to the development of full-scale capitalism and to commodity fetishism was the increasing use of machines in production. While the “starting-point of capital” is the “circulation of commodities” (297), the machine is “the starting-point of the industrial revolution” (497), and it replaces the handicraftsman or manufacturing worker, who uses a single tool, with “a mechanism operating with a number of similar tools and set in motion by a single motive power” (497).

Marx explains this socio-economic transition as a process, significantly, of internalization and normalization:

The exchange of commodities begins where communities have their boundaries, at their points of contact with other communities, or with members of the latter. *However, as soon as products have become commodities in the external relations of a community, they also, by reaction, become commodities in the internal life of the community. [...] The constant repetition of exchange makes it a normal social process.* In the course of time, therefore, at least some part of the products produced must be produced intentionally for the purpose of exchange. From that moment the distinction between the usefulness of things for direct consumption and their usefulness in exchange becomes firmly established. Their use-value becomes distinguished from their exchange-value. (182, my emphasis)

Drawing upon Marx’s economic theory, I argue that representations of the body’s organs of digestion, the organs responsible for the process of internalizing what is external, promoted the normalization, or naturalization, of this internalization of commodity exchange into the social body. Changing representations of the physiological processes of digestion additionally mirror the changing social relations accompanying the transition to an economy based on the
exchange of fetishized commodities.

Marx’s own physiological rhetoric, as I will illustrate below, not only grounds the abstract in the concrete but also offers insight into the relationship between discourses of the body and socio-economics. The tradition of naturalizing economic and political structures and ideology through representations of the body is an age-old one stretching back at least to Plato. The most obvious example is the ancient metaphor of the body politic, a metaphor comparing social groups to body parts and social processes to physiological ones. Highlighting the interdependence of individuals, the metaphor works to promote the notion that society is an organic whole in which all parts work together for the common good. Not all individuals or social groups are considered equal, however, but neither are all body parts, and the body/state analogy legitimates social hierarchies and economic inequities by mapping them onto the body according to the relative valuation of its parts. The Christian counterpart of the body politic is the corpus mysticum, or corpus ecclesias, St. Paul’s doctrine of the Church as the mystical body of Christ (its head), which informed many of the medieval elaborations of the organicist metaphor in political and religious writings (Hale, Body Politic 7).

The religious and political models of the social body overlap in the late medieval and early modern periods as the struggle between church and state arising from increasing monarchical power was articulated through comparisons of the pope and king to either the head or the heart. The difference depended on ideological agenda and on whether vertical hierarchy (the importance of the head) or centrality (the importance of the heart) was being emphasized, and it was linked to medical discussion about whether the heart (following Aristotle) or the brain (following Galen) was most crucial to the bodily system. Helkiah Crooke takes Galen’s part against the argument of Aristotle and his followers that the heart’s primary importance within the bodily “Oeconomie or order of the parts” is corroborated by

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3 Plato and Aristotle both employ the analogy when discussing the polis while Roman Stoics like Cicero and Seneca use it to express the notion that political morality involves “one’s relations with other individuals” rather than “membership in a polis” (Hale Body Politic 26).

4 For more on the political and religious implications of the heart/brain relationship, see Jacques Le Goff, who focuses on the medieval period, and Scott Manning Stevens, who focuses on the early modern period.
its location at the centre of the body. After refuting this spatial centrality, he adds that if degree of dignity is to be decided by “scituation,” then “true superiority” will “fall to the Braine, because it is placed uppemost, as the fire aboue the inferiour elements.” To be “placed aboue,” he continues, “is high superiority and praeminence; to be thrust downe below, betokeneth base subiection and inferiority,” as we have seen in the case of the “vail[ed]” or lowered stomach.

An important and relevant variation on the metaphor of the body politic is the Fable of the Belly, which appears in a collection of prose fables attributed to Aesop (Hale, Body Politic 26). In Livy and Plutarch, among others, the fable is delivered by Menenius Agrippa to the plebians who have become disgruntled with the Roman senate’s rule and have left the city and gathered at Mons Sacer (Hale 27-28). In the fable, the members of the body accuse the belly, representing the senate, of reaping the benefits but not contributing to the welfare of the whole organism. In some variations, the belly successfully defends itself, thereby resolving the conflict, by explaining that it performs a crucial role in nourishing the rest of the body; in others, the members withhold food from the belly, realizing too late that they will all perish as a result. The moral, as it is expressed in Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ version of the fable, for example, is: “Learn, therefore, plebians, that just as in our bodies the belly thus evilly reviled by the multitude nourishes the body even while it is itself nourished, and preserves it while it is preserved itself . . . so in commonwealths the senate, which administers the affairs of the public and provides what is expedient for everyone, preserves, guards, and corrects all things” (qtd. in Hale 27). Equating the belly with the social elite, the fable foregrounds corporeal and social importance based on a centre/margins dichotomy rather than a superior (high)/inferior (low) one.

Bodily metaphors are grounded in medical theory, but medical theories are also, like

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5 Book 1. A Dilucidation or Exposition of the Controuersies concerning the Subject of Anatomy. Page 46. (Hereafter Controuersies).

6 Patterson describes the two outcomes as comedy and tragicomedy (114).

7 In his reading of the Fable of the Belly in Coriolanus, Michael Schoenfeldt stresses the emphasis on centrality rather than verticality. See “Fables of the Belly,” page 248.
fables, inclined towards moralizing. Even when not making their morals explicit, they work powerfully to naturalize ideology. What Hayden White writes of accounts of historical events is equally applicable to medical accounts of the body: “narrativity, certainly in factual storytelling and probably in fictional storytelling as well, is intimately related to, if not a function of, the impulse to moralize reality, that is, to identify it with the social system that is the source of any morality that we can imagine” (18). In Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England: Bodies, Plagues and Politics, Margaret Healy emphasizes the ways in which interpretations of disease serve ideological purposes by applying the word fiction to these interpretations. She writes: “a prominent feature of fictions of the body in any age is their ability—through grounding themselves in the flesh—to camouflage their subjectivity. For this reason it is often easier to pierce through the mask of medical authority, and apprehend accounts of disease as value-laden constructs, when they relate to previous eras with obviously different conceptions of what the body ‘is’ and how it works” (234). Healy and others have done much to stress the ways in which the “natural” body is understood through discourses about it, a point emphasized through expressions like “somatic fictions” or “bodily fictions.” Healy asserts that “health and disease constructs are shaped by, and themselves exert an effect on, other socio-cultural phenomena: discourses of the body are sensitive indicators of social and intellectual change” (23).

What Healy claims for fictions of disease is true, too, for fictions of digestion. Discourses of digestion are indeed “sensitive indicators of social and intellectual change.” The early modern period experienced not only profound socio-economic change but also significant change in medical and cultural understandings of the body and its digestive processes, providing an excellent opportunity to explore how discourses of the body influence and are influenced by socio-economic phenomena. It was during the early modern period that the ancient Galenic model of the body, which had held sway in Europe for well over a

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8 The titles of medical texts like John Banister’s The Historie of Man point to connections between history and medicine. In his comparison of the physiological reaction of the humours in the experience of fear to the behaviour of the cardinals during the 1527 siege of Rome, Laguna explicitly comments on the relationship between history and medicine, writing: “I could present numerous other examples were it not for the fact that I might appear to be writing history instead of medical theory” (282). Laguna’s text is rooted in, and evidence of, a tradition of much more fluid (though increasingly sharply drawn) generic boundaries.
millenium, was seriously challenged by, for example, the chemical theories of Paracelus and van Helmont; Andreas Vesalius’s anatomies and William Harvey’s vivisections; and a mechanical and dualistic Cartesianism. It is no coincidence, I suggest, that the economic transition from feudalism to capitalism was accompanied by the transition from Galenic medicine to the new medicine of William Harvey and others: economic modes of production receive perhaps their greatest naturalization when they become embedded in medical paradigms. In what follows, I trace this process of naturalization, first examining the ways in which earlier economics are perpetuated in Galenic medicine and the bodily metaphors informed by it, and then turning to an analysis of the economic implications of the new medical and cultural interpretations of digestion. Moving along the digestive tract from the stomach, I concentrate here (and in the following chapter) on depictions of the liver, an organ which has not received any extensive critical attention in recent studies of the early modern body.⁹

The liver was assigned a much greater role in earlier psycho-physiological models of the body. In Galenic physiology, the liver was believed responsible for making blood during the digestive process, and, like the heart and brain, it was one of the three principal organs and the seat of a faculty of the tri-partite soul. The rational faculty was located in the brain, the sensitive in the heart, and the nutritive in the liver. The liver was also considered the locus of “Loues desire” (Lemnius 139) and, like the stomach, it was connected to courage and anger: to be “hot-livered” was to be hot-tempered, while to be “white-livered” was to be cowardly. (Physiologically, a white liver lacked choler, the humour conducive to both courage and anger) *(OED, “liver”).¹⁰* In very ancient times, however, the liver appears to have been regarded as

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⁹ The collection entitled *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, for example, does not include an essay devoted to the liver. Jonathan Gil Harris, however, does discuss the liver in parts of his chapter called “Hepatitis/Castration and Treasure: Edward Misselden, Gerard Malynes, The Fair Maid of the West, Renegado” in *Sick Economies*.

¹⁰ Bassanio’s philosophizing on the relationship between outward appearance and internal reality in the casket scene in *Merchant of Venice* offers an example of this belief:

There is no [vice] so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
“the inmost spring of the deeper emotions” as well as the seat of “consciousness not limited to love and anger” (Onians 85, 89). This earlier significance of the organ is evident in Hecuba’s desire to devour Achilles’s liver to avenge Hector and in the punishment famously given to Prometheus for stealing fire from the gods: to have his liver consumed daily by an eagle (Onians 85-87). Significantly, the liver was often understood to have a reflective function—in the Timaeus, Plato describes it as an organ from which thoughts proceeding from the mind are “reflected as in a mirror” to the other belly organs (3.38), and in ancient cultures practising divination, the liver was interpreted as a reflection of the will of the gods—so it is perhaps an especially appropriate organ to inspect for signs of socio-economic change.

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The early moderns inherited not only economic and social structures from medieval feudalism but also both the ancient tradition of comparing the physical and social bodies and a medical model based heavily on the writings of Galen. Examples of the body politic metaphor abound in literature of the period as do examples of the Fable of the Belly variation, the most famous of which appears in the opening scene of Shakespeare’s Coriolanus.

Shakespeare develops both negative and positive interpretations of the belly, demonstrating the way in which the digestive organs can be used to both critique and legitimate economic relations, relations which, as Sweeney Todd so succinctly puts it, are ultimately about “who

The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,  
Who inward search’d, have livers white as milk,  
And these assume but valor’s excrement  
To render them redoubted! (3.2.81-88)

In addition to having white livers, cowards were also thought to have large livers. Ambroise Paré explains that livers differ in size not only between species but also within the same species. Of men, he writes that “one will bee gluttonous and fearefull, another bold, and temperate, or sober,” and offers two explanations for why “such as are fearefull have a larger liver.” The first reason is because in such people, “the vitall facultie (in which the heate of courage and anger resides) which is in the heart, is weake; and therefore the defect of it must be supplied by the strength of the naturall facultie,” which is in the liver. The second reason is that cowardly men are colder—and thus implicitly more like women—and so have a greater appetite and therefore more chylus, “by which plenty the liver is nourished, and growes larger” (3.18.109).

11 Christian rejection of pagan divination and linkage of the liver with concupiscence altered the moral interpretation of the organ considerably (Le Goff 14).

12 The term for divination using the liver is hepatoscopy. Stephen Batman refers to this tradition in Batman Vppon Bartholome (“Of the Lüer” 5.39.57).
gets eaten, and who gets to eat.” As told by Menenius Agrippa, the body’s members one day “rebell’d against the belly,” accusing it that “only like a gulf it did remain / I’ th’ midst a’ th’ body, idle and unactive, / Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing / Like labor with the rest,” while the “other instruments” who “mutually participate, did minister / Unto the appetite and affection common / Of the whole body”(1.1.97-105). The accusation made against the belly by the disgruntled members of the body makes use of the connection between the belly and appetite to highlight inequality in the structure of social relations, including those between society’s consumers and producers, between the rich and the poor. Although belly could sometimes be used for the stomach, womb, or intestines, and although it could mean simply “an internal cavity,” in relation to the human body it most often referred to the part of the body between the chest and thighs, the abdominal region as a whole. Because it refers primarily to the organs of nourishment, it was regularly used to indicate the body in its capacity for food—belly-cheer and belly-timber both mean food—and so to gluttony and the desires of the flesh. A belly-god or belly-worshipper, for example, was someone who made a god of his belly, following belly-doctrine rather than Church doctrine and attending to corporeal appetite rather than the injunctions of reason.

The first citizen emphasizes negative interpretations of the belly when he asks what its answer is to the accusations by those he describes, revealing his own awareness of the metaphor of the body politic and its division of social functions, as the “kingly-crowned head, the vigilant eye, / The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier, / Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter, /With other muniments and petty helps / In this our fabric” (1.1.115-119).\textsuperscript{13} The belly, however, he describes as “the cormorant belly” who is “the sink a’ th’ body” (1.1.120, 121). Comparing the belly to a cormorant, symbol of voraciousness, the first citizen stresses the belly’s association with appetite in a de-humanizing way reminiscent of Plato’s assertion in the Timaeus that the belly needs to be bound down “like a wild animal” (3.38). Describing it as the “sink,” or cesspool/sewer of the body, the citizen stresses the excremental aspect of

\textsuperscript{13} Hale calls attention to the inaccuracy of the citizen’s reference to a king in post-Tarquin Rome, pointing to the citizen’s insistence on “the latent contradiction in the traditions which alternately identify the seat of authority in a state with the head of the belly” (“Political Metaphor” 198).
the digestive process, emphasizing its uncleanness.

The defense against the accusation of appropriating the fruits of others’ labour while not contributing to society as a whole, though, draws upon the physiological importance of consumption to life and on the function of the belly as “the nourisher of the body,” which “taketh and seetheth [boils/digests] meate and drinke, to feed all the members of the body, and sendeth feeding to euery member” (Batman 5.47.61).14 Menenius offers a detailed response by the belly to his corporeal accusers:

“True is it, my incorporate friends,” quoth he,
“That I receive the general food at first
Which you do live upon; and fit it is,
Because I am the store-house and the shop
Of the whole body. But if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the court, the heart, to th’seat o’ th’ brain,
And through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live. And though all at once”—
[. . .]

“[...] cannot
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran.”(1.1.130-140, 143-146)

In digestion, the initial act of consumption undertaken to satisfy the belly becomes the means by which the rest of the body receives its nourishment. Of Menenius and the stomach, Schoenfeldt observes: “Fantasizing that a society’s resources naturally trickle down from its

14 Making the stomach a synecdoche for the digestive system, Schoenfeldt writes that it “is not a passive receptacle but the great feeder of parts” (“Fables” 247). I suggest, however, that the liver’s role as “feeder of the parts” needs to be kept in mind.
most to its least privileged members, Agrippa uses the physiological centrality of the stomach to mystify a doctrine of social inequality and to obscure the actual labor that is part of the production and distribution of provisions” (*Bodies* 29). Reading the belly as more than the stomach, I suggest that Menenius adds to this mystification by giving the belly a singular voice when the activities described are actually the work of several organs; by gendering it masculine; and, of course, by imagining the “store-house and the shop” of the body as comparable to Rome’s patricians, rather than its labourers.

When asked by the first citizen to specify the application, or moral, of his version of the belly fable, Menenius explains that the senators of Rome are this “good belly” while they, the disgruntled citizens, are “the mutinous members.” He then adds: “disgest [sic] things rightly / Touching the weal a’ th’ common, you shall find / No public benefit which you receive / But it proceeds or comes from them to you, / And no way from yourselves” (1.1.148-154). Just as “shrews” have not properly digested the gender ideology that makes them subservient to their husbands, so the angry citizens of Rome have not, according to Menenius, properly digested the socio-economic ideology that makes them dependent upon, and indebted to, their social superiors. Menenius takes advantage of the citizens’ empty bellies to feed them with politico-economic ideology, rather than real food, a point emphasized by his reference to the “pretty tale” as something he “venture[s]” to “stale” by telling it even though they may have already heard it because it “serves” his “purpose.” Menenius credits the senators as the source of all “public benefit” received by the citizens, stressing not a symbiotic social relationship between the rulers and the ruled but one in which the benefits flow only in one direction—from the senators towards the citizens. Citizens like the first citizen are, according to Menenius, comparable to the “great toe,” “one o’ th’ lowest, basest, poorest” members of society, and instead of assigning a productive role to the toes and feet, he insists that they play no role in “public benefit” (although toes can be amputated and the body survive, they are nonetheless useful).

Shakespeare’s treatment of the Fable of the Belly in his play was previously interpreted as evidence of his anti-democratic sentiment, but Annabel Patterson, David Hale, and others

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15 For more on the Fable of the Belly and language, see Arthur Riss.
have challenged this reading by pointing out that in making dearness the cause of the citizens’ uprising, Shakespeare raises considerable skepticism about the validity of the fable. Before the tale is even told, the citizens present a very astute economic analysis, including the assertion that their own lack serves to augment the status of the patricians (Patterson 122), who, as becomes clear later in the play, have indeed been hoarding grain (Hale, “Political Metaphor” 200). I argue that Shakespeare further encourages skepticism regarding the tale, drawing attention to its propagandic purposes, by alluding to the phenomenon of ventriloquism, belly-talking. Early in his presentation of the belly’s response to his accusers, Menenius says, “look you, I may make the belly smile / As well as speak” and later adds, “this says the belly, mark me.” Alex Garganigo has remarked that Menenius “mimics the belly’s reply to the members with an implied bit of stage business many directors have interpreted as a burp or fart” (351), which is a kind of belly-talking. Shakespeare may also intend that the actor playing Menenius engage in a form of stage spectacle and throw his voice so as to speak as if from his belly in the traditional understanding of ventriloquism. (This is, after all, a play

16 See Oliver Arnold for a brief overview of the tradition of reading the play as evidence of Shakespeare’s “horror of the lower orders” and contrasting readings by Annabel Patterson, Anne Barton, Leah Marcus, Vivian Thomas, and Shannon Miller of the play as “the work of a prescient liberal who championed ‘the people’ [...]” (192). In his insightful analysis of Shakespeare’s engagement with representational politics in the play, Arnold argues of the opening scene: “The new order created offstage accomplishes precisely what Menenius seeks to achieve through the Fable of the Belly: while the old patrician bamboozlement is failing to pacify the citizens onstage, the new bamboozlement of political representation is containing the revolt on ‘th’other side o’th’ city.’ Here, then, is the truly radical message Coriolanus held for Shakespeare’s audience: political representation dissolves the people, makes them nothing” (198-99). I am grateful to Mary Nyquist for calling my attention to Arnold’s study.

17 Garganigo reads this possible fart in the context of contemporary politics, in which “a fart could be very subversive indeed and might be used by a member of Parliament to defy the head of the body politic. Several contemporary poems hint at the meaning and the danger of ‘A Fart that was Lett in the Lower House of Parliament 1607’: ‘Be advised . . .looke to the lott / If you fart at the Union remember Piggott’: for “‘Tis a very bold trick, / To fart in the nose of the Body Politick’” (351-52). See also Maurice Hunt, “The Backward Voice of Coriol-anus” and A. Cruvelle, “Coriolanus: The Smiling Belly and the Parliament Fart.” Referring to Hunt’s article, Cruvelle suggests that “Menenius’s rhetorical act cleverly combines ventriloquism (the speaking belly) with the motif of the speaking arse” (12). In Riss’s opinion, Menenius “belches to illustrate how the belly can speak and plays with the folds of his stomach to demonstrate how the belly smiles” (61). My point that Shakespeare may gesture towards the tradition of ventriloquism adds to this sense of belly-speaking (farts/burps) the sense of the phenomenon as spirit possession or trickery employing voice projection.

18 For background on the practice of employing ventriloquism in ancient Greek drama, see C. W. Marshall. In his study of juggling tricks and conjury on the early modern stage, Louis B. Wright suggests that
ventriloquism may have been used, for example, to make the brazen head speak in performances of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay (274).

19 In his reading of the play, Arnold suggests that “Shakespeare’s entire political meditation in Coriolanus turns on dramatic juxtapositions between the people and their representatives, speaking for oneself and being spoken for, political representation and theatrical representation” (196). Ultimately, in his “radical rewriting of Plutarch, Livy, and other sources, the election of the tribunes instantaneously disempowers the people and usurps their voices” (196). Arnold takes issue with Patterson’s interpretation of the play’s politics, writing: “It seems odd to put so much stock in the capacity of the ‘hungry commoners . . . [to] speak for themselves’ and then to argue that Shakespeare advocated representational politics—that is, a system in which representatives speak for the people. If the people can ‘speak for themselves,’ why should they elect tribunes to speak for them? Patterson herself claims that Shakespeare’s plebeians ‘require no ventriloquizers because they are not dummies.’” He adds: “Put another way, Patterson and the Whigs, for all the importance they attach to plebeian speech, do not distinguish between speaking for oneself and being spoken for by representatives, and they thus construct political representation precisely as the ideology of early modern political representation constructs political representation” (195, original emphasis).
than a horse-drench” (2.1.114-118). Although Menenius’s description of Galenic medical therapy as a kind of quackery and horse medicine is ostensibly simply a hyperbolic means of emphasizing the salutary benefits of Martius’s safety (and he relies heavily on Galen himself), the negative association is made here nonetheless. As I will discuss further below, Galenic medicine had begun to be challenged by early modern medical figures, and it was viewed with increasing skepticism throughout the seventeenth century. Johannes Baptista van Helmont, writing mid-century, was especially vitriolic, describing the Galenic theory of catarrh, for example, as “an old wives fable” (3) and a “monstrous Romance”(13) “invented by the common adversary of mankind” (3) to keep people unwell, and used by physicians to make themselves wealthy (8-9, original emphasis).

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Although Menenius does not mention the liver specifically, his Fable of the Belly is strongly influenced by the Galenic model of digestion and of the liver’s role in it. In the Galenic model of the body inherited by the early moderns, the liver was understood, alongside the heart and brain, as one of the three principal parts of the body and as the primary organ of the belly.21 The heart and brain are directly mentioned in Menenius’s telling of the fable—the food is sent to “the court, the heart, to th’seat o’ th’ brain.” The liver implicitly

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20 John Filling, a political scientist, also explores some of the economic implications of the Fable of the Belly and the physiology underpinning it, and he quotes this reference to Galen as a way into his overview of Galenic medicine (10). He is especially interested in references by Marx and Brecht to Coriolanus.

21 Galen was born in 129 CE in the Greek-speaking part of the Roman Empire, in what is now Bergama, Turkey, and studied and practised medicine in various parts of the Empire (Nutton, “Roman Medicine” 58-61). In the ninth and tenth centuries, his works were translated into Arabic and “set the standard for Arabic medicine in centuries to come”(Conrad 108). In Al-Quanun fi l-tibb (Canon of Medicine), Ibn Sina (Avicenna, d. 1037) organized Galen’s medical writings into “a definitive system governed by Aristotelian philosophy, the most prominent aspect of this being the fusion of Galen’s humoral system with Aristotle’s doctrine of three life forces – psychic, natural, and human” (Conrad 114). Translations of Arabic texts into Latin in Europe in the medieval period “provided a far wider and heavily Arabised vocabulary for learned medicine in Latin, and they imparted an even greater Arabic and Aristotelian slant to Galenic medicine” (Nutton, “Medieval” 143). From around the middle of the fifteenth century, there was a renewed interest in Galen and in Greek medicine among humanists who sought new translations of the original Greek texts “since they felt that the Arabic and the medieval Latin translations were inaccurate and that the latter were often barbarously inelegant” or contained corrupted medical terminology (Wear 252). The complete works of Galen were published in Greek in 1525 by the Aldine Press in Venice, and Latin translations after this tended to be based on this version. Between 1500 and 1600 around 590 different editions of works of Galen were published (Wear 253).
completes the triad explicitly referred to in *Cymbeline* in the king’s description of Belarius, Guiderius, and Arviragus as “the liver, heart, and brain of Britain, / By whom, I grant, she lives” (5.5.14-15). In Galenic theory food was altered, rather than simply broken into smaller pieces, during digestion, and heat was, as we have seen, believed fundamental to the process. Not only does the stomach contain “innate heat,” Galen writes in *On the Natural Faculties*, but the “adjacent viscera,” including the liver, spleen, and heart, are “like a lot of burning hearths around a great cauldron” (3.7.255). Digestion, or concoction, was believed to take place in three stages: in the first concoction, ingested food was transformed into chyle in the stomach, which was then delivered from the stomach and small intestine to the liver by way of the vena porta, or gate vein, a branch of which includes the mesentery veins. In the second concoction, the chyle, which had been partly altered along its journey, was made into blood in the liver and distributed throughout the body by the veins, thought to originate in the liver. Vital spirits were added to the blood in the heart and transported from there through arteries. In the final concoction, blood was assimilated by individual parts according to their needs. Excrements and the humours arising during these stages of digestion were collected by various organs, including the gall bladder, the spleen, the kidneys, and the large intestine. I focus in this chapter on the production of blood in the liver during the second concoction.

Galen wrote and practised medicine in the Roman Empire in the 2nd century CE, in one of what Marx calls “ancient social organisms of production” (172), and his depiction of the human organism, and of the liver’s role in it, mirrors the predominant mode of production in the larger social organism. This mirroring reflects the extent to which modes of production

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22 Hale cites this passage as evidence of the widespread use of the organic body/state analogy by Elizabethans (*Body Politic* 71).

23 Specifically addressing Erasistratus’s “foolish and absurd” opinion that digestion ought not to be compared to boiling—concoction literally means “to boil together”—because it involves only “trifling warmth,” Galen remarks: “This is as if we were to suppose that it was necessary to put the fires of Etna under the stomach before it could manage to alter the food; or else that, while it was capable of altering the food, it did not do this by virtue of its innate heat, which of course was moist, so that the word *boil* was used [by the ancients] instead of *bake*” (3.7.259). Galen later adds that Erasistratus “ought not to have made himself ridiculous by quarrelling uselessly with a mere name—as though Aristotle had not clearly stated in the fourth book of his *Meteorology,*” as well as in many other passages, in what way digestion can be said to be allied to boiling, and also that the latter expression is not used in its primitive or strict sense” (3.7.259-260).
become incorporated (in idealized form), and thereby naturalized, into medical theory. On the paradigmatic level, the Galenic model of digestion envisions a bodily economy based on production for direct consumption since blood was believed to be produced in the liver on a daily basis as part of the digestive process and then distributed to the other parts of the body for their nourishment. Menenius reflects this theory of daily production later in the play when, seeking to explain Coriolanus’s brusque dismissal of an envoy from Rome, he suggests that he must not have eaten: after a night without food, the “veins are unfilled” and the blood “cold” and, therefore, “we pout upon the morning, unapt to give or to forgive”; in contrast, “when we have stuffed these pipes and these conveyances of our blood with wine and feeding, we have suppler souls than in our priest-like fasts” (5.1.51-56).

The rhetoric used by Galen in descriptions of the digestive process furthers the parallel between the physical and social bodies, revealing the shared ideological project of the use of bodily metaphors in economic discourse and of metaphorized bodies in medical discourse. In On the Usefulness of the Parts, Galen explains the digestive process using a series of vivid similes in the tradition of comparing the body to a city, a tradition to which he refers when describing how the liver has a single “entrance” that divides into “many narrow passages”: “long ago some man well versed in Nature’s lore, I suppose, called it the porta, a name which has persisted ever since, so that Hippocrates and with him the whole chorus of the followers of Æsculapius also call it the porta, approving the wisdom of the first man who likened the governance of an animal to that of a city (I:4.205). Galen compares the transformation of ingested food into blood to the process of preparing and baking wheat. The stomach, Galen writes, is like “a central storehouse established in the middle of the animal for the benefit of all the parts.” It “receives all the nutriment and subjects the food to its first elaboration, without which it would be useless and of no benefit whatever to the animal. For just as workmen skilled in preparing wheat cleanse it of any earth, stones, or foreign seeds mixed with it [...],” so the stomach separates good from bad and makes the good better. From there, “[j]ust as city porters carry the wheat cleaned in the storehouse to some public bakery of the city where it will be baked and made fit for nourishment, so these [mesentery] veins carry the nutriment already elaborated in the stomach up to a place for concoction common to the whole animal,
There is medical/physiological significance to the different comparisons: the comparison to baked wheat/bread highlights the thermal theory of digestion while the comparison to wine implies a fermentative process, which would come to predominate in the early modern (and later) medical theory of Paracelsus and van Helmont. See Stephen Merton, especially page 253.

Galen’s similes make digestion into a labour-intensive process of production, and what is produced is a use-value intended for direct consumption: in the Galenic model, the blood, once produced, was then transported to the other parts of the communal body for consumption. (Although the heart was considered the organ of blood production in the Aristotelian model, blood was still produced for direct consumption). Galen’s comparison of the blood produced in the liver to baked wheat, by which he almost certainly means bread, emphasizes this use-value aspect. Although the Romans had once been described by Plautus as “a nation of ‘porridge eaters’” (Breatann 2), by the time Galen was writing, bread had become a dietary staple of the empire (as was wine, his other comparison), its importance evident by “the number of public shops, mills, and bakeries that have been found through archeological digs, especially in areas of Pompeii” (Breatann 2). Galen thus imagines an organic, communal (although hierarchical) functioning of the body and body politic and compares blood to a product available to all strata of society; he accentuates this organicism by describing the stomach as a “central storehouse” located in the middle of the body for the “benefit of all the parts” and by describing the liver as a “public” bakery. Adding that the liver is “a place for concoction common to the whole animal” (my emphasis), Galen stresses its public function, a function like that of the public ovens available for use by those who prepared their bread at home but did not have their own ovens or the bakeries that provided bread to the public on behalf of the emperor (Bakker). Even when sold, “the notion that bread should sell for a just price is found in Roman law” (Middleton 352) and “the government controlled the baking trade and import and export of wheat” (Breatann 2). (The concept of “just price” is antithetical to capitalism [Mandell, “Notes”]).

In keeping with Marx’s understanding of production for direct consumption, the labour
relations involved in making use-values are not concealed in Galen’s description of the internal bodily economy but revealed and naturalized through comparison with bodily organs. That digestion is a process of productive labour is emphasized when, in addition to comparing the liver to a public bakery, Galen also compares it to a workshop more generally explaining that “just as in the liver there is a workshop, so to speak, for the production of blood, so in the stomach there is a workshop for concoction” (I:4.236). Furthermore, through an allusion to Homer’s *Iliad* in his description of the mesentery veins, he implicitly transforms the liver specifically into the workshop of Hephaestus, the Greek god of the forge and of metalworking. Describing the role of the veins in conveying chyle to the liver, Galen writes: “Just as Homer sings of Hephaestus’ self-moving works of art, the bellows that ‘poured forth their well-tempered blasts, now strong, now gentle,’ at the bidding of their master, and those golden handmaidens who of themselves moved as their maker moved, so you should observe that in the body of an animal there is nothing inert, nothing motionless”; thus “the veins do not merely convey the nutriment from the stomach […], they attract the nutriment and give it a preliminary preparation for the liver by a process very like that which it will undergo in the liver itself.” Finally, “[w]hen the liver has received the nutriment already prepared by its servants and having the crude outline, as it were, and indistinct semblance of blood, it provides the final elaboration itself so that the nutriment becomes actual blood” (I:4.205).

Aside from illustrating how medical texts can draw on literature as much as literary texts draw on medicine, Galen’s allusion to Hephaestus has economic implications. The context of the quotation is the visit from Thetis to ask the god of fire and metal-working to make a shield for Achilles. When she arrives, Hephaestus is busy making tripods, three-legged vessels that will move on their own and serve in his dining room. His handmaidens made of gold wait on him because he is lame. In the early modern Chapman translation, they resemble “Liuing yong damzels; fild with minds, and wisedome, and were train’d / In all immortall ministrie; virtue and voice contain’d, / And mou’d with voluntarie powres: and these still waited on / Their fierie Soueraigne” (18.262). After agreeing to undertake the task for Thetis, Hephaestus (whom Chapman calls by his Roman name, Vulcan) did to his bellows go,
Apposde them to the fire againe, commanding them to blow.
Through twenty holes made to his harth, at once blew twenty paire,
That fir’d his coles, sometimes with soft, sometimes with vehement ayre;
As he will’d, and as his worke requir’d. (18.263)

Galen’s inclusion of this allusion to Hephaestus’s bellows and golden handmaidens strengthens his point that no part of the body is idle, not even the veins through which chyle or blood are conveyed. This is one of many examples of Galen’s repeated assertion that Nature has designed all parts of the body for a specific purpose, and it simultaneously works to assert that all parts of society have naturally designated roles to play in contributing to the good of the whole. He also naturalizes the servitude that makes the mesentery veins the “servants” of the liver.

Both Aristotle, in *The Politics*, and Marx, in *Capital*, include a discussion of Hephaestus’s automata in their analyses of socio-economics. Marx quotes Aristotle’s opinion that if animated tools like Hephaestus’s tripods existed, then “there would be no need either of apprentices for the master craftsmen, or of slaves for the lords.” (In Aristotle’s formulation, apprentices and slaves are the instruments of their masters.) To this vision of a return to the golden age through machinery, Marx remarks that the “heathens” did not comprehend that machinery is the surest means of lengthening the working day. They may perhaps have excused the slavery of one person as a means to the full human development of another. But they lacked the specifically Christian qualities which would have enabled them to preach the slavery of the masses in order that a few crude and half-educated parvenus might become ‘eminent spinners,’ ‘extensive sausage-makers’ and ‘influential shoe-black dealers.’ (532-33)

Virgil’s depiction in the *Aeneid* of the making of Achilles’s shield differs significantly from Homer’s. Whereas in Homer’s epic automata assist Hephaestus in the performance of his labour, in Virgil’s epic Cyclopean workers, rather than automata, do the work for Vulcan, who more closely resembles an overseer than a craftsman.²⁵ Importantly, in Homer’s version, Hephaestus’s labour is handicraft, artisanal labour. The god of the forge performs the work

²⁵ I treat Virgil’s depiction of the making of Achilles’s shield in the next chapter.
himself, assisted by automata that are really animated tools, rather than machines: they move according to his instructions and in the case of the golden damsels, especially as Galen expresses it, they move alongside their master, emphasizing that they are extensions of himself. In this handicraft mode of production, the worker is united to the means of production and not separated from his tools.  

Finally, Galen’s similes and personifications draw attention to an easily overlooked metaphorical dimension of medical theory: terminology. Frequently embedded in medical terms for physiological processes are social analogies with economic, as well as medical, implications. Galen’s rhetoric highlights the etymological roots of medical terms as well as their economic implications, particularly the labour implicit in the physiological language later inherited by his early modern followers through translation. Not only does concoction mean “to boil together,” giving rise to common comparisons between digestion and cooking, but digestion stems from a word meaning “to carry” (dis–apart, asunder; gerere- to carry) and excretion from one meaning “to sift” (ex–out; cernere-to separate, sift). It is thus not surprising to encounter porters and wheat sifters in Galen’s depiction of the body’s digestive processes. Most importantly, ingested food undergoes several stages of “elaboration” before becoming blood. Elaboration comes from the verb meaning “to work out, produce by labour,” which the OED suggests most likely first entered the English language from the use of the Latin word by writers on medicine and alchemy (“elaborate”( v), etymology). In early modern medicine, based on ancient medicine, elaboration meant “the formation of animal or vegetable tissues, or the changes undergone by alimentary substances from their reception into the body to their complete assimilation” (def. 2). During the process of sanguification, blood is “laboured,” at various stages receiving additional “elaboration” (Crooke 3.12.133,134). The

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26 I am expanding here on a very brief mention of the different forms of labour in the two scenes in Greek Myth Index.

27 In early modern chemistry, elaboration meant “the process of producing or developing from crude materials” (def. 1).

28 In Thomas Johnson’s English translation of Ambroise Pare’s Of the Anatomic of Mans Body, the liver is “the shoppe and Author of the bloud, and the originall of the veines,” and the blood “acquires” the “forme and perfection of bloud” when it is “elaborate and fully concoct in the liver” (3.18.109, 110).
use of the term in medical theory and the frequent personification of bodily organs foregrounds, rather than conceals, labour and the social relations that go into the making of products, fitting Marx’s explanation that the labour intrinsic in use-values is not disguised, as it is in fetishized commodities.

Galen’s model of daily blood production from ingested food for distribution to and consumption by the parts of the body thus highlights, and in a sense reproduces, the production that went into the product that was consumed in the first place. Galen’s model and rhetoric provide a medical and cultural interpretation of digestion that makes concrete Marx’s argument about the nature of consumption in societies which are not based on commodity exchange. As opposed to consumption of fetishized commodities, in the consumption of use-values in a society based on social relations of dependence and production primarily for direct consumption, the labour and social relations of production do not vanish from the product consumed. Consumption is essentially transformed into production, a blurring of producer and consumer that fits the production for direct consumption model in which the consumer is regularly also the producer. However, the fact that all bodies are understood to be labouring to digest—no matter their position on the social scale—has a similar effect to that of the Fable of the Belly of equally ascribing productive labour to those who actually perform the work and to those who simply consume the labour of others by imagining all parts working together for the good of the whole.

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Galen’s model of the body and of its digestive processes, together with much of his rhetoric, were easily adapted to feudal economic structures largely based on production for direct consumption and social relations of direct dependence. The Galenic model continued to predominate in medical theory and to serve ideological purposes well into the seventeenth century. As Helkiah Crooke tells his medical readers, Aristotle’s opinion that there is only one principal organ of the body, the heart, and that it is “the store-house of bloud, or work-house of sanguification” and “the mansion house of the vegetatiue, sensatiue and reasonable Soule” has been “long since hissed out of the Schooles of the Physitians, and banished from amongst them” (1. Controuersies.39,40). Instead, the Galen-based division of the body into three
principal organs prevails, with the brain considered more important than the heart, but the heart superior to the liver. The liver, however, is considered “the shop of sanguification or blood-making,” located in the “middest as it were of the body” so that “it might send bloud equally upward and downward” (3.12.130).

Social functions and economic ideology were regularly mapped onto the body by early modern medical writers. They naturalize them in much the same way as writers employing the metaphor of the body politic. Very often, medical writers explicitly borrow from this metaphorical tradition. Explaining how useful anatomy is, Crooke, for example, urges that “if both Princes and Peasants would weigh and consider the mutuall offices betwene the principall and the ignoble parts, Princes might understand how to rule, and Peasants how to obey. Princes may learene of the braine how to make Lawes, to governe their people; of the heart, how to preserve the life, health, and safety of their Citizens; of the Liver, they may learn bounty and liberality” (2.5.13). For their part, “the meaner sort of people [...] may easilie understand by the ministering and servile organs, what bee the limits of service and subjection. For the parts that are in the lower bellie do all serve the Liver; the Stomacke dooth concoct the meate, the Guts distribute and divide it, the veines of the Mesentarie prepare it; the bladder of Gall, the Milt and the Reines, do purge and clense the princely Pallace, & thrust

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29 Galen often included the testicles as a fourth principal part, but Crooke dismisses this view. See 1.19.31 and 1. Controversies. 45. See also Jonathan Gil Harris’s discussion of the testicles and treasure in Sick Economies.

30 Although Crooke suggests a universal acceptance of this medical doctrine, some writers were more ambivalent about whether it was the heart or the liver that produced blood. In An Introduction to Phisycke, for example, Christopher Langton writes: “Althogh that sume thynke the harte to be the well, and original sprynge of blood, not wythstandyng I had rather saye as Galene sayeth, that it is the fleshe of the liuer, which engendreth blood, althogh the lyuer receyue both vytall heat, and spiryte of the hearte [...]” (xxxvii).

31 In particular, he adds: “For the braine sitting in the highest place, as it were in a Tribunall, distributeth to every Organ or Instrument of the sences, offices of dignity: the Heart like a King maintaineneth and cheriseth with his lively and quickening heate, the life of all the partes: the Liver the fountaine and well-spring of most beneficall humidiety of juice, nouriseth and feedeth the whole family of the bodie, and that at her owne proper costs and charges, and feedeth the whole family of the bodie, like a most bountifull Prince” (2.5.13). In the next chapter, I suggest that Crooke has Spenser’s allegory of the body in mind in his unusual and inconsistent feminization of the liver here. (He makes the liver masculine elsewhere).
Similarly, the “parts that are included within the Chest, do serve the Heart; those that are in the head, do attend the Braine, and so each to others, doe afford [sic] their mutual services” (2.5.13). Crooke also stresses hierarchy and degrees of servitude elsewhere, writing:

Now, as there is not an equality of dignity among the principle parts, so the ignoble parts are not all of one and the same degree. For some of them serve the principal, by preparing somewhat for them, others by carrying or leading somewhat unto them. There are also some sorts ordained only for the expurgation or cleansing of the principal, which are the most ignoble of all the rest, and are commonly called Emunctori or Draynets. So for the Liver the Stomacke boyleth the Meate, the Veynes of the Mesentary give the blood a kind of rudiment of initiation; the Cauce or hollow veyne disperseth the bloode already perfected (1.19.31-32).

Describing the relationship between the mesentary veins in particular and the liver, Crooke repeats Galen’s allusion to Homer almost verbatim, although he uses the Roman Vulcan rather than Hephaestus. The mesentary veins, he explains, have been called by some Batuli domus, the Porters of the house, because they continually carry the Aliment unto that furnace where it is tried unto bloud. Neither are they idle and rigid passages, but as Homer feigneth that the instruments of Vulcan are moved by instinct and of their owne accord, so we may say that these vessels are taught by their Creator, not onely to leade along the Chylus, but to draw it and prepare it for the Liver. (3.Preface.95)

While the liver is described as the prince of his own domain, elsewhere Crooke, clearly influenced by classical images of the body politic, also compares the body and its organization of brain, heart, and liver to a “wel governed City or Common-wealth” which has, respectively, “a wise Senate to guide it, a stout and valorous strength of soouldiers to defend

32 Similarly, the “parts that are included within the Chest, do serve the Heart; those that are in the head, do attend the Braine, and so each to others, doe afford [sic] their mutual services” (2.5.13). Crooke also stresses hierarchy and degrees of servitude elsewhere, writing:

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33 Although Argenterius for one refuted Galen’s definition of “principality by Necessity” by urging that other organs like the stomach are also necessary, Crooke counters by explaining that if they are necessary, “it is not for the preservation of the whole Man, but because they be necessary Ministers to assist the Liver in his worke” (43) and offers Galen’s answer to this “cauill,” which is to point to animals who hibernate and therefore do not eat or use their stomachs all winter, proving that it is possible for creatures to survive for some time without chilification, the function of the stomach, while other examples prove they cannot survive without sanguification, the believed function of the liver (44).
and redeeme it; and an infinite multiplicity of trades and occupations to maintaine and support it; all of which though they be distinguished in offices and place, doe yet consent in one, and conspire together for their mutual preseruation” (I. Controuersies.46). In this case, the liver and belly are equated with the “trades and occupations” of a commonwealth, and drawing upon the familiar understanding of concoction as a form of cooking, Crooke compares the belly to a kitchen, rather than Galen’s “public bakery,” but suggests that the belly organs prepare “the common diet for the rest,” much as the public bakery in Galen’s example prepares a common food for the rest of the body (3. Preface. 94). Similarly, in his allegory of the body, The Purple Island, Phineas Fletcher locates concoction in the “market-place” of the city (the bottom of the stomach in the body), but writes that “The Islands common Cook, Concoction,” is “Common to all” and so “quarter’d” in “middle space” (2.33.1-3, my emphasis). As well as meaning “ordinary,” common meant “something shared” or “belonging to all.” Additionally, the OED explains that in “various semi-legal or statutory designations, as common alehouse, common brewer, common carrier, etc., the original meaning appears to be ‘existing for the use of the public’ as opposed to ‘private,’ recognized by law as bound to serve the public.” It was what was “common” or “public” that was threatened by emergent forms of capitalism, including the “common” lands that were being enclosed for private use and profit, thus dispossessing the local inhabitants from their traditional ways of life and from the means of production.

In contrast to Crooke’s image of the liver as master of the belly served by the parts subordinate to him, Andrés de Laguna, a Spanish anatomist, presents a somewhat different picture in his 1535 anatomical treatise Anatomica Methodus. Explaining that the liver gets less purified blood than the other parts even though it makes the blood, Laguna comments that this should not be surprising to anyone especially since I said just now that it is the workshop of all the humors just like some kitchen which prepares nutriment for the entire body. And just as it is not unreasonable that the cooks should eat what is more impure and less good than that which is most palatable and, in short, are more mean in every respect than those they serve and to whom they minister so the liver, which performs the function of a cook,
serves the other more principal members of the body and cannot thus distinguish the
overflowing excrements from the blood itself but drinks them up also along with the
blood. (274)

Laguna takes as obvious the assumption that those who perform labour for others deserve less
reward for their labour than their masters (who consume the products of the labour of others)
as a condition of their servitude, their meanness.

A very specific connection between producer and product appears in Laguna’s
description of the liver in which he explains why it is that the liver is the colour of the blood
it produces. He writes: “But since the blood is most abundant in the liver the latter obtains its
color from what is poured into the liver not unlike those who are forced to grind grain in a mill
daily and grow white with the flour they grind out. Everything, finally, attains the color of the
humor which is predominant in it” (274). Laguna’s description illustrates a conflation of
producer and product that incorporates labour into the product in a way different from a
fetishized commodity. It also points to the power relations at work in modes of production
based on dependence and “direct relations of dominance and servitude,” as Marx puts it. The
liver is here compared through simile to people who are “forced” to grind grain. Millers take
on the appearance of the grain they grind, powerfully blurring the distinction between
producer and product in a way that foregrounds labour but also hints at the appetitive nature
of consuming the labour of others by transforming the labourer into his edible product.

Laguna additionally stresses the continuing social function of bakers and millers in the early
modern period in his description of the lungs, writing: “I should easily believe that the
necessity of cool air is linked to the necessity for this motion of the lungs which bring that air
to us, since a more liberal supply of animal spirits is borne to the intercostal muscles than to
the other parts, that motion being analogous to the service of millers and butchers who are
permitted no holiday because what they do is always required for the life of mankind” (285).

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Economics were changing in the period, however. As examples of the internalization
of exchange outlined by Marx, increased international trade in the early modern period meant
that “colonial imports stimulated demand for European goods within Europe itself as people
sought to sell their products in order to buy china, silks, spices, sugar (and later rum), tobacco, coffee (and later tea)’’ (Houston 162). Additionally, because of the influx of gold and silver into Europe from the Spanish colonies, Europe experienced major inflation in the “Price Revolution.” As a result, “money was increasingly used in transactions from which it had been absent before: Feudal dues were commuted from kind to cash, cash replaced barter in the local economy, small scale credit became widely available, and so on” (Hawkes 38). In 1566, the Royal Exchange was built in London (Hawkes 38). Goldsmiths in England profited from increasing opportunities in money lending and foreign exchange, “evolving into something resembling modern bankers” (Hawkes 39). Describing seventeenth-century economic activity as “the first great age of English economic expansion,” Andrea Finkelstein highlights that “[a]t the century’s dawning, Bills of Exchange were specialized instruments familiar only to a narrow circle of merchants, while at its evening, paper money was common throughout the land. Global expansion and internal innovation went hand in hand. The East India Company, the greatest of the joint-stock companies, was chartered in 1600; by 1700 the price of stocks on the exchange was a regular feature of the periodical press”(3).

The developing merchant capitalism of the early modern period was by no means the industrial capitalism of the nineteenth century, but significant changes in labour practices and social relations occurred. Lords attempted to maximize their own profits in the face of rising inflation by restricting peasant rights to the “commons,” denying them access to game, fish, and firewood, or, even more drastically, enclosing the commons to raise sheep for the wool trade. Peasants were thus increasingly left to seek a means of survival as wage-labourers or by begging or stealing (Rowlands 50-51). In Marx’s theorization, they were “freed” from the land to become wage-labourers, “free, unprotected and rightless proletarians” (876). Disciplinary labour in the form of work-houses for the poor or “idle” and indentured servitude for felons was practised, and slavery instituted in European colonies. Although the Industrial Revolution was still at a considerable distance, the gradual movement away from handicraft production to manufacturing meant an increasing division of labour and greater separation of the worker from the means of production. Entrenched commodity fetishism was still to come, but Christopher Warley suggests that it was in the early modern period that “the category of the
commodity is itself in the process of being differentiated [...] from an object of trade to the ‘mysterious thing’ that Marx sets at the center of industrial capitalism and thus at the start of *Capital*” (Warley 574).

Before a capitalist economy based on commodity exchange could reach the level of normalization Marx describes or the ideological “obviousness” Althusser points to, resistance to commercial activity needed to be overcome. Not only were commodities themselves frequently viewed with misgiving, but so were those who made their living from their sale and purchase. In *A Counterblaste to Tobacco*, King James famously denounces the “childish affectation of Noueltie” that allows customs originating in “base corruption and barbarity,” like the taking of tobacco, to gain “entry” into a country(B1r-B2v), and ministers regularly preached sermons urging the spiritual dangers of luxury good consumption.34 Andrea Finkelstein explains that a key reason merchants were viewed with suspicion by many was that the merchant stood outside the land-based hierarchy inherited from the Middle Ages. Neither lord nor vassal, he was bound in homage to no one and served no one’s ends but his own. In a sense, he also stood outside the polis itself, for the word merchant was reserved for the import-export trader, the individual whose commerce depended upon and fed foreign markets in goods and money. But more generally, it was the trader’s self-direction that society found both revolting and rebellious. (24-25)

As examples of reactions against more wide-spread commerce, she includes a 1550 sermon describing merchants as “marchaunts of mischiefe” (15); the humanist Thomas More’s banishment of commerce as far as possible from Utopia by reworking Plato’s idea of holding

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34 James first claims that the nation has become soft: peace and wealth have caused “a generall sluggishne, which makes us wallow in all sorts of idle delights, and soft delicacies, the first seedes of the subversion of all great Monarchies.” In general, all strata of society are more concerned with their “priuat ends” than they are with “their mother the Common-wealth.” Specifically, the clergy have become “neglignet and lazie,” and the nobility and gentry “prodigall, and solde to their priuate delights.” While lawyers are “couetusous,” the “Common-peole” are “prodigall and curious” (A4v). After listing the dangers tobacco poses to the health of individuals, he goes on to complain that it affects the safety of the king and of the common-wealth because people are spending all they have on its purchase and have reduced themselves to “shamefull imbecilitie,” making them useless for military activity (C4r-D1v). For more on the economic context of attitudes towards foreign drugs and their effect on the body politic, see Jonathan Gil Harris’s chapter on *Volpone in Sick Economies*. See also Margaret Healy’s *Fictions of Disease* for a discussion of luxury goods in the context of bodily metaphors and the economic crisis of the 1620s.
all things in common (15); and an anonymous pamphlet from the 1530s, in which all the
“labour, stody and policy” of the commercial classes is said to be “[by] bying and selling to
gete singler [singular] richis frome the communaltie,” and they “never workith to gete there
lyving nother by workes of husbandry nor artificialte, but lyveth by other menes workes and
of naught riseth to grete richis, entending nothing else but only to gete riches, which knoweth
no common weale” (15, original parentheses). Religious concerns about commerce continued
throughout the period as is evident in a 1653 broadsheet by Christopher Love, a London
minister, in which Love accepts the reality of commercial activity but provides “rules” that the
buyers and sellers of commodities should follow in order to ensure that they do not
“transgress” Scripture.\(^{35}\)

In addition, the borrowing and lending of money, which enabled much merchandizing
to take place and which became fundamental to the capitalist economy, was equally viewed
with suspicion, especially when interest, and therefore profit, was involved. A longstanding
argument against usury was that it was unnatural for money to breed money and that the
practice was sinful.\(^{36}\) Depictions of usurers as cannibals, which stress the unnaturalness of the
practice of charging interest by comparing it to the unnatural practice of consuming the flesh
of one’s own species, powerfully highlight the opinion that moneylenders threatened

\(^{35}\) In *Scripture Rules to be Observed in Buying and Selling*, Love admonishes buyers of commodities
not to pay less for a commodity than it is worth; not to “make vows and protestations” that they will give no
more for a commodity if afterwards they will give more, because this amounts to a “palpable and downright
lie”; not to engross commodities so that they can be sold later for a higher price, which is destructive to a
commonwealth and to trading; not to buy anything on the Lord’s day; not to take advantage of the poor by
paying less for their wares; and not to buy stolen goods or slaves. Sellers, on the other hand, should not
overpraise a commodity in order to sell it for more than it is worth; use false weights or measures; adulterate
products; take advantage of the “ignorance or simplicity” of the purchaser; be the first to raise prices; sell goods
on the Lord’s day; or sell stolen goods, goods that serve a sinful purpose (like “stuffe to paint Harlots faces”),
or themselves to work wickedness. Although Love legitimates commerce, provided that these scriptural rules
are followed, underpinning many of his rules and seriously restraining profit-making is the notion of a “just-
price.”

\(^{36}\) Usury was considered sinful because “it did not involve the usual risks of commerce; the lender was
assured against loss of his principal by the posting of collateral and, at the same time, was sure to earn a
handsome interest. The usurer seemed to be getting something for nothing” (Bevington 182).
communal well-being in their pursuit of private financial gain. Jean de Léry, a Frenchman
who recorded his experiences living in Brazil in the sixteenth century, and whose writings
influenced Montaigne’s “Des Cannibales,” expresses this commonly held opinion about usury
in the context of supposed Brazilian cannibalism when he writes: “if you consider in all candor
what our big usurers do, sucking blood and marrow, and eating everyone alive—widows,
orphans, and other poor people, whose throats it would be better to cut once and for all, than
to make them linger in misery—you will say that they are even more cruel than the savages
I speak of” (132). Thomas Floyd likewise insists, “Usury is an active element that consumeth
all the well that is layed upon it, gnawing the deters to the bones, and sucketh out the bloud
& marrow from them, ingendring money of mony, contrary to the disposition of nature, and
holding a disordinate desire of wealth (41.276-277).

An important way of making these socio-economics appear more natural and less
threatening was to incorporate them into representations of the body. Writers therefore
frequently transformed the traditional image of society as a body so as to include commercial
activity. Numerous examples exist, but I wish to touch briefly here on how writers figuratively
adapted the Galenic model of blood production in the liver to suit some of these new
economic phenomena, thereby both promoting and mirroring the internalization of exchange
into the social body. In my analysis of Spenser’s allegory of the body in The Faerie Queene,
I offer a more detailed literary example of the figurative adaptation of Galenic medicine to the
changing economics.

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37 Arguing that there are advantages to usury, including assisting the development of trade because
much trade is undertaken by young men borrowing upon interest, Francis Bacon likewise uses ingestion
imagery to make his point that for many people borrowing upon interest saves them from having to sell their
necessities: “whereas usury doth but gnaw upon them, bad markets would swallow them quite up” (“Of Usury”
95). For more on usury, capitalism, cannibalism, and community in Merchant, see Jerry Phillips, “Cannibalism
qua Capitalism: The Metaphorics of Accumulation in Marx, Conrad, Shakespeare and Marlowe.”

38 Examples of resistance to borrowing/lending in Shakespeare include Polonius’s representation of
borrowing and lending as threatening to the community, especially as manifested in the social bonds of
friendship, in his proverbial advice to Laertes: “Neither a borrower nor a lender be, / For loan oft loses both
itself and friend, / And borrowing dulleth th’ edge of husbandry” (1.3.75-77). Antonio refers to the belief in
the unnaturalness of charging interest in the rhetorical question he asks of Shylock: “If thou wilt lend this money,
that it not / As to thy friends, for when did friendship take / A breed for barren metal of his friend?” (1.3.132-
134). Unlike Polonius, for Antonio, lending can be an act of friendship, if done freely, but making a profit from
the loan is not.
While Galen had compared the blood produced in the liver to bread baked in a public bakery and also to wine, both dietary staples, some early modern writers instead compare blood to commodities, products meant for exchange on the market. In so doing, they make the production and distribution of commodities into crucial physiological functions. Extolling the present and future uses of the Virginia plantation in his sermon to its planters, John Donne, for example, exclaims that the colony is “already, not only a spleen, to drain the ill humours of the body, but a liver, to breed good blood; already the employment breeds mariners; already the place gives good essays, *nay freights of merchantable commodities*” (9, my emphasis). I will discuss the role of the plantation as spleen in my final chapter, but here wish to draw attention to Donne’s description of the plantation as a liver producing “good blood,” which includes “merchantable commodities.” In his 1535 anatomical treatise, Andrés de Laguna similarly describes how “the liver and the heart are not so far apart that a certain very broad vein cannot pass, *like a very rich traveling merchant*, from the region of the liver to that of the heart. The liver sends forth blood, in which it especially abounds, so that through an exchange not at all regrettable it may receive by arteries from the heart the spirits from the lack of which it suffers” (281, my emphasis).\(^{39}\) Whereas Galen had described the *vena cava*, the vein transporting blood from the liver to the heart, as “a sort of aqueduct full of blood” (I:4.207) and others like Crooke had outlined blood distribution in traditional imagery as resembling irrigation or natural moisturizing, in Laguna’s depiction, the vein becomes a merchant carrying commodities (blood) for exchange between different regions of the body, which he identifies with Greece, Spain, and Italy.\(^{40}\) The concept of exchange was not absent

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\(^{39}\) Laguna continues: “In a similar manner, of course, the heart sends vital spirit to the brain through arteries so that later it may draw from the brain by way of nerves the animal spirit which is by far more valuable” (281).

\(^{40}\) Crooke explains that the blood “is as it were sprinckled upon the flesh, into which by little and little in manner of a vapour or dewe it soaketh and sinketh, cleaung like gloe till it bee wholly converted into their proper Aliment” (3.12.135). In *Coriolanus*, Menenius describes “pipes” and “conveyances,” and in his tale, the belly refers to “rivers” through which blood is “shipped” throughout the body. Seneca, too, remarked on the similarity between the body and the natural world: “It is pleasing that the earth is ruled by Nature according to the example of the human body, in which there are veins and arteries, the receptacles respectively of blood and spirit. In the earth, too, there are separate passageways for water and for wind, which Nature has fashioned so similar to those in our own bodies that our ancestors named the passageways for water ‘veins.’” (qtd. in Durling 70).
from the Galenic model, though that exchange is more comparable to the forms of exchange prevalent in societies in which production for direct consumption and social relations of dependence predominate, exchange not mediated by money: services in kind, for instance. Although grounded in Galenic physiology, Laguna’s interpretation of the bodily economy nonetheless gives to the transactions between the parts a financial aspect, and implicitly, mediation by way of money.\textsuperscript{41} Surplus is traded in an exchange “not at all regrettable,” which suggests mutual benefit rather than any form of structural socio-economic inequity. This example from Laguna illustrates the overlapping of economic conditions since he also, as mentioned above, describes the liver as a cook and a miller of flour. (In “Of Empire,” Bacon, too, makes digestion into a commercial enterprise by describing merchants as the \textit{vena porta}, the vein responsible for transporting the chyle produced in the stomach to the liver to be made into blood: “if they flourish not, a kingdom may have good limbs, but will have empty veins, and nourish little”\textsuperscript{42}).

\textsuperscript{41} Demonstrating the way in which the body could be called into use in order to legitimate the system of borrowing and lending, Rabelais’s Panurge explains to Pantagruel that borrowing and lending are crucial to the healthy functioning of the body. Referring specifically to the Fable of the Belly, he asserts that if there is no lending in the microcosm, then there will be “terrible confusion” because the head will refuse to “lend” his eyesight to guide the feet and hands, the heart will not “lend” assistance, the liver will not send blood for “the good of the whole” and the bladder will not care to be “indebted” to the kidneys and so will stop the urine. As a result, in such a world “owing nothing, lending nothing, and borrowing nothing, you would see a more dangerous Conspiracy than that which \textit{Esope} exposed in his Apologue” (3.3.42-43, original emphasis). (Jerah Johnson refers to this passage in his discussion of the “money=blood metaphor,” treated below, since Panurge describes the blood produced in the liver as a “rivulet of gold” [129]). In \textit{The Debtors Apologie} (1644), Thomas Jordan similarly uses the analogy between body and society to legitimate borrowing, writing that “the constitutive parts are debtors each to other”: “the eye seeth for the foot, the foot standeth for the hand, the hand toucheth for the mouth, the mouth tasteth for the stomach, the stomach eateth for the whole body, the body repayeth back again that nutriment which it hath received to all the parts, discharging the retributions by the Port Esquiline”(2-3). Here friendship and indebtedness are not considered mutually exclusive.

\textsuperscript{42} Donne also includes merchants in his metaphor of the body politic in “A Funeral Elegy,” although in this case they are compared to the feet:

\begin{quote}
The world contains
Princes for arms, and counsellors for brains,
Lawyers for tongues, divines for hearts, and more,
The rich for stomachs, and for backs, the poor;
The officers for hands, merchants for feet
By which remote and distant countries meet. (21-26)
\end{quote}

By comparing merchants to the body’s feet, Donne plays on the fact that merchants are particularly associated with travel and thus well suited for comparison to the body’s primary means of transportation. Although in the hierarchy of body parts the feet occupy the lowest position, they are nonetheless very important to bodily...
Increasing commercial activity meant increasing use of money in everyday life and this too is reflected in bodily metaphors, particularly those comparing money to blood, thereby emphasizing the importance of its flow to the health of the body politic. Jerah Johnson writes that from 1500-1800, from “the medieval scholastics to the eighteenth-century physiocrats,” the metaphorical comparison of money to blood was “[v]irtually a stock-in-trade” (119). The metaphor may have been a “stock-in-trade,” but it was not a consistently uniform one since medical theory regarding blood altered dramatically over that period, significantly impacting bodily metaphors comparing money to blood. Working within the Galenic model in which the blood produced in the liver was distributed throughout the body for consumption, medieval writers like John of Salisbury and Nicholas of Oresme, Robert Durling explains, “speak of wealth in the traditional terms of something whose nature is to be accumulated. Although money is termed ‘currency’ in the period, the notion of the circulation of money is foreign to the conception, which is rather that of the current of river of blood that carries food to the members where it is, precisely, accumulated.” He adds that “[t]he notion of wealth as inherently parallel to the circulation of the blood was to have to wait until after Servetus’s and Harvey’s great discoveries” (71).

The internalization of commercial exchange and new socio-economics is evident not only in these adaptations (and numerous others) of the ancient medical model of the body but also in the changing medical paradigm itself, which William Harvey’s (and to a lesser extent Servetus’s) “discoveries” promoted. Marx’s rhetoric, I suggest, provides a reminder of the continued use of bodily metaphors in economic discourse and at the same time points to the powerful link between medical discourses of the body and modes of production. Marx regularly employs the term *circulation* to explain his economic theory, as in his statement that the “circulation of commodities” on the world market and in world trade, which he dates from the sixteenth century, is the “starting-point of capital” (247) or in his frequent description of money as the “medium of circulation” (212). Although in many cases Marx clearly understands “circulation” as an alchemical process, “circulation” also has a more obvious activity: Donne’s comparison thus assigns a productive role to merchants, distinguishing them from “the rich,” who in his example appear to be appetitive rather than digesting stomachs.
Writers attempting to uphold the authority of the ancients sought explanations for these discrepancies. Encountering duodenums much shorter than their nominal twelve finger length, Paré suggests that it is the duodenum is only that long “in great bodied men, such as were more frequently to be met withal in Galens time, than in this time of ours, in which this gut is found no longer than seven, eight, or nine fingers at most” (3.15.105). Paré’s explanation belongs to the traditional theory of degeneration, the belief that the world was regressing, a belief that was used to explain the shorter life lived by ordinary mortals when compared to the lives lived by biblical figures. Similarly, in The Historie of Man, John Banister argues that Hippocrates and Galen “suffer in these dayes such sundry contradictions, especially in the partes of mans body” because the “stature of man in all pointes decreaseth” (proem Bij). Donne refers to the same belief in his poetic anatomy, “An Anatomy of the World,” when he writes that in past times “as the age was long, the size was great,” but “as in lasting, so in length is man / Contracted to an inch, who was a span.” (121,135-36).
that the liver produced blood from chyle. He denied, however, that the vena cava, the vein which Galen believed transported blood from the liver to the heart, originated in the liver: “From this observation might have begun the destruction of the established Galenic view of two distinct vascular systems: the venous originating in the liver and the arterial stemming from the heart, but this was not the time” (Wear 279).

The time came when Harvey, using vivisection and mathematical calculation, demonstrated that the amount of blood daily moving through the heart could not possibly be produced by the liver from ingested food. He therefore argued that there must be “a MOTION, AS IT WERE, IN A CIRCLE” (De motu cordis VIII), with the heart acting as a pump. Harvey adds to sixteenth-century theories about the movement of blood by such figures as Realdo Columbo and Michael Servetus, who is credited with outlining the pulmonary circulation, the circular path of blood between the heart and lungs, before being burned at the stake, along with most of his books, for heresy. Harvey’s model of the body more closely resembles the Aristotelian emphasis on the heart as the source of the blood than the Galenic emphasis on the liver. According to Harvey, blood is sent from the heart to the other parts of the body, which are “nourished, cherished, and quickened” with blood. But in its “contact” with these parts, the blood becomes cooled and “coagulated” and so returns to “its sovereign, the heart, as if to its source, or to the inmost home of the body, there to recover its state of excellence or perfection.” In the heart, it “renews its fluidity” and “natural heat” and becomes “powerful, fervid, a kind of treasury of life” and is “again dispersed” by “the motion and action of the heart” (VIII).

Harvey’s theory of the circulation of blood essentially replaced the Galenic model of

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44 I am treating Harvey as the “discoverer” of the circulation of blood since that is how he is understood in the Western medical tradition largely because he was the first to demonstrate and have accepted the theory of systemic circulation.

45 For Harvey, the heart is thus “the beginning of life; the sun of the microcosm, even as the sun in his turn might well be designated the heart of the world; for it is the heart by whose virtue and pulse the blood is moved, perfected, and made nutrient, and is preserved from corruption and coagulation; it is the household divinity which, discharging its function, nourishes, cherishes, quickens the whole body, and is indeed the foundation of life, the source of all action” (VIII). In giving this centrality to the heart, Harvey resembles Aristotle, although Aristotle had not theorized the circulation of the blood as Harvey does.
a bodily economy based on production for direct consumption with one based on production for circulation, mirroring the transformation in socio-economic structures arising as a result of increased international trade. Marx’s use of the commonplace trope of medical discovery unconsciously furthers the connection between Harvey’s medical theory and the economic phenomenon promoted by other “discoverers” of the early modern period, those who initiated and engaged in world trade. This connection is made explicit, as Ernest B. Gilman points out, in Martin Llewellyn’s prefatory poem published with the 1653 translation of Harvey’s *De generatione animalium*. In his poem, Llewellyn describes Harvey as the “Fam’d Circulator of the Lesser World,” or body, comparing him to Cavendish and Drake, Elizabethan circumnavigators of the greater world, or globe (qtd. in Gilman 284, original emphasis).

Once Harvey had presented his theory of blood circulation, it was then quite rapidly incorporated into economic discourse and theory. In *Leviathan*, for instance, Hobbes discusses money through a comparison with the digestive and circulatory systems in a manner clearly influenced by Harvey. In his body/state analogy, Hobbes describes concoction as the process of reducing those commodities, “which are not presently consumed, but reserved for Nourishment in time to come,” to gold, silver, and money. This money “passeth from Man to Man, within the Common-wealth; and goes round about, Nourishing (as it passeth) every part thereof; In so much as this Concoction, is as it were the Sanguification of the Common-wealth: For naturall Bloud is in like manner made of the fruits of the Earth; and circulating, nourisheth by the way, every Member of the Body of Man” (2.24.300). Noting the difference between the Galenic model and the Harvean model on early modern theorizing of money in the economy, Finkelstein writes:

With its identification of money with either vital spirits or nutritive blood, the organic

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46 In *Shakespeare’s Entrails*, David Hillman interprets Harvey’s “discovery” of the circulation of the blood in the context of changing notions of embodiment in the period: “at once symptom and cause of the new ideology of somatic closure—the ‘discovery’ comes from and contributes to what we could almost refer to as a ‘claustrophilic’ world-view. Harvey’s circulatory body represents a radically new image of the body as a closed system—more self-contained, less permeable than its Galenic predecessor: the body, so to speak, has been taken out of circulation” (7).

47 For more on the trope of discovery and early modern medicine, see Jonathan Sawday’s *The Body Emblazoned*. 
analogy had always contained the possibility of an alternate economic model to trade balance theory. In its narrowest sense, it led to questions about the quantity of money in circulation. William Harvey’s theory was not necessary for this: Malynes had worked out a rough concept based on Galen’s ideas of circulation. But Harvey’s demonstration of both the existence and the mechanics of a single circulation was the basis for three important changes: (1) through its focus on the mechanics of circulation, it broadened the velocity question to one of how money actually moved through an economy; (2) the concept of efficiency opened up the question of which paths that money took through an economy would prove most advantageous to it; (3) this led to a new appraisal of what advantageous meant.” (111-112, original emphasis)

Although the “circulation” of money has largely become a dead metaphor, the comparison between the movement of money in the economy and the movement of blood in the body continued to be employed and developed by the eighteenth-century physiocrats and later political economists.48

Although the influence of Harvey’s “discovery” on economic metaphors and theory is frequently commented upon, much less often noted is the influence of economic theory and metaphors on Harvey’s “discovery.” The relationship is, appropriately, more one of circulation than of uni-directional flow.49 Drawing partly on the work of Walter Pagel, Gilman provides some possible non-economic influences on Harvey’s conception of the movement of blood as, specifically, a circle, including descriptions of the heart in the works of Thomas Aquinas and Giordano Bruno, as well as descriptions of the relationship between the heavens and the earth. For Aquinas, the motion of the heart is “not circular but like a circular motion” in its

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48 For a reading of Marx’s engagement with use of the metaphor by the physiocrats, see Filling, page 14. For more on the influence of circulation on economic metaphor see, for example, Clément.

49 For a reading of Stephen Greenblatt’s famous use of “circulation” to describe the early modern “circulation of social capital” in the context of Harvey’s medical theory, see Gilman. Gilman points out that Greenblatt does not contextualize his terminology through reference to Harvey (or any other) early modern conceptions of circulation: “Taking no account of this linked cosmological and medical lineage of ‘circulation,’ the discourse in which it has the greatest literal force as well as frequency of usage, Greenblatt is left free to describe the idea otherwise, but at the cost of reinventing the wheel—of refashioning what might have been a more firmly grounded historical term into his own critical neologism” (278-79).
pulsations, while for Bruno, the life force found in the universe is “effused from the heart into whole of the body and (flows back) from the latter to the heart, as it were from the centre to the periphery and from the periphery to the centre, following the pattern of a circle” (278). Within the economic context, Jonathan Gil Harris argues that the “physiology of blood is at the heart (or liver) of one of the most important exchanges of early mercantilism: the pamphlet war of 1622-23 between Edward Misselden and Gerard Malynes” (137) and that “early modern discourses of economic pathology provided one of the horizons within which the objects of later medical ‘discoveries’ could first be constituted” (142-43).

The money as blood metaphor, I suggest, offers insight into the ways in which metaphorical adaptations of the Galenic model of digestion to new economic conditions may have contributed to changes in the medical model, which were then used metaphorically to describe economics. In an address to the Platonic Academy in the latter half of the sixteenth century, Italian Bernardo Davanzati suggested that although money was frequently compared to the “nerve system of war and the republic” it “would be more properly named the second blood.” He goes on to compare the movement of blood from large veins to small ones in terms familiar in early modern Galenic physiology. He speaks of irrigation and of the flesh drinking the blood as the earth absorbs rain, but he then goes on to use a financial comparison, describing how money, “in flowing from the large purses into the small ones, brings into each new blood, which is spent and goes continually into the things which we use in life, in exchange for which it goes back into the same large purses. In this fashion, in circulating, it maintains the body of the republic” (qtd. in Johnson, “Money” 120). It is worth noting that Harvey studied medicine at the University of Padua and such ideas of circulation may have influenced his own “discovery.”

50 Henderson points to scholarly opinion that Harvey may have “got the germ and possibly even some of the form of his ideas when a student in Italy, for the Italian universities were at that time the living centers of thought in Europe” (197). Reacting to this argument, Henderson significantly goes on to draw his own comparison between Harvey and early modern “discoverers” of the New World and the world market. He writes: “It puts such matters in their true light, however, to notice that the same sort of comments apply to nearly all the great discoverers; for instance, in the case of Christopher Columbus, it has been shown, I believe, both that others had discovered America before him and also that Columbus did not realize that he was discovering America. Neither Columbus nor Harvey nor any other great discoverer can possibly realize the enormous consequences which will grow out of his work, but this fact does not in the least decrease their greatness and the immensity of our debt to them” (197).
Harvey’s “discovery” was one of several seventeenth-century “discoveries” contributing to a significant diminishment in the role assigned to the liver in physiological functions. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, Ysbrand van Diemerbroeck commented on this alteration in the liver’s fortunes in his medical treatise, using highly politicized language. As translated into English by William Salmon, he writes:

In the mean time the Condition of the unfortunate Liver is to be lamented; as being that which formerly was call’d the Principal Bowel, and by Galen seated in the highest Throne of Sanguification, and there has been worship’d for many Ages by the common consent of Physic; yet that in these our times it should be torn and depos’d from its Throne, and despoil’d of all its Soveraignty; nay that it should be said to be dead, and therefore buried, and only remembred with an Ironical Epitaph by Bartholine, and yet contrary to the expectation of all men, like a Silkworm chang’d into a Butterflie, so metamorphos’d into a pitiful conglomerated Glandule, be beholding to a miserable resurrection in that likeness.(1.14.79-80, original italics)

Van Diemerbroeck is here referring to Thomas Bartholin, the Dutch anatomist who “discovered” the lymphatic system. The research of Bartholin and others led to the rejection of the Galenic theory that the chyle produced in the stomach from ingested food was conveyed to the liver, completely overturning the notion that it was in the liver that the chyle was converted to blood, and thus “declaring the end of the liver’s role as ‘ruler of the abdomen’ and the death of the ‘sanguine empire’” (Findlen). Instead, the liver was simply a producer of bile. Van Diemerbroeck refers, too, to the work done by Marcello Malpighi, who extended Harvey’s “discovery” of the circulation of the blood with his observation, using the newly invented microscope, of the capillaries, the existence of which Harvey had theorized but been unable to see. Malpighi also turned his microscope, what van Diemerbroeck calls “these new Golden Inventions,” on the liver and there “observ’d many things unheard of, and hitherto altogether undiscover’d,” which led to his conclusion that “the Liver is a conglomerated or cluster’d glandule” that separates out choler from the blood, and to the
dispelling of “many Hepatic Obscurities” (1.14.79). Van Diemerbroeck’s description of the fall of the liver from sovereign to “glandulous conglomerate” additionally charts the increasing movement in science and medicine in the seventeenth century away from figurative language.

The dethronement of the liver, however, was part of a larger trend in medical theory with social parallels. Just as the liver was “depos’d from its Throne, and despoil’d of all its Soveraignty,” so the heart, which contributed to that deposing and despoiling, suffered a similar fate in the course of Harvey’s lifetime. In his study of the “cultural intersections between the English and Scientific Revolutions,” The Matter of Revolution, John Rogers draws attention to the political and economic implications of Harvey’s theory of blood circulation. In Harvey’s 1628 publication, Rogers writes, the heart is an “absolutist prince” who can be said “to rule his dependents with a kind and gentle paternalism: with a firm control over what Harvey calls the ‘oeconomy of the body,’ the heart opens itself up as a storehouse of corporal nutrition. [...] Through the heart’s benevolent though mercantilist manipulation of the process of systole, every want of the bodily extremities is met” (19). By the publication of De circulatione sanguinis shortly after the execution of King Charles I in 1649, however, Harvey has had a “change of heart”(Rogers 36): “the circulation of the blood, in 1649, is no longer effected by ‘the heart, but by the meer impulsion of the blood,’ which has supplanted the heart as ‘the first efficient cause of the pulse, as likewise to be the common instrument of all operations’” (Rogers 20):

The heart in 1649 is still, as in 1628, the cistern or cellar of bodily nutrition: “The heart is to be thought the Ware-house . . . of the blood.” But no longer the “prince” of the corporeal commonwealth, the heart has no control over the distribution and allotment of bodily nutrition. A mere receptacle for the blood, the heart literally has no more agency, or capacity for action, than an actual warehouse: the heart is quite simply “made to be serviceable” to the blood, having been “erected for the transmission, and distribution” of it. (20-21)

51 Van Diemerbroeck writes that although Malpighi is thus “unwilling to call the Liver a Bowel for future, but rather a conglomerated or cluster’d Glandule; yet I beseech him to grant us this liberty, that we may still, for a while, call it a Bowel, lest by too sudden a change of the name, we should render our Discourse obscure, especially among those who never heard of this Denomination before” (1.14.79).
Alongside the political implications of Harvey’s “attribution of vitalist agency to the blood,” Rogers insightfully explores the economic significance of this shift in interpretation of bodily functions. Not only does this bodily reconfiguration parallel the “discovery of the individual” (36), but it engages the emergence of “the economic paradigm of the self-regulating market that had been theorized for the first time in the 1620s to promote a nearly laissez-faire program of foreign trade” (22). Thomas Mun and Edward Misselden, the founders of this early free-trade theory, proposed that “goods circulate most freely and the marketplace is most harmonious in a market exempt from the intrusive practices of monarchic price fixing and the granting of monopolies. The sovereign’s control over currency and trade, they argued, could be replaced with the predictable operation of the autonomous laws of the market” (22).^52

Although the liver can no longer be said to sit on the throne of sanguification, in modern-day medicine it is currently considered “the largest and most important metabolic organ in the body”: not only is the liver believed to secrete bile, important to the digestive system, but in addition, “the products absorbed from the digestive tract” are carried by the hepatic portal vein directly to the liver for “processing, storage, or detoxification before they gain access to the general circulation” (Sherwood 433, 434). Metabolism, like the circulation of blood, is a physiological concept with economic implications, and Marx’s use of the concept as a bodily metaphor in explaining his economic theory again provides insight into these implications. In addition to his rhetorical use of “circulation,” Marx uses the related bodily process of metabolism as a metaphor to explain that the “exchange of commodities” through the medium of money (or commodity-money-commodity) is “a process of social metabolism” whereby “[t]he product of one kind of useful labour replaces that of another” (198). Society’s “metabolic process” is “the quick disappearance of commodities from the sphere of circulation, and their equally quick replacement by fresh commodities” (217).

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^52 Aside from Harvey, the “utopian proposals for a self-regulating market for the exchange of goods would find a curious reflex in the work of many of the intellectuals of the Vitalist Moment: the anticensorship model of the free, unlicensed flow of information, the radical political model of a popular sovereignty in a newly decentralized state, and the Armieran theological model of a world released from the interventionist behavior of the arbitrary and whimsical God of Calvin” (Rogers 22-23). Rogers also remarks on the influence of the Fable of the Belly on Harvey throughout his career, and he notes that Harvey’s father and numerous brothers were successful merchants.
Metabolism is defined by the *OED* as the “chemical processes that occur within a living organism in order to maintain life; the interconnected sequences of mostly enzyme-catalysed chemical reactions by which a cell, tissue, organ, etc., sustains energy production, and synthesizes and breaks down complex molecules; anabolism and catabolism considered together; the overall rate at which these processes occur. Also: the chemical changes undergone in an organism by any particular substance.” This “more-or-less bio-chemical notion of metabolism,” however, differs from the nineteenth-century concept of metabolism as “an exchange of energy and substances between organisms and the environment which, by the writings of Moleschott (1857), had become influential in the social science of that time” (Fischer-Kowalski 37). German physiologists pioneered much of the research on metabolism in the nineteenth century. Significantly, the German word for metabolism used by Marx, *Stoffwechsel*, literally means “exchange of stuff,” highlighting once again the interdependence of economics and physiology by incorporating the concept of exchange into medical terminology. Marx and Engels, who were familiar with Moleschott’s writings, were “the first to apply the term ‘metabolism’ to society”(Fischer-Kowalski 37). Marx had also read the work of Theodor Schwann, who in 1839 had introduced the notion of cellular metabolism (Foster 160).

While the study of metabolism and the introduction of the word itself is associated with the nineteenth century, the beginnings of its study as a concept can be traced to the early modern period. Working within the Galenic tradition, but applying the new empiricism to it, Sanctorio Sanctorius is generally considered the father of the study of metabolic functions. In an attempt to improve the objectivity of physicians’ measurements of the heat and moisture of their patients—fundamental to Galenic medical practice—Sanctorius invented the thermometer and hydrometer, for example (Wear 261).\(^{53}\) He was also very interested in changes in body weight and, fascinatingly, had constructed for himself a chair suspended to a lever balance; in this chair he seems to have spent much of his time, weighing himself before and after meals, as well as

\(^{53}\) In Galenic medicine, physicians used touch to evaluate the nature of the illness and degrees of heat and moisture (Wear 261).
during them, so adjusting his lever that by the descent of the chair he would be warned that the predetermined amount of food had been swallowed. He made most careful measurements of the weight of his food and of his excretions. Thus was he able accurately to measure the loss of weight in his body due to “insensible perspiration.” (Merton 258)

He published his influential theory of “insensible perspiration” in Statica Methodica (1614), not long before the publication of Harvey’s theory of blood circulation.

In contrast to Sanctorius, Paracelsus, born Theophrastus Philippus Aureolus Bombastus von Hohenheim (b. 1482), rejected much of learned medicine and natural philosophy based on the ancients, creating his own natural philosophy, which, importantly, was based on chemical principles. It was also explicitly Christian. He believed strongly in the interconnectedness of the macrocosm (the universe) and the microcosm (the body), including the influence of the stars or minerals, especially salts, on the body and its parts, and, in opposition to Galen, he argued that like cured like (Wear 313-314). Although in many cases Paracelsian principles and chemical remedies were integrated into the Galenic tradition, Paracelsus’s iatrochemistry, or medical chemistry, shook the foundations of Galenic medicine: “It took hold among empirics, apothecaries, and surgeons at the popular end of the medical market-place as well as in royal courts” (Wear 320).

Iatrochemistry gained increasing influence in the seventeenth century when it was

54 “Salt, sulphur, and mercury were his new primary substances, which, although they did not completely replace the Aristotelian and Galenic system of qualities, elements, and humours, were considered by him as superior because they were ‘male’, and active and more spirit-like rather than ‘female’ and passive, like the elements” (Wear 313).

55 Paracelsus is often considered the Luther of medicine (and the inspiration for Marlowe’s Dr. Faustus). In his writings, “not only were new medical theories and cures set out but their associated social and religious radicalism and the incorporation of contemporary medical and cosmological interests gave it a sense of relevance arguably lacking in a learned medicine based on ancient texts” (Wear 316).

56 The Pharmacopoeia Londinensis, published in 1618 by the London College of Physicians, for example, included chemical remedies alongside traditional Galenic ones (Wear 320).

57 Because many of Paracelsus’s writings were not published until after his death, they had a delayed effect in early modern medicine and culture. By 1575, however, Paracelsianism had begun to spread rapidly throughout Europe (Wear 317).
revitalized by Flemish Johannes Baptisa van Helmont (1579-1644), who provided it with “a
down-to-earth approach (the use of chemical tests, quantification, the development of the idea
of gas) whilst preserving a spiritual dimension to the chemical interpretation of matter as well
as a strong Christian ethic” (Wear 342). Van Helmont is credited with replacing the traditional
Galenic emphasis on the importance of heat in the digestive process with an emphasis on the
importance of acid and chemical reactions instead. He also increased the number of stages of
digestion from three to six: “The sixth and last Digestion,’ Helmont said, ‘is perfected in all the
particular Kitchins of the Members: And there are as many stomacks, as there are
members nourishable. Indeed, in this Digestion, the in-bred spirit in every place, doth Cook
its own nourishment for it selfe” (Merton 255, my emphasis). Reflecting changing socio-
economics, van Helmont thus imagines the body as much more privatized, each part having
a stomach of its own, but also its own private kitchen so that the parts are less dependent on
the “public bakery” than in Galen’s model. Rogers suggests that in ascribing “bodily processes
not to centralized powers, such as the soul, the heart, or the brain, but to local and metabolic
forces,” the work of physiologists like van Helmont and later Francis Glisson resembles
Harvey’s in their engagement with economic theories, particularly those of decentralized free
trade (22).

Again using the metaphor of metabolism, Marx writes that commodity exchange is
“the metabolic interaction of social labour, in whose result the process itself becomes
extinguished” (200). Stoffwechsel/metabolism is an appropriate metaphor here for explaining
a process in which labour relations have been “extinguished.” Robert Multhauf writes that
digestion in Galenic theory “corresponds more nearly to what is now called metabolism, or
perhaps it would be more correct to say that metabolism was seen by these physicians as a
series of digestions”(155). This series of digestions in ancient physiology, however, was also,
as I mentioned earlier, a series of elaborations. I wish to suggest that it is perhaps no
coincidence that elaboration has largely become obsolete as a physiological concept, becoming
replaced by metabolism: as society became increasingly capitalist and as commodity fetishism
increasingly concealed the labour relations between producers of products by making them
appear relationships between things, so the term elaboration, with labour implicit in it, was
According to the OED, the ancient Greek senses of *metabole* include those relating to music, rhetoric, politics, and medicine. In its ancient medical application, it was used primarily for changes in symptoms and treatments of diseases.

About Descartes, Marx writes that “in defining animals as mere machines” he “saw with the eyes of the period of manufacture,” adding that in the medieval view “animals were assistants to man.” Descartes, he adds, thought like Bacon that “the altered methods of thought would result in an alteration in the shape of production, and the practical subjugation of nature by man” (512-13, fn. 27).

As Sawday suggests, in tracing the implications of “mechanical philosophy,” the anatomist Samuel Collins, on the one hand, “offered a body understood in Hobbesian terms where the ‘oeconomy of the Body politick’ was held to resemble the ‘body material’ in that both conformed to the ‘best constitution of monarchical government.’” On the other hand, against Collins’s “aristocratic (and anachronistic) interior monarchy, others arrayed the mechanical republic wherein might be discerned:

All things ... joined together, as in a clock, one cannot be without the other, neither is the most despicable wheel less necessary than the hand of the Clock itself without which it cannot be accounted a Clock.

Thus the Dutch anatomist, Paul Barbette, in 1659 challenged the age-old Galenic definition of the body as being composed of parts with varying degrees of ‘nobility.’ Such hierarchies, it was clear, could not be sustained within the mechanical republic” (31).
intellect of its own” but operating “according to the laws of mechanics” were profound:

Hitherto, the body had always been available as a rich source of metaphors with which to describe systems of government which were held to be both organic (and hence natural) and hierarchical. No longer was this the case. The easy familiarity with which early-modern political commentators could point to the body (mediated, it is true, by St Paul’s more communitarian model) as a demonstration of monarchical authority was now open to question. Menenius’ fable of the belly in Shakespeare’s Coriolanus had become simply irrelevant in any literal sense. (Sawday 29)

Although increasingly understood as a collection of automata operating according to mechanical laws, the notion of the body as a collection of working bodies did not suddenly disappear. The co-existence of the two traditions in the period is evident in Llewellyn’s prefatory poem to the 1653 edition of Harvey’s Anatomical Exercitations, Concerning the Generation of Living Creatures, which also provides the comparison of Harvey to Drake and Cavendish quoted earlier. Llewellyn writes that the “Numerous Intrals” Harvey has “searched through” have been studies not of “the dull Emerit Carcase, where / The Shops remain where once the Workmen were; And onely yield this cold Account; there stands / The Stuffe and Tools perhaps, but not the Hands. / But in the Living Laboratories, when / The Vitals ply’d their task like Lab’ring men; / When Life and Industry one Fountaine fed, / And to give over Work, was to be Dead” (A3v). Llewellyn stresses the value of vivisection, dissection performed on a living creature, over the dissection of a dead body because it allows observation of the body at work. As in the example from Galen and then other early moderns, Llewellyn compares the bodily interior to a workshop and the organs to workmen working on stuff with their hands and tools, the vitals specifically performing their bodily operations “like Lab’ring men.” Noteworthy here is the continued pervasiveness of gendered work in depictions of the work performed by the bodily organs as is the very explicit ideology that living means working,

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61 Sawday continues: “‘The soul’s power within the body was no longer analogous to the king’s power within the state, or even God’s power within the universe: the triple bond of authority had broken down into a world of mechanical process. If God still existed, then he was certainly no architect, perhaps not even a creator in the older sense of a fashioning and forming deity. Rather he was a mechanic, an engineer, a watchmaker even, whose presence was no longer required for the continuing operation of the orderly movement of the machine” (29).
that work is fundamental to life, and that life and industry (manufacture) are “fed” by the same “fountain,” the heart.

Alongside this depiction of the living body as a busy workshop filled with labouring men, however, Llewellyn also highlights in his prefatory poem the mechanistic aspect of Harvey’s work, although Harvey himself resisted the mechanistic approach and was instead a vitalist. Harvey did, though, importantly compare the heart to a pump. Of Harvey’s study of the internal workings of the body, Llewellyn writes: “There thy Observing eye first found the Art / Of all the Wheels and Clock-work of the Heart: / The mystick causes of its Dark Estate, / What Pullies Close its Cells, and what Dilate. / What secret Engines tune the Pulse, whose din / By Chimes without, Strikes how things fare within” (A3v-r). Llewellyn’s comparison of the heart to a clock is fitting because clocks were frequently used as metaphors for mechanical operations and they tick in a way resembling the pulse of the blood. By overlapping the workings of a clock with the work of labouring men, Llewellyn’s poem in a sense conflates the labour of individual men with the working parts of a machine, something Marx points to himself when he describes the relationship between tools and machines, manufacture and industrial production, in which the worker becomes a living appendage of the machine. Referring to the Fable of the Belly tradition, Marx writes:

While simple co-operation leaves the mode of the individual’s labour for the most part unchanged, manufacture thoroughly revolutionizes it, and seizes labour-power by its roots. It converts the worker into a crippled monstrosity by furthering his particular skill as in a forcing-house, through the suppression of a whole world of productive drives and inclinations, just as in the states of La Plata they butcher a whole beast for the sake of his hide or his tallow. Not only is the specialized work distributed among the different individuals, but the individual himself is divided up, and transformed into the automatic motor of a detail operation, thus realizing the absurd fable of Menenius Agrippa, which presents man as a mere fragment of his own body. (481-82)

Personified body parts become machines just as the working body essentially becomes part of a machine.

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I would like to conclude with an example from *Capital* that beautifully illustrates the interrelationship between economic modes of production, or perhaps modes of consumption would be more appropriate here, and medical and cultural understandings of physiological processes like those of digestion. Explaining commodity fetishism and how in industrial production workers are unaware of the labour that goes into the materials they are using, Marx draws a comparison between industrial production and the digestive process:

Therefore, whenever products enter as means of production into new labour processes, they lose their character of being products and function only as objective factors contributing to living labour. A spinner treats spindles only as a means for spinning, and flax as the material he spins. Of course it is impossible to spin without material and spindles; and therefore the availability of these products is presupposed at the beginning of the spinning operation. *But in the process itself, the fact that they are the products of past labour is as irrelevant as, in the case of the digestive process, the fact that bread is the product of the previous labour of the farmer, the miller, and the baker.* On the contrary, it is by their imperfections that the means of production in any process bring to our attention their character of being the products of past labour. A knife which fails to cut, a piece of thread which keeps on snapping, forcibly remind us of Mr A, the cutler, or Mr B, the spinner. In a successful product, the role played by past labour in mediating its useful properties has been extinguished. (289, my emphasis)

Marx’s understanding of digestion differs radically from Galen’s, and it is not only a nineteenth-century understanding of digestion but also a nineteenth-century understanding of bread. A high degree of continuity existed in bread baking from the Roman empire until the eighteenth century. In the early modern period, bakers and millers were considered “agents of the public, working for the community,” and there were still public ovens available for public use into the nineteenth century (Fay 85, 91). The profits of bakers were strictly regulated through the Assize of Bread, which was not abolished until 1822 (Ross 338). In Joyce Appleby’s words, because of frequent scarcity, “the growing and marketing of corn, milling of flour, and the baking of bread were principally social rather than economic
activities,” and it was not until after plentiful harvests in the 1650s that “there emerged the possibility of treating food like any other commodity” (qtd. in Boehrer, Fury 37). Marx explains that it was only early in the eighteenth century that the baking trade really lost its “corporate character” and “the capitalist stepped behind the nominal baker in the shape of a miller or flour factor” (361). In contrast to Galen’s depiction of digestion of bread when it was a use-value, the later interpretation of the digestion of bread as a commodity does not reproduce the conditions of the bread’s production, though it does underline the concealment of social relations in the commodity fetish: “The taste of porridge,” Marx explains, “does not tell us who grew the oats, and the process we have presented does not reveal the conditions under which it takes place, whether it is happening under the slave-owner’s brutal lash or the anxious eye of the capitalist, whether Cincinnatus undertakes it in tilling his couple of acres, or a savage, when he lays low a wild beast with a stone” (290-91).

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62 See especially pages 358-362.
Chapter Three
Concocting Commodities:
Spenser’s Allegory of Digestion

In this chapter, which could have been called “Marx and Spenser” if that title hadn’t already been taken, I concentrate on Spenser’s allegory of digestion in *The Faerie Queene*, which has received surprisingly little economic analysis. The entry entitled “Marx & Spenser” in *The Spenser Encyclopedia* includes mention of a body part relevant to my study in its discussion of Marx’s description of Spenser as “Elizabeth’s arse-kissing poet” (457)—the “arse,” which Spenser allegorizes as the body’s “back-gate” or “Port Esquiline” (2.9.32.7-8), is a focus of my final chapter—but the entry does not apply Marx’s theories to Spenser’s texts. Several insightful economic readings of Spenser that do foreground his engagement with the conditions of emergent capitalism have been published in recent years, but they address texts other than *The Faerie Queene* or episodes other than the allegory of the body. Richard Halpern, for instance, includes a chapter on *The Shepheardes Calendar* in *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation*, and Christopher Warley examines the *Amoretti and Epithalamion* in his article on Spenser, Ireland, capitalism, and class. Influenced by Fredric Jameson’s work on genre and modes of production, Maureen Quilligan analyzes Guyon’s encounter with Mammon in Book Two of *The Faerie Queene* and the Radigund section in Book Five in the context of European involvement in New World slavery.

Scholars who do discuss Spenser’s allegory of the body focus predominantly on other angles of interpretation or on other parts of the body. An important exception is Michael Schoenfeldt’s chapter on *The Faerie Queene*, in which he foregrounds digestive processes, offering meaningful insight into “the relationship between physiology and morality, between matters of the body and conditions of the spirit”; however, he intentionally de-emphasizes economic, political, and colonial implications (*Bodies* 40-41). On the other hand, Annabel Patterson highlights the political and economic implications of early modern representations of the belly in her chapter “Body Fables” in *Fables of Power*, but she dismisses such
implications from *The Faerie Queene*.\(^1\) Although she opens the chapter with an epigraph from Book Four that refers to the ancient fable of “The Belly and the Members” (4.2.2), Patterson claims that, unlike the reference appearing in Sidney’s *Defence of Poesie* (her other epigraph), it is “far less clear that Spenser’s allusion carries any political valence” (112, original emphasis). Spenser’s depiction of the belly itself receives almost no attention. Contrasting him with what she calls the “newly capitalist candor” of a writer like Edward Forset, Patterson writes that “it is amusing to compare the allegory of the Body in the second book of Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, with its merely ethical approach to the lower bodily functions, to Forset’s emphasis on ‘Soveraigntie in his vegetable power’” (117, my emphasis). Patterson is referring to Forset’s claim in his 1606 *Comparative Discourse of the Bodies Natural and Politique* that “it belongeth to the office of Soveraigntie,” among other things, “to provide for the nourishing and maintaining of the state with necessaries, [. . .] to cherish in the subjects an appetite of acquiring of commodities; to grant to them places of Mart and Market for the digesting of the same unto all parts of the Realme [. . .]” (qtd. in Patterson 117, my emphasis).\(^2\)

My argument is that ethics and economics are not as easily separated as Patterson appears to assume and that although Spenser may exhibit less of the “candor” of Forset’s slightly later prose, careful reading of his allegory of the body reveals that he is no less engaged with early modern economics. As I demonstrate below, Spenser reproduces, thereby legitimating, changing social realities that were part of the gradual and inequitable transition

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1 David Hale’s *The Body Politic* contains only two brief references to *The Faerie Queene* in footnotes and those are not to the belly. In *Nature’s Work of Art*, Leonard Barkan provides fairly extensive treatment of *The Faerie Queene*, but does not discuss Spenser’s representation of digestion in any detail or in an economic context.

2 The full passage, as it appears in Patterson, reads:

Who seeth not, that it belongeth to the office of Soveraigntie, to provide for the nourishing and maintaining of the state with necessaries, to amplifie the dominions therof, for profit and dignitie, to spread abroad the encrease of the people by Colonies, in the nature of generating or propagating, to cherish in the subjects an appetite of acquiring of commodities; to grant to them places of Mart and Market for the digesting of the same unto all parts of the Realme . . . to give order for the holding and retaining of that which is become their well agreeing and naturall sustenance, and for the expelling as well of the hurtful overcharge, as the unprofitable excrements of the weale publique. (117)

Patterson’s remark that Forset’s “emphasis on digestion as the circulation of wealth would become [...] a central metaphor in Jacobean political thought” (117, my emphasis) is uncontextualized but unconsciously points to my argument about the interrelationship between economics and medical paradigms.
from feudalism to capitalism; and he participates directly in the ideological work necessary for this transition by naturalizing—primarily through figurative use of the body but also through gender—the consumption, production, and merchandizing of commodities so important to it. I also suggest that his allegory, as allegory, is particularly suited to making this economic ideology acceptable to public taste.

I

In Book Two, the book devoted to the virtue of Temperance and featuring Sir Guyon as its titular knight, Spenser compares the human body to a castle, the “Castle” of “Alma,” who represents the soul. Skin, the castle wall, is likened to the “Egyptian slime” used to build the tower of Babel; the mouth and anus are the castle’s two gates; the tongue is the porter guarding the entrance gate; and the teeth are armed warders. Castles frequently served figurative purposes in the English tradition, as indicated in the titles of William Blandy’s *The Castle, or, Picture of pollicy shewing forth most lively, the face, body, and partes of a commonwealth*, the morality play, *The Castle of Perseverance*, and Thomas Elyot’s popular mid-sixteenth-century medical treatise, *The Castel of Helthe*. With features like battlements and moats, castles are effective metaphors when stressing the importance of defending the self from temptation in order to maintain both spiritual and physical well-being.

While Spenser’s choice of comparison is highly appropriate in a romance-epic describing the adventures of knights, it is also economically significant. Castles were integral to the socio-economic structure of medieval feudalism, of which they are emblematic. By the time Spenser was writing *The Faerie Queene*, however, the older feudal economic and social structures had undergone considerable transformation as part of the transition towards what was to become capitalism. As a result of strengthened centralized power in the sovereign, castles functioned less as the social and military foci of regional domains, although the word *castle* was retained for the “large mansions or country houses, which were formerly feudal castles” (*OED*, def. 3). Instead, the court became the cultural and administrative centre of society. In his important study, *The Civilizing Process*, Norbert Elias pays particular attention to the altered social position of knights in the early modern period, writing that “[w]hile money circulation grew and commercial activity developed, while bourgeois classes and the revenue
of the central authority rose, the income of the entire remaining nobility fell” because they depended on fixed rents and so were unable to take advantage of rising prices. Some knights “kept themselves above water for as long as possible by slowly selling off their estates” while others, “forced by these circumstances and attracted by the new opportunities, entered the service of the kings or princes who could pay” (193). An “upper class of relatively independent warriors or knights” was “supplanted by a more or less pacified upper class of courtiers” formed “from elements of diverse social origins” (191, 68). Richard Halpern explains that the aristocracy became increasingly reliant on “consumption and expenditure, along with formal education and administrative authority, as compensation for its loss of political-military power,” often, though, going heavily into debt (237).

Marx, too, has something to say about the changes in social structure affecting knights. Expressing the transformation in social hierarchy that took place from the knight-serf relationship to the capitalist/wage-labourer relationship, he writes:

The industrial capitalists, these new potentates, had on their part not only to displace the guild masters of handicrafts, but also the feudal lords, who were in possession of the sources of wealth. In this respect, the rise of the industrial capitalists appears as the fruit of a victorious struggle both against feudal power and its disgusting prerogatives, and against the guilds, and the fetters by which the latter restricted the free development of production and the free exploitation of man by man. The knights of industry, however, only succeeded in supplanting the knights of the sword by making use of events in which they had played no part whatsoever. They rose by means as base as those once used by the Roman freedman to make himself the master of his patronus. (875)

Marx’s use of *knights* to describe industrial capitalists mocks the ideology that presents capitalism as a romance narrative of liberation, at the same time highlighting the similarity between the power dynamic that is more obvious in feudalism because based on direct dominance and its more concealed manifestation in capitalism.

The changing economics linked to the transition from feudalism to capitalism had a profound effect on European bodily behaviour. Elias proposes that the “concept of *civilité*
acquired its meaning for Western society at a time when knightly society and the unity of the Catholic church were disintegrating” (47). He suggests that “the coarser habits, the wilder, more uninhibited customs of medieval society with its warrior upper class, the corollaries of an uncertain, constantly threatened life, were ‘softened’, ‘polished’ and ‘civilized.’” Seeking the favour of the prince or the “great” and fighting for opportunities through “relatively peaceful means, through intrigue and diplomacy” imposed “a constraint on the affects, a self-discipline and self-control, a peculiarly courtly rationality, which at first made the courtier appear to the opposing bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, above all in Germany but also in England, as the epitome of the man of reason” (190). More recently, Michel Foucault has traced the interrelationship between the rise of capitalism and “bourgeois” techniques of disciplinary power that perpetuate it, while Pierre Bourdieu has theorized the importance of *habitus* and “symbolic capital” to the maintenance of class distinctions in capitalist societies.

Spenser was personally directly involved in the economic and cultural changes impacting castles and knights: in the late 1580s he purchased his own castle in Ireland, Kilcolman. Christopher Warley explains that Spenser was able to do so because of his government position there under a system of patronage and because of the “reconceptualization of Irish land under an English model of agricultural innovation and market rents.” These two factors are related: “Spenser drew on his public offices and in particular his position as secretary to Lord Grey, leader of the English forces, to acquire rights to a variety of lands, which he then successively sold in pursuit of more prestigious estates—a process which culminated with his acquisition of Kilcolman. In buying and selling land, Spenser thus participated in the re-imagination of Ireland in nascent capitalist terms” (569-70). Warley goes on to point out that there is a paradoxical element to Spenser’s “upward mobility”: “In becoming a land owner, Spenser was consequently participating in a key transitory moment between the social capital promised by ownership of a domain and, simultaneously, the undermining of that capital by the very processes which made it possible for a socially ambiguous person like Spenser to become a ‘lord’ at all” (571).³

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³ As Greenblatt summarizes it in his introduction to *The Norton Shakespeare*: “The source of wealth for most of the ruling class, and the essential measure of social status, was land ownership, and changes to the
The social phenomenon of upward mobility is reflected in the “generall end” of The Faerie Queen, which, as Spenser explains in his letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, is “to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline” (15). Not only is Spenser contributing to the growing emphasis on manners and self-discipline as a form of social distinction but, as Warley argues: “Maureen Quilligan has shown how this ‘or’ in the letter to Raleigh complicates gender identities in its attempt to accommodate Queen Elizabeth as a female reader. The ‘or,’ however, similarly complicates questions of social standing. [...] While the gap between gentleman and noble person tries to accommodate Queen Elizabeth as a conspicuously female reader, it also tries to accommodate the socially ambiguous Spenser himself” (569), whose “very education depended upon the emerging dominance of English merchants (he was educated at the Merchant-Taylors’ School)” (572-73). Kim Hall similarly stresses that courtesy literature preserves the “fiction” of being written for an aristocratic audience while nonetheless offering “upwardly mobile” readers “a peek into the status competitions and consumption patterns that they wished to emulate” (171).

The allegorical castle of the body in Spenser’s contribution to courtesy literature needs to be read in the context of the socio-economic changes affecting real castles and their inhabitants. Accommodating Queen Elizabeth as well as the “socially ambiguous,” it could, for instance, be the home of a “noble person,” but it could also be the home of someone enabled by nascent capitalist economics to buy an estate and imitate the nobility. This point is emphasized, I suggest, by the description of the allegorical body as both the Castle of Alma and the more widely applicable House of Temperance, an ambiguity mirroring that found in

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social structure in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were largely driven by the land market. The property that passed into private hands as the Tudors and early Stuarts sold off confiscated monastic estates and then their own crown lands for ready cash amounted to nearly a quarter of all the land in England. At the same time, the buying and selling of private estates was on the rise throughout the period. Land was bought up not only by established landowners seeking to enlarge their estates but by successful merchants, manufacturers, and urban professionals” (7).

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4 Elias points to a similar tendency in German translations of Italian and French conduct manuals “to efface the social differentiations in the original” by changing expressions like “a noble” to “a noble, or any other honourable man” (66, original italics).

5 Hall includes recipe books in the category of courtesy literature.
Spenser’s use of “or” in his letter to Raleigh. While house could certainly be used to designate large mansions, unlike castle, it could also be used for more humble dwellings and for such things as a bake-house or work-house. Notably, London’s Bridewell likewise reflects the mapping of new socio-economics onto older architectural structures. Although in Spenser’s day it was “a house of correction” and “a Workhouse for the poore and idle persons of the Citie,” it had originally been a “house” (palace) belonging to King Henry VIII (Stow 321).

II

Temperance, or self-restraint and moderation, is a virtue found in both Christian belief and classical ethics (Schoenfeldt, Bodies 41). Margaret Healy suggests that moderation was given particular emphasis in early modern England as part of what she calls “a new temperance movement” (191): for example, from the mid-sixteenth century onward, ministers were “commanded to rail against surfeit from the pulpit every Sunday” and, as Stephen Orgel charts, Comus was transformed “from a relatively harmless god of love, wine, dance and high spirits to the villainous one of banquets and ‘swinish gluttony’” (190, 192). Healy links this increased emphasis on temperance to “the rise of humanism, Neoplatonism, and reforming Protestantism,” all of which are at work in The Faerie Queene, where “ideology, with its medical underpinning, cannot be viewed separately from dietary and digestive concerns” (191).  

In early modern humoral medicine, excessive consumption was believed to overload the stomach, impeding the digestive process so crucial to physical and psychological well-being, thereby causing illness or even death. In Picture of a Perfit Commonwealth, Thomas Floyd, for example, stresses that intemperance “increaseth anger, & anger in extremity extinguisheth vnderstanding, opinion and memory,” and gluttony is “an enemy to health, a friend to sicknes, the mother of wanton lust, and the instrument of death” (260-61): “more die by it, then perish by the sworde” (258). Expressing the negative effects of intemperance, Spenser writes:

What warre so cruell, or what siege so sore,

As that, which strong affections do apply

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6 Healy does not discuss The Faerie Queene in any further detail on this point.
Against the fort of reason euermore
To bring the soule into captiuitie:
Their force is fiercer through infirmitie
Of the fraile flesh, relenting to their rage,
And exercise most bitter tyranny
Upon the parts, brought into their bondage:
No wretchednesse is like to sinfull vellenage.(2.11.1.1-9)

When Malegar ("bearer of evil" or "badly sick") and his forces attack the castle of the body’s five “bulwarks,” or senses, Taste is besieged by “a grysie rablement,” some of whom have mouths like “greedy Oystriges,” while others resemble “loathly Toades” or have waists “like swine,” “for so deformd is luxury, / Surfeat, misdiet, and vnthriftie wast, / Vaine feasts, and idle superfluity” (2.11.12. 3-8). In the Bower of Bliss, the lovers of Acrasia, whose name comes from a Greek term meaning “morbid intemperance, excess,” a term applied by Hippocrates to meats (OED), are transformed into “seeming beasts,” “figures hideous”(2.12.85.1.4).

In contrast to an intemperate body, which is “[d]istempred through misrule and passions bace” (2.9.1.6), a temperate body is one “which doth freely yield / His partes to reasons rule obedient, / And letteth her that ought the scepter weeld.” In such a body,

All happy peace and goodly gouernment
Is setled there in sure establishment;
There Alma like a virgin Queene most bright,
Doth flourish in all beautie excellent:
And to her guests doth bounteous banket dight,

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7 In his reading of the castle of Alma in the context of the shifting paradigm in interpretations of disease, Jonathan Gil Harris speculates:

Despite its “goodly workemanship” (ii.ix.21.8), the castle has to defend its vulnerable “bulwarkes” against an external threat, the pathogenic Maleger—whose name commentators usually gloss as male aeger, “desperately diseased”—and his equally venemous “band of villeins” (ii.xi.5.3). The latter include the seven deadly sins, who attempt to infiltrate the castle “with hidden guile” (ii.xi.7.4) through its eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin. Although Spenser is vague about who or what Maleger is meant to allegorize, certain details of this episode suggest intriguing parallels with late sixteenth-century explanations of the form and origins of syphilis. (Foreign Bodies 28)
Attempred goodly well for health and for delight. (2.11.2.1-9)

Imagining Alma as “like a virgin Queene,” Spenser’s allegory gains political resonance, becoming a variation on the trope of the body politic, one in which the sovereign is compared to reason, who “ought the scepter weeld.”8 Spenser’s allegorical body is thus the nation as well as the household.9 Politically, the intemperate body, one which serves the desires of the flesh, resembles ideological constructions of feudal serfdom (and of Ireland), whereas the temperate body resembles ideological constructions of monarchy, linking, as Elias does, the shift towards greater self-government to the shift towards greater centralization of government. Obedience to the monarch by the members of the body politic is rewarded by peace, good-government, and bounty, but rebelliousness results in a life of “bondage” that is wretched, quite literally brutish, and most probably short.10

Although Schoenfeldt, Patterson, and others resist reading it as such, I suggest that Spenser’s allegory of the body is not only a version of the analogy between the body and the nation, but is here also more specifically a version of the Fable of the Belly.11 Making the

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8 For representations of Elizabeth as a castle, see chapter four of Susanne Scholz’s *Body Narratives*. She includes, for example, John Stubbes’s 1579 description of the queen as “the royall ship of our ayde, the hyghest tover, the strongest hold and castle in the land” (84). “The castle image,” Scholz writes, “combined with the architectural metaphors denoting the well-ordered bodily structure, imagines the national community as an orderly, fortified container resisting attempts at intrusion from outside” (90).

9 Hobbes refers to this tradition in *Leviathan*, writing that in the Leviathan, which is like an artificial man, “Sovereignty is an Artificiall Soul, as giving life and motion to the whole body” (Intro. 81).

10 In Spenser’s day, *villein* in its original meaning of a peasant bound to a feudal overlord was an “obsolete social category.” While Spenser often uses the term in its more recent sense, “he also refers explicitly to the archaic feudal institution in developing major concerns such as the social, political, and religious upheavals characterizing Elizabeth’s reign and the fear of rebellion (eg, in Ireland)” (Brown 716).

11 Of this stanza Schoenfeldt writes: “The ideal of self-governance here is articulated in the language of political governance, but this does not make the two projects synonymous. Although the body was frequently deployed to defend hierarchical privilege, as in Agrippa’s famous fable of the belly [...], the ideal of self-governance could compete with rather than extend political absolutism. I would argue, furthermore, that despite these obvious links between Spenser’s own experience as a colonial administrator in Ireland and the assault on Alma, the sense of order that emerges from Book 2 is not a discipline necessarily complicit with colonial suppression, but something very different: potentially even opposite: a discipline intended to inculcate the internal stability that makes possible the subject’s liberation from the passions that rage within all. It is not temperance but rather intemperance that Spenser portrays in terms of political violence and unjust subjugation: intemperance involves the physiological equivalent of the political violations of tyranny and usurpation [...].” (*Bodies* 69).
In Plato’s *Timaeus* “there are three faculties of the soul, each assigned to a specific part of the body— an assignation that survives into the seventeenth century. The rational element is located in the head, the spirited element in the heart, and the appetitive in the stomach. The neck, which separates the rational faculty from the rest, Plato compares to an isthmus isolating it from contamination” (Osmond 5). In Aristotle’s model, “Plato’s tripartite division of the soul is simplified to become a twofold division, the rational and the irrational soul, though the latter is itself further divided into the vegetative and sensitive faculties” (Osmond 7).

12 In Plato’s *Timaeus* “there are three faculties of the soul, each assigned to a specific part of the body— an assignation that survives into the seventeenth century. The rational element is located in the head, the spirited element in the heart, and the appetitive in the stomach. The neck, which separates the rational faculty from the rest, Plato compares to an isthmus isolating it from contamination” (Osmond 5). In Aristotle’s model, “Plato’s tripartite division of the soul is simplified to become a twofold division, the rational and the irrational soul, though the latter is itself further divided into the vegetative and sensitive faculties” (Osmond 7).

13 As noted in the previous chapter, Crooke is inconsistent in his gendering of the liver, for he also describes how the liver, “the fountaine of beneficiall humor, like a bountifull and liberall Prince at his proper charges, nourisheth the whole family of the bodie” (1.19.31).
other digestive organs of the belly by virtue of the meaning of her name and the description of her as provider of “bounteous banket[s].” Spenser’s allegory of the Castle of Alma is thus partly a description of “Sovereignty in her vegetable power.”

Much more than Shakespeare in Coriolanus, Spenser adapts the fable to early modern politics and economics, most obviously by substituting Queen Elizabeth for the Roman patricians as the equivalent of the body politic’s belly. When Elizabeth described herself in her 1588 speech to the troops at Tillbury as having “the stomach of a king,” one assumes she did so to emphasize her kingly (and manly) courage, and not her appetite. Monarchical appetite, which could take a variety of forms, was, however, a perennial subject of discussion and concern, one often articulated through digestive metaphors in the tradition of the Fable of the Belly. Comparing the monarch to the digestive organs could, using the logic of the fable and Galenic physiology, justify courtly consumption by transforming it into a crucial activity serving the interests of the commonwealth as a whole. Bishop Russell’s 1483 defense of high taxation provides an example. Russell writes:

[...] “What ys the bely or where ys the wombe of thys grete publick body of Englonde but that there where the kyng ys hym self, hys court and hys counselle? For there must be digested all maner metes, not onely servying to commoyn foode but alleso . . . some tyme to medicines, such as be appropried to remedye the excesses and surfettes committed at large.” (qtd. in Schoenfeldt, Bodies)

In his comparison of the royal court to the belly, Russell “develops the image in ways that directly invoke the political meanings that Agrippa squeezes from physiology” and in “a signal act of bad policy derived from good physiology,” he likewise “endows the most voracious consumers in his culture with a critical role in the sustenance of that culture” (Schoenfeldt, Bodies 29-30). Spenser’s representation of the queen as Alma, the “nourisher” of the body,

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14 Corporealization of the soul could include imagining it as having digestive capacity of its own. In Marlowe’s Massacre at Paris, for example, Guise says, “Fondly hast thou incensed the Guise’s soul that of itself was hot enough to work thy just digestion” (xviii.23-25).

15 In his medical treatise, The Historie of Man (1578), John Banister points to the perpetuation of similar political and economic ideology in medicine, writing that some call the ventricle, or stomach, “the kyng of the body” because of “the giftes” which it “ministreth unto the whole body” (I.71); the liver is “the prince of Abdomen” (I.75).
is similar to Russell’s representation of the king in that both underscore the fluid boundary between food and medicine in humoral doctrine and in doing so transform the monarch not only into the nation’s provider of nourishment but its physician as well, a role King James was also to emphasize.

Both Spenser and Russell imagine the monarchs treating, rather than being guilty of, “excesses and surfettes.” Alma’s “bounteous banket” is specifically “attempred goodly well for health and for delight” (my emphasis). Because each food was believed to affect humoral balance, the housewife “manipulated diet as part of medical care” (Wall 3), a practice alluded to here. The housewife was also traditionally responsible for preparing “physic” for the household. This practice is alluded to in Alma’s treatment of the wounds Arthur receives as a result of his battle with Maleger at the end of canto eleven: “And eke the fairest Alma met him there / With balme and wine and costly spicery / To comfort him in his infirmity / [...] / And all the while his wounds were dressing, by him stayd” (2.11.49.3-5,9).

The comparison between the monarch and the digestive organs could, however, be used to criticize monarchical consumption that exceeded reasonable limits. As early as the twelfth century, John of Salisbury compared the king’s tax-gatherers and treasurers to the stomach and other digestive organs, cautioning that “[i]f they eat too greedily and do not sufficiently digest (i.e. distribute), they generate diseases either incurable or difficult” (qtd. in Durling 71). During James I’s reign, Thomas Mun similarly warns: “A Prince . . . is like the stomach in the body, which if it cease to digest and distribute to the other members, it doth no sooner corrupt them, but it destroys itself” (qtd. in Healy 214). In this context, the discourse of temperance becomes politically very useful. Healy draws attention, for example, to an anxiousness in Jacobean masques “to create an image of James, and then of Charles, a the epitome of temperance” (193), an image James certainly worked hard to promote while nonetheless spending vast sums.16 Aligning Elizabeth with the belly in a specifically temperate body, Spenser draws upon both the tradition of the Fable of the Belly and the tradition

16 In Basilicon Doron, for example, he instructs his heir to “beware of usig exesse of meat and drinke; and chiefly beware of drunkenesse, which is a beastlie vice, namely in a King” (3.51). For more extensive study of James and excess, see Healy’s chapter, “The Glutted, Unvented Body,” in Fictions of Disease. Healy also discusses the role accusations of excess played in the execution of Charles I.
associating good leadership with moderation: in contrast to the “proude and ambitious Tyrant” who “doeth thinke his Kingdome and people are onely ordeigned for satisfaction of his desires and unreasonable appetites,” James insists that the “righteous and iust King” considers himself “ordeigned for the procuring of the wealth and prosperitie of his people” (“Speach” 143).

The discourse of temperance and the logic of the Fable of the Belly could be used to justify not only monarchical rule and consumption but also the accumulation of capital “by landlords and big tenant farmers who dispossessed impoverished aristocrats, by merchants who crushed artisanal guilds, and by merchants and adventurers who operated the lucrative slave trade, exploited or outright looted colonies, and practiced usury” (Duplessis 10). Temperance, rather than being “merely ethical” (Patterson 117), played an important role in the ideological myth-making at work in justifications of the “wealth and prosperitie” of certain of the monarch’s people. The “abstinence” theory proposed by those Marx calls “vulgar” economists attributed the accumulation of capital not to the dispossession of the peasants, crushing of the guilds, interest, colonialism, or slavery, but to moderation. Challenging this use of ethics to legitimate economic inequality, Marx writes:

‘The more society progresses, the more abstinence is demanded,’ namely from those whose business it is to appropriate the industry and the products of others. All the conditions necessary for the labour process are now converted into acts of abstinence on the part of the capitalist. If the corn is not all eaten, but in part also sown—abstinence of the capitalist. If the wine gets time to mature—abstinence of the capitalist. The capitalist robs himself whenever he ‘lends (!) the instruments of production to the worker’, in other words, whenever he valorizes their value as capital by incorporating labour-power into them instead of eating them up, steam-engines, cotton, railways, manure, horses and all; or, as the vulgar economist childishly conceives, instead of dissipating ‘their value’ in luxuries and other articles of consumption. How the capitalist class can perform the latter feat is a secret which vulgar economics has so far obstinately refused to divulge. (744-45)

Abstinence means something very similar here to what temperance meant in the early modern period. With what could almost be an allusion to Sir Guyon, Marx concludes this section of
his critique with a reference to “that peculiar saint, that knight of the woeful countenance, the ‘abstaining’ capitalist” (746).  

As Marx outlines, however, “[w]hen a certain stage of development [in the capitalist mode of production] has been reached, a conventional degree of prodigality, which is also an exhibition of wealth, and consequently a source of credit, becomes a business necessity to the ‘unfortunate’ capitalist. Luxury enters into capital’s expenses of representation” (741). Relatedly, in *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation*, Christopher J. Berry draws attention to “a fundamental fault-line” in European attitudes towards luxury, a fault-line that has been interpreted as “marking the transition from feudal to capitalist relations of production” (139). Berry traces how in classical critiques, “luxuria was almost invariably linked with its supposed ‘softness.’ This was the object of criticism because [...] such softness was indicative of effeminacy, the effect of which was to undermine the masculine qualities of *virtus*” (14). Discussing Aquinas, Berry adds that in the Christian context luxury also took on “the meaning of lechery in the sense of the sin of valuing bodily—chiefly sexual—enjoyments. By the time of Spenser, as Tuve points out, the meaning of luxury as an embodiment of concupiscence was ‘perfectly habitual’” (98). In contrast to these negative opinions about luxury, however, “when we read that sincere Christian Dr. Johnson’s remark in 1778 that ‘you cannot spend money in luxury without doing good to the poor,’ we cannot but be aware that a sea-change has occurred” (97).

Johnson’s statement regarding luxury goods demonstrates not only a change in attitudes towards luxury but also how the logic of the Fable of the Belly could be adapted to legitimate capitalist consumption. In the capitalist variation, consumption by the wealthy, whether of luxury goods or of the labour-power of wage-labourers, becomes crucial to all layers of society, contributing to the well-being of the poor, who make the goods and perform the labour in the first place but do not themselves consume the luxury goods. Expressing sentiments similar to those of Johnson, Sir James Steuart, an eighteenth-century political economist, defined luxury in a “political sense” as “a principle which produces employment and gives bread to those who supply the demands of the rich”; it is therefore something which

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17 I am grateful to Mary Nyquist for suggesting that Marx’s allusion is actually to Don Quixote.
produces “good effects”: aside from giving bread to the “industrious,” it also “encourages emulation, industry and agriculture” (qtd. in Berry 138-139). As Berry notes, Steuart distinguishes luxury from sensuality and excess, and once distinguished, “Steuart is able to defend luxury without committing himself to upholding excess (for which, he says, nobody has ever seriously been an apologist)” (138).

I wish to suggest that, despite appearances, Spenser is not so clearly on the opposite side of the “fault-line” in attitudes towards luxury from Johnson and Steuart but instead contributes to the “sea-change.” The dichotomy of temperance and excess allows Spenser, much like Steuart, to critique excessive consumption of luxury goods while simultaneously legitimating moderate consumption of them, and the Fable of the Belly tradition allows him to represent such consumption as important to the overall health of the body politic.

III

Spenser’s allegory of digestion is based upon Galenic physiology, as is Menenius’s belly fable in Coriolanus, but in adapting the Galenic model to his allegory and to Elizabethan society, Spenser makes ideologically important changes. Whereas Galen drew upon familiar socio-economics to explain the unfamiliar workings of the bodily interior, Spenser draws upon the by-then well-known Galenic model of digestion to familiarize and naturalize new socio-economics. In so doing, he anticipates some of the changes in medical interpretations of physiological functions traced in the previous chapter.

When Alma takes Arthur and Guyon on a tour of the interior of her castle, including the rooms corresponding to parts of the digestive tract, they travel along the esophagus, a “stately Hall,” where they see “many tables faire dispreed, / And ready dight with drapets festivall, / Against the viaundes should be ministred” (2.9.27.1-4). Here they meet Diet, the steward, who is “rype of age,” “in demeanure sober, and in counsell sage” (2.9.27.8-9). It was during the early modern period that “the English meanings of ‘diet’ are beginning to migrate from their original Greek meaning of ‘a daily mode of life,’ or ‘a regular way of living,’ to the more specific, food-related, contemporary connotations” (Schoenfeldt, Bodies 19). By imagining Diet as Alma’s steward, Spenser brings together food consumption and economics since economy as a concept could refer to household management, for which the steward of
wealthy households was particularly responsible. Diet is accompanied by Appetite, the marshall, a “iolly yeoman” who “did bestow / Both guestes and meate, when euer in they came, / And knew them how to order without blame, / As him the Steward bad” (2.9.28.2-6). *Marshall of the Hall* was the title originally given to the person in a royal or noble household responsible for arranging or supervising ceremonies, especially of guests at a banquet or other formal occasions, but *marshall* was also a title with disciplinary associations: marshalls were officials responsible for public order or officers of a court of law in charge of prisoners (*OED*). Spenser stresses the disciplinary aspect of the marshall’s role, and therefore the need to discipline appetite, by having Appetite obey the instructions of the “sober” and “sage” Diet and by having him carefully “order without blame” the foods that are consumed. This behaviour of Alma’s servants in the temperate body contrasts with the behaviour of “Gluttons,” who, Ambroise Paré claims, “cast downe with great greedinesse” meats “halfe chewed, hard and grosse” (3.14.104).

Alma then leads Arthur and Guyon into “the kitchen rowme,” which Schoenfeldt reads as “the stomach proper” (*Bodies* 58), but which I read as the belly more generally because Spenser represents not only the transformation of ingested food into chyle but also the production of blood:

It was a vaut ybuilt for great dispence,
With many rauunge reard along the wall;
And one great chimney, whose long tonnell thence,
The smoke forth threw. And in the midst of all
There placed was a caudron wide and tall,
Upon a mighty furnace, burning whot,
More whot, then Aetn’, or flaming Mongiball:
For day and night it brent, ne ceased not,
So long as any thing it in the caudron got.

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18 Marx writes: “In France, the régisseur, or steward, who collected the dues for the feudal lords during the earlier part of the Middle Ages, soon became an homme d’affaires, or man of business, who by means of extortion, cheating and so on swindled his way into the position of capitalist” (907).
But to delay the heat, least by mischaunce
It might breake out, and set the whole on fire,
There added was by goodly ordinaunce,
An huge great paire of bellowes, which did styre
Continually, and cooling breath inspyre,
About the Caudron many Cookes accoyld,
With hookes and ladles, as need did require;
The whiles the viandes in the vessell boyld
They did about their businesse sweat, and sorely toyld.

The maister Cooke was cald Concoction,
A carefull man, and full of comely guise:
The kitchen Clerke, that hight Digestion,
Did order all th’Achates in seemely wise,
And set them forth, as well he could deuise.
The rest had seuerall offices assind,
Some to remove the scum, as it did rise;
Others to beare the same away did mind;
And others it to vse according to his kind. (2.9.29-31)

Like Galen, Spenser understands digestion as a heat-based physiological process comparable to cooking. Spenser’s depiction of the stomach as “a caudron wide and tall” and the liver as “a mighty furnace, burning whot” (2.29.5-6) resembles Galen’s assertion in On the Natural Faculties that not only does the stomach contain “innate heat,” but the “adjacent viscer” are “like a lot of burning hearths around a great cauldron” (3.7.255). Spenser’s reference to Mount Etna, also called Mongiball, is an allusion to Galen’s rebuttal of Erasistratus (2.7.255). Although both Galen and Spenser imagine digestion as a labour-intensive activity, they differ in what they imagine the product of that labour to be. In On the Usefulness of the Parts, Galen compares the transformation of food into chyle in the stomach and then into blood in
the liver to the preparation and baking of wheat (into bread), and Shakespeare’s Menenius similarly makes reference to flour. Spenser, however, rather strikingly compares the making of blood in the liver to the making of “Achates”; yet the significance of Spenser’s word choice at this point in his allegory has not, to my knowledge, received any critical attention.\footnote{Beyond editorial glossing of the word.}

Perhaps one of the best examples of what \textit{achates} or \textit{cates} signified in the early modern English imagination appears in \textit{Part One} of Christopher Marlowe’s \textit{Tamburlaine}. In the banquet scene in act four, the stage directions indicate that a “second course of crowns” should be brought on stage. When the crowns appear, Tamburlaine says to his guests, “here are the cates you desire to finger, are they not?” Theridamas wisely responds that “none save kings must feed with these,” but in a highly symbolic gesture, Tamburlaine uses the edible crowns to “crown” as his “contributory kings” Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane. Cates like these are examples of the dishes of sweetmeats that were served during the uniquely early modern banquet: from between 1530 and 1700 the word \textit{feast} was used for large festive meals while \textit{banquet} was usually more specifically used to refer to courses of delicacies most often served at the end of the meal.\footnote{See Hunter 37 and C. Anne Wilson 10.} This part of the meal was also called the void (Hall 172). Banquets were highly elaborate affairs that “provided a unique opportunity for the display of culinary skills, artistic flourish, theatrical effect, and sheer wealth” and included “the most magnificent assemblies of dishes ever to have been presented on English tables” (Brears 60). The primary ingredient of sweetmeats was sugar, followed by almonds and exotic spices. These ingredients, when ground, could be used to make a clay-like marzipan paste with which intricate artistic creations like the crowns in Marlowe’s play could be made.

There is thus a world of socio-economic difference implied in Spenser’s comparison of blood to achates rather than to bread. In Spenser’s day, as in Galen’s, bread was a dietary staple, available to all strata of society, provided there was no grain shortage: “hunger for bread” motivates the uprising by the poor citizens in \textit{Coriolanus}. Bread-making, as noted in the previous chapter, was still very much tied to older economic systems: the Assize of Bread
regulated prices and bakers and millers continued to serve social functions. Achates are almost the exact opposite of bread and flour. Unlike viandes, which comes from the Latin vivere, “to live,” thus etymologically implying the subsistence living associated with dietary staples like bread, achates comes from the French acheter, “to purchase,” etymologically implying a very different economics of commerce and consumerism: achates are defined by the OED as “things bought; spec. provisions for a household bought rather than made” (“achate” n.2, def. 2), and as distinctly different from bread and ale, as “provisions that were not made in the house, by the baker or brewer, but had to be purchased as wanted” (“achate,” def. 2). Most frequently, they were, as in the example from Marlowe, “foreign viands, dainties, delicacies” (“acate,” def. 2), quintessential luxury goods rather than dietary staples. Further underlining Spenser’s deviation from his medical model, the sugar so central to the making of achates, was, Joseph Hall explains in The Discovery of A New World (1609), “a substance unknown of old (Galen knew it not)” (10).

As Natasha Korda has insightfully pointed out in her reading of Petruchio’s pun on Kate’s name in The Taming of the Shrew—“my super-dainty Kate, / For dainties are all Kates”—because they are things specifically purchased, achates (or cates) are “by definition exchange-values, commodities properly speaking—as opposed to use-values, or objects of home production” (277). In stark contrast to foods like bread, achates were, “above all, signifiers of social distinction or social differentiation” (280). Achates may thus be said “to

21 Richard Halpern argues that the “structural transformation of the aristocracy from a politico-military ruling class to a consuming one” (239) was accompanied by a change in aristocratic consumption itself:

Lavish consumption had, of course, always been a mark of aristocratic style, but its nature and structural position were changing. The older mode of consumption, based in the countryside, was strongly connected with the principle of hospitality; it thus helped to reinforce the economic and ideological structures of manorial production and hence of surplus extraction. It was, in the end, a kind of productive expenditure. The new mode was centered in London and thus divorced from any role in reproducing agrarian relations of production. (237)

Changes in aristocratic patterns of consumption ironically undermined the social primacy of the aristocracy. Drawing on the work of Lawrence Stone, Halpern explains that many noble families accrued heavy debts in their attempts to maintain social status, oppressing their tenants to raise money before eventually selling their patrimonies. One of the “strongest challenges to the traditional privileges of the aristocracy involved the appropriation of aristocratic consumption-signs by the gentry” (245). Originally only available to the aristocracy, the gentry, yeoman farmers, and expanding merchant class were increasingly able to afford such things as sugary achates. Richard Ligon’s seventeenth-century “facetious coinage ‘saccharocracy’ to signify sugar plantation society” (Sandiford 38) underscores the economic importance of colonial products like sugar
map the historical shift from domestic use-value production to production for the market" and, equally, the shift from consumption of home produce to consumption of commodities that is linked to emergent forms of capitalism (277). Achates also map the related shift from a domestic economy to an international one. The sweetmeats served at banquets could be imported whole from the continent, as were Naples biscuits and sugar-candies, for example, or individual ingredients could be purchased at the growing number of grocers’ shops and prepared at home (Wilson 10, 30). In both cases, these delicacies were directly tied to expanding trade routes in an increasingly global and commercial market and, especially in the case of the sugar used in their making, to European colonization of the New World.

The historical specificity of the word *achates* (and the related *acates* and *cates*) perfectly captures the transitional economics of the early modern period’s socio-economic transformation from a society based largely on the production and consumption of use-values to one based on commodity exchange. That the “manufactured commodity” was “an historically novel object” (Turner 530), one linked to international commerce, is reflected in the importation of the word *achates* into the English language. Spenser’s choice of spelling, *achates*, rather than the other possibilities, like *cates*, maintains a stronger connection with the meaning of “purchase” as well as a stronger element of foreignness in the word, a foreignness requiring digestion and assimilation as much as the products, economics, and ideology it represents. The process of digesting and assimilating commodities and economic ideology is mirrored in the digestion of *achates* into *cates*: in The Arte of English Poesie (1589), George Puttenham describes what he calls the “swallowing or eating vp of one letter by another” (3.11.135). That the words *achates*, *acates*, and *cates* became obsolete, or to the replacement of “the knights of the sword” by “the knights of industry.”

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22 Spenser’s choice of spelling additionally has an intertextual dimension. Achates, spelled the same but pronounced differently, is Achilles’s friend in Virgil’s *Aeneid* and was frequently used in the early modern period for a loyal friend more generally. Thus the incorporation of classical literary texts so central to the Renaissance humanist project is figuratively, but directly, tied here to the incorporation of luxury goods and carries with it its own cultural capital. I am grateful to Elizabeth Harvey for drawing my attention to this connection and to Mary Nyquist for pointing to other examples of *Achates* used to mean friend.

23 Linguists call the dropping of an unstressed vowel *aphesis*. The *OED* describes “cates” as an aphetized version of *achates*. Puttenham uses this ingestion imagery in his description of what happens when
completely swallowed up, indicates the extent to which purchased goods became fully incorporated into capitalist society, becoming the norm, while inversely, *home-made* goods became the ones requiring qualification.\(^{24}\) (The *OED* gives 1659 as its earliest example for the adjective *home-made*).

Spenser’s allegory both promotes and reflects this social digestion of commodities. By comparing the production of blood in the digestive process to the making and serving of achates, goods for exchange, Spenser no less than Edward Forset, in the passage commented on by Patterson, makes it part of the sovereign’s duty to “cherish in the subjects an appetite of acquiring of commodities; to graunt to them places of Mart and Market for the digesting of the same unto all parts of the Realme” (qtd. in Patterson 117). Forset’s remark stresses the need actively to develop a consumer culture: as Kim Hall writes of edible commodities, although “we are familiar with the search for new territories and precious substances that fueled colonial expansion, the more mundane byproducts of this trade—the exposure to new foodstuffs and the gradual incorporation of those foods into the European diet—is often accepted as a ‘natural’ occurrence rather than one which is often contested and must be prepared for ideologically” (170). By describing the “bounteous banket” at which the achates are served as “attempred” for “health and for delight,” Spenser links their consumption to bodily well-being, doing his part to naturalize commerce and foreign products. In his representation of the body Spenser differs not only from Galen but also from Plato, who in Book III of the *Republic*, “traces the rise of a simple, rural state, ‘the healthy state’ (*polis* . . . *ygies*). The addition of luxuries–sweetmeats, furniture, incense, and so on—produces a ‘fevered state’ (*phlegmainousan polis*)” (Hale, *Body Politic* 20). And he differs from those of his contemporaries who criticized luxury good consumption. Where Plato links luxuries to disease, Spenser links *moderate, tempered* consumption of luxury goods to health.\(^{25}\)

\(^{24}\) *Caterer*, though, is still in use.

\(^{25}\) Margaret Healy points out that especially during the crisis of the 1620s, economic troubles were linked to too much importation and not enough exportation (194) and insightfully proposes that “anxious calls for better self-government in the medical regimens of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries may

“two vowels meete” and “th’ones sound goeth into other” [sic] as in “t’attaine.”
Spenser’s depiction of Digestion, the kitchen clerk, emphasizes the commercial exchange implied in the word *achates*. Achates are not only “things purchased” but also therefore things for sale. Digestion, we are told, “Did order all th’Achates in seemely wise, / And set them forth, as well he could devise.” Digestion’s careful attention to display corresponds to the important element of display in the presentation of banqueting dishes—cookbooks provided instructions on how to do this properly—but it also resembles the careful attention to display in merchandizing: Digestion could be a shop clerk aiming to attract customers in an increasingly competitive market. Examining rhetorical strategies from an economic perspective, Patricia Parker has illustrated the link between the blazon and new economics related to the list and inventory, highlighting the shared techniques of “division,” “partition,” and “distribution” in rhetorical and merchandizing practices. It is worth noting that the techniques of merchandizing foregrounded by Parker also exactly fit the early modern understanding of what digestion meant. *Deuise* shares with *digest* the meanings “divide,” “distribute,” and “order.”

In addition to incorporating commodities into the bodily economy in his allegory of digestion, Spenser also legitimates commerce in his description of the Salvage Nation, who encounter Serena in Book Six. The salvages, he writes

```plaintext
did liue
Of stealth and spoile, and making nightly rode
Into their neighbours borders; ne did giue
Them selues to any trade, as for to driue
The painefull plough, or cattell for to breed,
Or by aduentrous marchandize to thriue;
But on the labours of poore men to feed,
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well have been prompted by anxieties about the economic body” (199). However, while “the commentators stressed that it was ‘unnecessary,’ ‘superfluous’ luxury items that increased the ‘waste and charge’ (gluttoning the body),” those like Thomas Mun “advocated, not abstinence, but temperance and moderation” (Healy 197).

26 See “Rhetorics of Property: Exploration, Inventory, Blazon” (especially page 150) in *Literary Fat Ladies*.

27 Spenser’s representations of merchants are not, however, uniformly positive.
And serue their owne necessities with others need. (6.8.35.2-9)

By claiming that the Salvage Nation does not engage in agriculture OR merchandizing, Spenser legitimates merchandizing by making it a “trade” as valid as agriculture, in a sense transforming commercial activity into a form of labour equivalent to driving the “painful plough.” Any sense that merchandizing or trafficking in commodities is dependent on the labour of others is obscured by Spenser here through his comparison of merchandizing to the manual labour of tilling the earth to produce food and because he explicitly contrasts it with the cannibalistic Salvage Nation. As in the proem to Book Two, where he describes how “through hardy enterprize, / Many great Regions are discouered, / Which to late age were neuer mentioned” including “th’Indian Peru” and the “fruitfullest Virginia” (2.3-6,9), Spenser conveniently overlooks the similarity between colonial ventures and the invasion of “neighbours borders” to “serue” one’s “owne necessities with others need” through “stealth and spoile.” In stark contrast to the savagery of this marauding nation, who not only “feed” on the “labours of poor men” but also “eate the flesh of men” themselves, Alma and her guests appear emblems of civility itself. Yet those partaking of Alma’s “bounteous banket” are no less guilty of feeding on the labours of others, nor is their banquet so completely different from the cannibalism of the salvages, who are especially looking forward to feasting on Serena’s “dainty flesh,” her “daintest morsels,” and her “daintie parts” (6.8.38.8; 39.4;43.1)—as Petruchio reminds us, “dainties are all cates.”

As I traced in the previous chapter, the shift in European society from the production for direct consumption characteristic of feudalism to the “circulation of commodities” that Marx claims is “the starting-point of capital” (247) was accompanied by a paradigm shift from the Galenic model of digestion—daily production of blood for direct consumption by the parts—to Harvey’s model of blood circulation and to conceptions of metabolism, the economic significance of which is foregrounded in Marx’s native German: Stoffwechsel (metabolism) literally translates as “exchange of stuff.” The details of Spenser’s allegory reveal how he is part of this double shift: in order to naturalize the conditions of emergent capitalist economics, he assimilates them into his figurative representation of digestion, thereby contributing to their internalization. In this context, it is worth noting that in the early modern
period banqueting cates were also categorized as “banqueting stuffe,” which comes directly from the German *Stoffe*.

Spenser’s decision to compare the blood produced during the process of digestion to achates has added economic and medical significance because of the connection between these “dainties” and the history of sugar. Of a later period in this history, Keith Sandiford points out that the “anonymous author of *The Present State of the British Sugar Colonies Consider’d* [1731], in a vigorous and reasoned admonition against excessive taxation on the trade, showed plainly that sugar produced mainly by slave labour in remote colonial locations provided work for ship-owners and their families, factors, shipbuilders, ropemakers, sailmakers, and other shipping trades—besides many thousands of poor artificers and manufacturers in Britain” (30). Another English author writing on Barbados claimed: “This little island is for our nation an abundant mine of gold: it has fed endless mouths, kept busy great fleets, employed extraordinary numbers of seafaring men, expanded considerably the national wealth of England” (qtd. in Sandiford 30). Between 1676 and 1756, the colony added 276 million pounds sterling to the national wealth (Sandiford 30). These examples illustrate the continued logic of the Fable of the Belly at work. Consumption of luxury goods like sugar is directly linked to the nourishment and employment of the poor and to an increase in the national, or common, wealth.

The amount of sugar shipped into London rose from only 28,2016 pounds in 1557 to over one million pounds in 1595 (Muldeq qtd. in Healy 198). “As Europeans developed a collective sweet tooth and a liking for rum, sugar consumption soared: British purchases rose an astounding 2,500 percent between 1650 and 1800” (Duplessis 199). According to Sidney Mintz, sugar was the first luxury good to become a staple necessity, “the first mass-produced exotic necessity of a proletarian working class” (46). After 1850 the biggest consumers were the poor whereas before 1750 they had been the rich: “This reversal marks the final transformation of sugar from a preciosity into a daily commodity and into one of the first

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28 Until the mid sixteenth century, refining of sugar was mainly done in the Low Countries but by 1544 England was refining its own sugar, and after 1585 London was an important refining centre for the European trade (Mintz, *Sweetness* 45). On average, by the 1650s each of the sugar refineries in London gave work to 6 members of a family and nine yearly working servants (Hugill 27).
consumables fulfilling the capitalistic view of the relation between labor productivity and consumption” (Mintz, *Sweetness* 148). In addition, the “caloric contribution” of sugar “rose from an estimated 2 percent of total intake at the start of the nineteenth century to a more probable 14 percent a century later” (134). “What had begun as a spice and a medicine was eventually transformed into a basic foodstuff, but a foodstuff of a special kind” (134); “a rarity in 1650, a luxury in 1750, sugar had been transformed into a virtual necessity by 1850” (148).\(^{29}\)

That Spenser replaces Galen’s flour-based bread with sugar-based achates as his allegorical equivalent for blood is particularly fitting because of the way in which sugar became the life-blood of Britain, crucially important to the expansion of the British Empire, and as much a “virtual necessity” of the individual diet as bread. I wish to suggest that it is perhaps no coincidence that as sugar became an economic and dietary necessity, the importance of sugars like glucose to proper physiological functioning was “discovered.” Sugar’s incorporation into the social body is mirrored by its incorporation into interpretations of the physical body through the coining of the term *liver-sugar* in the nineteenth century and then *blood-sugar* in the twentieth.\(^{30}\) Spenser’s highly prescient comparison between blood and sugary desserts thus reminds us of the powerful interdependence of economics and physiology.

IV

Because Alma, like England’s sovereign at the time, is female, Spenser’s representation of commodity consumption has an added gender dimension. There is a long tradition of associating women with the desire for luxury goods and thus with the transition

\(^{29}\) “Over the course of less than two centuries, a nation most of whose citizens formerly subsisted almost exclusively on foods produced within its borders had become a prodigious consumer of imported goods. Usually these foods were new to those who consumed them, supplanting more familiar items, or they were novelties, gradually transformed from exotic treats into ordinary, everyday consumables. As these changes took place, the foods acquired new meanings, but those meanings—what the foods meant to people, and what people signalled by consuming them—were associated with social differences of all sorts, including those of age, gender, class, and occupation. They were also related to the will and intent of the nation’s rulers, and to the economic, social, and political destiny of the nation itself” (Mintz, *Sweetness* 151).

\(^{30}\) The *OED* provides an 1853 example as its earliest for *liver sugar* (or glycogen) and a 1927 example for *blood-sugar*. 
to capitalism. In his study of luxury, Berry provides several examples:

Rybczynski lays considerable emphasis on what he calls “the feminization of the home,” by which he means that the initiative and drive to comfort was led by women. He is not alone in making this link. Thornton had linked the “invention” of comfort to the influence of women, Mme de Rambouillet in particular, and the general connection between luxury goods, physical ease or sensuousness and women was also made by Werner Sombart (1913). In his explanation he stresses—indeed he calls it his *Grundgedanke*—the role played in the development of capitalism by the accumulation of wealth derived from trade in luxury goods, where the stimulus for this trade emanated from princely courts at the behest, most especially, of courtesans or mistresses. (14)

In early modern debates about the transition from a domestic to an international economy, those who encouraged self-sufficiency argued against the importation of sugar, for example, in favour of the production of honey, dismissing those who preferred sugar as “decadent, effeminate, and un-English: ‘queint and Ladilike palats (whom nothing but that which is farre faught [sought] and deare bought can please’)” (Raylor 101). Spenser may also be alluding in his allegory to Queen Elizabeth’s personal fondness for sugar: “Paul Hentzner’s famous remark about Queen Elizabeth’s blackened teeth, ‘a defect the English seem subject to, from their too great use of sugar,’ indicates the popularity of sugar at court at least, whereas the lower classes must have used a predominance of other sweeteners, such as honey” (Meads 12).

In her study of the gendering of sugar, Kim Hall importantly traces the role of early modern women in facilitating the incorporation of foreign products into the domestic diet. She proposes that the women’s “‘familiar acquaintance’ is the very thing necessary to remove the threat of strangeness: as substances pass through the English home and are transformed from raw material to ‘food,’ they lose their foreign taint” (182). Hall demonstrates the increasing presence of sugar as well as exotic spices in recipes aimed at a female readership and draws attention to the ways in which English women were thus indirectly involved in the exploitation

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31 Raylor points out that there was a debate over the status of sugar on moral grounds, which was shared by Dutch Calvinist divines (123, fn. 58).
of slave labour in the West Indies. I suggest that in her role as hostess and lady of the castle, Spenser’s Alma is illustrative of this gendered process of the familiarization of the foreign, a process resembling the assimilation of the foreign that occurs in digestion. Spenser’s House of Temperance is both the domestic space of the home presided over by a female mistress and also the body politic in its interaction with what is external to it. The conflation of the digestive organs with the kitchen points to the centrality of English kitchens in assimilating foreign and luxury goods.

Spenser’s allegory thus uses gender as well as the body to naturalize the consumption of commodities and points to the role of women in the larger colonial project. Spenser’s depiction of Alma also, though, reflects changes in the role of the housewife resulting from the transition towards a capitalist economy. In her study of The Taming of the Shrew, Korda examines what scholars have pointed to as “a crucial change in the cultural valuation of housework” during the early modern period that is historically linked, as housework theory reminds us, to the rise of capitalism and the development of the commodity form (279). Drawing on Veblen, Baudrillard, and Bourdieu, she argues that with the rise of consumer culture, housekeeping becomes much more about the manipulation of the symbolic order of things than of keeping objects ready for use (281) and emphasizes that the transition from producer of goods for a husband’s consumption to consumer of goods is no less a form of female drudgery; it is a form of “subsidized (and culturally conspicuous) nonproductivity itself,” an obligatory “performance of leisure” (280). This makes the housewife a status object deriving value precisely because she is “useless and expensive” (281). While Korda concentrates on the shift from the housewife as producer to the housewife as consumer, Hall makes a similar point in relation to class distinction in female domestic labour: “While the ‘plain country’ housewife spends her time on household work, the higher-class woman is marked by her removal from such labor. Her skill at making void [banqueting] foods is distanced from the energy needed for their production ... because it is now raised to the status of a leisured art and is made evidence of her hospitality” (Hall 176). Reflecting this removal of the higher-class woman from labour, although she is never depicted actually engaged in the production of either banqueting cates or medical recipes, Alma is represented as largely
responsible for hospitality and healing. When a gender for her servants is given, it is always masculine, and they are the ones who are directly engaged in the labour necessary for the body’s health and survival, although, according to Hall, even in “households where male stewards were responsible for the main meal, aristocratic women created the devices that composed the void” (175). Even Spenser’s choice of *dight* in his description of Alma’s banquet is ambiguous; although the *OED* gives this line from Spenser as one of its quotations under the definition meaning “to prepare, make ready (food, a meal),” *dight* could also mean “to dictate, appoint, order” or “to put in order, array, dress, direct, prepare, make ready or proper.” In one case Alma would be directly involved in the banquet’s preparation, whereas in the other, she would be responsible for arranging for a banquet to be prepared, just as when providing medical aid to Arthur she arranges for his treatment by her servants rather than directly administering it herself.

The word *banket* appears only twice in Book Two of *The Faerie Queene*, and it is highly significant that these appearances occur in relation to the feminized dichotomy of temperance and luxury. Its first appearance is the “bounteous banket” provided by Alma as a reward for moderate living and political obedience; it appears later in the form of the “banket houses” in Acrasia’s Bower of Bliss, which are destroyed by Guyon in fulfilment of his quest. I suggest that the destruction of the Bower of Bliss allows Spenser to critique excess consumption of luxury goods while the example of Alma’s castle allows him simultaneously to promote the moderate consumption of goods like achates. Additionally, by aligning appropriate and inappropriate consumption with the mistress of the home on the one hand and the lascivious woman on the other, Spenser not only genders commodity consumption but also uses this alignment to construct models of appropriate and inappropriate female behaviour within changing social conditions.\(^\text{32}\)

\(^{32}\) Of the eighteenth century, Erin Mackie argues that because men were not “completely at ease with new commercial and economic conditions,” they “demonize the sources of their anxieties as threateningly feminine and both symbolically and literally sequester them out of harm’s way. Both the need to banish, or at least stabilize, the ‘bad’ feminine forces at work in the world and the need for a private, domestic sphere immune from the perils of that world vitalized by ‘good’ feminine forces bear witness to anxieties about control and dominance.” In addition, she suggests, that the “management of troubling feminine forces is part of an attempt to conceive both of a rational capitalist market and a natural domestic sphere and participates in a masculine fantasy of complete triumph over feminine forces of disorder” (119).
By describing the “bounteous banquete” provided by Alma to her guests as “attempted goodly well for health and for delight,” Spenser highlights the original medicinal and digestive aspect of the key ingredients—sugar and spices—in banqueting dishes. As C. Anne Wilson explains, the “original reason for serving the spices, either in their natural state or sugar-coated, together with the spiced wine at that stage of the meal was, of course, medicinal. The spices chosen were those believed to be warming to the stomach and, therefore, helpful for the digestion of the food consumed at the meal” (11). In contrast to the association between banqueting stuff and medicinal digestives, though, there was a very different connection between sweetmeats and aphrodisiacs. Various ingredients used to make banqueting dishes were thought to inspire lust, provoke “sluggish husbands,” “stir up Venus,” and promote fertility (Stead 147-151). In addition, banqueting houses, like those destroyed by Guyon, had their critics on moral grounds: “it was the removed nature of the garden house which gave it its dubious reputation, quite apart from the occasion of the banquet itself when the supposed aphrodisiac nature of many of the sweetmeats, distilled waters, and wines might lead to amorous adventures” (Stead 133). In *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), Phillip Stubbes writes:

> In the Feeldes and Suburbes of the Cities thei have Gardens, either pailed, or walled around about very high, with their Harbers and Bowers fit for the purpose. And least thei might be espied in these open places, thei have their Banquetting Houses with Galleries, Turrettes, and what not els therein sumptuously erected; wherein thei maie (and doubtlesse doe) Many of them plaie the filthie persons ... truly I think some of these places are little better then the Stewes and Brothell Houses were in tymes past.”
>
> (qtd. in Stead 133)

Stubbes’s Puritan view is in line with the lengthy tradition associating luxury with lechery and corresponds closely to Spenser’s depiction of the Bower of Bliss and Guyon’s reaction to it.  

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33 Cinnamon, frankincense, and saffron, for example, were thought to keep the body from corruption and putrefaction: “two favorite banqueting stuffs—and the cooking innovations of the time—were ‘conserves’ and ‘preserves’” (Fumerton 134, original emphasis).

34 There were even sugar sculptures that made this sexual aspect of banqueting dishes explicit. Writing in 1791 of the loose behaviour of the sixteenth century, Rev. Richard Warner describes a culinary equivalent to the fashion of wearing an “indecent appendage” or codpiece of “enormous magnitude”:

> The table also exhibited strong proofs of this grossness of manners, which ... pervaded the greater part
Jennifer Stead’s allusion to Acrasia’s bower in the title of her study of the architecture of banqueting houses, “Bowers of Bliss: The Banquet Setting,” firmly situates Spenser’s highly visual literary creation in the context of banqueting practices, particularly the frequent locating of banqueting houses in estate gardens in order to appeal to the sense of sight as much as the sense of taste. Stead argues that not only are there banquet houses in the Bower of Bliss, but the bower itself in many ways resembles the artistic creations served at banqueting voids. In addition to the fairly simple edible crowns that appear in Tamburlaine, much more elaborate dishes were also designed, including, for example, a sugar sculpture of a stag that would bleed claret when an arrow was removed from its flank, and “personages most lyvely made & conterfeit in dysshes / some fighting (as it ware) wt swordes / some wt Gonnes and Crossbowes” (qtd. in Mintz, Sweetness 243, fn. 46). In his popular cook book, Hugh Platt explains how to make life-like sugar works, how

To make both marchpane paste, and sugred plate,
And cast the same in formes of sweetest grace
Each bird and foule, so moulded from the life,
And after cast in sweet compounds of Arte,
As if the flesh and forme which Nature gave,
Did still remaie in every lim and part. (qtd. in Brears 67)

The Bower of Bliss likewise aims to imitate nature through art, and words like “sweet” and “dainty” appear repeatedly in Spenser’s description of it. The damsels splashing in the fountain display their “dainty parts” (2.12.64.9) and their “lilly paps” (2.12.68.6). (“Spanish paps” was the name of a banqueting dish [Brears 76]). Even Acrasia is like the exotic commodities served

of Europe. Hence arose an extraordinary species of ornament, in use both among the English and French, for a considerable time; representations of the membra virilia, pudendaque muliebria, which were formed of pastry, or sugar, and placed before the guests at entertainments, doubtless for the purpose of causing jokes and conversation among them: as we at present use the little devices of paste, containing motos within them, to the same end. (qtd. in Stead 152)

Stead writes that “the nature of the banquet was not to satisfy the stomach, but to delight the eye. The banquet and banqueting house were designed to titillate and refresh, among birdsong, plashing water, fragrant flowers, and summer air, occasionally even in moonlight” (120). Some banqueting houses were made “wholly of green and living stuff”; Queen Elizabeth had one erected for the visiting embassy of France in 1560 (126).
at banquets. Like them, she lures lovers from “farre” with a “snowy breast” bared for “readie spoyle / Of hungry eies.” After “sweet toyle,” Acrasia perspires rather than sweats, and what she perspires are drops “more cleare then Nectar” that are “like pure Orient perles” (2.12.79.1-6). The bower is

A place pickt out by choice of best aliue,
That natures worke by art can imitate:
In which what euer in this worldly state
Is sweet, and pleasing vnto living sense,
Or that may dayntiest fantazie aggregare,
Was poured forth with plentifull dispence,
And made there to abound with lauish affluence. (2.12.42.3-9)

That these dainties and delicacies are “poured forth” gives a sense of liberal hospitality but also a feeling of edibility. Furthermore, the walls of the bower are depicted as “wrought of substaunce light, / Rather for pleasure, then for battery of fight” (2.12.43.8-9) and as framed of “precious yuory / That seemd a worke of admirable wit; / And therein all the famous history / Of Iason and Medæa was ywrit” (2.12.44.1-4). This “snowy substaunce sprent / With vermell” and “with gold besprinkeled,” while described as ivory, might also be read, I suggest, as an example of the banqueting creations made of marzipan or other sugar-paste, the colour of which resembled ivory; these edible creations frequently included poetic verse and dyes that could imitate vermell and often had gold leaf pressed into them.36

After capturing Acrasia, Guyon undertakes to destroy the copious luxury goods in the Bower of Bliss so at odds with Temperance:

But all those pleasant bowres and Pallace braue,

Guyon broke downe, with rigour pittilesse;
Ne ought their goodly workmanship might saue
Them from the tempest of his wrathfulnesse,
But that their blisse he turn’d to balefulnesse:

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36 Peter Brears includes descriptions of the technique of gilding from early modern recipe books in “Rare Conceites and Strange Delightes.” See, for example, page 65.
Their groues he feld, their gardins did deface,
Their arbers spoyle, their Cabinets suppresse,
Their banket houses burne, their buildings race,
And of the fairest late, now made the fowlest place. (2.12.83)

Yet in destroying the Bower of Bliss, including its “cabinets” and “banket houses” (cabinets were associated with luxury goods, including the sugar and spice that were so valuable they were kept locked up), Guyon’s behaviour is ironically reminiscent of behaviour at banqueting voids where, in Hall’s words, “the object was not to eat, but to destroy the table.” For example, the banquet held after one of Ben Jonson’s masques was described by a witness as “so furiously assaulted that down went tables and trestles before one bit was touched” (qtd. in Hall 174). According to Patricia Fumerton, it was common practice at banquets not simply to consume but to “break” and “spoyle” confectionary … Thomas Dawson, giving the popular recipe for a sugar paste to make “al manner of fruits, and other fine things” (including plateware), added the equally popular conclusion: “At the ende of the Banket they [the guests] may eat all, and breake the Platters, Dishes, Glasses, Cuppes, and all other things, for this paste is very delicate and sauerous.” The breaking of banqueting stuffs was done with zest, even violence. Looking back nostalgically at this phenomenon in The Accomplisht Cook (1660), Robert May offered a sweet imitation. He proposed an elaborate sugar display figuring a mock-battle in which a castle fired artillery at a man-of-war. The sweet battle then ended with a perfumed “war,” the ladies pelting each other with eggshells full of scented water. Actually living in May’s earlier “sugar-coated” age, John Taylor, the Water Poet, was even more militant in his enjoyment of sweets. Keenly, if satirically, he recounted the rude violence of banqueting “wars.” In The praise of Hemp-seed (1630), he pictured “feasting fights” that riotously “spoyld” the many fancifull “Dainties” at banquets (here made by professional comfit makers)[.](132, original italics)

In his reading of the finale of Book Two, Schoenfeldt takes issue with Stephen Greenblatt’s account in Renaissance Self-Fashioning of Guyon’s destruction of the Bower
of Bliss “as an act of colonial violence” because it “leaves little room for the positive aspects of self-regulation Spenser here endorses” (Bodies 70). These interpretations are not mutually exclusive since powerful connections exist between violence and self-discipline, some of which I explore in the following chapter. What I want to highlight here, however, is how the destructive acts common at banquets, which Guyon’s behaviour resembles, are not only examples of conspicuous consumption but also in a sense acts revealing or dramatizing—in a convoluted way—the violence concealed in the commodity form itself. Sugar “wars” and “battles” present what is a disturbing mockery, or perhaps mimicry, of the violent means required to maintain the conditions necessary for the acquisition of the sugar in the first place: the early history of sugar in Europe is tied to the crusades, while its later history is bound up with colonial conquest and exploitation, indentured servitude and the slave trade. While in a sense working to sugarcoat this history of violence and to distance consumers from direct involvement in it, enacting “feasting fights” and “sweet battles” nonetheless underlines their indirect (or direct) complicity in it.

V

In his allegory of the body, Spenser depicts not only the consumption and digestion of achates but also their production. While achates are commodities, in Spenser’s poem they are not fetishized commodities from which labour relations have been removed. These labour relations, though, while not concealed, are, like the achates themselves, familiarized and naturalized. Spenser’s representation of digestion in the kitchen of Alma thus reflects and legitimates some of the changes in modes of production associated with the transition from feudalism to capitalism. For example, in contrast to sugar, honey was “a local item, unimportant in trade, its production individual and unorganized, appropriate to an era when foods traveled short distances only, and one-person technology sufficed for most productive tasks.” Sugar, however, had been “an item of overseas production since its introduction into Europe, important in trade, its production highly organized and disciplined, appropriate to an era when mass-produced and mass-consumed foods had begun to travel vast distances, and gang production—for very long almost exclusively by enslaved labor—fitted the available technology” (Mintz, “Conquest” 15).
In “On the Renaissance Epic: Spenser and Slavery,” Maureen Quilligan underlines how the increasing practice of wage labour, “the slow and certain creation of a class of workers who, in being (violently) denied their former access to the means of production, ended with only their labor to sell in the metropolitan center [...] needs to be contextualized by New World labor experiences” (18). Quilligan then analyzes Spenser’s meditation on “the problem of slave and wage labor” (16) in the “strangely parallel scenes” (15) of Guyon’s encounter with Mammon in Book Two and Britomart’s slaying of Radigund in Book Five in the context of the Renaissance “renascence of slavery in the economics of many western European powers” (15); and, drawing on Fredric Jameson’s understanding of genre, she suggests that *The Faerie Queene* “may be aiming to do the work that *epic* poems usually do, to wit, mediating the contradictions (i.e., the internally irrational elements) of a slave economy, particularly as slavery was just becoming an element in the overseas economy of Renaissance England’s growing imperial interests” (15). Quilligan does not, however, consider Spenser’s representation of labour in the kitchen of Alma, which closely parallels his representation of labour in the earlier Mammon episode. Reading the kitchen of Alma scene in light of the Mammon scene provides additional insight into its economic implications.

When Mammon takes Guyon, unaccompanied by the Palmer, to witness how gold is processed, the knight sees a room in which

an hundred raunget were pight,
And hundred fornaces all burning bright;
By euery fornace many feends did bide,
Deformed creatures, horrible in sight,
And euery feend his busie paines applide,
To melt the golden metall, ready to be tride.

One with great bellowes gathered filling aire,
And with forst wind the fewell did inflame;
Another did the dying brongs repaire
With yron toungs, and sprinckled oft the same
With liquid waves, fiers Vulcans rage to tame,
Who mastring them, renewd his former heat;
Some scumd the drosse, that from the metall came;
Some stird the molten owre with ladles great;

And every one did swincke, and every one did sweat. (2.7.35.4-9; 36. 1-9)

Importantly calling attention to the similarity between the two scenes, Michael Schoenfeldt writes that “Spenser identifies a striking if unoriginal resemblance between the cooking that constitutes digestion and the purifying of metal from ore.” In contrast to Milton, who “uses the alchemical transformation of metal to explain the corporeal transubstantiation that is digestion,” Spenser, Schoenfeldt argues, “intends to emphasize the contrast: where one produces inert riches, the other sustains life. Where the one is an unnatural temptation away from the flesh, making Guyon forget to eat and sleep, the other is the central activity of healthy flesh” (Bodies 59). Spenser’s comparison of the “central activity of healthy flesh” to the making of commodities, albeit edible ones, minimizes, however, the starkness of such a contrast, placing emphasis instead on the contrast between the hoarding of money and the distribution of goods, between unhealthy and healthy digestion, between a consuming belly and a nourishing one. The contrast also has nationalist overtones. While gold and silver were central to the early modern economies of Spain and Portugal—and had profoundly affected the economies of Europe as a whole—commodities were of greater importance to northern countries like England (Mintz, Sweetness 35-36).

In the early modern period, concoct was used not only for digestion but also for the process of bringing metals and minerals “to their perfect or mature state by heat” (def. 2). The frequent metaphorical comparison between money and blood thus gains resonance because blood was the product of concoction in the belly. Both processes of concoction, as Spenser represents them, involve heat, furnaces, bellows, ladles, boiling or melting, and removal of scum or dross. They are also labour-intensive operations, requiring many workers who “sweat” and either “toil” or “swincke”: that Spenser uses “toyld” to describe the activity of the nameless cooks working about the cauldron in Alma’s kitchen is particularly appropriate because in addition to meaning “labour arduously,” toil also had a specialized meaning in
cookery of “to stir, mix by stirring” (def. 7). In Spenser’s allegory of the body, the product of the labour of the body’s digestive organs is specifically achates, and the similarity between the production of achates and the production of riches underscores that the point to making commodities is to make money in the form of profit. Those who make commodities are, of course, not the ones making a profit. Furthermore, just as Galen’s depiction of the making of blood from ingested food in *On the Usefulness of the Parts* resembles the preparation and baking of bread, so Spenser’s depiction of the making of blood, which he compares to sugary achates, resembles the making of sugar, a process involving several stages, an important one of which was boiling. Like bread, sugar was also baked into “loaves.”

Quilligan suggests that although “Mammon’s cave is clearly a classical-cum-Dantean infernal region” (19), nonetheless, “[i]n looking so like the picture of New World conquest—naked workers surveyed by armed knights—this vision presents New World wealth as it really was, without the erasure of its base in forced labor” (22-23). She argues that Spenser and his contemporary readers may well have been influenced by verbal descriptions of New World mining practices and includes Theodor de Bry’s illustrations of goldsmithing and gold mining, published in 1596, as examples of how readers might have imagined the labour involved in these processes. In addition, Quilligan includes de Bry’s illustration of sugar refining, which also reveals sugar’s base in forced labour, unconsciously highlighting the parallelism between Spenser’s Mammon and Alma episodes.

There is a classical influence on Spenser’s depiction of the work being performed in both the Mammon episode and the Alma episode. In the Mammon episode, Spenser makes explicit reference to Vulcan, the Roman god of the fire and of metal-working, in describing how the heat of “fiers Vulcans rage” needs to be tamed with water. In the Alma scene, Spenser’s reference to the heat of Etna and Mongiball is related not only to Galen’s gibe at Erasistratus but also to Vulcan since Etna, or Mongiball, was traditionally considered one of the locations of his forge. Galen had also implicitly transformed the liver into not only a “public bakery” but also the workshop of Hephaestus, the Greek equivalent of Vulcan, by comparing the work done by the mesentery veins in carrying the chyle to the liver to the work done by Hephaestus’s automata, his self-moving golden handmaidens and his bellows. But
whereas Galen relies on Homer’s description of Hephaestus’s workshop in the *Iliad*, Spenser is more heavily indebted to Virgil’s version in the *Aeneid*.

Homer’s version, as I outlined in the previous chapter, is characteristic of handicraft production, but Virgil’s version is more characteristic of manufacturing. Virgil’s Vulcan does not make Achilles’s shield himself, with the assistance of animated tools, but instructs his workers, the “Cyclopes of Aetna,” to make it, becoming an overseer rather than a craftsman. In the middle of the night, Vulcan goes to his belly-like smithy on Vulcania, where “subterranean vaults / Thunder in its bowels,” and tells Brontes, Steropes, and Pyracmon to stop what they are working on:

> Turn your minds now to arms for a hero. I want
> Strength, fast hands, master craftsmanship—
> And no delays!”

That was all they needed to hear.

They divided the work equally and bent down to it.

Bronze and gold flowed in streams of hot metal,

And Chalyb iron, the raw material

For so many wounds, was melted down in the furnace.

[. . .]

Some worked the bellows,

Others tempered the hissing bronze in the lake.

The cave groaned with the thud of anvils.

The Cyclopes’ great hammers rose and fell

In cadence, and they turned the metal with tongs. (500-506; 509-513)

Division of labour is a central characteristic of manufacturing. Where Hephaestus’s automata assist him with his work in Homer’s version, in Virgil’s version, the methodical rhythm of the hammers of the Cyclopes in a sense transforms them into a massive machine, and it is hardly surprising that Marx over and over employs the adjective “Cyclopean” when describing the machines of industrial production. (Fittingly, the cover illustration of the Penguin Classics
1990 reprint edition of Volume One of *Capital* is a detail from the 1875 painting called *The Forge [A Modern Cyclops]* by Adolph von Menzel.

According to Sidney Mintz, sugar plantations in the New World were “an integral part of the growth from shop to factory” (*Sweetness* 48), “an unusual combination of agricultural and industrial forms” that he believes were “probably the closest thing to industry that was typical of the seventeenth century” (48): “The specialization by skill and jobs, and the division of labor by age, gender, and condition into crews, shifts, and ‘gangs,’ together with the stress upon punctuality and discipline, are features associated more with industry than with agriculture—at least in the sixteenth century” (47). Other ways in which the plantations were industrial included the separation of production from consumption and the separation of the worker from his tools (52). Although sugar cane cultivation and sugar production moved progressively westward, and eventually to the New World, Sicily, where Etna is located, was an important site for sugar production before being supplanted by this westward movement. A contemporary wrote of the sugar-making factory near Palermo that going into it was like “entering the Forge of Vulcan; ‘the men who worked there being blackened by the smoke from the fires, dirty, sweaty, and scorched, more like demons than men’”(Hugill 16). Sugar production therefore closely resembled the work being done in Mammon’s cave, which Spenser demonizes, contrasting it with a domesticated version of very similar labour in the Castle of Alma.

VI

In conclusion, I wish to suggest that Spenser not only depicts the concoction and digestion of commodities in his allegory of the body, but he also in a sense concocts his own commodity for his readers’ digestion. In his letter to Raleigh, Spenser describes his poem as a “continued Allegory” or “darke conceit,” and while we are familiar with the literary conceit, we are less familiar with its early modern culinary equivalent. Because of their artistic and imitative nature, in the early modern period cates were frequently called banqueting “conceits,” what Sidney Mintz calls “allegories at table.” The literary conceit, I argue, bears a resemblance to its more material form—in some cases, the literary and the banqueting conceit overlapped as when verses were printed or painted on banqueting dishes made of sugar or marzipan—and
is similarly linked to shifting economic relations. Just as culinary conceits were either composed of ingredients from foreign lands or were themselves imported whole from elsewhere, so were literary conceits considered in this context of expanded geographical trade. George Puttenham, for instance, describes figurative language generally, and certain figures specifically, in commercial terms. Figurative language, which includes the “secret conceit,” is a “noueltie of language” (3.10.132). Some figures work by “surplusage” (3.14.142), “exchange” (3.15.142), or “transport” (3.16.148), all terms that are important in the changing economic dynamics of the early modern period. Puttenham describes his own coined terms as “nouelties,” reminding potential critics that “all old things soone waxe stale & loathsome, and the new deuices are euer dainty and delicate” (3.10.133). He Anglicizes metalepsis as “the farfet” because it is used “when we would rather fetch a word a great way off then to vse one nerer ha[n]d to expresse the matter aswel & plainer,” adding that “it seemeth the deuiser of this figure, had a desire to please women rather than men: for we vse to say by manner of Prouerbe: things farrefet and deare bought are good for Ladies” (3.17.152). By gendering the trope, Puttenham effeminizes it while simultaneously perpetuating the notion that foreign trade is driven by female, rather than male, desires. Meanwhile, however, in Alma’s turret, the manly Arthur and Guyon are “[b]eguild” with “delight of nouelties” when reading in the library (2.10.77.1).37 Admirers praised the exotic element of literary conceits—John Cleveland’s conceits were described, for example, by Edward Phillips as “out of the common road, and wittily far-fetched” (qtd. in Rangnes)—while critics denigrated it by highlighting its

37 Spenser’s allegory additionally resembles the commodity form in its doubleness. As Korda expresses it, when commodities enter into the process of exchange they are split into “the two-fold form of use-value and value proper” in a way that “transforms mere stuff into values, or cates” (Korda 288). As Marx articulates it in Capital, use-values are “the physical body of the commodity itself,” “the material bearers of ... exchange value” (126). Exchange-value, on the other hand, “cannot be anything other than the mode of expression, the ‘form of appearance,’ of a content distinguishable from it” (127). In exchange, “the first commodity plays an active role, the second a passive one” (139). This double value of the commodity-proper is reflected in the very structure of a conceit, which is split into its literal and figurative components. I suggest that economics can be fruitfully applied to Gordon Teskey’s analysis of gender and violence at the rift between matter and form in allegory. Teskey reads the literal and figurative components of allegory in the context of Platonic and Aristotelian theories of matter and form, philosophical concepts understood and gendered through analogy with biology in Aristotle’s De generatione animalium: “the male provides the ‘form’ [eidos] and the ‘principle of movement’[ten archen tes kineseos], the female provides the body [soma], in other words, the material [hylēn]” (qtd. in Teskey 297, his Latin). On Aristotelian aspects of Marx’s theory of the commodity, see also Henry Turner’s “Nashe’s Red Herring: Epistemologies of the Commodity in Lenten Stuffe.”
foreignness, a tradition which continues in modern-day definitions of the conceit that apply the adjective *outlandish*, or foreign and excessive, to the device.  

Spenser is thus concocting and elaborating (in our more modern senses) his own commodity through which to make nascent capitalist socio-economics “palatable.” In this, he resembles Shakespeare’s Menenius, who tells the citizens his “pretty tale” because it “serves” his purpose, and although they may have already heard it, he “venture[s]” to “stale’t a little more” (1.1.90-92), encouraging them to “disgest things rightly” (1.1.150). Interestingly, the *OED* suggests that *fable* may have occasionally been used to mean a “trifle” or “toy,” and includes a sixteenth-century example of someone described as a “seller” of “fables, haberdash wares, or trifles” (def. 5). Although Menenius uses “tale” instead of “fable,” “venture” has strong commercial signification and “stale” implies that what he is selling is edible, like Spenser’s achates. It is also worth noting Spenser’s concern, raised in the proem to Book Two, that his poem will be judged “th’aboundance of an *idle* brain” (my emphasis). Perhaps this is why there is so much activity in his allegorical brain, the turrets of Alma’s castle, where the male figures of Imagination, Judgement, and Memory are found. Phantastes, for example, “neuer idle was, ne once could rest a whit” (2.9.49.9), while Eumnestes is “[t]ossing and

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38 With the increasing availability of exotic goods, more and more people were able to afford them and so they became common. This may explain why there is an increasing emphasis on “taste” and discrimination in relation to the literary conceit. In “An Essay on Criticism,” for example, Alexander Pope writes:

Thus critics, of less judgement than caprice,
Curious not knowing, not exact but nice,
Form short ideas; and offend in arts
(As most in manners) by a love to parts.
Some to conceit alone their taste confine,
And glittering thoughts struck out at every line;
Pleased with a work where nothing’s just or fit;
One glaring chaos and a wild heap of wit. (285-292, original emphasis)

In his famous criticism of the metaphysical conceit, Samuel Johnson includes a particular reference to the reader as consumer in a more commercial world: “The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions; their learning instructs, and their subtlety surprises; but the reader commonly thinks his improvement dearly bought, and though he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased” (20). Perhaps this is because the readership is imagined as masculine and therefore might be thought to be less interested in far-fetched things, those commodities so frequently, and conveniently, attributed to female appetite and consumerism. The male reader/consumer by contrast is careful when considering cost and value. (I am grateful to Rebecca Tierney-Hynes for drawing my attention to the passage in Pope).
turning them [books and scrolls] withouten end” (2.9.58.2), and Arthur and Guyon “wonder” at his “endlesse exercise” (2.9.59.2). Intellectual labour is validated as a form of labour crucial to the proper functioning of the social body.
Chapter Four

“Englands Excrements”: Bodily Functions and Colonialism

Add a hyphen to colonization and it becomes colon-ization. The colon in colonialism, colonization, and colony means “farmer” or “husbandman,” but it has several homonyms in the English language, one of which, of course, is the punctuation mark. Although punctuation is important in this chapter, as it is throughout this dissertation, the importance of the colon (:) here is purely grammatical and stylistic. It is worth noting, though, that etymologically the punctuation mark derives from a word meaning “limb” or “member” as well as “clause of a sentence” or “portion of strophe” and thus has a connection to the body (OED n.2). More obviously related to the body, however, colon also refers to the middle and largest part of the large intestine, the part that conveys fecal matter from the caecum to the rectum for removal by way of the anus. While the appearance of the colon as section of the large intestine in the words colonialism and colonization is a coincidence of language, early modern discourses and practices of colonialism do nonetheless frequently intersect in powerful ways with discourses and practices of excretion. These points of intersection are the focus of this chapter.

The small intestine (comprised of the duodenum, jejunum, and ileum) and the large intestine play crucial roles in the assimilation of nutritive material during digestion and, along with the kidneys, the excretion of waste material. Both bowels and entrails could refer to the intestines specifically or to the internal organs more generally. In the medical and cultural models of the belly inherited by the early moderns, the spleen and gall bladder served excretory functions since they were believed to collect and drain melancholy and bile respectively. Like the stomach and the liver, these organs were assigned a much greater role in mental and emotional experience in this earlier psycho-physiological model based on Galenic humoral theory. In Titus Andronicus, for instance, Titus tells Marcus he is unable to

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1 On the anus in early modern culture, see Jeffrey Masten’s “Is the Fundament a Grave?” in The Body in Parts. For readings of the anus in Coriolanus, see Jonathan Goldberg’s chapter called “The Anus in Coriolanus” in Shakespeare’s Hand and Maurice Hunt’s “The backward voice of Coriol-anus.”
restrain his misery and be ruled by reason: “For why [because] my bowels cannot hide her woes, / But like a drunkard must I vomit them” (3.1.230-31). In contrast to Titus’s image of the bowels projecting emotion outward, in Troilus and Cressida Hector imagines the bowels absorbing emotion. Giving his opinion that the Trojans should return Helen to the Greeks and end the war, he remarks: “Though no man lesser fears the Greeks than I / As far as toucheth my particular, / Yet, dread Priam, / There is no lady of more softer bowels, / More spungy to suck in the sense of fear, / More ready to cry out, ‘Who knows what follows?’” (2.2.8-13). Ascribing a sponge-like quality to the intestines, Hector emphasizes the way in which they “suck in” and assimilate what is external, a sponginess making the guts an apt metaphor for the internalization of ideology as well as emotions like fear. Hector also genders both the bowels and fear, associating “softer,” more “spungy” bowels and greater fearfulness with women.

The intestines were also ascribed a fundamental (so to speak) role in definitions of the human and in understandings of society. In many of the “voracious animals,” Galen explains, the “intestine is straight” and of uniform width, with the result that “these animals both feed continually and as incessantly eliminate.” They thus lead “a life truly inimical to philosophy and music, as Plato has said, whereas nobler and more perfect animals neither eat nor eliminate continually.” Galen adds that he has “demonstrated that it is the coils of the intestines that keep us from needing a constant supply of nutriment; similarly it is the breadth of the thick [large] intestine that enables us not to eliminate [too] readily, but only at longer intervals” (I:4.240). As Helkiah Crooke expresses it, the “guttes” are convoluted to prevent “insatiable gulosity or rauenousnes, which would as Plato saith, interrupt all good and liberall learning” (3.5.103). Thus, despite being categorized by writers like Crooke as “ignoble parts” commonly called “Emunctories or Draynets” that are “ordained onely for the expurgation or cleansing of the principall” parts and so “most ignoble of all the rest” (1.19.31-32), it is the

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2 Paré similarly explains that the “length of the guts, is seven times more than the length of the whole body; to this length they have windings, least the nourishment should quickly slide away, and least men should bee withdrawne by gluttony from action and contemplation. For wee see it comes to passe in most beasts, which have one Gut stretched straight out from the stomacke to the fundament; as in the Lynx and such other beasts of insatiable gluttony, alwayes, like plants, regarding their food” (3.16.108).
winding structure of the intestines that allows time for philosophizing, music, and learning, in essence, for the cultivation of the finer things of civilization. (Just as servants, slaves, and other labourers allow time for their masters and social superiors [or husbands] to engage in intellectual activity because not troubled with growing and preparing food or cleaning).

In my study of the intersections of discourses of colonialism and discourses of the intestines and other excretory organs, I draw upon Norbert Elias’s influential theorization of what he calls the “civilizing process.” Elias traces a shift in attitudes towards bodily functions and a “refinement” of manners in European culture over the course of the early modern period. Comparing conduct manuals like Erasmus’s *De civilitate morum puerilium* to later examples, he argues that over several centuries European society experienced a slowly raised “standard of what is felt to be shameful and offensive” and that this “socio-historical process” is “re-enacted in abbreviated form in the life of the individual human being” (109). Of the “excretory experience” specifically, David Inglis, influenced by Elias’s conception of the “civilizing process” and Bourdieu’s articulation of *habitus*, or bodily practices, outlines the development and refinement of a “bourgeois fecal habitus.” Increasing shame regarding defecation, greater use of euphemisms, and a privatization and regulation of waste characterized this development. Of the internal organs, including those involved in excretion, David Hillman, focusing on Elias’s notion of the *homo clauses*, or “bounded” individual, the notion that there was an “increasingly strict demarcation” of the interior of the body from the exterior world (7), remarks that the “body’s innards have undergone a kind of aesthetic repression over the past few hundred years” (17).

Elias links the “change in the psychological make-up known as ‘civilization’” to the “advancing differentiation of social functions” and the disintegration of feudalism and succeeding formation of centralized states with a “firmer monopolization of physical force” (369). What I am most interested in here is Elias’s argument that state discipline and self-discipline, state formation and manners, are intertwined. He writes:

The peculiar stability of the apparatus of mental self-restraint which emerges as a decisive trait built into the habits of every “civilized” human being, stands in the closest relationship to the monopolization of physical force and the growing stability of the
central organs of society. Only with the formation of this [sic] kind of relatively stable monopolies do societies acquire those characteristics as a result of which the individuals forming them get attuned, from infancy, to a highly regulated and differentiated pattern of self-restraint; only in conjunction with these monopolies does this kind of self-restraint require a higher degree of automaticity, does it become, as it were, “second nature.” (369)

Self-discipline is thus an internalization of external forms of discipline.\(^3\)

As I will demonstrate in what follows, the body/state analogy offers vivid insight into the interrelationship of state and self in the “civilizing process,” including the development of the “bourgeois fecal habitus” and the “aesthetic repression” of the “body’s innards.” Analyzing the relationship between the body politic and body, and between the external and internal habitus, I concentrate on depictions of excrement, the excretory organs, and the process of excretion. Outlining how early modern nationalist and colonialist propaganda employs metaphors of excretion in order to naturalize the colonialist project, I highlight parallels between this state-sanctioned colonial practice, contemporary treatment of literal human waste, and increasing social regulation of bodily functions and manners. In the final section, I examine Phineas Fletcher’s allegory of the body in *The Purple Island, or, The Isle of Man* for how colonialist ideology embedded in physiological descriptions of the alimentary canal transforms the traditional vertical hierarchy of the body into a geo-political one, marginalizing the belly. The rhetoric employed in depictions of the body’s excretory organs, I argue, both participates in, and mirrors, the larger social and historical processes of the “civilization” and discipline of self, nation, and Other.

I

In 1492, the man we know as Christopher Columbus “discovered” the New World, thereby initiating early modern European colonialism. Importantly, however, Columbus was frequently called Colon, thus providing an additional homonym for the colon in colonialism. While in modern Spanish an accent differentiates the name from the body part, this is not the case in early modern English usage. Thus, when Samuel Purchas exclaimed of Columbus in

\(^3\) For a recent critique of Elias, see Barbara H. Rosenwein’s “Worrying about Emotions in History.”
In the marginal note accompanying this statement, Purchas explains: “His true name was Colon, which corruptly is called Columbus.” In his 1625 *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, however, Purchas claims that Columbus or Columbo was called Colon by the Spanish for easier pronunciation (The First Part, 2.4.8). In his 1613 text, Purchas plays on other aspects of Columbus’s name. Immediately after his pun on Colon/Colonies, he writes: “or may I call thee Columbo for thy Doue-like simplicitie and patience? The tru [sic] Colouna or Pillar, whereon our knowledge of this new world is founded, the true Christopher, which with more then Giant-like force and fortitude hast carried Christ his name and Religion, through vnknown Seas, to vnknowne lands: which wee hope and pray, that it may be more refined, and reformed, then Popish superstition, and Spanish pride will yet suffer” (8.2.612-13). *Columbus* is the Latin word for a male dove or pigeon, while *colonna* is the Italian for “column.” Purchas’s play on Columbus’s first name is an example of early modern comparisons of Columbus and St. Christopher, whose name means “Christ bearer / carrier.”

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5 Browne’s extrapolation from Paracelsus is as follows: “[...] and commend the Geography of Paracelsus; who according to the cardinall points of the world divideth the body of man, and therefore working upon human orude, and by long preparation rendring it odiferous, he termes it Zibeta Occidentalis, Western Civet; making the face the East, but the posteriours the America or Western part of his microcosme” (2.3.69). I am grateful to John Geary for calling my attention to this passage.
come to Rouen with their cargoes on their way to Paris but transfer their cargoes at Rouen into small boats for the last stage of the journey up the Seine. Indeed, the intestines are rightly called ships since they carry the chyle and all the excrement through the entire region of the stomach as if through the Ocean Sea. (273)

Laguna treats both aspects of the digestive process—assimilation and elimination—in his outline of the transportation of chyle and excrement throughout the “Ocean Sea.” I consider the assimilative aspects of the digestion of New World goods like those unloaded in Rouen, France’s gateway to the New World, in detail in the previous chapter and so focus on the excretory here and turn now to English colonialism.

In his discussion of Paradise Lost in the context of English colonialism, J. Martin Evans distinguishes between the “purging” and the “expansive” arguments in favour of colonialism. “Purging arguments,” he writes, “were based on the widespread belief that England’s population had grown so dramatically during the sixteenth century that the country was bursting at the seams” (30), while expansive arguments “focused not so much on the social problems afflicting England as on the opportunities presented by America” (31). According to the purging argument, colonies would serve as places not only from which commodities could be obtained but also to which people could be sent so as to reduce the population at home. Changes in the structure of society accompanying enclosure and the transition to capitalism meant that people displaced from their land and livelihoods, and with fewer social safety networks to support them, were left to shift for themselves. Overcrowding, unemployment, crime, disease, dearth, and uprisings were major concerns. In The Planters [sic] Plea, for instance, John White states that “it cannot be denied, but the nearre thronging of people together in these full Contreyes, have occasioned amongst us ciuill Warres, Famines, and Plagues” (7). Opposing “an imputation of Barbarisme” directed at the project of removing people to the New World, the Council of Virginia assert in A Trve Declaration of the Estate

6 In “The Poor and the People,” Christopher Hill notes a change in perceptions of England’s population from a fear of overpopulation at the beginning of the seventeenth century to a fear of a shortage of laborers at the end of the century, a change he links to England’s transition from an importer to an exporter of corn (260).
of the Colonie in Virginia (1610): “He is ouer blinde that doth not see, what an inundation of people doth overflow this little Iland” and go on to contrast the alternative of “setling so excellent a Plantation, to disimbarke some millions of people vpon a land that floweth with all manner of plenty” with the “indirect and vnchristian policies,” “barbarous” and “inhumane” examples, and “diabolicall and hellish projects” employed by the Romans, Chinese, and Muscovites (24-25).

The shipping of surplus people to colonies in the New World was a form of state discipline: the criminalized poor (particularly those classified as rogues or vagabonds), felons, and political prisoners were deemed especially eligible for removal. King James I took the first steps towards establishing a system of convict transportation, urging that because the number of “offences and offenders” had increased and because the laws were so severe as to punish felons with death, a “speedy remedy” was required “for ease unto our people.” “Wherein as in all things els tending to punishment,” he states, “it is our desire that Justice be tempered with mercie.” He then urges that rather than being executed, “lesser offenders” might instead “live and yeild a profitable service to the Comon wealth in parts abroade where it shall be found fitt to imploie them,” including “ferraine discoveries or other services beyond the seas.” “Great and notorious malefactors,” including those convicted of “wilful murder,” rape, witchcraft, or burglary, however, are excepted from this “Clemency” (qtd. in Smith 92-93). As Abbot Smith

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7 Specific examples of the policies of these nations for addressing conditions of overpopulation are listed in *A True Declaration*:

Shall we vent this deluge, by indirect and vnchristian policies? shall we imitate the bloody and heathenishe counsell of the Romanes, to leave a Carthage standing, that may exhaust our people by forraine warre? or shall we nourish domesticall faction, that as in the dayes of Vitellius and Vespasian, the sonne may imbrew his hands in the blood of the father? Or shall we follow the barbarous foot-steps of the state of China, to imprison our people in a little circle of the earth, and consume them by pestilence? Or shall we like the beast of Babylon, deny to any sort the honourable estate of mariage, and allow abominable stews, that our people may not ouer increase in multitude? Or shall we take the inhumane example from the Muscouite, in a time of famine to put tenne thousand of the poor under the yce, as the Mice and rats of a state politique? If all these be diabolicall and hellish projects, what other meanes remains to vs, but by setling so excellent a Plantation, to disimbarke some millions of people vpon a land that floweth with all manner of plenty? (24-25)

8 Hill suggests that the increasing divide between the “poor” and the rest of the population “may help to account for the trend in English Puritanism, from William Perkins in the fifteen-nineties onwards, which stressed the wickedness, the apparently irredeemable wickedness, of many of the poor” (259).
outlines, although penal colonies had not yet been established and it was not legal to make transportation a penalty for crime, James’s process of reprieves was followed in 1655 by a system of collective pardons, and both were conditional upon the felon’s agreement to “transport himself out of the country,” with the term of his exile decided upon by the authorities (91).

The idea of employing individuals convicted of crimes in foreign exploration and plantations was familiar from the early years of transatlantic voyages and colonialism:

Cartier took some [criminals] to Canada in 1534, and Francis I authorized a selection of malefactors to be made from the Breton prisons for the expedition of 1540. Frobisher had men from the jails with him, and the Spaniards used them in colonization. Towards the end of the sixteenth century a French penal settlement was founded on Sable Island, but without success. Governor Dale of Virginia recommended to Lord Salisbury in August, 1611, that all offenders in the common jails who were condemned to die should be sent for three years to Virginia, ‘as do the Spaniards people the Indies,’ and he seems to have believed that they would prove better than the three hundred profane, diseased and mutinous colonists who had gone on his first voyage. The planting of the colonies with convicts was an element in nearly all plans and proposals for empire. (Smith 91-92)

In contrast to the treatment of felons, according to an Elizabethan statute, those classified as rogues or vagabonds “dangerous to the inferior sorte of People” and unwilling to “be reformed of their rogish kinde of lyfe” (qtd. in Smith 137), were to be banished from the realm, though there were as yet no permanent colonies to which they could be sent: “Thus the legal penalty of transportation, which could not be inflicted on English felons until after 1717, could be pronounced on incorrigible rogues throughout the whole colonial period, and by no higher court than quarter sessions” (Smith 137).

Shipping incorrigible rogues, felons, and political prisoners to the colonies as indentured servants was to serve two purposes: first, undesirables would be removed from the nation, and second, there would be a supply of labour in the colonies. The disciplinary measure of transportation to the colonies to serve a term of indentured servitude thus reflects
the underlying economics of punishment at the historical conjunction of European colonialism and mercantilism. As outlined by Foucault, “in a slave economy, punitive mechanisms serve to provide an additional labour force—and to constitute a body of ‘civil’ slaves in addition to those provided by war or trading”; in a feudal system, “when money and production were still at an early stage of development,” there is a “sudden increase in corporal punishments—the body being in most cases the only property accessible”; the “penitentiary,” “forced labour,” and the “prison factory” coincide with “the development of the mercantile economy.” The “industrial system,” however, “requires a free market in labour and, in the nineteenth century, the role of forced labour in the mechanisms of punishment diminishes accordingly and ‘corrective’ detention takes its place” (*Discipline* 25).

The actual shipping of criminals was essentially a private enterprise undertaken by merchants who made a profit selling their cargo for the term of their indentured servitude (Smith 98). A trade in these “commodities” also developed outside of the legal structure, and orphans and prostitutes, for example, were often scooped up off the streets. Cases of kidnapping were common enough that parliament debated ways of dealing with the problem. George Gardyner remarked in 1651 that “we are upbraided by all other Nations that know that trade for selling our own Countreymen for the Commodities of those places. And I affirm, that I have been told by the Dutch and others, that we English were worse than the Turks, for that they sold strangers onely, and we sold our own Countrymen” (qtd. in Evans 79). It is worth noting that indentured servants were regularly paid for in sugar, making the figurative consumption of their labour explicit.

The expulsion of unwanted people from England to the colonies was regularly expressed in bodily metaphors grounded in Galenic medical theory and therapeutic practice, linking state discipline, medicine, and bodily functions. In Galenic medicine, a balance of humours was considered crucial to overall health and imbalance the cause of most illness.

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9 For Parliamentary debates and bills relating to the transportation of convicts, rebels, and the poor as well as ways of dealing with kidnapping, see *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America*, especially pages 37, 140, 207, 209, 211, 241, 302, 303, 309, and 404.

10 Smith claims that prices for an indentured servant ranged from 2,200 to 2,400 pounds of sugar (75).
Balance was achieved through diet following the principle of curing by contraries: each food was categorized according to the humours it gave rise to, and cold and moist foods, for example, were considered best suited to individuals with a hot and dry complexion. Also important to humoral balance, though, were bodily evacuations, including bloodletting, induced vomiting, and most relevant here, purging the contents of the belly through the use of laxatives. When administering purges, physicians needed to consider such things as the time of year, climate, and age of the patient and to take care to purge only the humours harmful to the body. Overuse of evacuation was to be avoided as well. After explaining the benefits of vomiting, Christopher Langton cautions: “yet he that wyll be hole and pourposeth to be olde, let hym not be to busye with vomittynge: for the muche vse of it causeth deafnesse,” “hurteth the eyes,” “offendeth the teathe,” and “causeth head ache” (2.vi).

In contrast to bodily metaphors that worked to legitimate social, economic, and political conditions by comparing them to bodily organs and processes crucial to the healthy functioning of the body, metaphors of purgation and evacuation worked to legitimate the policy of shipping people to the New World by comparing those shipped to substances threatening to bodily health and requiring removal. In “The Poor and the People,” Christopher Hill demonstrates that in the early modern period, the poor were not included among “the people.” The exclusion of the poor, as well as felons and political prisoners, from the conception of “the people” becomes particularly apparent in applications of the body/state analogy. Where the Fable of the Belly powerfully incorporates the social elite accused of idleness into the body politic by equating them with the digestive organs of the belly, excretory metaphors transform those from the lowest social stratum into waste products arising from the digestive process, encouraging their elimination from the social body. Thus in *A Discovrse of the Originall and Fundamentall Cause of Naturall, Customary, Arbitrary, Voluntary and Necessary Warre*, Sir Walter Raleigh explains how, when told that eight thousand Spaniards

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11 See Christopher Langton’s chapter called “Of Fulnesse and Emptinesse” in *A Uery Brefe Treatise* (2.6).

12 Highlighting the disciplinary and regulatory aspect of medical therapy, Langton adds: “Therefore it is the Physitons dutie to declare, who is apt to vomit, and who is not. For suche as be not apt to vomit, shoulde be pourged dounwarde” and “constrayned to vomit” (2.vi).
had died in “the enterprise of Algier,” Cardinal Francis de Amiens, who governed Spain during the minority of Charles V, “made light of the matter: Affirming, that Spaine stood in need of such evacuation, forreigne Warre serving (as King Fardinard [sic] had been wont to say) like a potion of Rubarbe, to wash away Choler from the body of the Realme” (original emphasis). While foreign war operates on the social body like a laxative on the physical body, encouraging the body’s excretion of choler, colonial activity in the New World similarly maintains the health of the Spanish body politic, preventing any need for phlebotomy: “Certainly among all Kingdomes of the earth, we shall scarce find any that stands in lesse need then Spaine, of having the veines opened by an enemies sword: The many Colonies which it sends abroad so well preserving it from swelling humors” (13-14).13

Writing of the English colony of Virginia, Samuel Purchas explains: “A long time Virginia was thought to be much encombered with Englands excrements, some vicious persons, as corrupt leuin sourring, or as plague sores infecting others, and that Colony was made a Port Exquiline for such as by ordure or vomit were by good order and physicke worthy to be evacuated from This Body” (Fourth Part, 19.20.815-16).14 As well as meaning ordure, or fecal matter, excrement could additionally refer to other superfluous substances, including the humours.15 In The Purple Island, for example, Fletcher describes choler as “the first excrement drawn from the liver to the gall” (3.15, mn.m). Purchas’s description of England’s figurative “excrements” as “vicious persons” continues the corporeal metaphor: while vicious, related to vice, was used for immoral or wicked people, it was also used to describe diseased organs and noxious matter in the body, frequently harmful excrements requiring therapeutic evacuation (OED), thus reflecting an incorporation of morality into

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13 I am grateful to Mary Nyquist for drawing my attention to this passage.

14 In The Planters Plea, John White uses similar language in his argument that it is a “common and grosse errour that Colonies ought to be Emuncitories or sinkes of States; to drayne away their filth”(33). Nonetheless, he felt that “those Colonies that have been undertaken upon the desire either of disburthening of full states of unnecessary multitudes, or of replenishing wast and voyd Countries” have “a cleare and sufficient warrant from the mouth of God” (9-10, my emphasis). Evans includes discussion of these quotations in his brief outline of the “purgative” rationale for colonialism.

15 Excrement also refers to the dregs or lees resulting in the process of refining or sifting (OED).
medical descriptions of the body. Similarly linking morality and the humours, Christopher Langton, for example, uses the common medical and moral adjective *naughty* in his description in chapter seven, “Of the Vnnaturall Humours,” of “noughty” humours, or humours that are made “nought” or “corrupted” (*Physicke*). Purchas likens England’s “vicious persons” to “plague sores infecting others” and to “corrupt” leaven souring others, as well as to “excrements.” Just as literal excrements need to be removed from the body, and figurative excrements from the social body, so attempts were made to remove plague victims from social interaction, and in his first epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul urges his audience to “purge out the old leaven” since “a little leaven sours the whole lump.”

Stressing the similarity between the national and the physical bodies, Purchas notes that Virginia was transformed into a “Port Exquiline,” a reference to the gate beyond which the sewage of Rome was dumped. In his allegory of the body in *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser compares the anus to the Port Exquiline, a comparison emphasizing what I read as Purchas’s pun on “end” in his encomium to Columbus. The significance of Purchas’s figurative description of Virginia as the dung heap of England in relation to literal waste removal practices is dealt with more fully below.

The corporeality of the evacuation of undesirables from the English body politic is given particular emphasis during England’s “intestine” conflict, including the aptly nicknamed “Rump” Parliament years. Royalist tracts like “Stop your Noses: or, England at her Easement” make scatological use of the metaphor of the body politic to revile their political opponents by transforming them into ordure. England is imagined “on the Close-stoole to her excrement the Junto at Westminister” (t.p.). She is described as needing a “violent purge” to be able to “evacuate those congealed humours which so stop her vitalls” (2), those “monster[s]” of the

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16 See the OED on “sour.”

17 Although it was common to equate colonies with offspring—as, for example, Francis Bacon does in “Of Plantations” when he writes that “new plantations [are] the children of former kingdoms” (78)—slippage in the period between “bowels” and “womb” means that national propagation and national defecation are frequently conflated, as in John White’s reminder in *A Planters Plea* that a colony must respect “the State from whose bowels it issued” or otherwise it “is as great a monster, as an unnaturall childe” (26). Giving birth and eliminating waste from the body are in some ways treated as parallel, a treatment connected to the belief in the generative aspects of excrement, the “creation and generation *ex putri*” that was undermined in the later 18th and nineteenth centuries by the development of bacteriology and new theories of fertilization (Inglis 86).
state (5). Satire aside, during the period many political prisoners were transported to the colonies by Parliamentary forces. Cromwell, for example, wrote of his treatment of Irish prisoners that “[w]hen they submitted, their officers were knock’d on the head and every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes” (Stock 211); they were “barbadoed,” as the expression went.

The alien nature of England’s “unnecessary multitudes” to the body politic is emphasized through the description of them as surplus humours, “filth,” and “excrements,” that which is not assimilated into the body but which is threatening to it and must be eliminated. The exclusion of people so classified from conceptions of the body politic is further highlighted rhetorically by comparisons of them with geographical and cultural Others, who, as in James’s description of the Indians of America as “the refuse of the world” (Counterblaste B2r), could also be compared to excrement. In An Anatomy of Melancholy, for example, Robert Burton conflates poverty and foreignness through simile in his discussion of the “rogues, beggars, Egyptian vagabonds (so termed at least) which have swarmed all over Germany, France, Italy, Poland [...] as those Tartars and Arabians at this day do in the Eastern countries” (77) and in his epithet, “vagabond Arabians” (81). The word Tartar itself was, as the OED explains, both the name given to Central Asian peoples and “[a]n old cant name for a strolling vagabond, a thief, a beggar” (n.2, def.1, 2b). Of a slightly later period, Edmund Morgan argues that “[t]he stereotypes of the poor expressed so often in England during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were often identical with the descriptions of blacks expressed in colonies dependent on slave labor, even to the extent of intimating the subhumanity of both: the poor were ‘the vile and brutish part of mankind’: the black were ‘a brutish sort of people.’ In the eyes of unpoor Englishmen, the poor bore many of the marks of an alien race” (325-26).18

18 In describing relations between the “Negroes” and the colonists in 1700, Judge Sewell uses the image of surplus blood to argue against slavery on the grounds there were too many slaves already: “And there is such a disparity in their Conditions, Colour & Hair, that they can never embody with us, and grow up into orderly Families, to the Peopling of the Land: but still remain in our Body Politick as a kind of extravasat Blood” (qtd. in Towner 166). In Settling with the Indians, Karen Orthal Kupperman points out the similarity in treatments of the Indians of North America and the lower classes of England: “[The Indians] were subject to this form of ‘contempt’ not because they were racially different or savage, but because they were lumped in the minds of the colonial leaders in the same status category as low-born English people” (3).
Along with the economic and political motivations behind transportation, the practice also represents an attempt at disciplinary leniency, King James’s stated hope, quoted above, that “Justice be tempered with mercie.” According to Barry Vaughan, Norbert Elias’s approach has influenced recent scholarship on changes in the form of punishment: “The notion of a civilizing process, having its roots in increasing interdependency among people, that inculcated behavioural restraints and encouraged sympathy for others may explain why punishment took on a less physically punitive form” (71-72). While this approach is frequently employed in studies of the prison reforms of later periods, it is also applicable, I suggest, to this earlier change in penal practices involving experimentation with transportation. Because this form of state discipline is figured as an excremental process, it offers an example of the influence of the “civilizing process” on methods of state discipline and on attitudes towards the bodily functions of excretion, and on connections between the national, social, and individual habitus.

In his sermon to the Virginia planters, John Donne links leniency in state discipline with colonialism and the influence of the “civilizing process,” particularly in relation to attitudes towards ordure. Donne assures his audience of the usefulness of the colony:

> It shall redeeme many a wretch from the Jawes of death, from the hands of the Executioner, upon whom, perchaunce a small fault, or perchance a first fault, or perchance a fault heartily and sincerely repented, perchance no fault, but malice, had otherwise cast a present, and ignominious death. It shall sweep your streets, and wash your dores, from idle persons, and the children of idle persons, and imploy them: and truely, if the whole Countrey were but such a Bridewell, to force idle persons to work, it had a good use. But it is already, not onely a Spleene, to draine the ill humors of the body, but a Liver, to breed good bloud; already the imploymet breeds Mariners; already the place gives essayes, nay Fraytes of Marchantable commodities; already it is a marke for the Envy and for the ambition of our Enemies[.] (9)

Donne conflates criminals, “idle” persons (displaced from their traditional livelihoods and left to migrate to the urban centres to beg), and filth. Transportation of those convicted of minor offences and offered a reprieve—and the number and nuance of his examples encourages
sympathy—is presented as a humane form of state discipline. The idle, for whom there is less sympathy, will be removed from the streets and put to work in the colony, envisioned as a prison-like workhouse. When Donne writes that the colony will “sweep your streets, and wash your dores, from idle persons, and the children of idle persons,” though, he is drawing not only on the comparison between idle people and waste, but additionally on the increasing emphasis being placed during the period on cleanliness and waste removal, also subject to state regulation. What to do with England’s figurative excrement during a period of social displacement, and what to do with its literal excrement during a period of increased urban population were simultaneous concerns in the period, with similar strategies frequently being proposed or enacted.

In his study of dung disposal in seventeenth-century Prescot, Walter King argues that the trend during the century was toward “stricter enforcement of public health regulations” (443). Residents could pay a fee for the privilege of piling waste against the street side of their houses or shops but were fined if the pile restricted traffic; if they left it there too long; or if they had not payed their fee (443). Officers known as the “four men” were responsible for collecting fees from “both owners selling and individuals purchasing dung piled against house walls” and to address complaints (444). Donne’s metaphor of cleansing the streets by sending idle people to Virginia is grounded in the practice whereby “each householder was required to clean the street between his or her residence or shop and the public ditch running down the middle of the street and to remove within three hours, increased to five hours in 1692, the muck that had been raked up. The two streetlookers walked through the town every Saturday evening to check on compliance” (King 446-447). And the colony itself had similar regulations relating to literal human waste: “[E]very man” in the colony of Virginia was to “haue an especiall and due care, to keepe his house sweete and cleane, as also so much of the street, as lieth before his door […] as he will answere the contrarie at a martillic Court” (Dale 16). King concludes that “[w]hat changed over the century was not the frequency of reported unlawful activity but the way that activity was viewed—as less tolerable,” and this is reflected in an increase in punishment over warnings (454-455).

The body politic’s evacuation of its “excrements” to the New World is paralleled by both an increasing enforcement of standards of cleanliness and by a key strategy of achieving
that cleanliness: removal of waste (both literal and figurative) from the centre to the margins. In *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, Sir John Harington proposes the adoption of his invention, an early flush toilet, to replace the usual—and inadequate—method of retaining waste in vaults. Harington’s invention was designed to use running water to transport fecal matter away from dwellings. On a larger scale, James I’s Parliament “enacted a series of laws expanding previous provisions for cleansing the city,” which included plans to divert water from outside the city, through a system of closed canals, to carry off waste (Boehrer, “Ordure”181). This emphasis on eliminating literal human excrement by removing it from the centre parallels the removal of England’s figurative excrements to the margins of the colonial world (also by way of water) in a sort of social cleansing based on status.

Much waste was transported from the cities to the countryside, where it was used as fertilizer in agriculture. For a fee, residents of Prescot, for example, could “dispose of their dung on the ‘common ground’ or waste” (King 445), and others could pay a fee to remove dung from there for their own uses: “dung was a valuable commodity in pre-industrial society for improving soil fertility. Thomas Parr, innkeeper, had £3 13s. 4d worth of dung when he died in 1680, or four percent of his total worth” (King 447)19. In his study of new agricultural practices in Europe after 1350, which were influenced by the study of classical texts on crop cultivation, Mauro Ambrosoli describes an early modern “English obsession with manure”(283).20 It was only in the second half of the sixteenth century, he writes, that grain production was really taken up again after having been taxed in the late fourteenth century by shortage of labour (293), and “[c]urrent opinion had it that the success of crops in mid-sixteenth century English agriculture depended on the amount of manure spread on the land” (282). Combined with manuring, improvers emphasized the need for labour-intensive treatment of the land. Even in the mid-seventeenth century, the idea that “the land had to be

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19 In “The Ordure of Things,” Bruce Thomas Boehrer points out that “[e]ven William Shakespeare’s father was fined a shilling in 1552 ‘for making a dungheap (sterquinarium) before his house in Henley Street,’’; “the fee was worth paying because the shit was worth keeping” (179).

20 Significantly, “85 percent of the examples given in the Latin-English dictionary for schoolboys, published in those very years [mid sixteenth century], came from Pliny or Columella and dealt with agriculture (land, fields, cattle, farmers, corn, meadows, cow-houses, houses, markets and so on)” (Ambrosoli 238).
tamed by tillage [...] was still a novelty” (321).21

Excrement, labour, discipline, and the “civilizing process” all come together in colonialism, because perhaps the most common metaphor for the establishment of colonies was the agricultural one, in which colonies were called “plantations.” The people described as England’s “excrements” were, like their literal counterparts, commodities, sold for their labour, just as dung was sold for its usefulness as a fertilizer. The similarity between literal and figurative is further strengthened by the fact that when indentured servants arrived in the plantations, they were most frequently put to work “manuring” the fields. Indentured servants “manured” the earth in the sense of themselves being perceived as manure and in the sense that they laboured to till the ground. In “Of Plantations,” for example, Bacon writes: “let the main part of the ground be employed for gardens or corn to be a common stock and the produce shared equally, besides some spots of ground that any particular person will manure for his own private use” (79, my emphasis). As both a noun and a verb, manure links excrement and tillage. Furthermore, the practice of disposing urban ordure on the “common ground” or “waste” recalls the frequent argument that colonialism was justifiable because the land was not being tilled properly by the indigenous inhabitants or was lying “void” or “waste.”

At the same time that there was a sustained interest in improving land productivity—both in colonial plantations and at home—there was a sustained interest in the “cultivation” of manners, a mutuality underscored by the etymological connection between the words manure and manners, and by an interchangeability of spellings in the period.22

21 Samuel Purchas includes an account by an Italian taken prisoner in China that comments on the Chinese method of dealing with human ordure, an account which draws a comparison with contemporary Italian practices: “The Countrey is so well inhabited, that no one foot of ground is left untilled[…] […] These country-men by art doe that in tillage, which we are constrained to doe by force. Here be sold the voydings of Close-stooles, although there wanteth not the dung of beasts: and the excrements of man are good marchandise throughout all China. The Dung-fermers seeke in euery street by exchange to buy their durtie ware for Hearbs and Wood. The custome is very good for keeping the Citie cleane”(The Third Part, 1.11.199).

22 Both manure and manner have etymological roots in manus. The former means to work by hand and the latter means to be tractable, to be manageable in the hand. The OED entries for each word indicate, for
example, that manure was also spelled manner on occasion and that manner also appeared as manure.

23 On the connection between cultivation and civility in *Paradise Lost*, see Paul Stevens's “Paradise Lost and the Colonial Imperative” (especially 11-15) and “Milton and the New World: Custom, Relativism, and the Discipline of Shame.”
the intestines: Troy was regularly called Illium or Ilion, both names that are also applied to a section of the small intestine (Hillman, “Gastric” 300). The intestines are, then, the figurative source from which colonies are sent, despite the association by Spenser and others of the indigenous people with filth and pollution.

The previous lack of civilization characteristic of the English before their cultivation is remarked on by Burton, too, and also by Spenser in A View of the Present State of Ireland, when Irenius explains to Eudoxus that “it is but even the other day since England grew civil,” that the English were themselves once “rude and barbarous” (67). He goes on to insist that “if any were to be like that in England now it would seem worthy of sharp correction and of new laws for reformation” (67). His observation draws attention to the very “civilizing process” outlined by Norbert Elias in his study of the history of manners and highlights the recentness of this reformation in English behaviour and some of the disciplinary methods—both social and legal—used to enforce such civility. I have already traced some of the legal disciplinary measures employed to impose changes in behaviour relating to the treatment of human ordure and so primarily concentrate in the next section on the effects of social regulation on bodily practices related to excretion.

II

In his chapter entitled “Changes in Attitude Toward the Natural Functions,” Norbert Elias points to Erasmus’s De civilitate morum puerilium as a text indicative of a “shift of the frontier of embarrassment” about bodily functions (111), and he asserts later in his study that “from the sixteenth century onwards, the frontier of shame and embarrassment gradually begins to advance more rapidly” (418). This advancement of the “frontier of shame and embarrassment” is related to the monopolization of force: “Physical violence is confined to the barracks; and from this store-house it breaks out only in extreme cases, in times of war or social upheaval, into individual life. As the monopoly of certain specialist groups it is normally excluded from the life of others; and these specialists, the whole monopoly organization of force, now stand guard only in the margin of social life as a control on individual conduct”
(372). In his summary of Elias’s argument in his study of the role played by disgust and loathing in the development of ethnography, Stephen Greenblatt writes: “Scatology, of course, did not vanish—indeed, its endurance has surpassed that of the aristocracy—but what Norbert Elias calls ‘the threshold of shame and embarrassment’ altered, so what was once acceptable in the central zone of the social system was pushed out to the periphery, and what was once tolerated on the periphery was declared altogether unacceptable” (“Filthy Rites” 9). I wish to highlight the geo-political nature of the rhetoric employed in these articulations of patterns of social behaviour. “Frontier,” “margin,” “central zone,” and “periphery” are all imbued with overtones of colonialisit and imperialist discourse and therefore draw attention to the simultaneity of changing European attitudes towards bodily functions in the early modern period and of early modern European colonial expansion, and to the similarity between the two processes. Shame and embarrassment are territorialized and frontiers altered to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in a way that implies notions of the foreign and of class, reminding us of the original meanings of “barbarous” and “vulgar.” Greenblatt’s summary of the process is particularly apt; the rhetoric he employs in describing changes in behaviour mirrors both the English colonial practice of removing what was unacceptable—the poor and criminals—from the centre to the margins and the defecatory aspect of the colonial discourse which figured that removal as a “pushing out” of England’s so-called excrements.

In this context, Amerigo Vespucci’s description of the “fecal habitus” of the people he meets in the New World demonstrates the “frontier of shame” from the frontier. He writes: “They are a people of neat exterior, and clean of body, because of so continually washing themselves as they do. When, saving your reverence, they evacuate the stomach they do their utmost not to be observed, and as much as in this they are cleanly and bashful, so much the more are they filthy and shameless in making water, since, while standing speaking to us, without turning round or shewing [sic] any
shame, they let go their nastiness, for in this they have no shame” (21).24

Several points about this passage are worth noting for what they tell us about Vespucci’s own culture. Vespucci’s inclusion of “saving your reverence” before discussing the evacuation of the bowels is indicative of changed attitudes at home where the subject was becoming increasingly one that could not be discussed without recourse to euphemism. His emphasis on invisibility as “clean” and “modest” resembles the increasing removal of defecation from public spaces in Europe, though this was by no means commonplace. Shame is an important factor influencing behavioural restraint, and Vespucci attributes shamefulness to the local habit of urinating openly. Ironically, Erasmus’s text, written later than Vespucci’s letter (whether that was authentic or not), demonstrates an only recently changed understanding about polite behaviour regarding urination. In a section highlighted by Elias, Erasmus instructs students that “[i]t is impolite to greet someone who is urinating or defecating” (qtd. in Elias 106), making clear, as Elias points out, how commonplace it must have been to encounter someone doing either (111). Vespucci’s letter is an example, then, of foreign customs being used to denigrate less tolerated practices at home.25

Colonists at the frontiers of the English colonial world were similarly concerned about their own manners relating to bodily practices. The following prohibition appears in a list of laws to be obeyed by Virginian colonists:

nor shall any one of the aforesaid, within lesse than a quarter of one mile from the Pallizadoes [fences], dare to doe the necessities of nature, since by these vnmanly, slothfull, and loathsome immodesties, the whole Fort may bee choaked, and poisoned

24 Julie Horan also cites Vespucci in The Porcelain God.

25 Similarly, the Tartars disapprove of the Christian “fecal habitus.” They “hold it not good to abide long in one place, for they will say when they will curse any of their children, ‘I would thou mightest tarry so long in one place that thou mightest smell thine own dung as the Christians do;’ and this is the greatest curse they have” (Bourke 143). Bourke’s Scatologic Rites of All Nations is the centrepiece of Greenblatt’s “Filthy Rites.”
with ill aires, and so corrupt (as in all reason cannot but much infect the same) and this shall they take notice of, and auoide, vpon paine of whipping and further punishment, as shall be thought meete, by the censure of a martiaall Court. (Dale 15)

Dale’s euphemism, the “necessities of nature,” like “saving your reverence,” indicates the extent to which direct reference to bodily functions was increasingly relegated to the periphery of language, just as the bodily functions themselves were increasingly relegated to the periphery of population centres. To defecate or urinate within the prescribed bounds of the centre is to risk corporal punishment and possibly a fine. To do such a thing is “unmanly” and “slothfull,” making those who do so effeminate and idle, two adjectives that carried especially negative overtones in a land trying desperately to establish itself with hard work. The law also draws on a medical argument against such behaviour emphasizing, rather than taking for granted, that the near presence of ordure will influence the health of the fort.

Opponents of the practice of sending England’s undesirable “excrements” to the colonies and making it a “Port Esquiline” also employed notions of “civilized” behaviour and shame when expressing their disapproval of the manners of the body politic. Although Francis Bacon likens “discontentments” in “the politic body” to “humours in the natural, which are apt to gather a preternatural heat and to inflame” (“Of Seditious and Troubles” 33), he disagrees with the policy of transportation, arguing: “It is a shameful and unblessed thing to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantation” (“Of Plantations” 78). Even more obviously connecting the practice of transportation to manners and illustrating the continuing pervasiveness of metaphors of excretion in colonialist discourse, in a 1751 edition of the Virginia Gazette, the Virginian colony’s disgust at the treatment it was receiving from the home country is made strikingly clear: “In what can Britain show a more sovereign contempt for us than by emptying their jails into our settlements; unless they would likewise empty their Jakes [privy] on our tables!” (qtd. in Smith 130). The author of the piece perpetuates the long-standing comparison between criminals and ordure but goes on to denounce the practice of convict transportation
by comparing it to a major social taboo relating to defecation. England’s purging of its superfluities to the colonies is held up as a serious breach of etiquette in a world of decreasing tolerance for such breaches and increasing exclusion of those who made them. England ought, the writer suggests, be ashamed of herself.

On the domestic front, in *The Metamorphosis of Ajax* (1596) Sir John Harington discusses a jakes as well—his invention of a flush toilet—in the context of social etiquette. In the prefatory letter “written by a gentleman of good worth,” the invention is described as something that cannot be named “without save-reverence,” although the gentleman has heard that it is as “sweet” as his parlour (56). He goes on to say that Tarlton used to say “this same excellent word save-reverence, makes all mannerlie” (57). The use of “save-reverence” in such a way again demonstrates that this was a society in the process of evicting certain behaviours from the public sphere and certain topics from “polite” discussion. It was not yet completely unacceptable to discuss bodily functions, but it was clearly necessary to indicate one’s awareness of social norms and of the sensibilities of one’s listeners. For his part, Harington promises to “endeavour to keepe [himself] within the boundes of modestie” (63, my emphasis), providing a contemporary example of the way in which manners are territorialized, just as in the language used by Elias and Greenblatt.

Harington’s invention was designed to address problems of traditional methods of waste retention that were no longer practicable in increasingly crowded urban settings and, again, more abstract social issues of class and criminality are conflated with sewage issues. He writes:

notwithstanding al our provisions of vaults, of sluces, of grates, or paines of poore folkes in sweeping and scouring, yet still this same whoreson sawcie stinke, though he were commanded on paine of death not to come within the gates, yet would spite of our noses, even when we would gladliest have spared his company, prease to the faire Ladies chambers. (160)

In contrast to Donne’s sermon in which the colony of Virginia is envisioned sweeping the
Indecent behaviour in the form of flatulence is linked to barbarism in Rabelais’s description of an Italian woman possessed by a spirit who engaged in ventriloquy, or belly-talking. When asked questions, this “Evil Spirit” would sometimes give “pertinent Answers” to the “Amazement of the Hearers,” but other times “he seem’d to own his Ignorance,” by “leting out a rouzing Fart, or mutter ing some word with barbarous and uncouth Inflexions, and not to be understood” (Motteux trans. 4.58.28). Flatulence and foreign languages are, apparently, similar.

streets and washing the doors of the filth of idle people and their children, here it is the poor who do the “sweeping and scouring.” Harington’s personification of the “stinke” of human feces is striking and operates on a number of levels. The offensive odour, in contrast to Harington’s own observance of the “boundes of modestie,” is depicted as a socially transgressive outsider with no manners. The stinke is “whoreson” (implying illegitimacy) and “sawcie” (implying irreverence). Furthermore, this “stinke” fails to observe social codes, and even when not wanted among the company, he threatens the privacy of the “faire Ladies.” Manners and the law are linked, too, because this ill-mannered stink enters the “gates” meant to keep such offensive things and people out, disregarding the consequence of the death penalty attendant upon such a breach.

The spatialization of manners evident in Harington’s description of the “bounds of modestie” takes on more obvious colonial implications when he defends his subject matter against criticism by the “finer sort of readers,” whom he reminds that if they are healthy they make use of the very place he treats at least once a day (82). Using examples from scripture, he argues that “there is no obscenitie, or barbarisme in words concerning our necessaries” (111). The word obscenitie had only recently entered the English language (the OED gives 1589 as its earliest entry), reflecting the increased attention being placed on the designation of behaviour as either appropriate or not. By equating “obscenitie” with “barbarisme,” Harington indicates the extent to which behaviour or language deemed indecent is associated with what is foreign or, reciprocally, the extent to which what is foreign could also be deemed obscene.26 When Spenser wrote in 1596 that “it is but even the other day since England grew

26 Indecent behaviour in the form of flatulence is linked to barbarism in Rabelais’s description of an Italian woman possessed by a spirit who engaged in ventriloquy, or belly-talking. When asked questions, this “Evil Spirit” would sometimes give “pertinent Answers” to the “Amazement of the Hearers,” but other times “he seem’d to own his Ignorance,” by “leting out a rouzing Fart, or mutter ing some word with barbarous and uncouth Inflexions, and not to be understood” (Motteux trans. 4.58.28). Flatulence and foreign languages are, apparently, similar.
privies went one step further and provided a closet with a close-stool or chamber pot inside it, thereby allowing even greater privacy (Horan 48).

Flush toilets like that invented by Harington did not become household objects until much later, but the early modern period did see significant changes in receptacles for human waste, reflecting the increasing embarrassment about bodily functions and concomitant increasing emphasis on privacy. Ironically, as chamber pots became more decorative (because of the discovery of Chinese porcelain by the sixteenth century) their users began to hide them in furniture, no longer displaying them openly (Horan 34). Close-stools were one example of how chamber pots were removed from sight: dating from the Renaissance, close-stools “resembled a box with a lid opening to reveal a circular seat. Under the seat, a chamber pot was housed to collect the waste” (Horan 202). During the seventeenth century, it was common to disguise their purpose. One method of disguise was to design the close-stool so that it resembled a stack of books and then to give the books titles that would make it clear, euphemistically, what the real purpose of the pile of books was. One such stack of books was called *Journey to the Low Countries* (Horan 52). Very clearly, geographical spatialization was used to conceive not only of the body’s hierarchized parts (here the nether regions conflated with the Netherlands) but also of the functions performed by those parts. The underlying connection between Holland and the nether regions of the body also informs scatological anti-Dutch texts like the 1653 pamphlet entitled “The Dutch-mens Pedigree, or A relation, Shewing how they were first Bred, and Descended from a Horse-Turd, which was enclosed in a Butter-box.”

A final anecdotal example about manners illustrates how the ways in which “what was once acceptable in the central zone of the social system was pushed out to the periphery” mirror colonial and penal practices. The Earl of Oxford, having farted when bowing to Queen

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27 Privies went one step further and provided a closet with a close-stool or chamber pot inside it, thereby allowing even greater privacy (Horan 48).
Elizabeth, left the country to travel for seven years in the hopes that the incident would be forgotten (Horan 59). His self-imposed banishment from the national body (and from “polite” circles) for the unruly behaviour of his own bowels illustrates not only the extreme shame that had come to be attached to bodily functions relating to defecation and flatulence but also the connection between boundaries of social behaviour and geographical and national boundaries. Just as those considered England’s “excrements” were sent into exile in the colonies of the New World (a kind of self-imposed exile since pardon was conditional upon one’s willingness to remove oneself), so the earl, for his breach of social codes, imposed a similar disciplinary action upon himself. His term of exile is significant, too, since seven years was the standard term of indentured servitude for transportees sent to labour in the colonies (Smith 97). Perhaps to ensure that his punishment fit his crime, the Earl spent his years in the Netherlands. Regardless, the next section of this chapter is in a sense a journey to the nether lands and low countries of the microcosm.

III

In the first section of this chapter, I examined the ways in which those considered threatening to the nation were conceived in terms of bodily superfluities and imagined as best excreted from the body politic to the colonies in the New World. In the second section, I looked at the removal of certain behaviours related to bodily defecation beyond social boundaries by removing them from sight or from direct reference in language, or by linking the behaviour with barbarism and foreignness. In this section, I focus on Phineas Fletcher’s allegory of the body and of the battle between the virtues and vices in *The Purple Island, or The Isle of Man*. I demonstrate some of the ways in which depictions of the regions of the body associated with the functions less and less acceptable in the “central zone” reflect these larger disciplinary processes of banishment and colonization as well as being conceived as themselves alien and thus requiring subjection and civilizing.

*The Purple Island*, published in 1633, is a distinctive and elaborate allegory of the
body influenced by the Castle of Alma episode in Book Two of Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*. Where Spenser compares the body to a building, however, Fletcher compares it to an island (England), a geographical territory in which the principal organs are cities. Fletcher includes numerous marginal notes alongside his verse to explain the medical significance of the allegory. Jonathan Sawday reads this marginalia in terms of theoretical interest in the relationship between the central and the marginal and as a display of “a moment of transition in the history of discourse”: “That moment is the point at which science and poetry finally struggle free of one another, with the ‘marginal’ text appearing as a proto-scientific descriptive narrative in its own right, whilst the ‘central’ poetic text is the remnant of a ‘pre-scientific’ view of the world bounded by the theology of the microcosm” (178-179). Thomas Healy reads Fletcher’s medical marginalia as an attempt “to provide supposed scientific evidence for Stuart political policy”; the dissected body “illustrates the larger conflicts in the outside world, and the body combats vices in the same way James’s policies do—or rather, Fletcher’s view of such policies” (350).

Unlike Spenser, who was actively engaged in English colonial efforts in Ireland and whose allegory of the body becomes a vehicle, as I have argued, for the promotion of international trade, Fletcher explicitly presents himself as an anti-colonialist. In the opening canto of his poem, he discourages New World exploration and exploitation, urging people to explore themselves rather than undertake adventures on the seas seeking material gain, and linking the search for and consumption of luxury goods to death and hell:

Let others trust the seas, dare death and hell,
Search either Inde, vaunt of their scarres and wounds:
Let others their deare breath (nay silence) sell

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28 For a brief discussion of the advantages in terms of medical accuracy of Fletcher’s comparison over Spenser’s, see Peter Mitchell (187).

29 Sawday goes on to say that what appears a struggle between these two discourses “should more properly be understood as an attempt at synthesis” (179).
To fools, and (swoln, not rich) stretch out their bounds
By spoiling those that live, and wronging dead;
That they may drink in pearl, and couch their head
In soft, but sleeplesse down; in rich, but restlesse bed. (1.26)

He then goes on to locate the motivating forces behind these risky ventures in the desires of
the body:

Oh let them in their gold quaffe dropsies down;
Oh let them surfets feast in silver bright:
While sugar hires the taste the brain to drown,
And bribes of sauce corrupt false appetite,
    His masters rest, health, heart, life, soul to sell.
Thus plentie, fulnesse, sicknesse, ring their knell:
Death weds and beds them; first in grave, and then in hell. (1.27)

In contrast to the ways in which Spenser naturalizes the incorporation of exotic luxury goods
from the New World into the English diet by situating them within the healthy functioning of
the body and within the domestic space of the home, for Fletcher, luxury goods like gold and
silver, here associated with feasts, pose a serious threat to the health of the individual. Fletcher
suggests that such luxuries will have negative repercussions on the body by resulting in
diseases like dropsies and surfeits. Rather than depict sugar and sauce as the products of
household labour under the direction of a familiar feminine presence, as Spenser does, for
Fletcher, sugar and sauce are personified as outsiders who threaten the household (and the
nation) by hiring and bribing the servants—part of a new wage-labour economy rather than
one of personal dependence—to assassinate their master.³⁰

³⁰ In The Touchstone of Complexions, Levinus Lemniss similarly describes the “fulsome vapours”
that can arise during digestion and negatively affect the principal members and organs of wit and reason as
“back friendes and enemieys”: they “strike upward” and so “do annoy the Brayne with greeuous and odious
fumes, and distemper the Spyrittes Animall wyth a straunge and forreyne quality” resulting in “disquietnes of
mynde and alienation of right wits, absurde cogitations, troublesom Dreames, gyddinesse of the head, ringing
Fletcher adds the warning that: “Thus while your selves and native home forgetting,/ You search farre distant worlds with needless sweating,/ You never finde your selves; so lose ye more by getting’ (1.38.5-7). According to Fletcher, all was wonderful in the early days of the world, in the days when “None knew the sea; (oh blessed ignorance!)” and “None sought new coasts, nor forrain lands descri’d” (1.51.1,6). The Fall occurred when “not content / To be confin’d in bounds of happinesse” the Isle “[w]ould trie what e’re is in the continent” (1.53.1-3). While Fletcher denigrates geographical exploration and expansionism, he nonetheless turns the discourses of colonialism and civilization inwards, transforming the microcosm into a reflection of these impetuses at work in the macrocosm.

The Purple Island, “a direct response to (and an idealizing of) discursive conditions of power—the power to subjectify, and the power of self-control” (Anderson 1), is in many ways an allegory of the “civilizing process”; not only does Fletcher allegorize the internalization of state discipline that is so central to the development of “a highly regulated and differentiated pattern of self-restraint” (Elias 447), but he also positions this “civilizing” in terms of global politics and cultural Otherness. Fletcher’s psychomachia demonstrates the influence of “the parade of virtues and vices found in Prudentius’ Psychomachia and The Faerie Queene, the Biblical conflict between the spirit and the flesh, and scale invariance between the microcosm (man) and the macrocosm (the world)” (Anderson 4). I suggest, however, that The Purple Island’s dramatization of these conflicts is also an “intestine” struggle, a struggle within and against the belly. The intestines are of central importance to Fletcher’s narrative of self-knowledge and of self-restraint. In “To the Readers,” Daniel Featly

of the eares, dazeling of eyes, mournefull sighes, trembling and beating of heart, a mynde sorrowfull, colorlesse, perplexed, pensive and fearefull” (143).

31 Thomas Healy calls attention to some of the purgative aspects of the poem. He uses “purgation” in a more abstract way than I do, however, focusing on political and religious reformation rather than on Fletcher’s representation of the belly and its excretory processes.
writes: “He that would learn Theologie, must first studie Autologie. The way to God is by our selves: It is a blinde and dirty way; it hath many windings, and is easie to be lost: This Poem will make thee understand that way[.].” The “blinde and dirty way” with “many windings” may well recall the intestinal tract, which contains plenty to make it “dirty” and a section that Fletcher notes is also “called blind” (2.42, mn.q), the caecum.

Appropriately, the individual’s internalization of state-discipline is particularly obvious in Fletcher’s allegorical depiction of digestion, the process through which what is external to the self is literally internalized. Just as the link between state and self-discipline is emphasized through the metaphor of the body politic—and the comparison of the colonial transportation of undesirables to excretion—so the reciprocity between self and nation is emphasized through Fletcher’s comparison of bodily excretion to forms of state discipline. As the body digests, humours (also specifically called “excrements”) need disciplining, much like England’s figurative “excrements.” Describing choler, Fletcher writes:

Three pois’nous liquours from this purple well
Rise with the native streams, the first like fire,
All flaming hot, red, furious, and fell,
The spring of dire debate, and civile ire;
    Which wer’t not surely held with strong retention,
   Would stirre domestick strife, and fierce contention,
And waste the weary Isle with never ceas’d dissension.

Therefore close by a little conduit stands,
*Choledochus*, that drags this poison hence,
And safely locks it up in prison bands;
Thence gently drains it through a narrow fence:
    A needfull fence, attended with a guard,
   That watches in the straits all closely barr’d,
Fletcher’s depiction of bodily excrements as criminals inversely mirrors cultural depictions of criminals as excrements: “debate,” civil ire,” “domestic strife,” “fierce contention,” and “never ceas’d dissension” are imagined to be the consequences of superfluities, of the body’s humours or of people. As a result, these superfluities need to be imprisoned, guarded, fenced in, and locked up before being transported and evacuated from the “Isle,” the body/body politic as unassimilable foreign matter. Similarly, Gail Kern Paster notes that Helkiah Crooke “justifies the need to relieve the body of an excess of choler by imbuing the humor with a madcap personality and rebellious proclivities. Choler, ‘being a mad and hare-brain’d humour, had neede at the first generation of it be sent away, least it should set all the body in an uprore’”(11).

“Choledochus,” Fletcher tells us in his marginal gloss, corresponds to the gall bladder, and is thus a conflation of the excretory organ and a prison similar to Donne’s near conflation of the spleen and Bridewell in the passage quoted earlier from his sermon to the Virginia planters. Donne hopes that the colony will be “such a Bridewell, to force idle persons to work,” but, he says, “it is already, not onely a “Spleene, to draine ill humors of the body, but a Liver, to breed good bloud”(9). Additionally reflecting state discipline and state surveillance, Fletcher’s liver, Hepar, ruler of the metropolis of the belly, keeps his “spies” in the intestines

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32The language of capture used by Fletcher is not unique to his depiction of how the body’s intestinal and excretory organs work. Laguna describes a “place of correction for the humours to cool and become subservient to reason before being admitted to the heart” (282). Helkiah Crooke writes that the intestines are winding so that “noisom steame of the faeculent excrements not have free and direct ascent to the upper parts but be intercepted and detained within those meanders & so smothered in those gulphs of the guts, or let out the port Esquiline” (3. Preface. 94-95). Andreas Vesalius writes that “refuse is collected in the thick intestine and kept there only until, becoming troublesome to man, the sphincter relaxes and the refuse is borne forth at once and completely at the will of man” (41-42). In On the Usefulness of the Parts, Galen describes excremental fluids as needing expulsion because they would otherwise become an “alien burden” to the veins. And he says the intestines are in coils to prevent the nutriment from “escaping too easily” (1:4.207, 236).
in order to ensure that “if ought good with evil blended lies” it can be brought “back again to Hepars treasuries” (2.44.6-7). Furthermore, the caecum (the first part of the large intestine) is described as ending in an “Isthmos” (original italics), a geographical term, like “straits” in 3.2.16.6, where “he examines all his passengers, / And those who ought not escape, he backwards sends” (2.42.3-4). Reminiscent of the penal aspect of colonialism and of royal grants of reprieve for felons to be sent to the colonies as indentured labourers, the rectum operates by “the Kings assigne,” “the filth out-throwing” (2.43.6-7).

Fletcher’s depiction of the intestinal tract also reflects the increased concern in urban centres about literal excrement. Conditions of urban life and changing attitudes towards sanitation are evident, for example, in his description of the humours collectively as “poisonous liquours” (3.15.1) and “muddie humours” (3.18.2), or singly, as an “ill stream the wholesome fount offending” (3.17.1) or “bad water, bubbling from this fountain” (3.20.1). The digestive tract is presented as a system of “drains,” “conduits,” and “pipes” designed—just as John Harington’s flush toilet, parliament’s plan for closed canals in London, and regulations about the distance within which one could not engage in the “necessities of nature”—to prevent contagion and illness by removing excrements from the water supply and lessening odours in the air. The duodenum, we are told,

is narrow’st, and down-right doth look.
Lest that his charge discharg’d might back retire;
And by the way takes in a bitter brook,
That when the chanel’s stopt with stifeling mire,
Through th’idle pipe with piercing waters soking,
His tender sides with sharpest stream provoking,
Thrusts out the muddy parts, & rids the miry choking. (2.40)

The emphasis placed by Fletcher on “stifeling mire,” “muddy parts,” and “miry choking” obstructing the intestinal “chanel” is similar to the language used in reports made by the Commissioners of Sewers for London and its suburbs as they attempted to make Fleet Ditch
into a river once again. In a 1652 report, for example, the commissioners advocate “a thorough reformation of all the said abuses by scouring and cleansing the said Ditch or Sewer to make it passable again with boats and other vessels for the benefit of the inhabitants and others as formerly[.].” To this end, they decree that all persons presented before them for “encroachments, stops, lets, houses of office [latrines] or annoyances in or upon the said ditch or Sewer shall abate, pull down, reform and amend the same” or have inflicted upon them “such pain” as the commissioners shall determine. The cleansing of nation, city, and body, bound up with disciplinary measures, are clearly interconnected on the material and figurative levels.

Similarly, the battle at the heart of Fletcher’s psychomachia is imagined as partly a requisite purging to restore the manners and cleanliness sullied by the Fall. We are told that after the Isle rebelled and sought the continent, the saints who lived there fled and were promptly replaced by a “foul, fiend-like companie,” a “rabble” (6.10.2,4). The ensuing effects are made clear through an extended simile involving a badger:

So where the neatest Badger most abides,
Deep in the earth she frames her prettie cell,
And into halls and closulets divides:
But when the stinking fox with loathsome smell
Infests her pleasant cave, the cleanly beast
So hates her inmate and rank-smelling guest,
That farre away she flies, and leaves her loathed nest. (6.11)

Cleanliness really is next to godliness in this comparison. The pre-lapsarian world was one of neatness with pretty and pleasant architecture; the post-lapsarian stinks and is loathsome. The fox is another “rank-smelling guest” who does not know when he is not wanted among company. Ultimately, the “foul rout” (6.10.6) will have to be, like superfluous excrements and population, expelled.

The threat posed by dangerous excrements is also translated into the larger context of
international politics in Fletcher’s allegory, with the belly becoming geographically and culturally Othered. Just as certain behaviours associated with bodily functions were labelled “barbarous,” so were bodily regions associated with those functions. In Laguna’s anatomical text, contemporary geopolitics are vividly mapped onto the body’s interior space in his description of the three major regions of the body, the liver, heart, and head, in ascending order of importance:

Since, as I said, the liver is by far the most abounding in impure sediment of the three viscera I wish you to regard it as that grand Turk, who holds the most dangerous dominion of them all, and the heart as the great Pope, who, since he holds the middle place among all Christians and is so splendid an authority, bestows his favor upon all equally with a rare eagerness, just as the heart bestows vital spirit to all parts of the body. The third of the viscera, the brain, in which the chief power of the soul is established, you may deservedly compare to our most distinguished emperor. (280)

Laguna’s comparison of these body parts to cultural centres is, I suggest, an early modern updating of Galen’s (borrowing from Plato) conception which depends on the great chain of being rather than on cultural difference to establish hierarchy. Galen writes: “as Plato says, the liver is like a wild animal, but this integral part of ourselves must be nourished if there is to be a human race. The reasoning part of us, which is the real man, is situated in the encephalon [the technical name for the brain] and has as its handmaiden and servant the irascible [soul] [in the heart] to protect it against this wild animal” (Usefulness I:4.229). In Laguna, this

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33 Plato’s depiction of the tri-partite regions of the body and of the soul in the Timaeus is as follows:

The part of the soul which desires meats and drinks and the other things of which it has need by reason of the bodily nature, they [the gods] placed between the midriff and the boundary of the navel, contriving in all this region a sort of manger for the food of the body; and there they bound it down like a wild animal which was chained up with man, and must be nourished if man was to exist. They appointed this lower creation to his place here in order that he might be always feeding at the manger, and have his dwelling as far as might be from the council-chamber, making as little noise and disturbance as possible, and permitting the best part to advise quietly for the good of the whole.(3.38)

Plato does not, as Galen says he does, compare the liver itself to a “wild animal,” but instead represents the liver
as providing a restraining influence: "And knowing that this lower principle in man would not comprehend reason, and even if attaining to some degree of perception would never naturally care for rational notions, but that it would be led away by phantoms and visions night and day—to be a remedy for this, God combined with it the liver, and placed it in the house of the lower nature, contriving that it should be solid and smooth, and bright and sweet, and should also have a bitter quality, in order that the power of thought, which proceeds from the mind, might be reflected as in a mirror which receives likenesses of objects and gives back images of them to the sight; and so might strike terror into the desires [...]" (3.38).
Laguna draws on patterns of international travel and trade in order to illustrate the body’s system of exchange and in the process naturalizes those patterns. Laguna replaces his own set of correspondences between the heart as Pope and the head as Emperor with the heart as King of Portugal and the head as the Ethiopians, ultimately suggesting that the Portuguese ought to study anatomy in order to learn how to engage in the unequal trade of lead and clay for gold.

In *The Purple Island*, published almost exactly a century later than Laguna’s treatise, Fletcher employs a similar structure of comparison between the regions of the body. Fletcher, however, does not naturalize international commerce, which he passionately discourages, but he does turn the discourses of colonialism inward, rendering the belly and its associated vices foreign to the self. Conquest, rather than exchange, is represented as necessary for the ultimate victory of Intellect, the island’s prince, left open to his enemies as a result of the “intestine rage” weakening his kingdom after the Fall (6.3.33). Fletcher explains in a marginal note that “[t]he whole body may be parted into three regions: the lowest, or belly; the middle, or breast; the highest, or head. In the lowest the liver is sovereign, whose regiment is the widest, but meanest. In the middle the heart reignes, most necessarie. The brain obtains the highest place, and is as the least in compasse, so the greatest in dignitie” (2.14, mn.1). Given Fletcher’s anti-Catholic sentiment, Laguna’s comparison of head, heart, and liver with Emperor, Pope, and grand Turk or Spain, Italy, and Greece is transformed somewhat:

So of three parts fair Europe is the least,
In which this earthly Ball was first divided;
Yet stronger farre, and nobler then the rest,
Where victorie and learned arts resided,

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34 I have discussed the naturalization of exchange in relation to Laguna’s comparison of “the very broad vein” between the liver and the heart to “a very rich traveling merchant” in Chapter Two, and so only mention it briefly here.
And by the *Greek* and *Romane* monarchical
Swaid both the rest; now prest by slaverie
Of Mosco, and the big-swoln *Turkish* tyrannie. (5.5)

In Fletcher’s analogy, the brain is “fair Europe,” once the great power of the Greek and Roman empires, but now threatened by the rest of the body, represented by the Muscovites and an expanded Turkish empire. England was engaged in trade with both regions in Fletcher’s time, but both were associated with barbarism. Stories abounded of Christians captured by Turks and made to serve in the galleys as slaves. The “monarchie,” nobility, “victorie,” and cultivation of learning and the arts epitomized by classical civilization are specifically contrasted with the “tyrannie” and “slaverie” of the regions of the body located lower on the hierarchical scale and removed from reason.\(^{35}\)

That the Turkish tyranny is specifically “big-swoln” further identifies the belly with the Ottoman empire enlarging its boundaries. The Turks appear slightly later in the poem as well. After explaining the dreadful consequences attendant upon the spread of Catholicism (now “bridled” and “yoked” [7.6.7]), Fletcher continues, indicating in the margins that the “black Vulture” is “The Turk”:

> And that black Vulture, which with deathfull wing  
> O’re-shadows half the earth, whose dismall sight  
> Frighted the Muses from their native spring,  
> Already stoops, and flagges with weary flight. (7.7.1-4)

Burton, too, integrates the body and similar geo-politics when he writes in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* that the “whole body groans under such heads [tyrants etc], and all the members must needs be misaffected, as at this day those goodly provinces in Asia Minor, &c., groan under the burden of a Turkish government; and those vast kingdoms of Muscovia, Russia,

\(^{35}\) Similarly, in describing the effects of surplus melancholy, Fletcher compares an enlarged spleen to a town threatening to overtake its neighbours (3.19.1-2) and, through simile, to a “tyrant” who “raves” (3.19.6).
under a tyrannizing Duke” (66).

Fletcher additionally employs geographical territorialization along national boundaries in his description of the sexual organs, presenting them as foreign too. In his allegory, Cupid—lust as distinguished from love—“dwells with a lower nation” (3.10.3), and those parts and that nation are “best undescri’d” (3.25.5). “Lower” indicates both position in the vertical hierarchy of the body and a sense of inferiority and operates in much the same way as scatological puns on the “Netherlands” or the “Low” Countries. A related example of the ways in which the belly region is associated with foreignness and barbarism appears in the anatomical works first of Ambroise Paré and later of Helkiah Crooke. Both very specifically describe the colon as being in the shape of a “Scythian bow.”36 While the analogy might merely be an apt description of the colon in relation to a highly distinctive weapon design, the choice of comparison is nonetheless significant in the context of the association of the belly with the “wildness” of the “wild beast” mentioned by Plato in the Timaeus and with the tyranny of the Turks in the works of Laguna and Fletcher.

Scythians were, of course, the barbarians par excellence of the classical world, and their reputation had not much changed in the early modern period, whether in Marlowe’s Tamburlaine or Spenser’s A View of the Present State of Ireland, in which he traces a genealogical link between the Scythians and the Irish in customs he finds wild and uncivilized. Scythians were nomads, were reported to drink human blood, and were said to make savage war cries as they went into battle, for example. The colon, by being described as shaped like a Scythian bow, has its potential threat to the body highlighted and is connected to savagery and barbarism. It is hardly surprising, then, that Fletcher calls the colon “the tormentor” in a marginal gloss because of the pain associated with colic (2.42, mn.r).

Later, in Fletcher’s catalogue of the vices that must be subdued, the Scythians are

36 The 1634 English translation of Paré includes a description of the colon as “crooked and bent, in the forme of a Scythian bow” (3.15.106). In Mikrokosmographia, Crooke writes that the colon “maketh a shew as it were of a Scythian bow” (3.5.107).
associated with Murder through an extended simile. Fletcher explains how Murder was “nurst with humane bloud” by his mother and taught to slay passengers in the woods and “on their flesh his barking stomack stay, / And with their wretched bloud his firy thirst allay” (7.69.2, 6-7). He then expands on this explanation by drawing the following comparison:

So when the never-setled Scythian
Removes his dwelling in an empty wain;
When now the Sunne hath half his journey ranne,
His horse he blouds, and pricks a trembling vein,
So from the wound quenches his thirstie heat:
Yet worse, this fiend makes his own flesh his meat.
Monster! the ravenous beare his kinde will never eat. (7.70)

Whether “this fiend” refers to Murder or to the nomadic Scythian is left slightly ambiguous, but regardless, cannibalism, murder, and Scythians are conflated. Fletcher emphasizes the role of the stomach in murderous impulse, and “barking” transforms the organ into a wild beast in a manner reminiscent of Galen and Plato. Furthermore, in explaining that Murder has been nursed with human blood by his mother, Fletcher is perhaps alluding to the understanding of fetal nourishment in the womb (feeding on blood) and is thus associating Murder and Scythians with the parts of generation—part of the “lower nation” where Cupid dwells—as well as the parts of nutrition. In this context, it is additionally worth noting that Cupid’s bow is usually depicted as being of the Scythian model.

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In a prefatory poem by Lewis (Lod.) Roberts included in the 1633 edition of The Purple Island, the similarities between microcosm and macrocosm are placed specifically in the context of New World colonialism. Roberts presents himself as a merchant who has travelled the world but found “rarer wonders” in Fletcher’s Isle. He writes:

And thou [Americus] whose name the Western world impos’d
Upon it self, first by thy skill disclos’d;
Yet is thy skill by this farre overcome,
Who hath decri’d an unknown World at home:

A World, which to search out, subdue, and till,
Is the best object of mans wit, strength, skill:
A World, where all may dangerlesse obtain
Without long travell, cheapest, greatest, gain.

(13-20, original emphasis)

Again, while self-exploration and discovery are placed above the exploration and discovery of foreign lands, the language of colonialism is nonetheless turned inward, making aspects of the self foreign. When Roberts writes that the best object of man’s wit is to “search out, subdue, and till” the microcosmic world, he is advocating exploration, conquest, and the establishment of a plantation to till the land, linking colonialism, cultivation, and civility. While not explicitly colonial, Donne similarly advocates cultivation of the self in “To Mr. Rowland Woodward”:

We are but farmers of ourselves, yet may,
If we can stock ourselves, and thrive, uplay
Much, much dear treasure for the great rent day.

Manure thyself then, to thyself be approved,
And with vain outward things be no more moved,
But to know, that I love thee and would be loved. (31-36)\(^37\)

This metaphor of self-cultivation is given a corporeal dimension in the description in medical

\(^37\) Robert Wiltenburg includes this poem in his analysis of Donne’s conception of the relationship of the self and the soul (417).
texts of the intestines as the agricultural centre of the body. As Crooke explains, the “common use of the guts is to be instead of earth or the soile to yeeld nourishment to the parts. For as in the earth is contained the Aliment of the plants which they draw out by the Fibres or strings of the roots, so in the guts is the Chylus, which the rootes of the Meseraick Veines do sucke out for the nourishment of the creature” (3.5.111). As I have traced here, the cultivation of the self and of manners is intertwined with the guts and other excretory organs. In addition to making refinement and learning possible because allowing time for things other than eating and excreting, the process of excretion these organs perform is regarded with increasing shame and embarrassment and so regulated and expelled from the bounds of politeness, part of the “civilizing process” the belly organs in a sense make possible in the first place.

Just as the language of colonialism—“search out, subdue, and till”—is utilized in advocating self-exploration, discipline and cultivation as it relates to the excretory organs and to the bodily functions associated with them, so anatomical language related to the excretory organs is used to justify colonialism. I began this chapter with Purchas’s pun on Columbus’s other name of Colon. I would like to conclude with an example from Thomas Gainsford’s The Glory of England (1618), in which the explorer, although called Columbus rather than Colon, is nevertheless associated with the intestines. Gainsford writes:

[...] Americus Vesputius gave name to this new world, and Christophorus Columbus of Genoa about 130 years since, searched her entrailes, discouered her maladies, and applied a Cataplasme to her most dangerous wounds, which was irreligion and barbarous idolatry: For although he found vnlookt-for glorious Cities, and well compacted gouernments, yet was he faine by strong hand to ouerthrow their idols, and punish their obstinancy with cruelty. (1.9.74-75)

Gainsford’s choice of name for Columbus means that the explorer is not transformed into a part of the body’s intestines. Instead he is compared to a physician. (There was, coincidentally, a renowned sixteenth-century anatomist called Realdo Columbus [sometimes Columbo], an explorer of the interior of the human body). Rhetorically, though, the intestines remain an
important aspect of Gainsford’s representation of the colonial project; not only is the New World clearly associated with the body’s entrails, but as with the example of Fletcher’s Turks, those entrails are conceived as the sight of “dangerous” illness—“irreligion” and “barbarous idolatry”—requiring a European and Christian cure. Just as the medical practice of purgation was used figuratively to justify colonialism as a method of treating a surplus domestic population, here the medical application of cataplasms, or poultices, is used to justify colonial conquest and subjection as a method of treating “irreligion.”\footnote{As evidence of his nationalism, Gainsford describes Columbus’s activities as acts of “cruelty” even though his medical metaphors legitimate those acts.}
While the main focus of this study has been on the ways in which representations of the belly and of the digestive processes it performs work to naturalize cultural values and ideology, a large part of my method of analysis has been to foreground the underlying materiality of language by attending to the literal and figurative nuances of individual words. Puns and word play, whether my own or those of the early modern authors I study, are more than rhetorical games. They reveal the complex imbrication of body, language, and culture. Each of my chapters originated with a word that resonated with multiple valences which expanded in significance as I investigated further: Katherina’s use of stomach in her speech on wifely obedience at the end of The Taming of the Shrew; Spenser’s choice of Achates as the product of concoction in his allegory of the body in the Castle of Alma episode of The Faerie Queene; Marx’s employment of circulation as well as metabolism in his critique of political economy in Capital, the title of which in itself points to connections between economics and the body, specifically the head; and the coincidental—and yet extremely apt—colon in colonialism. All texts—poetry, drama, medical treatises, colonialist tracts, religious writings, economic theory, and scholarly criticism, for instance—reflect (to varying degrees of obviousness) the interaction of author and culture through diction as much as content, and my own text is no different. While Mary Thomas Crane and cognitive linguists direct attention to the interaction of self, society, and language in the brain, much of our language links thought processes to the digestive organs. Representations of the belly, as I have argued, not only promote ideology but literalize its “internalization” and “incorporation” into the “mind.” They also literalize the trope of ventriloquism as a form of being spoken through by culture but, using earlier definitions of the phenomenon of “belly-talking,” without entirely eliminating agency.
One of the many words that caught my attention while undertaking my doctoral research, and which, try as I might, I just could not “assimilate” into the body of the thesis, will serve here as a final example of this internalizing process made explicit. The word is Orque and it appears in Helkiah Crooke’s description of the intestines in *Mikrokosmographia*. In his preface to the section on the “Parts belonging to Nutrition or Nourishment,” Crooke writes:

> Immediately vnder these Cipresse wings (for wings they are called by the Anatomists) or Cauly cobwebs, appeareth the Maze or labyrinth of the guts wheeled about in manifold foulds & convolutions, that neither the aliment should so suddenly passe away, *and so the wombe of man become an insatiate Orque voyding whilst it doth deuour*, neyther yet the noisom steame of the Fæculent excrements haue free and direct ascent to the vpper parts, but be intercepted and deteined within those Meanders, & so smothered in those gulphs of the Guts, or let out at the port Esquiline. (3.94-95, my emphasis)

Crooke explains that the structural reason for the labyrinthine twists and turns of the intestines is to prevent nutriment from passing through the body too quickly, without allowing time for its absorption. In addition, this arrangement of the guts prevents vapours produced during the digestive process from rising upward and interfering with the proper functioning of the brain. The language Crooke uses in his description of how the excrements are “deteined” and “smothered,” instead of being allowed “free” and “direct ascent” to the “vpper parts,” gives to the bodily function of excretion a disciplinary element involving detention and violent suppression of anything attempting to rise above where it belongs. Crooke’s comparison of the anus to the “port Esquiline,” the gate of Rome beyond which human waste was dumped, strengthens the comparison between the individual body and the social body made central in his choice of title for his treatise; and it is almost certainly an allusion to Spenser’s identical comparison in his allegory of the body in Book Two of *The Faerie Queene*, which, as I have mentioned, Crooke directly refers to and quotes from in other parts of his treatise. Since I have
developed the ideological significance of these points in greater detail within the chapters of *Digestive Tracts*, I will concentrate here on Crooke’s use of the word *Orque* in his depictions of the guts. I suggest that an examination of his anatomy of the belly reveals the assimilation of language and its cultural import into the self by way of the intestinal tract.

The *OED* suggests that *orque* likely comes from the Italian word *orco*, or man-eating giant (ogre), and that it is unlikely to be a survival of the Old English *orc*, or demon, which also appears as the first element of *orcēnas*, “evil spirits, walking corpses.” *Orque* is an extremely rare word, especially in the days before Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, but it does also appear in Joshua Sylvester’s early seventeenth-century translation of Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas’s depiction of Dearth, one of the Furies, in his *Divine Weeks and Works*. In Sylvester’s translation, Dearth has “loathsom stinking breath,” “hollow eyes” and “meager cheeks and chin,” bones poking through her “sable skin,” and swollen knees and knuckles (261). Like Ovid’s Famine, her “empty bowels may be plainly spīd / Clean through the wrinkles of her withered hide,” and she “hath no belly, but the bellies seat.” Du Bartas’s depiction of Dearth strongly resembles Ovid’s depiction in Book Eight of the *Metamorphoses* of both Famine and Erysicthon, to whom Ceres sends Famine as punishment for destroying her sacred grove. Conflating Ovid’s description of Famine and his description of the starving and eventually self-consuming Erysicthon, Du Bartas continues:

> Insatiate Orque, that even at one repast,  
> Almost all creatures in the World would waste;  
> Whose greedy gorge dish after dish doth draw,  
> Seeks meat in meat. For, still her monstrous maw  

> Voyds in deouourcing, and somtimes she eats  
> Her own deer Babes for lack of other meats:

39 The description of the Furies appears as the third part of the first day of the second week.
Nay more, somtimes (O strangest gluttony!)
She eats her self, her self to satisfie;
Lessening her self, her self so to in large[.] (262)

The appearance of the word *Orque* in Crooke’s text is quite clearly influenced by this earlier and widely-known text, and as such it forms part of a long history of textual and cultural incorporation, but in Crooke’s case, incorporation into key organs of bodily incorporation. Rather than being stuck in the stomach, the word is undergoing digestion. Crooke’s use of *Orque*, with its grounding in literary representations of famine, is additionally significant since one of the sections of the small intestine, the jejunum, literally means “hungry” or “fasting” gut (so named because usually empty when dissected), a point regularly noted by early modern medical writers.

Although Crooke does not gender *Orque* in his use of the term, both Du Bartas’s Dearth and Ovid’s Famine are examples of the “feminization of famine” analyzed by Margaret Kelleher and discussed in relation to shrew-taming methods in Chapter One. Crooke’s allusion to Du Bartas’s Dearth in his anatomical text connects famine and the anatomized body in a way that is mirrored in Du Bartas’s (and in Ovid’s) personifications of extreme hunger. Dearth’s “empty bowels may be plainly spi’d / Clean through the wrinkles of her withered hide,” and she “hath no belly, but the bellies seat.” In the starving body the skin is essentially transparent with the result that, as in an anatomized body, the internal organs are visible to the voyeur, or have been removed altogether leaving an empty space. In *The Discovery of A New World* (1609) Joseph Hall likewise connects starvation and anatomies. Of the inhabitants of the Starvling Island, or Hunger-land, also under the curse of Ceres because she was shipwrecked there while seeking her daughter, Hall writes that their “hew” is “pale and swartie,” their skins are “crumpled like halfe burnt parchment and pucker’d like the hide of an elephant,” and “you would swear they were anatomies with fresh skin or else one of Athenodorus his apparitions” (56). Similarly, in *A View of the Present State of Ireland*,
Spenser explains that the victims of famine during the wars in Munster “looked anatomies of death,” “spake like ghosts crying out of their graves,” and made “feasts” of “shamrocks” (104). Hall’s comparison of the skin of famished people to parchment blurs the line between starving body and text just as his other comparison to the hide of an elephant blurs the line between human and animal. Given these examples, it is possible that orque has as strong a relationship with orcnēas, “evil spirits, walking corpses” (my emphasis) as with the man-eating ogre.

In conclusion, I would like to draw attention to current medical research being done on the belly, and on the intestines in particular. In *The Second Brain: The Scientific Basis of Gut Instinct and a Groundbreaking New Understanding of Nervous Disorders of the Stomach and Intestine* (1998), Michael Gershon, M.D., interprets the bowels in a way reminiscent of earlier medical and cultural models. Gershon argues that there is a “brain in the bowel” and that the “ugly gut is more intellectual than the heart and may have a greater capacity for ‘feeling’” (xiii). It is the only organ, he explains, that has “an intrinsic nervous system” and can therefore “mediate reflexes in the complete absence of input from the brain or spinal cord” (xiii). He adds:

Evolution has played a trick. When our predecessors emerged from the primeval ooze and acquired a backbone, they also developed a brain in the head and a gut with a mind of its own. The organism could thus attend to more attractive things, like finding food, escaping destruction, and having sex with other organisms. All this could occur while the bowel handled digestion and absorption beyond the pale of cognition. It was not necessary to devote cerebral energy to visceral matters because the viscera took care of themselves. (xiii)

With the exception of Gershon’s mention of the theory of evolution, his opinion of the function of the gut in allowing the brain to perform tasks other than digestion is not unlike Galen’s opinion that the intestines allow people to undertake “nobler” activities than simply eating and excreting.
According to Gershon, though, it is not so much the winding structure of the intestines that allows the brain opportunity to do other things but a consequence of the gut’s nervous system. He notes that there are more nerve cells in the esophagus, stomach, and large intestine than in the rest of the peripheral nervous system, and the nervous system of the gut is “a vast chemical warehouse within which is represented every one of the classes of neurotransmitter found in the brain. [...] The multiplicity of neurotransmitters in the bowel suggests that the language spoken by the cells of the enteric nervous system is rich and brainlike in its complexity” (xiii). Outlining the relationship between the brain and what he calls the “second brain,” Gershon employs highly politicized language not unlike that used by much earlier writers. As he explains:

In every body, the brain is king. Its writ is law. At the top of the bowel, the rule of the king is acknowledged, but as one descends deeper and deeper into the depths of the gut, the rule of the king weakens. A new order emerges: that of the second brain. From the mouth to the middle of the esophagus, virtually nothing moves unless the brain decrees that it should. The first tentative signs of the lower will become manifest in the peristaltic movements of the lower esophagus, which require the participation of the enteric nervous system to be anything like normal. The central authority of the king is restored in the lower esophageal sphincter, but only temporarily.

In the stomach the central order is still important, and in the form of orders transmitted by the vagus nerves, the will of the brain looms large. The second brain, however, is now also a potent factor, and should the word of the brain be lost, the enteric nervous system is ready and able to take over the show. That is, the enteric nervous system can take over all aspects of the show except the running of the pyloric sphincter, which curiously enough is left to the brain to operate by way of the vagus nerves. To descend below the pyloric sphincter (the exit of the stomach), however, is to move almost beyond the reach of the king. This is the turf of the enteric nervous system, where the brain can exert only quantitative effects and not make the basic
decisions of what to do and when. It is an autonomous region that cares little for the brain and is happy to do without it altogether. The central authority of the brain is not reexerted until one emerges from the colon at the rectum and anus. (113)

In Gershon’s microcosm, the brain is not an absolute ruler with “central authority.” The gut is an “autonomous region” preferring to manage its “turf” without government interference. Gershon’s *The Second Brain* is an example of the continuing ideological underpinnings not only of medical rhetoric but also of medical paradigms. His model of the body represents a challenge to the cerebro-centrism that has developed over the centuries, re-ascribing to the belly a much more important physiological and emotional role in the understanding of the self.
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