UFR LANGUES, LITTERATURES ET CIVILISATIONS ETRANGERES
DEPARTEMENT DES ETUDES DU MONDE ANGLOPHONE
M2 RECHERCHE « ETUDES DU MONDE ANGLOPHONE »

Telling Stories of Gender and Beliefs: Witches, Martyrs, Sorcerers during the English Reformations of the Sixteenth Century

Mémoire de Master 2

2022-2023

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

All of my gratitude goes to my supervisors, Jeanne Mathieu and Rachel Rogers, who agreed to guide me throughout the entirety of this research. Their insight and guidance on my research pushed me to go the extra mile for this work. Without their positive support, this dissertation would not have been possible. Additionally, I want to thank the members of my jury, Nathalie Rivère de Carles and Xavier Cervantès, for joining me in the process.

To my parents and friends, who have listened to all my doubts and fears these past two years. They have supported me, encouraged me even when it was the hardest. Most of all, they gave me confidence to believe in myself and my ideas.

A special thanks to Professor Helen Parish who taught at the University of Reading in 2020 and made me fall in love with the early modern period and the history of belief.

Lastly, this research is dedicated to my grandmother whom I miss very much. I wish she were still here to read this piece.

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"And to saue the lyfe corporall is to lose the lyfe eternall. […] Therfore most tender ones, I haue by gods spirit geuen ouer the flesh, with the fighte of my soule: and the spirit hath the victory. The flesh shal now yer it be longe leaue of to synne: the spirite shall raigne eternally."

- From a letter written by Minister John Rough in John Foxe's Actes and Monuments (1563)

INTRODUCTION

The sixteenth century in England marked a period of doctrinal and religious instability, the very fabric that belief systems operated on was endangered by Protestant reformers and by the ruling English monarchs of the period. Until Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1534, England like many other states in Europe was under the religious rule of the Roman Catholic Church.[1] Over the course of the following years, Henry VIII and his counsellors proceeded to modify the scope of England's religious landscape. Other European states initiated similar changes based on the rise of the popularity of Protestant theology that was developed by Martin Luther and the publication of his *Ninety-Five Theses* (1517) in which he presented his desire to focus on Scripture only and to re-establish a simple relationship between the believer and God.[2] We might infer then that Henry VIII's decision to step away from Rome was in support of Lutheran ideologies even if that was not the case. This dissertation will not focus on the political implications of the break with Rome yet an explanation is needed to further our point. The English religious landscape was, therefore, unstable in the wake of Henry VIII's reign. Questier writes that "In that the Church is an institution in which power is exercised by some over others […], and the thing which it does (even the way it expresses doctrine) are affected by political considerations."[3] Henry VIII's inability to create a common religious space in which Protestant Reformers who believed in Luther's *sola scriptura* idea and Catholics whose centuries-old establishment was taken away from them made it nearly impossible for them to coexist.[4] Indeed, over the entirety of the sixteenth century, England was ruled by several monarchs who followed Henry VIII's creation of an English Protestant identity or who attempted to completely erase it to re-establish Roman Catholicism as the religion of the State.[5] Christopher Haigh, a historian of religion of the early modern period, argued that the consensus of speaking of a single "Reformation" could not be applied to England.[6] England was faced with different

[1] The Pope at the time of Henry VIII's break with Rome was Pope Leo X and later Pope Clement VII whose relations with the English King were good until he refused the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage with Catherine of Aragon.
[2] Luther, Martin, *95 Theses* (Wittenberg: 1517).
[3] Questier, Michael, *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580-1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 2.
[4] *Sola scriptura* literally translates to "by Scriptures only". This doctrine was one of the foundational principles of Martin Luther's theological doctrine. The Bible is thus viewed as the only power and authority which holds the true message of God, this doctrine does not recognize the authority of intermediaries such as the Pope for instance.
[5] Notable Protestant monarchs were King Edward VI who reigned from 1547 to 1553. He was the son of Henry VIII. Queen Elizabeth I reigned from 1558 until 1603. She was replaced by King James VI of Scotland and I of England. They have marked the period of the English Reformations and they have continued to create a Protestant identity in their own respect.
[6] Haigh, Christopher, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

Protestant Reformations and Counter-Reformations in the plural, each of these periods initiating drastic change in the very structure of the belief system of England and its people. Haigh's research is, thus, one of the pillars of this study's theoretical background. To further define the scope of this study, we must dwell a little longer on how belief systems were structured in sixteenth century England. The social, political, and theological systems overlapped during this period as suggested by many historians of the period like Patrick Collinson.[7] The precedent set by the Head of the Church, a role given to the monarch since the first English Reformation, had a long-lasting impact on the way religious beliefs were viewed and thus, how the subsequent religious oppression by the State was justified. Several studies conclude that the beginning of the English Reformation marked the end of medieval times and thus the establishment of a new paradigm of thought and beliefs.[8]

Although the process of the Reformations lasted over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we have decided to restrict our study to the sixteenth century only. England as a country was very large and diverse, many historians such as Jan Pitman focused on North Norfolk as a case study.[9] Geographical areas are definitely aspects that can factor in nuances and differences in our understanding of our subject yet we desire to explore a more theoretical explanation of beliefs and their structures. As we will attempt to show throughout this study, the distinction made between binary structures of Catholic versus Protestant fails to represent the nuances and complexities of this period. The conversion of the state from one religious order to another was not systematically synonymous with individual conversion but it still begged for a religious uniformity which none of the monarchs of the period was able to enforce or obtain which they attempted to remedy by enforcing outward conformity. As such, this study will use political and religious agitation as a basis for understanding the impact it had on the construction of what it meant to be an English Protestant during the sixteenth century.

Social agitation was another symptom of the instability of the period. This agitation was revealed through several popular rebellions throughout England. The Pilgrimage of Grace of 1536, for instance, were a series of revolts in the counties of Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire.

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[7] Collinson, Patrick, "The politics of religion and the religion of politics in Elizabethan England" *Historical Research*, vol. 82, no.215 (February 2009).

[8] See Thomas, Keith, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (London: Penguin Books, 1991) especially Chapter 2 "The Magic of the Medieval Church". Ruether, R.R., *Church and Family in the Medieval and Reformation Periods* (1984). Rudolph W. Heinze et al., *Reform and Conflict: From the Medieval World to the Wars of Religion, AD 1350-1648* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Sharpe, J.A., *Early Modern England: A Social History* 1550-1760 (1987).

[9] Pitman, Jan. "Tradition and Exclusion: Parochial Officeholding in Early Modern England, A Case Study from North Norfolk, 1580-1640" *Rural History* 15.1 (2004) pp.27-45.

People rebelled against Henry VIII's policies regarding the dissolution and destruction of monasteries. Another notable revolt was Kett's rebellion which stemmed from the popular discontent against landowners who profited from the agricultural crisis. The different revolts prompted either by unpopular religious policies or by popular anxiety over the agriculture crisis shows the extent of the agitation that English society was under during the sixteenth century.[10] We have established in this introduction that religion in England was vital to the very structure of the state and the way politics operated yet we have not explored the prosecution faced both by Protestants and Catholics. The period was marked by the publication and distribution of many treatises from both the Catholic and Protestant sides which have allowed historians to further understand some key eschatological concepts which permeated the behaviour of many believers from either confession. This myriad of works played a crucial role in the legitimization of the prosecution that both sides, Catholic or Protestant, faced by the state. This was crystallised through the creation of an *Other* with a capital O, an alien or even a stranger—an enemy that ought to be challenged both physically and figuratively, in writing.[11] For instance, roughly two hundred and eighty Protestants were killed because of their religion during Queen Mary I's reign. In parallel, around 200 Roman Catholics were executed under the rule of Queen Elizabeth I.[12] The idea of martyrology is central in the process of the legitimization of the prosecution Protestant believers were victims of by those they considered as heretics and traitors. This paper will draw from the representation of martyrdom in primarily Protestant martyrology works. A large portion of our study will analyse John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* which was originally entitled *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein ar comprehended and described the great persecutions horrible troubles, that have bene wrought and practised by the Romishe prelates, speciallye in this Realme of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lorde, a thousande, unto the tyme nowe present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies wrytinges certificatorie* (1583) which was a central work of the sixteenth century for the creation of a strong English Protestant identity as well as the perpetuation of the Christian tradition of

[10] See for further information, Wood, Andy, "Rebellion in Sixteenth-Century England" *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) pp.49-81.
[11] A recent study conducted by a group of researchers analysed the keywords with which early modern people described those that were 'different'. See Nandini, Das et al. *Keywords of Identity, Race, and Human Mobility in Early Modern England*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021).
[12] See Houliston, Victor & Muller, Aislinn (ed.) Middleton, Paul, "The Elizabethan Martyrs" *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Christian Martyrdom*. Chap. 19 (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2020).

martyrdom.[13] As such, our study falls under the scope of history in the way that we intend to use and analyse authentic sources dated from the period we are writing about. We have decided not to modernise the spellings of the primary sources of our corpus in order to work with the original meanings and literary goals of the different authors. Nevertheless, we were not able to access some original texts which explains some modernised spelling throughout this paper. We intend to give a more modern approach to the methodology that previous researchers of the period have offered—the question of gender has been extensively studied in relation to the English Reformations of the sixteenth century. Our method could be described as part of "feminist history" as defined by Jill Matthews:

> What seems clear from this example is that it is not the subject matter but how it is handled which determines feminist history, whereas subject matter is central to women's history. Feminist history, in fact, need not focus on women as such, although in general, it has done so. What is central to feminist history is the recognition of gender relations as a major power dynamic within history.[14]

The last sentence from the above quote is at the core of this thesis, we aim to draw a parallel between the way the Protestant Reformations shaped religious and popular beliefs and the social responses that were given to those beliefs. Researchers such as Keith Thomas have studied extensively the extent of the relationship between the established Church and "popular beliefs". As such, Thomas' book entitled *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England* (1991) will be used as one of the theoretical bases for our paper. Ranging from the topics of "established Church" to that of magic and astrology to witchcraft, Thomas renders a thorough analysis of the impact of the Reformation on the construction and perpetuation of popularised beliefs among believers. Other notable writers on this subject are Alan Macfarlane, Stuart Clark or the collective work of Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester and Gareth Roberts.[15]

Before we go any further in the introduction, it seems central to describe clearly the term "belief" and the difference between established and popular beliefs. The following quotes are definitions of the word "belief" in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED):

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[13] These ideas will be developed later in the dissertation, they will heavily draw on my previous dissertation that extensively studied female martyrdom and John Foxe's works. See Clavier, Laureen, "The Representations of Female Martyrs in John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563)" Université Toulouse II Jean Jaurès, Master's Dissertation. (2021).

[14] Matthews, Jill, "Feminist History" *Labour History*. No.50 (1986), 10.

[15] See Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester and Gareth Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Alan Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart* England (London: Routledge, 1970). Stuart Clark. *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

> The mental action, condition, or habit of trusting to or having confidence in a person or thing; trust, dependence, reliance, confidence, faith.
>
> Something believed; a proposition or set of propositions held to be true. In early usage esp.: a doctrine forming part of a religious system; a set of such doctrines, a religion.[16]

"Belief" is, therefore, a word that is rooted in the idea of religion and truth. Beliefs, as defined by these previous definitions, were not as definite or clearly defined either which suggests that we need to look beyond the propositions of these definitions. We believe that there needs to be distinctive categories to attempt to understand how beliefs worked in early modern England. As such, this paper proposes two separate categories: the first, "established beliefs" and the second, "popular beliefs". The first draws on the systemic organisation of a widely accepted system of beliefs either of the State –-such as Protestantism or Catholicism— or an idea that was largely legitimized by a multitude of works or laws for instance. Over the years, different translations and versions of the Bible were written and used in Protestant churches. The Great Bible of 1539 was authorised by Henry VIII to be read in church services throughout the country as it became obligatory for all churches to own a Bible per royal injunctions.[17] The Bishops' Bible of 1568 was produced during Elizabeth I's reign and was revised several times. The King James Version (KJV) was completed in 1611 using the Bishops' Bible. The production of such works over the different reigns of different monarchs establishes a desire to shape Protestant beliefs and to set English Protestant beliefs separate from other forms of Protestantism. Coupled with royal warrants and injunctions, Protestantism was established as the sole legitimate and legal belief system during the reigns of the aforementioned monarchs. These examples depict how the State can affect the way beliefs are policed and controlled through an established religion. The OED proposes the following definition of religion:

> Belief in or acknowledgement of some superhuman power or powers (esp. a god or gods) which is typically manifested in obedience, reverence, and worship; such a belief as part of system defining a code of living, esp. as a means of achieving spiritual or material improvement. [18]

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[16] Oxford English Dictionary, definition of "belief". https://www-oed-com.gorgone.univ-toulouse.fr/view/Entry/17368?redirectedFrom=belief#eid

[17] The writing of the Great Bible of 1539 was supervised by Thomas Cromwell, a prominent actor of Henry VIII's court during his reign. As a lawyer, Cromwell wrote several laws which are known today as Cromwell's Injunctions regarding the Anglican Church and faith. See *The Second Royal Injunctions of Henry VIII* (1538). https://www.henryviiithereign.co.uk/1538-second-injunctions.html

[18] Oxford English Dictionary, definition of "religion". https://www-oed-com.gorgone.univ-toulouse.fr/view/Entry/161944?redirectedFrom=religion#eid

By proposing to differentiate the two terms, belief and religion, we propose to show the difficulty of setting clear boundaries of what it meant to believe for the people of the sixteenth century as they were part of an ever-changing belief system. One of the main goals of this dissertation is to analyse how the Reformations impacted the "code of living" of English believers and the way they relate to the definite (or indefinite) set of rules that were set out by the establishment of the time. As such, it is imperative to note the ambiguity of those terms and the way that we will use them to describe and analyse the occurrences in which they appear to set out a clear and comprehensible study.

As for the second part of the notions we wish to define and explore, the phrase "popular beliefs" pertains to ideas or beliefs that are not shared by a definite establishment, outside of a set code of living. We will consider these beliefs as outside of the religious or legal institutions. The notion of "vernacular beliefs" is a core part of this definition, as explained by Marion Bowman.

> Vernacular knowledge is a realm of discourses and beliefs that challenge institutional authorities and official truths, defying regulation and eluding monovocal expressions of the status quo. Unlike monolithic "truths", religious or secular, vernacular knowledge tends to be dynamic, fluid, ambivalent, controversial, appearing in multiple forms and open to alternatives.[19]

Among those popular beliefs, we can include the different forms of "magic" as studied for example by Thomas. Astrology or witchcraft are examples of the different forms of magic that were commonly and generally accepted forms of beliefs outside of established religion. They are, for the most part, external to the common devotion to God and were themselves subject to different forms. The issue lies in the blurred boundaries that separate these two categories—until the witch craze of the middle and late sixteenth century, certain religious practices were not part of either Protestant or Catholic institutions yet they were accepted by these institutions. They fell within the scope of doctrines which were constructed around religious texts and/or relics, popular piety and the decision of the clergy. For Catholics, these examples of popular piety are shrines or the veneration of saints such as the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.[20] The English Reformations crystallised this ambiguous differentiation between the two categories, one of the most prominent attacks of established beliefs on popular beliefs is the persecution of

[19] Marion Bowman, Ülo Valk (eds.) *Vernacular Knowledge: Contesting Authority, Expressing Beliefs*. (Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2022)

[20] For a more complete study of Christian examples of popular piety see John W. O'Malley, *Catholicism in Early Modern History: A Guide to Research* (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1988).

witches and the subsequent witch-hunt that was led by the English state. Keith Thomas writes the following:

> But even in the years after the Reformation, it would be wrong to regard magic and religion as two opposed and incompatible systems of belief. There were magical elements surviving in religion, and there were religious facets to the practice of magic. This could make it difficult for the clerical opponents of magic to know where to draw the line.[21]

Our goal, therefore, is to show the innate link between the way Protestant and Catholic persecution was established in this period and that of witches and sorcerers. How can beliefs that are considered to be popular or even "vulgar" be embedded in the construction and legitimization of an established religion? Can we effectively divide the impact they have on each other and their shared discourses?

As we have set out earlier, this work follows the methodological ideas of feminist history which aims to use gender as an overarching model of analysis and understanding of a historical period. The attitude of many Protestant and Catholic thinkers of the period regarding the issue of magic and witchcraft was congruent with the demonization of women. One of the most famous works of demonology was Reginald Scott's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) which laid out the boundaries of magical activity and the extent to which it had permeated the religious and popular culture of England. It played a crucial role in the legitimization of the study of witchcraft and demonology as part of a scientific discourse. In his work that would be revised over the following years, Scott described the nature of witches as "certeine old women" and "ignorant and impotent women."[22] The discourse was later developed by James I's *Daemonologie* (1597) in which he sought to scientifically and theologically explain the danger of magic in its many forms.[23] Three different books consider three different forms of magic, from "Magic and necromancy" to "Sorcerie and witchcraft" and "Spirits and spectres."[24] James I and Scott produced a body of work that was vehement in its representation of religion and magic while at the same time delineating the limits of writing in a scientific, rational manner. They determined their system of belief on religion and witchcraft with the help of several different sources—legal sources including the trials of witches and sorcerers, theological arguments and the use of older knowledge from Antiquity. Thomas argues that "Protestants and

[21] Thomas, *The Decline of Magic*, 318.
[22] Scott, Reginald. *The discoverie of witchcraft, Wherein the lewde dealing of witches and witchmongers is notablie detected*… (London: Richard Cotes, 1584), 77;83.
[23] James I, *Daemonologie* (1597).
[24] James I, *Daemonologie* (1597).

Catholics in the mid sixteenth century were equally vehement in their hostility to popular magic," which coupled with the legal changes regarding the practice of religion and devotion to God rendered the practice of popular magic an issue. It is generally accepted that the case of witchcraft in the sixteenth century combined several truths regarding the position of women in early modern English history as well as their evolving position in religion since the medieval period. In that, we ought to explore the way previous historians have attempted to understand the situation. Christina Larner wrote that "Witchcraft was not sex-specific but it was sex-related" repudiating the theory among feminist scholars of witchcraft that the witch hunt was primarily a woman hunt.[25] Larner argued that "it is the hunting of women who do not fulfil the male view of how women ought to conduct themselves."[26] The explanations of why women were statistically more persecuted than men during the height of witchcraft trials in the sixteenth century are plenty and all of them are essential in our early discussion of the relation of gender with religion and magic. An interesting theory comes from Stuart Clark, arguing that the tension of gender within witchcraft is rooted in dual opposites between female and male. Clark's theory builds the foundation of a somewhat faithful representation of womanhood, the plausibility of such a view by the common people and thinkers of the early modern period shows that the dichotomous distinction between good and bad, women and men is not that clear. Nevertheless, it fails to explain the cultural and popular implications of the many forms of magic and why women were thought to be more susceptible to "fall prey" to these activities. Edward Bever argued that accusations of witchcraft against women could be explained with socioeconomic and psychological analyses that highlighted the struggle for power in the context of social and interpersonal relationships.[27]

All of the possibilities that befall us to understand the implications of gender within the unstable systems of beliefs in the sixteenth century are a prerequisite to further this study. We cannot possibly offer a satisfactory explanation of religious beliefs if we do not include the issue of magic, the popular and legal hostility regarding witchcraft, as part of the discussion. In Malcolm Gaskill's *Witchcraft: A Very Short Introduction* (2010), the author points out the interesting fact that "the charge of witchcraft was never uniquely associated with faith or another but generated by conflict *between* faiths."[28] As other historians have pointed out, there

[25] Larner, Christina. *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1984).
[26] *Ibid., Witchcraft and Religion*.
[27] Bever, Edward. "Witchcraft, Female Aggression, and Power in the Early Modern Community" *Journal of Social History*, vol.35, no.4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[28] Gaskill, Malcom. *Witchcraft: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 16.

is magic in religion and religion in magic.[29] For example, the making of a Foxean martyr, especially a female one, was bestowed a supernatural, God-like aura that defied the materialistic implications of the world. In the making of a witch, demonologists operated on a similar mode of representation that bestowed those deviant women (or men) the power of defying material issues with the aid of the Devil. The prosecutions of Protestants, and the subsequent creation of a Protestant martyrdom by Foxe for instance, parallels the heretical discourse that permeated the trials of witches. In that sense, we intend to shed light on the sociological, theological and intellectual similarities and differences between two distinct periods of prosecution against systems of beliefs whose limits were hard to delineate.

This dissertation will thus tackle three different issues as follows—the structuring of beliefs and the distinction between established and popular beliefs. In this part, we will develop the intellectual issues of what it meant to believe in England during that period. The boundaries of how the discussions between hagiography, martyrology and demonology and the way each of these literary traditions played a prerequisite role in the prosecution of the Protestant community and women within that same religious community will be discussed. Our second part deals primarily with theological ideas, the extent to which the concept of heresy permeated the dichotomous representation of the Self and the Other. We intend to study the theological and sociological meanings of violence against those who were considered heretical. These ideas will be explored through an analysis of legal sources from trials of witches and religious traitors. These questions, as we have introduced earlier, beg the question of how and why women were for the most part prosecuted. Thus, the third and last section of this paper will explore the negotiation of gender in the creation of an English and Protestant discourse. Our previous discussions will have questioned the importance of language and discourse in the differentiation of religious communities as well as gender categories. An important question regarding these issues is the extent to which authors justify the crossing of stereotypical gendered behaviours in a religious and magical context. As laid out above, this paper aims to highlight the liminal space that heretics, women or men, witches or traitors, Protestants or Catholics were sent to because of their dissenting beliefs. We will study how that liminal space, in its anthropological sense of being a middle stage, a sort of threshold that involved either the celebration or the destruction of a previous identity, has impacted the characterization of religious and gender

[29] See Thomas, Keith. *The Decline of Magic* (1991) and especially, "Chapter 9: Magic and Religion", pp.301-335.

categories.[30] In other words, we set out to explore the making of such a liminal space and the meaning it held for those that were involved in the process. This dissertation will thus draw from several scientific traditions and methodologies to write a story of the intermingling of gender and beliefs of the sixteenth-century English Reformations.

[30] The concept of liminality was first introduced in anthropology in the early twentieth century by Arnold van Gennep. See Arnold Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage* (Paris: 1909). Our view of this concept follows that of some philosophers such as Kaspers who have developed these ideas on a larger scale, in a same society rather than on a small community scale. Both of these ideas are integral in our study of the impact of an established religion, which pertains to Kaspers' large-scale societal crisis, on popular beliefs such as witchcraft or astrology which affected smaller communities. As such, the liminal space is a concept that can be applied in a historiographical context—in our case, witches can be considered liminal as well as the conceptualization of beliefs through worship in the creation of a martyrological identity for Protestants.

PART I. STRUCTURING BELIEFS: ESTABLISHED AND POPULAR GENDER RELATIONS

Gender history is a work on power relations. The structure of gender relations within the different levels of society is opaque. It requires social actors to recognize the theoretical aspects of the meanings of "gender", the subsequent social consequences it has on all of the individuals who take part in its structure and perpetuation. As we have recognized earlier, gender is a somewhat malleable concept whose shape has changed over history and whose structure is not static. Even by recognizing the malleable nature of gender relations, it is important to note that many gendered behaviours are socially regulated to some extent by many factors that range from familial influence to penal laws and one's religious environment. In other words, social prescription should not be confused with practice but rather, they should be used simultaneously to understand the constant tension between the different spaces in which gender relations are structured, negotiated and arranged.

Introduced earlier, the concept of liminal spaces is another way with which we can conduct this study of complex set of social behaviours. We must interrogate the way gender relations are codified and simultaneously de-codified in the public and private spaces of early modern England. In the words of Amanda Flather, "Structures do not exist as an abstract, mechanistic set of rules, acting as a coercive force on helpless subjects. But at the same time, the strategies and intentions of social actors are regulated."[31] The growing interest in the liminality of gender relations and spaces in early modern England has helped transition the history of gender from a normative story of binary structure to a nonbinary space which allows for a renewed interpretation of the gendered social relations of the early modern period. Flather's work will be quoted and used a methodological basis for the major part of this section as well as the very recent work of Kaye McLelland entitled *Violent Liminalities in Early Modern Culture* for her reworking of the definitions of liminalities and thresholds within textual analysis of violence.[32]

The threshold, the liminal space in which these negotiations of gender occur will be of interest in this part of the study as we try to understand the part played by gender relations in the construction of established and popular beliefs. At the core of these beliefs of the sixteenth century, many Protestant and Catholic theological structures were established within the tradition of late medieval Christianity. This historical and theological basis is necessary to paint a clearer picture of how Protestantism and its believers erected a specific and legitimate religious discourse that writers of the time built upon. The cases of the concept of sin is central

[31] Flather, Amanda. *Gender and Space in Early Modern England* (Chippenham: The Boydell Press, 2007) 3.
[32] McLelland, Kaye. *Violent Liminalities in Early Modern Culture: Inhabiting Contested Thresholds* (New York: Routledge, 2023).

to the period, it is often linked to the Devil and its many forms in the material and religious realm of the sixteenth century. As such, we shall inspect the mechanisms of legitimization of the Devil and the associated meanings within Protestant culture at the time.

I. English Reformations: Protestantism and Catholicism within the tradition of Late Medieval Christianity

The discourse sketched out by the different Protestant and Catholic writers of the time is central to the way beliefs were spread out on either side of the English religious spectrum. John Foxe or John Bale, both Protestant martyrologists, addressed their readers to interrogate them on "true faith". They believed that Catholic clergy had wronged its believers of a true, genuine relation with God.[33] In Bale's *The Image of Both Churches,* the writer attempted to prove the legitimacy of the Protestant movement in England and over in continental Europe by denouncing the corruption within the Roman Catholic Church.[34] In essence, Protestant writers demonstrated their desire to completely break with the Catholic tradition of thinking and structuring life. In their numerous attacks on Roman Catholicism, Bale or Foxe fail to completely erase Catholic influence from their theological demonstration of the legitimacy of English Protestantism. They draw heavily on the long ecclesiastical history of Christianity. James Louis Campani Messmer notes that "Bale's identification of the papacy with Antichrist is an integral component of his larger theology of history. By tying the Roman popes with the epitome of evil, he argued that Antichrist led the Roman Church as a whole and as such it could not be the true Church."[35] John Foxe drew upon early portrayal of Christianity and Jesus Christ to legitimize the standing of Protestantism in England and more largely in all Europe. In this sense, we must note that hagiographers and martyrologists of the time created a historical framework that enabled them to justify the genuine nature of Protestant beliefs. On the other side of the spectrum, Catholic writers drew upon historical and religious continuity within the English realm which argued for a more legitimate place at the core of the English early modern identity. Historians such as Luc Borot have investigated the link between patriotism and religious lineage which is innately connected with culture.[36] Polemical exchanges between

[33] Both John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and John Bale's *The image of both churches* (London: 1547) will be quoted throughout this dissertation to provide a larger lens to understand the interconnectedness of literary works of the period. They are central works in the construction of Protestantism in England.

[34] Bale, John. *The image of both Churches after the most wonderfull and heauenly Reuelation of sainct Iohn the Euangelist, containing a very fruitfull exposition or paraphrase vpon the same. Wherin it is conferred vvith the other scriptures, and most auctorised histories. Compyled by Iohn Bale an exile also in this lyfe, for the faithfull testimony of Iesu* (London: 1547).

[35] Messmer, James Louis Campani. "The Final Judgement: John Bale's Apocalyptic Justification of English Protestantism" *Honors Thesis* (2018).

[36] Borot, Luc (eds. Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Claire and al.)"Catholic Strategies of Resistance to Anti-Catholicism in Seventeenth-Century England" *Anti-Catholicism in Britain and England, 1600-2000: Practices, Representations and Ideas* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

Catholics and Protestants were thus common even when Catholicism was officially deemed illegal by the state especially during the reign of Elizabeth. By nature, these exchanges intend to be polemical, voicing discontent to reaffirm for each side their natural authority over the other. Alison Shell states the following regarding the dialogue between Catholics and Protestants:

> Yet this throws into relief the usual concessions which any polemicist, Catholic or Protestant, was obliged to make. To condemn something one needs to evoke it, and where Reformation writers evince squeamishness about voicing one's opponent, this reflects a wider anxiety about the potential entrapments of spontaneous everyday speech.[37]

Among early Protestants, who had a vested interest in pitting themselves against the dominating group, the trope could be linked to visualisations of the Pope as Antichrist, Christ's opposite. But evidence of popular complaint from a group once powerful, and now suppressed, is a rarer commodity because of their inability to publish and speak publicly. For Catholics operating in this idiom, a reversal had already occurred and was to be feared unless it took the form of turning the clock back.[38] In his *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990), James C. Scott worked on social domination between the dominant and dominated classes.[39] A central argument of this work is the "politics of disguise and anonymity that takes place in public view but is designed to have a double meaning or to shield the identity of the actors." This concept is centred around the case of subordinate groups, and the way the discourse that emanates from them and by them is inherently influenced by their place within the social organisation of the time. Scot writes the following about this hidden/public continuum:

> Rumor, gossip, folktales, jokes, songs, rituals, codes, and euphemisms—a good part of the folk culture of subordinate groups—fit this description. […] At one level these are nothing but innocent stories about animals; at another level they appear to celebrate the cunning wiles and vengeful spirit of the weak as they triumph over the strong. I argue that a partly sanitized, ambiguous, and coded version of the hidden transcript is always present in the public discourse of subordinate groups.[40]

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[37] Shell Alison, *Oral Culture and Catholicism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 12.
[38] *Ibid*., 93.
[39] Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).
[40] Scott, *Domination*, 19.

In that sense, Scott's anthropological work offers a newer form of understanding of the reversals of roles of the dominated and dominating social and religious groups during our period of interest. This theoretical and methodological lens will offer us an insight into the way the upheaval of social roles and norms within the English Reformations influenced the discourse and subsequently the identity of the dominating and subordinate groups. Different levels of early modern society can be analysed through this lens, this theory roots its interest in the presence of subordinate groups whose condition is validated through social, legal, and often by popular writing. Evidently, since Henry VIII's break with Rome and the persecution historically faced by Catholics during this period, English Catholics were the subordinate social group since Protestantism was the leading belief further legitimized by royal and penal laws. In this case, the form of domination can be exercised in violent outbursts on individuals which demonstrates a large-scale desire to dominate both the individual within the group and the group itself represented by the individual. In this sense, the attacks on Catholics who are often described by Protestants writers as "Popish" or "Romish" which has a derogatory and insulting connotation was a form of pushing them a subordinate role. In his letter to John Foxe, John Loude who was the Archdeacon of Nottingham, wrote about "pestilent papistes."[41] His writing translates a desire to humiliate through the use of several tropes such as an affiliation with the Devil or with buggery.[42]

> Then what lye can he or any man wryght of yow, but yt shalbe fownde trew, ether in your detestable crueltee, fylthy sodomy, or divyllyshe doctrine: he as muche offendythe that thus termythe yow, as he that should call yowr father the divill knave, by whose suggesyons yow fullfylle the measure of your fathers in all manner of crueltee and butchery of godly men.[43]

Similarly, Catholic priest and defender Nicholas Harpsfield wrote his treatise entitled *Dialogi sex contra summi pontificatus, monasticae vitae, sanctorum, sacrarum imaginum*

[41] Quoted from Nichols, John G. *Narrative of the Days of the Reformation: Chiefly from the Manuscripts of John Foxe the Martyrologist* (London: 1579) 17.
[42] Loude writes of "fythly sodomy" reverting to a rather common tactic used by Protestant polemists. At the time, the trope of buggery was a public concern which was made evident by the Buggery Act of 1533 (An Acte for the punishment of the vice of Buggerie) during Henry VIII's reign. This was enacted by Thomas Cromwell declaring the act of sodomy punishable by death. For Bale or Foxe, the acts of sodomy was related to Catholicism as they represented the reversal of God's natural order. See Betteridge, Tom. "The place of sodomy in the historical writings of John Bale and John Foxe" *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp.11-27. Burg, B.R. "Ho hum, another work of the devil. Buggery and sodomy in early Stuart England" in *J Homosex* (1980-1981) pp.69-78.
[43] Nichols, *Narrative of the Days of the Reformation*, 17.

oppugnatores, et pseudomartyres.[44] This response written in Latin was vehemently against the facts and stories of Protestant martyrs depicted by Foxe. This work was written during his imprisonment after he refused to swear allegiance to Queen Elizabeth I and to the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*. In answer to this, Foxe wrote the following passage which depicts the violent and derogatory dialogue of dominance between the two men, each representing their established religion and associated popular beliefs:

> This Alanus Coptic Anglus contendeth and chafeth against my former edition, to prove me in my historic to be a Iyer, forger, impudent, a misreporter of truth, a depraver of stories, a seducer of the world, and what els not ? whose virulent woordes and contumelious tennes, how well they become his popish person, I knowe not.[45]

Reverting to similar tropes, both Catholic and Protestant polemicists were able to criticise their opponents on their unnatural faith and cultural lore. Both John Loud and John Foxe, they create a historical continuum of their own persecution and of their enemies' by reconnecting their adversaries with their supposed wrong nature. The attack on their religious deviance often reads as an attack on sexual traditions within the Catholic community, Foxe speaks of "seducer of the world" above. The process of deindividuation of their opponents is violent, perhaps as a response to the systemic persecution the Protestant community itself faced, but it was not a new trope. Catholics were no longer human, they possessed demonic characteristics ("depraver", "seducer of the world") which connects them to their community. They could no longer be regarded as individuals or humans and should be treated accordingly.

Tangible attempts to humiliate and dehumanise epitomised the desire to corner the Catholic community to their vices and sins. The Catholic enemy then became a subordinate subject to legitimize Protestant supremacy. Through Scott's theory it can be argued that the upheaval of the dominated and dominating spaces surpassed the boundaries of the Protestant and Catholic communities. Women were constantly deprived of their spaces, whether they were Protestant or Catholic. In regards to this, it is impossible to study the social upheaval of the time without noticing the overarching subjection of women which are a special category of their own and a specific case of systematic and systemic social subordination.

It is commonly accepted among historians that women during the sixteenth century were subjected to the private sphere, to household affairs and were separated from the public sphere which was dominated by men. This historical consensus fails to recognize, as pointed by

[44]Harpsfield, Nicholas, *Dialogi sex contra summi pontificatus, monasticae vitae, sanctorum, sacrarum imaginum oppugnatores, et pseudomartyres* (1579).
[45] Nichols, *Narrative of the Days of the Reformation*, 16.

Amanda Flather, the way women negotiated and organized their presence in both and either public or private spheres.[46] Flather's earlier cited theory of social space is crucial to understand women's presence in the sacred spaces of England during the sixteenth century. According to her, the concept of space was a social construct which evolved and changed according to the society in which it was constructed. It is thus related to power dynamics in place in a particular society. David Harvey has established that space and time are socially constructed in four distinct ways:

> The particular way in which space and time get determined is very closely bound up with the power structures and social relations, particular modes of production and consumption, existing in a given society. Therefore the determination of what is space and what is time is not politically neutral but is politically embedded in a certain structure of power relations. To regard a particular version of space and time as 'natural' is to accept the social order that embodies it as also 'natural' and therefore incapable of change.[47]

Building upon these theoretical grounds, we realize that Flather's conceptualization of gendered space in England demands to be examined in more than the public and private spheres. Whether consciously disputed or not, space as a social construct is inherently gendered in its production and the early modern society was no exception. Amanda Vickery argues that the binary separation of social space between public/private and women/men is "at least as old as Aristotle."[48] Many historians of gender of the early modern period have noted, however, the growing space that was given to women thanks to Protestant theology. While Protestantism promoted the learning of Scriptures and their original iterations, women were still subjected to a subordinate role even if their position had somewhat grown in the Protestant community.[49] Space is inherently political in its construction, thus, the presence of women within the political –and public—sphere was constantly negotiated and often repudiated by male thinkers and writers. John Knox was known for his distaste for gynarchy, a political system ruled by women,

[46] Flather, Amanda. "Gender and the Organisation of Sacred Space in Early Modern England c.1580-1640" *The Uses of Space in Early Modern History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp.43-74.
[47] Harvey, David. "The Social Construction of Space and Time: A Relational Theory" *Geographical Review of Japan* (1994), 127.
[48] Vickery, Amanda. *The Gentlemen's Daugther: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 1764.
[49] See Katie Barclay and Stephanie Thomson, "Religious Patronage as Gendered Family Memory in Sixteenth-century England," *Journal of Family History* 46/1 (2021). Gertrud Wittenberg Tönsing, "Feminine Deity or Sister in Faith? A Lutheran Perspective on Mary, the Mother of Jesus," *Grace and Truth* 15/2 (1988). Fairchilds, Cissie. *Women in Early Modern Europe 1500–1700* (Oregon: Pearson Education, 2007).

and his argument that women rule was against the natural order of things saturated his works.[50] Knox's *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* was published in 1558 during which Scotland and England were both ruled by women.[51] His use of the natural-order-of-things trope is reminiscent of the arguments that are used by other Protestant writers to discredit Catholics, thus proving the way that the constant negotiation of dominated and dominating went beyond the foundations of religious dispute and disrupted the way gender was accepted or repudiated especially in public and political spaces. Can we assume that the presence of several women monarchs coincided with the growth of women's political space? Not particularly, but it made the discussion regarding this subject even more urgent and central. If the presence of women in male dominated spaces in early modern England was exceptional in its nature even as it was evolving, the subsequent presence of women in the construction of a legitimate Protestant historical continuum is even more exceptional. Constructing a specific discourse, as we have been establishing until now, is necessary for the domination of Protestantism over the "untrue faith" that is Roman Catholicism. Women's role in the development of a singular Protestant identity through the different periods of the English Reformations is not straight-forward, putting women and gender entirely at the centre of the discussion makes it impossible not to notice how common it was for women to be at the margins of society. Which roles were played by English women during the establishment of a Protestant England? How can we use the ambivalent presence and representation of women within English society as a social proof of the constant construction and de-construction of beliefs?

[50] John Knox wrote his treatise *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* in 1558. Protestant reformers opposed to either Elizabeth or Mary Tudor's reign were for instance: Goodman, Christopher. *How Superior Powers Ought To Be Obeyed By Their Subjects* (1558).

[51] In 1558, Scotland was ruled by Mary I of Scotland while England was ruled by Queen Elizabeth I. The relations between Scotland and England were tumultuous during this period. For further reading, see Blakeway, Amy. "The Anglo-Scottish War of 1558 and the Scottish Reformation" *History: The Journal of the Historical Association*, vol. 102, no. 350, pp.201-224 (2017).

II. Constructing a Specific Religious Discourse: The Exceptional Nature of Women in The Literary Tradition of Martyrology and Demonology

The religious tensions in England exacerbated the need to create a normative and common Protestant identity. The renewed interest in martyrological writings allowed many writers of the time to sketch out the basis for a specific religious discourse across the English Protestant community. John Bale or John Foxe are two of the most dominant martyrologists of the early modern period—they produced the largest works on Protestant martyrdom, depicting the many stories of the victims of anti-Protestantism and legitimized their work within a religious historical continuum that allowed their work to prosper outside of the ecclesiastical tradition of writing martyrdom. In fact, early Christianity relied heavily on the work of hagiographers and martyrologists who told the stories of the good persecuted Christians whose sacrifice crystallized the community fight against the persecuting enemy. Martyrdom is a central feature of Christian faith, it is a component that influenced Roman Catholicism and Protestantism during their emergence. From that experience of martyrdom, both religions shaped their theological identities according to this specific feature and subsequent discourse. The eschatological ideal of sacrificing oneself for the Christian faith, to be a witness for one's faith is made evident in the New Testament; Paul the Apostles wrote that "to live outside of Christ is to die, and to die in Christ is to live."[52] The stories of heroic suffering during the height of early Christian persecution permeated the eschatological tradition of early modern Protestantism, many writers drew parallels with their ancestors whose religion they deemed to be free of the devilish vices of Catholicism. Martyrdom is, therefore, equated with a noble endeavour whose goal is to rejoice in the Spirit of God and to find that spiritual *ataraxia* their Christian soul longs for. Thomas J. Hefferman and James E. Shelton stated that "Christian martyrdom [is] a complex amalgam of late Jewish fidelity to the law and aspects of Greco-Roman thought embodied in the *exitus illustrium virorum* tradition."[53] Mentioning *ataraxia*, an early conceptualisation of peace in Ancient Greece, is therefore a concept we can use to understand the tradition of a stoic, obedient and peaceful martyr depicted by early modern Protestant martyrologists. John Foxe wrote using these tropes in the instance of Elizabeth Thacknell's martyrdom story in 1557:

[52] New Testament, Phil 1.21–23; 1 Cor 9.15; 2 Cor 6.9 and Col 2.20.
[53] Thomas J. Hefferman; James E. Shelton, "Paradisus in carcere: The Vocabulary of Imprisonment and the Theology of Martyrdom in the Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis" *Journal of Early Christian Studies* (2006), 1.

> [They] gaue their bodies to the tormentors, there spirites they commended to God. For whose glory they wer willing and ready to suffer what soeuer the cruell hands of their enemies shoulde woorke againste them.[54]

The *exitus illustrium virorum* literary genre was an early sub-genre that depicted the deaths of famous men and stylized their deaths as martyrs of tyranny. Often reserved to Roman emperors, the influence of early Roman and Greek thought in Protestant martyrology sketches out this desire to create a living work honouring the deaths of martyrs. Creating a stoic martyr illustrating his or her strength in the face of persecution draws from many literary traditions, the intention remains the same even when the subjects or methods are different. Painting an identifiable martyr who fits within a set paradigm of martyrdom creates a sense of community, a common identity. It also creates a continuity within the community, officialising the identity of the enemy and the pattern that ought to be fought in order to stand strong against the Other.

The construction of the Protestant martyr is not a straightforward process: it is both a result and reaction to the persecution that they faced by Catholics as well as a way to further the process of subordination of the enemy. In other words, the conception of martyrdom illustrates the existent continuity between Protestant theology and models through the use of Christian ones by establishing a history of early Christian and Protestant martyrs. The connection between the two periods allows for writers to prove and argue that their beliefs have an historical background. This argument had undermined the legitimacy of Protestantism as standing in the way of a cultural lineage dating back from thousands of centuries. Paradoxically, it allowed Protestants to establish themselves as distinctly different from Catholics in the way they used their own past and present cultural lineage. The process of martyrdom realizes that of sanctification—Foxean martyrs' legitimacy is proved through their close relation with the Spirit of God. Their ability to put their material needs aside, their bodies depicted as sole vessels for God to move through roots the Protestant models further away from Catholic material culture. In the following quote, Foxe erected this distinction between body and mind which legitimized Elizabeth Folkes' status as a martyr:

> Nowe she being at the stake, and one of the officers nailing þe chayne about her, in þe striking in of þe staple, he mist þe place, and stroke her a great stroke wt the hammer on the shoulder bone, wherat she sodainlye turned her head, lifting vp her eyes to the lord,[55]

[54] *A&M*, 5:1588.
[55] *A&M*, 5:1685-1692.

The focus switches from the reality of their bodies to the visible proof of their undying faith that places them as perfect examples of martyrs. The above story is Elizabeth Folkes' who was executed in Colchester in 1557. The Protestant theology pushes believers to divert from material culture to focus on Scriptures, in the way that Luther conceptualized the model of *sola scriptura*. The cult of objects or saints diminishes the ability to connect genuinely with God and obstructs the believer's relation with God and his writings in the Bible and Scriptures. In his *The Work on the Councils and the Churches*, Luther argues against the possession of sacred objects by arguing the following statement:

> Seventh. The holy, Christian Church is outwardly known by the holy possession of the Holy Cross. It must endure all hardship and persecution, all kinds of temptation and evil (as the Lord's Prayer says) from devil, world, and flesh; it must be inwardly sad, timid, terrified; outwardly poor, despised, sick, weak; thus it becomes like its head, Christ. [56]

By articulating a visible attack on Catholic material culture, Luther tackles the gendered organization of property of the time. The concept of materiality is inherently linked to property which preserves the sanctity of the patriarchal system, itself supporting the marginal space given to women at the time. Although it is impossible to describe the Protestant Church as a woman-Church, the different model of materiality broadened the opportunities for women to possess things of their own. The questions of gender, women and property have been explored in the recent years which helped shape a different paradigm of female materiality. In A.L. Herickson's *Women and Property in Early Modern England*, the historian re-contextualized the place of women regarding property laws showing that primary sources showed that women were able to negotiate and assert control over some of their material belongings.[57] Other historians such as Pamela Hammons, Margreta de Grazia or Donna Dickinson have proved that the material space given to women enacted a strong patriarchal anxiety within the male community of writers and thus, sketched out a wrongful picture of the reality of women's property rights in the early modern period.[58] As such, it is even notable to observe the changes in the way women were able to access this part of society at the time that Protestantism intended to draw focus away from this material, male-dominated culture. The social aspect of materiality,

[56] Luther, Martin. *The Work on the Councils and the Churches* (1539)
[57] Herickson, A.L. *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London & New York: Routledge, 1993).
[58] See Hammons, Pamela. "Rethinking Women and Property in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England" *Literature Compass* (2006); "The Gendered Imagination of Property in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century English Women's Verse." *CLIO 34.4* (2005): 395–418. de Grazia, Margreta. "Afterword." *Women, Property, and the Letters of the Law* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2004), 296–304. Dickinson, D. *Women, Property and Politics: Subjects or Objects?* (New Jersey: Polity, 1997).

the extent to which it depicts an individual's place within the social structure is not a subject that is kept in the creation of Protestant martyrdom. However, this does not infer that Foxe or Bale as writers did not acknowledge the social status of the individuals they wrote about—John Rough is said to have been from Scotland because of "some of hys kinsfolke woulde haue kept hym from his right of inhertaunce, which he had to certaine landes."[59] Many of Foxe's martyrs are described through their status in society: Elizabeth Cooper is a "pewterers' wife", Joyce Lewis is a "a gētle womā born," or "an ancient good Lady of much worship, called Lady Anne Kneuet."[60]

If the reality of the societal status of martyrs is still visible in the textual description of Foxe, its importance is to be later erased in a desire to show the universal experience of martyrdom. As noted by Knott, "The individuals threaten to disappear into the type at such moments, with the implication that social and other distinctions are erased by the common experience of martyrdom."[61] Individuality of character and status is primordial to establish a common, universal experience of persecution. The reader, like the writer, can initiate a process of relation with the portrayal of these women and men whose spirit still lies in the words. This perspective of performativity in martyrological writing is important—the word of God, as laid out in the Scriptures, is performative in the way that it protects whoever reads or ushers it. C.R. Coats has argued that "what is significant is the use of reference to the body as a path to the word. In like fashion, many of the descriptions of martyrdoms effectively turn the martyr's body into a text."[62] By embodying the very words written by the writer, the martyr is sent to another realm—that of history, of continuous remembrance of his or her sacrifice. The words of the martyr through the lens of Foxe, for instance, are performative and create both a literary continuity itself rooted into a legitimate historicity. The presence of a female martyr crystallises the exceptional nature of their stories, they are recognised in their own ways and are turned into historical evidence that they played an extensive role in the creation of a Protestant identity and community. In other sources of the period, it is difficult to decipher the real gender of the individual as the generic he was common in official and legal documents all throughout England. In a sense, this makes the presence of women in martyrological writings even more exceptional. Their depiction appears to differ from the normative creation of the majority of

[59] A&M, 5:1727.
[60] A&M, 5:1684; 1700;1779.
[61] Knott, John R. "John Foxe and the Joy of Suffering" *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol.27 (1996), 731.
[62] Coats, Catherine R. *(Em)bodying the Word: Textual Resurrections in the Martyrological Narratives of Foxe, Crespin, de Beze, and d'Aubigne* (New York: Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers 1992), 39.

male martyrs—Foxean description of women draws from a set of gendered normative terms which offers activeness and agency to an individual that is commonly deprived of such. In the case of Anne Askew, her transgressive nature is described as a right and godly behaviour even as she publicly turns away from her female duties to be obedient and silent. Both the act of speaking against the enemy—in this case, Catholics defenders and Queen Mary I—and the act of showing rebellion physically are actions to be celebrated by the Protestant readers. Does this mean that women's place within Protestantism was to changing because of a few women depicted as courageous and pious against the vile enemy that is the Catholic establishment? Susannah Monta argues, for instance, the following:

> In the process of recording and celebrating such defiance, the *Actes and Monuments* at times tests the rhetoric of exceptionality underpinning the strength-within-weakness paradigm. The text pushes at the limits of what "woman" is or ought to be as it evokes but does not consistently or neatly resolve the tensions between patriarchal expectations for women's behavior and generic expectations that martyrs will be bold and resolute. There are two gendered characterizations of the martyr figure - what might be broadly labelled in the terms of modern literary scholarship constructivist and essentialist positions—often in tension in Foxe's work.[63]

Nevertheless, we cannot erase the impact that such a famous work as the *Acts and Monuments* had on popular beliefs (gender is included in the sense that it draws upon a malleable set of beliefs regarding the nature and place of women within society) regarding gender and women in religion. The same argument can be made in relation to the way gender is constructed within the paradigm of martyrology and religion, male and female martyrs alike play a role in the construction of what it means to be Protestant and what it means to be Catholic. This binary opposition, if understood by itself, does not suffice to explain the mechanism of constructing the sinful nature of the Other. In other words, the absence of God is synonymous with the presence of the Devil as much as the presence of the Devil is proof of the absence of God in the spirit of the individual. Foxe acclaims Elizabeth Lawson's strength by explaining that the spirit of God has visited and aided her in her sacrifice for the cause.[64] The mechanism of justification of God's supposed presence or absence is often cited by both Catholic and Protestant polemicists and martyrologists. In some ways it shifts the paradigm from an individual decision—to sacrifice oneself, for

[63] Monta, Susannah B. "Foxe's Female Martyrs and the Sanctity of Transgression" *Renaissance and Reformation*, vol.25 (2001).
[64] *A&M*, 5:1596.

instance—to a larger, cultural and established decision which is supported by the spirit of religion. As such, this raises the question of how this mechanism affects the meanings of the Devil and sinning.

III. The Mechanism of the Devil and Sins: The Meanings of Papistry and Witchcraft

In the story of Joyce Lewes's martyrdom, Foxe mentions several times the presence of Satan to divert this woman's faith:

> About thre of the clock in the morning, Sathan (who neuer slepeth especially when death is at hand) began to sturre him selfe busely, shoting at her that fyry darte the whiche he is wont to do against al that are at defiance with him, questioning with her howe she could tell that she was chosen to eternall lyfe, and that Christ died for her.[65]

Later, he celebrates Joyce Lewes' ability to escape from the Devil's grasp.

> By these and like persuasions, and specially by the cōfortable promises of christ, brought out of the scripture, Sathan was put to flight, and she comforted in Christ.[66]

Joyce Lewes reflected on the piety that a true martyr should think about, confirming the importance of sticking to the word of God. By preaching the Scriptures' influence over Satan, Foxe proved the effectiveness of the Protestant faith against Catholic persecution, whose words and actions demonstrate the presence of the Devil in their ranks. This can be linked to the promulgation of the Homily of Obedience in 1547 affirming the importance of hierarchy, order, subordination and obedience.[67] Alongside the *Book of Common Prayer* (1549) and the Thirty-Nine Articles, the *Books of Homilies* (1547, 1570) were foundational texts to understand how important allegiance and obedience to normative faith was. Martyrs, in these examples, showed the ultimate obedience to their faith by accepting their fate. These accusations are also acclaimed in the writings of Luther, he writes: "Forgive the wretched tyrants, along with their gang, for such sins, and enlighten all erring and misled hearts with the light of your grace."[68] Both writers deploy a plethora of tropes regarding the enemy within, that is Satan and Catholicism and their believers, to prove the presence of God and the true faith. They thereby provide a renewed image of binary opposites—good versus evil, God versus Satan, Protestantism versus Catholicism—that operates on the very construction of martyrdom. How was the presence of the Devil depicted by Foxe and other Protestant writers? How did they

[65] *A&M*, 5:1701.
[66] *A&M*, 5:1701.
[67] See Bond, Ronald. *Certain Sermons or Homiles (1547) and a Homily against Disobedience and Wilfull Rebellion (1570): A Critical Edition* (1987).
[68] Luther, Martin. *D. Martin Luthers Werke*, 18:239.20-31 trans. in Kolb, Robert. "God's Gift of Martyrdom: The Early Reformation Understanding of Dying for the Faith" *Church History*, vol.64 (1995).

establish the bounds of the "Devil's work"? The enemy, Satan, is conjoined within the very existence of the Roman Catholic Church and its work performed by the hands of Catholics. Constructing the trope of the spiritual enemy as the Devil, according to Isabelle Fernandes, provides the basis to construct the reality of the Other and the tangible enemy.

> The Catholic other is portrayed like the photo negative, the monstrous double of the pure and avenging Protestant who was ready to give up his life to impose the truth, restore order and prevent the ever-growing expanse of darkness from eating up the Church of the elect.[69]

In this sense, it was vital for Protestants to create an enemy that was tangible and spiritual to prosper outside the bounds of the Churches' division of beliefs. The eschatological nature of many Protestants' works were bound up with the ever-growing presence of the Devil, thereby providing groundwork to eradicate the Catholic Church from England. The meanings of papistry and witchcraft were inherently linked in Protestants' constant denunciation of the Devil—Catholics were the tangible production of devilish beliefs whereas witches are said to be doing Satan's work. Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (1496) provided three general components that were necessary for witchcraft to exist: God's permission, the influence of the Devil and devilish intentions from witches performing the acts of witchcraft.[70] The permissive nature of God was later included by James I in *Daemonologie* in which he wrote that "God permittes."[71] Jeffrey Burton Russell argues that witchcraft is linked with the Church, it is thus a form of rebellion against the established order of religion and beliefs. The social meaning of witchcraft is, therefore, a symptom of the intersection of established beliefs and popular religion.[72] This stereotype of the witch from the Middle Ages permeated the construction of the early modern witches as "slaves to the Devil," [73] or as "certeine old women […] called witches".[74]

The link between religion, witchcraft and gender lies largely in the way the beliefs of the enemy are constructed. In the same fashion, the legal control of religion and the definition of heretical behaviours was an outward display of control of the dissemination of false beliefs which did not fit within the state-imposed religious paradigm. The several laws against witchcraft and the relating punishments are proof of the existing anxiety around witchcraft and

[69] Fernandes, Isabelle. "'The deformed imp of the devil': John Foxe and the Protestant fashioning of the Catholic enemy" *Angles*, 10 (2020), 9.
[70] Kramer, Heinrich. *Malleus Maleficarum* (1496).
[71] James I, *Daemonologia* (1597), 49.
[72] Russell, Jeffrey B. *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1972).
[73] James I, *Daemonologia*, 10.
[74] Scott, Reginald. *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), 77.

the reality of unorthodox beliefs within and outside the Protestant community. Henry VIII's Witchcraft Act of 1541 punished those who were proven to perform witchcraft the "paynes of deathe losse and forfaytures of their lands tentes goodes."[75] Another Witchcraft Act was passed by Elizabeth I in 1563 and differed from her father's as it established different stages of offences as well as different punishments for said offences. The English state was thus an active actor in the process of condemning heresy and witchcraft, the passage of different legislations under the Protestant monarchs shows the extent to which they intended to control state apparatus. The "paynes of Deathe" was only reserved for those that committed two or more offences, "any intent or porpose" regarding magic or witchcraft was then considered an offence.[76] The fine line between heresy and witchcraft proved to be difficult to verify, Thomas writes that "popular magic was treated by the church courts as neither more or less serious than such other routine offences as sabbath-breaking, defamation and fornication."[77] Nevertheless, the fear of a sort of contamination of false beliefs and of the Devil to take over the English soil was ever-present in both martyrological and demonological writings, as well as in polemical treatises. In his *A Short Discoverie of the Unobserved Dangers of Severall Sorts of Ignorant and Unconsiderate Practisers of Physicke*, John Cotta, a Northamphton doctor, asked his readers to be more vigilant of the influence of evil women: "Discreete feare awaketh vigilance and circumspection, but ignorance of danger is void of feare, and therefore of care."[78] Cotta urges believers to be careful around women and evil-doers, especially when they are sick and they are at their weakest both in spirit and in body. Yet, he adviced his readers to be wary but not to fall prey to the beliefs that the Devil presents as real when they are, in fact, unreasonable when presented to a pious man.

> If the faithfull and deuout prayer of holy men (vnto which the promise of God, and the blessings of men are annexed) hath no such assurance or successe of necessarie consequent, without laborious industry and the vse of good meanes, how can religion or reason suffer men that are not voyd of both, to giue such impious credite vnto an vnsignificant and senslesse mumbling of idle words, contrarie to reason, without president of any truly wise[i] or learned, and iustly suspected of all sensible men?[79]

[75] Henry VIII, Witchcraft Act of 1541.
[76] Elizabeth I, Witchcraft Act of 1563.
[77] Thomas, *Decline of Magic*, 306.
[78] Cotta, John. *A short discouerie of the vnobserued dangers of seuerall sorts of ignorant and vnconsiderate practisers of physicke in England profitable not onely for the deceiued multitude, and easie for their meane capacities, but raising reformed and more aduised thoughts in the best vnderstandings: with direction for the safest election of a physition in necessitie* (London: 1612), 33.
[79] *Ibid*., 49.

A similar rhetoric is used by Reginald Scot in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* in which he attempts to prove that witchcraft was a result of illusionary beliefs and cannot exist when tried against reason and religion. He listed the three accusations one can use against witches: first is idolatry, then apostasy and seduction of others.[80] To a certain extent, all of the above examples epitomize the struggle to distinguish popular beliefs of magic and witchcraft from established beliefs present in the minds of believers. "Any device which seemed to produce miraculous effects for no discernible natural reason was immediately suspect," writes Thomas in regards to the changing attitude of the Church on sacred objects, miracles and holy words.[81] He continues his argument by noting that "[for Protestants] all supernatural effects necessarily sprang from either fraudulent illusion or the workings of the Devil."[82] There was a division within the very Protestant community in the action that should be taken regarding magic and its links with papistry and idolatry. Scot wrote that he "detest[ed] idolatrous opinions" at the very beginning of his book on witchcraft. The ties between religion and magic are undeniable, the implications of an enemy from within had large implications on the involvement of Protestants in the on-going hunt of heretics and witches.

The construction of the meanings of papistry and witchcraft is tackled through a process of differentiation of the different realms of magic, Protestants thus refuted all that could have a link with the devilish Catholic Church. Indeed, the attitude towards images in the Reformations exemplified the desire to implement initial Lutheran models of Protestantism. The "deliberate attempt to take the magical elements out of religion," is rooted within the very principles of Protestantism in which the believer's relationship with God is omnipotent and cannot be taken over by intermediaries as in Catholicism.[83] The individual believer had, thus, been given agency in how he or she performed his faith and beliefs. The discourse of Protestant writers, whether it be within martyrology or demonological treatises, is centred around the agency of those who were faithful enough to choose not to follow the right or true path of beliefs. As such, believers were urged to prove their faith within their community and to side with Christ. Witches were erected as antitheses to these concepts, as shown in Reginald Scot's assertion that witches were traitorous:

[80] Scot, *Discoverie*, CH.19.
[81] Thomas, *The Decline of Magic*, 304.
[82] *Ibid.*, 304.
[83] *Ibid.*, 87.

> The most notorious traitor and rebel that can be is the witch for she renounceth God himself, the king of kings, she leaves the society of his church and people, she bindeth herself in league with the Devil.[84]

Under the ever-growing scrutiny that magic and witchcraft were faced with, witches' connection with the Devil and supernatural forces is constantly reasserted. We have established earlier that the presence of women within the tradition of martyrological writings was exceptional but this was not usual for witchcraft. The presence of women –and the issue of gender altogether—was omnipotent in demonological and witchcraft treatises. Where Foxe's female martyrs were depicted as "gentle" or "calm", the women accused of witchcraft were binary opposites of these descriptions. They are "cooseners" or are even thought to be "prostituting themselves."[85] Where martyrdom can benefit from the most pious woman or man who faced bravely the fear and pain of death, accusations of witchcraft were constructed on the very concept of gender and unorthodox behaviour. By unorthodox behaviour, we imply that unusual behaviours were suspect and were thought to be explained by supernatural powers.[86] Gaskill notes that "the tightest control on behaviour came from the administration of justice, not just preventing and punishing crime, but obliging communities to deal with crime in officially sanctioned ways."[87] Elizabeth Stiles was accused and tried for witchcraft in Reading, Berkshire in 1579. She was rightfully tried as a witch thanks to the "manifest and vndeniable proffes of her honest neighbors".[88] In the pamphlet relating Stiles' story, some images are used to depict how she conducted her magic.

[84] Perkins, William quoted in Clark, Stuart. 'Inversion, Misrule and the Meaning of Witchcraft' *Past and Present*, 87 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 119.
[85] Scot, *Discoverie*, CH.3.
[86] Gaskill, *A Short Introduction*, 46.
[87] *Ibid.*, 52.
[88] Anon, *A rehearsal both straung and true, of heinous and horrible actes committed by Elizabeth Stile alias Rockingham, Mother Dutten, Mother Deuell, Mother Margaret, fower notorious witches, apprehended at Winsore in the countie of Barks. And at Abbington arraigned, condemned, and execited, on the 26 daye of Februarie laste Anno.1579* (London: 1579).

In the above illustration, Stiles' depiction conformed to several stereotypes of witches' appearance such as the long, crooked nose and the extended chin. Accompanied by her familiars whose forms are exaggerated to the point that they no longer resemble real animals, Stiles looks like a genuine witch. Many illustrations of the time pictured female witches in such ways—they were in a supposed agreement with the Devil, therefore they could only be as ugly as the Devil himself. Some demonologists would argue that some female witches' appearance before their oath to the Devil determined their fate as a witch. The woman-as-a-witch was a common trope rooted within the belief that women were feeble and weak beings.[89] The humoral theory supported the fragile nature of women who were, logically, more prone to diverge from true faith and piety.[90] As such, gender was at the centre of these issues: it complicated the very concepts of heresy and witchcraft. It overarches the way the stories of either female martyrs or witches were written, how their appearance and character were depicted. Were women the

Table 1. Illustration taken from A Rehearsall both straung and true, of hainous and horrible actes committed by Elizabeth Stile, Alias Rockingham, Mother Dutten, Mother Devell, Mother Margaret, Fower notorious Witches, apprehended at winsore in the Countie of Bark (London: 1579,: 23267).

[89] The reference to Eve is often an overarching stereotype to which women were attached: their cunningness descends directly from Eve's original sin. See Crowther, Kathleen M. *Adam and Eve in the Protestant Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Freed, Eugenie R. "'If Eve did Erre, it was for Knowledge sake': Women's Education, and Educated Women, in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" *S.A. Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 17 (2007): 21–39, Baker, Audrey M. "Adam and Eve and the Lord God: The Adam and Eve Cycle of Wall Paintings in the Church of Hardham, Sussex" *Archaeological Journal* 155:1 (1998), 207-225. See also the way the representation of Eve's sexuality has influenced the Christian educational model of girls and women: Vives, J.L. *The Education of a Christian Woman: a Sixteenth-Century Manual* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), Atkinson, C.W. '"Precious Balsam in a Fragile Glass": The Ideology of Virginity in the Late Middle Ages" *Journal of Family History* (1983).

[90] For a general understanding of humoralism or the humoral theory see Bos, Jacques. "The Rise and Decline of Character: Humoral Psychology in Ancient and Early Modern Medical Theory*" History of the Human* Sciences (2009), 22(3), pp.29-50. On humoralism and women, see Taavitsainen, Irma. "Dissemination and Appropriation of Medical Knowledge: Humoral Theory in Early Modern English Medical Writing and Lay Texts." *Medical Writing in Early Modern English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 94-114. Paster, Gail. "The Unbearable Coldness of Female Being: Women's Imperfections and the Humoral Economy" *English Literary Renaissance* (1998), vol.28, no.3, 416.

enemies in the way that Catholics and their Antichrist Pope were thought to be? Not quite. Yet, they were at the margins of society and their subordinate condition made them more prone to accusations at a time when distinctions were unfixed and unreliable. In such, the mechanisms of proving the existence of the Devil and the implications of sinning were endorsed by a large majority of Protestant writers. One should not renounce to believe in God's providence. Sticking to the writings of the Scriptures as well as living within the bounds of the Ten Commandments were widespread beliefs which replaced the Catholic belief of saint and idols:

> There were magical elements surviving in religion, and there were religious facets to the practice of magic. This could make it difficult for the clerical opponents of magic to know where to draw the line.[91]

As such, the line between established beliefs and popular beliefs is hard to decipher. Catholic idols were objects which tied the community together, relics and idols were invested with meaning. Belief and religious faith were, thus, inherently linked with ecclesiastical tradition and practice which could explain why some Catholic magic was still retained within Protestant practice especially in relation to healing. With all these elements in mind, we must now turn to the question of heresy and how such accusations enacted the discreet mingling of established and popular beliefs in the case of martyr and witches' trials.

[91] Thomas, *The Decline of Magic*, 318.

PART II. RELIGION AT STAKE: NEGOTIATING BELIEFS AND THE SELF

We have established that the case of religion should be questioned under different lenses in order to grasp the entire social and historical extent it falls under. The social spaces given to dissenters, whether they were Catholic or Protestant, is rooted within a tradition whose process has influenced the construction of believers' beliefs. The evolution of marginal beliefs is, thus, inherently linked with the process of construction of what is right and wrong. This section will work upon these conclusions to question the extent to which belief systems are put to the test. From the initiation of the Protestant Reformation and its evolution, it is easy to see the period only in terms of confrontation. In many ways, violence was a recurrent symptom of religious dissent in sixteenth century England yet the Protestant agenda strived to reconcile its community within a common agenda through state-erected harmonisation. We shall question how the question of irenics and ecumenism have complexified the process of religious toleration and exclusion of the period. The identity of Protestant believers should be questioned to effectively define the boundaries of Protestantism, as to eventually lead us to concede how the Other is defined.

> O terryble voyce of most just judgement, whiche shalbe pronounced upon them, when it shalbe sayde unto them: Go, ye cursed, into the fyre everlastynge, whyche is prepared for the devill and hys Aungeles. […] but let us whyle we have the lyght, beleve in the lyghte, and walke as the children of the lyght, that we be not caste into the utter darckenes, where is wepyinge and gnasshynge of teeth.[92]

Taken from Elizabeth I's *Book of Common Prayer* (1559), this quote constructs "them" as an outsider whose beliefs eventually casts them away of the realm of God and His mercy. The distribution of theological books like the *Book of Common Prayer* and its constant revisions or the *Books of Homilies*, proposes a more sophisticated version of theology and subtly limits the extent to which religious texts such as the Scriptures should be read and understood. Many concepts of otherness coupled with the conceptualisation of the spiritual consequence of sin manages to reflect a desire to shape faith in a certain way. As such, this chapter will inspect the way the construction of heresy and its theological importance has justified the attack on the Other, as an enemy, against the established religion of the state. The resonance of trials against heresy and its many forms will be used as a basis to highlight how the presence of dissenters was legitimized and constructed within a legal and popular paradigm. The social meanings of trials, especially under the gender lens, highlights the social meanings of peace and violence

[92] Elizabeth I's The Book of Common Prayer of 1559 cited in ed. Brian Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559 and 1662* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). The 1549 version will be abbreviated as EDBCP, the 1559 version as EBCP and the last 1662 which will be rarely cited as KJBCP.

inside the English confessional age. The creation of martyrs and witches was heavily influenced by the telling of their stories in trials, their confessions. As such, this chapter will conclude by studying the role of pain and torture in the construction of martyrs and witches as well as the way beliefs shape the justification of those behaviours.

I. The Legal and Theological Construction of an Other: Heretics and Believers

Over the years of the English Reformations, the legal and theological notions of heresy and heretics were deeply influenced by the controversies that were generated by the different ruling monarchs. The notion of heresy thereby depicts a complexified image of how dissenting beliefs operated on either side of the English spectrum of Christianity. Starting off from Henry VIII's breaking up with Rome and the initial portion of the Reformations, several laws regarding heresy and treason were enacted by the King himself and his court. The *Act whereby divers Offenses be made High Treason; and taking away all Sanctuaries for all manner of High Treason* was passed shortly after the 1534 *Act of Supremacy* enacting the break with Rome and the monarch as the Supreme Head of the Church of England or Supreme Governor of the Church of England later in the case of Elizabeth I. Through this title, the monarch was Defender of the Faith.[93] This act speaks of treason including the notion of heresy in parts of it as it forbids English subjects, whether on English soil or abroad, to act or speak badly of the King and his heirs based on their newly acquired spiritual and religious role.

> That if any Perfon or Perfons […] do maliciously wifh will or define, by Words of Writing or by Craft imagine invent practife or attempt any bodily Harm to be done or committed to the King's moft Royal Perfon, the Queen's or their Heirs apparent, […] or flanderoufly and malicioufly publifh and pronounce, by exprefs Writing or Words, that the King our Sovereign Lord fould be Heretick Schfmatick Tyrant Infidel or Ufurper of the Crown […][94]

Although it was not defined explicitly against heresy, the Act established the exclusion of English subjects who did not conform with the current monarch's beliefs of the time. Questioning Henry VIII's meant questioning the newly established Church of England which led to some dissent among English Catholics. One of the most notable executions of a Catholic dissenter under this very Act was Sir Thomas More.[95] For instance, the controversy around the Commons' Supplication in 1532 highlighted Henry VIII's desire for conformity in his realm, rather than dissension inside his own court and government. Indeed, the Commons'

[93] The title "Defender of the Faith" derives from the Latin phrase *Fidei Defensor* or *Fidei Defensatrix* if used for a female subject. This was originally used for Catholic monarchs but its use was kept even after the first stages of the Protestant Reformation. The use of either "Head of the Church of England" or "Supreme Governor of the Church of England" translates the gendered distinction of the original Latin phrases.
[94] Great Britain. The statures at large, of England and of Great Britain: from Magna Carta to the union of the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland (1811), 208. Accessed online on April, 11. https://archive.org/details/statutesatlarge00raitgoog/page/208/mode/1up
[95] Sir Thomas More was a highly influential member of Henry VIII's court yet his constant refusal to abide to the King's Reformation of the Church led him to be accused of high treason. He was executed in 1535.

Supplication deals with abuses of power from the clergy and particularly, the way heresy trials were conducted. [96]

More royal injunctions pushed for a further reformation of the Church of England, the *Act abolishing diversity in Opinions* of 1539 (also known as the *Statute of Six Articles*) which established six foundational doctrines of the King's Church. The disrespect of any or either of these articles was punishable by death. G.W. Bernard states that the "Act of Six Articles was a restatement of certain important doctrines of the Church of England, intended to curb what Henry saw as dangerous diversity, and giving the government increased powers to deal with those who disagreed."[97] Further towards the reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth I, heresy laws were passed in order to eradicate a growing dissenting community in England. The activist state was central in how the enemy was perceived in legal matters. Under the scope of the aforementioned Protestant monarchs, their doctrinal points of view were rarely entirely Protestant in its Lutheran or Calvinist sense.[98] The development of certain extreme Protestant views were present in the publication of the first *Book of Common Prayer* in 1549 during Edward VI's reign, its unpopularity among the people led to the so-called Prayer Book Rebellion and the Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire risings of the same year.[99] This social tribulation regarding the enacting of certain Protestant doctrines was fuelled by local grievances which concerned itself with issues of property.[100] The growing control of the government of religious affairs disrupted the social organization of the time, the rebels' needs were shut down through violent and swift suppression of their voices. This hostility can be traced all throughout the entirety of the English Reformations; indeed, Mary I's heresy laws were more vehement than her predecessors as she attempted to reconstruct the Roman Catholic roots of England.

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[96] See Elton, G.R. "The Commons' Supplication of 1532: Parliamentary Manoeuvres in the Reign of Henry VIII" *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 107-136.

[97] Bernard, G.W. "The Making of Religious Policy, 1533-1546: Henry VIII and the Search for the Middle Way" *The Historical Journal* vol.41, no.2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 339.

[98] On Lutheranism in early modern England, see Hall, Basil. "The Early Rise and Gradual Decline of Lutheranism in England (1520-1600)" *Studies in Church History Subsidia 2* (Cambridge: Cambrige University Press, 1979), pp.103-131. On the polemical nature of these debates, see Zlatar, Antoinina. *Reformation Fictions: Polemical Protestant Dialogues in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). On Calvinism in early modern England, see Teall, John. "Witchcraft and Calvinism in Elizabethan England: Divine Power and Human Agency" *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol.23, no.1 (Pennsylvania: 1962) pp.21-36.

[99] The 1549 Book of Common Prayer was generally understood as being overtly Protestant: the remaining Catholic community was not happy with these "prises de positions" of the King. The enforcement of these doctrines disrupted more the organization of local authorities and churches, it also pursued a reorganization of individual property which had, until then, been discussed among local clerics.

[100] See Wood, Andy. *The 1549 Rebellions and the Making of Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambrige University Press, 2009).

The *Revival of the Heresy Acts* of 1554 made Protestantism and any supporter of the Protestant cause heretics.[101] The conceptualization of heresy, thereby, provided the monarch with enough control and authority to enforce his or her own system of religious and popular beliefs.

The Other, the heretical enemy was to be tried and judged. Heresy was thus a result of a systemic legal criminalization of non-conforming beliefs which are to be proved by witnesses set out clearly by laws in place.[102] It also possessed a social meaning whose understanding needs to be made in relation with the legal one. Peter Marshall argues that heresy has had a profound influence on the shift of the social paradigm of sixteenth-century English society.[103] He writes that heresy is "a top-down "act of state" which ultimately bound subject populations more closely to the mandates of secular and ecclesiastical authority."[104] The legal definition of heresy and the subsequent process of punishment was, thus, motivated by both political and religious agendas. Although the authority of the government and State was debated, its realization influenced the way people respond to the laws put in place, whether they benefit them or not.[105] Historians have argued for a more thorough analysis of the English State's control over the entire religious, economic and political system over the period—the growing dissent among the clergy, laymen and in many social groups requires us to dwell on how religious intolerance led to a number of issues in the political and economic formation of the State.

> Society itself seemed in danger of imminent dissolution. Religious anarchy and extremism, administrative corruption, financial collapse, currency and exchange chaos, agrarian unrest, extravagant and fruitless military enterprises, political control by a group of most unscrupulous and irresponsible careerists, all combined with the most violent fluctuations in the main export trade to produce a situation of acute crisis.[106]

Although Stone's quote dates back to the 1950s, his analysis of the intermingling of political, economic and religious issues proves to be still useful. The overarching social distress in almost

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[101] England. Mary I, *Revival of the Heresy Acts* (1554).
[102] See for further information on the legal organization of accusations and condemnations of heresy, Kelly Henry A. "Mixing Canon and Common Law in Religious Prosecutions in Henry VIII and Edward VI: Bishop Bonner, Anne Askew, and Beyond" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 46-4 (2015), 927-955.
[103] Marshall, Peter. "Identifying Heresy in the Sixteenth-Century England" *Saint Anselm Journal* 14-2 (2019), 59-81.
[104] *Ibid.*, 60.
[105] On the English state's formation in the sixteenth-century. Lachmann, Richard. "Elite Conflict and State Formation in 16th- and 17th-Century England in France*" American Sociological Review* 54-2 (1989), 141-162.
[106] Stone, Lawrence. "State Control in Sixteenth-Century England" *The Economic History Review* 17-2 (1947), 103-120.

every layer of organized society can explain to some extent the anxiety over the danger of the enemy living among an already unstable society. It does not explain everything, yet the urgency with which many Protestants wrote and expressed their concern over the reality of the Devil and its destruction of the current organization of their society is tangible. Translating through an eschatological point of view, the State's conservatism in terms of religious tolerance and intolerance did not stem solely from theological concerns. The intermingling of these issues complexified the image of the early modern thinker—the heretic has a choice, pertaining to the Greek etymology of the term *hairesis,* and his or her choice was to ultimately disturb the social peace. The growing patriotic thinking of the period worked on several levels: a symptom of political conservatism based on the state's growing control, a desire to support the growth of the English state's legitimacy outside of its borders, as well as a religious demonstration of strength against Roman Catholicism.[107] In that, the depiction of Elizabeth I in Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* translated some sort of political motivation in his martyrological writings.[108] The representation of English excellence with the establishment of a true Church represented by a true Queen sketched out the primitive notions of religious patriotism. David Loades writes that "The *Acts and Monuments* does not represent England as an Elect Nation, or a New Israel, but it does speak of special providences in ways which enabled those who wished to do so, to read in such a message."[109] Many Protestant writers, including Foxe, established in their writing the uniqueness of the English model and therefore, relate the way its model is excellent and righteous against the Antichrist (the Roman Catholic Church). The depictions of Protestant martyrs are sketched out in an apocalyptic manner in light of the ramping eschatological idea of ultimate destruction of the world and especially the English nation if remnants of the Catholic Antichrist and Devil remains. The illustrations below depict different martyrs, women and men, engulfed in large flames as they are martyred by the Catholic enemy. These eight martyrs were all executed during Queen Mary I's reign. The pictorial representation of martyrs, female or male, in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* often draws from the same biblical tropes whose usage infer the martyr's enclosure, lack of physical agency as well as a stoic, patient face translating their superiority over the enemy's evil and detestable behaviour. One of the women depicted

[107] On England's political and economic growth in the sixteenth-century. ed. Grabes, Herbert. *Writing the Early Modern English Nation: The Transformation of National Identity in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2001) especially '"Elect Nation": The Founding Myth of National Identity in Early Modern England", 173-190.
[108] See Fernandes, Isabelle. "1570: Au Service de Sa Majesté : Les utilisations des Acts and Monuments de John Foxe » *Du bon usage des commémorations : Histoire, mémoire et identité, XVI-XXIe siècle* (Rennes : Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 39-54.
[109] Loades, David. "The Early Reception" *John Foxe's The Acts and Monuments Online* (2004).

below speaks against the "Catholicke vnity of the Church," and defends the truth of the true Protestant church.[110] The creation of martyrs and the relating of their martyrdom demonstrates in turn a legitimate theological ground—that is, dying in God's name and for the honour of the true Church—and a legitimate social unity—that is, going against the religious norm and not conforming to an unjust social organisation—which is rendered through a refusal to conform to Catholicism.[111]

Table 2. Illustrations taken from *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein ar comprehended and described the great persecutions horrible troubles, that have bene wrought and practised by the Romishe prelates, speciallye in this Realme of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lorde, a thousande, unto the tyme nowe present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies wrytinges certificatorie* (London: 1563), 11:1899; 11:2070.

Years before the first publication of John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, clergyman Christopher Goodman wrote *How superior powers ought to be obeyd of their subiects* (1558) in

[110] *A&M*, 11:2069.

[111] "but beyng moued and exhorted by the Byshop to returne to the Catholicke vnity of the Church, sayth boldly to him agayne: if ye wyll leaue of your abomination, so I will returne, and otherwyse I wyll not. Whereupon the bishop yet agayne promised her pardon of all her errours (as he called thē) if she would be conformed. To thys she aunswered agayne, saying vnto the Bishop: Doe as it pleaseth you, and I pray God that you may doe that which may please God. And thus she constantly perseuering in the Lords holy truth, was by the sentence diffinitiue condemned," *AM*, 11:2069. The entire passage shows the way Catholics are pictured to be deceiving through and through, their false religion has also permeated the way they mitigate social interactions. The enemy is more than religiously wrong and unjust, the enemy is morally and socially deceiving.

which he violently exposed the reasons why England was in a desperate state.[112] His disdain for Queen Mary I was both motivated by the revival of Roman Catholicism all throughout the English soil as well as her gender. Just like Knox, his religious patriotism celebrated the truth and excellence of Protestantism but his stance on female rulers furthered the process of humiliation of the Catholic enemy while it pushed his point of view to the extreme. Goodman asked "Are you therfore excused, that permit your selues to be made a pray to Satan, Antichriste, and to all sortes of Gods enimies, at the commandement of an vngodlie woman?"[113] His construction of the heretic enemy, in and by itself, represented a common belief among the Protestant community. His argument is one that we have exposed earlier in this paper: gender is an overarching category which prevails when presented against non-established and un-popular beliefs. Goodman's refusal to recognize the supremacy of Queen Elizabeth I and her government eventually led him to be accused and tried of non-conformity.

In light of Goodman's treatment by his own religious party, the identity of non-conformists was often negotiated in light of their degree of involvement in heretical thinking. In this, we are faced with this ambiguous threshold in which our demonstration of what heresy—and heretics, as well—looks like and the way in which they are trapped in a liminal trap. The construction of the enemy works in many ways, the enemy-within is not always Catholic nor foreign. It survives among the Protestant community, which in light of the social rebellions that we have talked about explained the turmoil of the early seventeenth-century. The English State was, thus, a powerful authority which controls or at least, attempts to control the behaviours of its people. Failures to regroup, to conform with the established belief system in place was publicly exercised and mitigated in court trials.

[112] Goodman, Christopher. *How superior powers ought to be obeyd of their subiects and wherin they may lawfully by Gods Worde be disobeyed and resisted. Wherin also is declared the cause of all this present miserie in England, and the onely way to remedy the same.* (Geneva: 1558).
[113] *Ibid*., 5:129.

II. The Resonance of Trials: The Legitimising of the Other against the Establishment

> Christe wil deliver us from the curse of the law, and from the extreme malediccion whiche shall light upon them that shalbee set on the left hand, and geve us the blessed benediccion of hys father, commaundyng us to take possession of hys glorious kyngdome, unto the whiche he vouchsafe to bryng us al, for hys infinite mercye.[114]

Referencing Galatians 3:23, the passage above speaks of "the curse of the law" which, if understood in its biblical context, highlights the unreliable and false nature of human law in comparison with God's law. Jesus Christ was cursed with the curse of the law, he was crucified because of human law that did not follow God's genuine law as written in the Scriptures and in the Testaments. From this Biblical interpretation, we can infer that the Edwardian *Book of Common Prayer* urges its believers to follow God's law and His commandments as they are clearly written in the Testaments in order to be freed from the curse of human law. This passage, although very short, lets us explore the relation between materiality—understood as legalism and everything that concerns mundane matters—and spirituality—understood as the Scriptures, and the way faith ought to be put in place. The reality of this specific link is more profound than the simple issue of "the curse of the law" yet it is a glimpse of how the early modern society might have conceptually justified the human manners of upholding God's law in its own. The following demonstration will attempt to show how trials legitimized the process of vilification of the Other while upholding the faithful precepts of the State and its established belief. How did the Protestant individual negotiate between faith and state issues? How did God's law permeate legal, English law and to what extent was theology used to justify the accusation and condemnation of "criminals"? What were the social and theological meanings of trials?

The *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* of 1552 proposed to join English canon and common law as to uniformize and modernize the English law.[115] This revision was postponed

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[114] "Commination" *EDBCP* (1549) cited in ed. Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer* (2011) 95. The EBCP contains the same passage with very little difference, the syntax and the grammar are slightly different and modernized in the 1559 version but the meaning stays the same in both cases.

[115] The *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* translates to "the Reform of Ecclesiastical Laws" in English which was written during Edward VI's reign. Led by Sir Thomas Cranmer, this draft of legal codes of the Reformed Church never saw the light because of the death of the King. In 1571, a revised version of the *Reformatio* was presented to the Parliament with a preface written by John Foxe. See John Foxe, ed., *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum: ex authoritate primum Regis Henrici. 8. inchoata: deinde per Regem Edouardum 6. prouecta, adauctaq[ue] in hunc modum, atq[ue] nunc ad pleniorem ipsarum reformationem in lucem ædita (*1571).

and completed only much later because of Mary I's reversal of Protestant laws, it was only rejected by Parliament in 1571. Commonly referred to as Henrician Canons, this project of revision was used as a foundational influence in the reform of many topics such as the definition of heresy, court procedures, and punishments. These are some examples of what the *Reformatio legum* proposed to reform. In the section "Of the Rules of Law", it is written that "the use of the masculine gender often applies to both sexes," which could explain the general absence of women in many heresy trials.[116] This grammatical confusion forces us to pursue our effort in highlighting the importance of gendered differences when it was not explicitly defined in some of our sources. The case of the generic "he" did not, however, absolve all of the instances in which women were explicitly mentioned. Understanding the usage of pronouns in those sources is vital to fully grasp the meanings of these different individuals. Nevertheless, the *Reformatio legum* proposed a revised definition of many theological issues such as the negotiation between God's law and human law: it is written that "Therefore in our state lawful magistrates of all kinds will remain, and ensure that both human and, above all, divine laws will be kept firm and inviolate."[117] It is also established that the "authority truth of the Scriptures" transcends the laws that are man-made even though they are shaped in the respect and perfect understanding of God's law.[118] The English state and Church are two indistinguishable entities whose goal was to work within the boundaries of God's law and to preserve the sanctity of these laws in their own. Repentance is, thus, preferred when trying heretics for their behaviours, capital punishment is not directly proposed. The manner with which heretics were tried was revised by including both the laity and civil magistrates, a legal team and guarantors.[119] A similar attempt to nuance the case of heresy was found in Elizabeth I's royal injunctions. It is questionable whether or not it was a feeble attempt to negotiate religious coexistence by introducing a common law that is closer to ecclesiastical law and therefore, to God. As pointed out by Spalding, "they understood their labours in 1552 as enabling the Church of England truly to be the spouse of Christ, with those marks about her by which she could be seen to be the true church."[120] In that sense, the organisation of trials is socially motivated in the way that it mingled several issues that befell society ranging from religious dissent to social unrest. Although trials are man-made and ordained through a man-ordered system, their role in society

[116] *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum* (1552), 741.
[117] *Ibid*., 199.
[118] *Ibid*., 193 & 195.
[119] *Ibid*., 215-23.
[120] Spalding, James. "The *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum* of 1552 and the Furthering of Discipline in England" *Church History* 39-2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 169.

transcends their very nature and organisation. In this sense, their role is to further discipline English subjects, to publicly justify their actions through theological and ecclesiastical arguments.

Court trials were public, their use was inherently linked to social spaces and how and by whom they were ordained. It was a way for the state to perform another form of control and power over its subjects. The trope of the enemy-within was propelled on a public stage.

> For we ordain that the crime of heresy is a public one, since whenever the religion of God which is common to all is violated, harm is seen to be done publicly to all as a result.[121]

Unity around one religion, one state, one monarch, was essential to prove the utility of such reforms. The search for truth, in its Christian meaning, overarched everything and its search justified through the social inquest into the lives of conformists and particularly, non-conformists. This idea of a theatrical public stage was not new: Protestant reformers "actively produced, performed, patronized reforming plays as a means of countering the effects of Catholic drama and spreading the reformed faith."[122] The English dramatic culture persisted even in the Reformation and created a real-life stage to extend the issue of religious disputes.[123] John Bale, who we have discussed as a martyrologist, wrote many plays during the period and many of them staged religious debate around doctrinal and theological issues.[124] We argue that the social meanings of drama and theatre permeated the literary tradition in martyrological and demonological writings, while justifying the public setting of heresy and witchcraft trials. In this sense, the process of censorship of many performing arts throughout the English Reformations was also a symptom of the conservatory beliefs regarding beliefs and popular representation of the Establishment. It also translated the monarch's desire to further control popular and established belief systems even when it was often insufficient.[125]

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[121] *Reformatio Legum*, 223.

[122] Greg Walker, 'Paul White, "Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England" (Book Review)' *The Yearbook of English Studies* 25 (1995), 259.

[123] See Chloe Porter, *The Making and Unmaking of Early Modern English Drama: Spectators, Aesthetics and Incompletion* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013) –"Early Modern English Drama and Visual Culture", *Ibid*., 18-63. Atkin, Tamara. *The Drama of Reform: Theology and Theatricality, 1461*-1553 (Turnhout: Bresolps, 2013).

[124] See Fairfield, Leslie. *John Bale, Mythmaker for the English Reformation* (2016). Happé, Peter. "John Bale and the Practice of Drama" *Reformation,* vol.18 (2013), pp.7-20. Pressler, C.A. "Energeia: Renaissance Rhetoric and Poetics in Petrarch, Bale and Shakespeare (William Shakespeare, John Bale, Francesco Petrarca, Italy)" *Ph.D.* (2002).

[125] See Shell, Alison. "What is a Catholic Poem? Explicitness and Censorship in Tudor and Stuart Religious Verse" in *Literature and Censorship in Renaissance England*, ed. Hadfield, A. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp.95-111.

As such, the Protestant imagination of drama and theatre was deeply imbedded in religious discourse: Huston Diehl's work is fundamental to this part of the demonstration. Working upon the idea that drama is a form of staging rituals, a space in which social *habitus* can be ridiculed and negotiated through the sacralization of an open and public stage is also a central argument for this part.[126] The Protestant rejection of the cult of images and icons also greatly influenced the popularity of drama during the period, it thus forced the drama culture to engage more closely with its own practices and symbols. As such, engagement with the culture of drama seemed to be vital for many Protestant reformers whose goal was to represent the livelihood of their God and their identities. Martyrologists such as John Foxe openly supported the processes of iconoclasm—that is, the destruction of icons and images—which itself furthered the establishment of the true church and religion.[127] It is almost paradoxical to consider the visual culture of Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* to be a central part of the work in terms of Protestant theology. Yet, it is not as much paradoxical if we look more closely to the state of literacy during the period. It is estimated by historians that only 16% of people could read and write in England in 1550.[128] These figures have to be understood in terms of gender and class, as such men of nobler status were more likely to be literate. Nevertheless, the visual nature of the *Actes and Monuments* does not only accompany the textual description of martyrs and their stories, it also engages the reader with the reality of the stories he or she is told. Visual representations of the martyrs helped the creation of a persuasive rhetoric which aroused the spectator's mind and imagination beyond textual engagement. His images were not like sacred images or icons, they were not sacred nor were they worshipped by the believer. They were intended to depict the cruel nature of life when the natural order of God is not respected, or as Diehl argues, "rather than functioning as miraculous images that inspire awe or provide access to divine power, they serve in the newly reformed church as representational signs, reminding worshipers of spiritual rebirth and Christian redemption."[129] Isabelle Fernandes' study of John Foxe also concluded that the theatricality and dramatization of his narratives ensured that the

[126] Diehl, Huston. *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).
[127] On iconoclasm in early modern culture, see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1585*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). See Reist, Kathrin. "Writing the Relic, Fetishising the Written: John Foxe's Actes and Monuments" *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, vol.12 (2010) pp.238-305. Davis, David. "Destructive Defiance: Catholic and Protestant Iconoclasm in England,1550-1585", in M. Caricchio, G. Tarantino, eds., *Cromohs Virtual Seminars. Recent historiographical trends of the British Studies (17th-18th Centuries)*, (2007) 1-5.
[128] These figures were taken from Our World in Data. "Literacy" Roser, Max and Ortiz-Ospina, Esteban for *Our World in Data* (2018). https://ourworldindata.org/literacy
[129] Diehl, *Staging Reform*, 13.

Catholic enemy's authority and legitimacy is questioned and challenged. She notes the following:

> Thanks to parody and irony, in the narrative or in the marginalia, Foxe likened the Catholic ritual to bad drama, deconstructing and reducing it to a sheer mechanic succession of gestures, to a senseless spectacle with no connection to God whatsoever, thereby proving Catholics were fraudulently wielding authority they were deprived of.[130]

The public space wields authority, its openness and lack thereof make political interpretation plausible and possible. In that sense, the fabrication of a public stage to represent the dramatics of martyrdom thereby provides the writer with a larger space in which he is able to produce a work that is embedded in the social *habitus* of the spectator as well as his, further allowing negotiation of the social meaning of dramatization and martyrdom. By manufacturing genuine social spaces in the textual and visual culture of the early modern literary tradition, Foxe like many authors, revived the reality of the past and unified his discourse within a dominant paradigm of thought.[131] Space is given to a revival of past modes of thinking and to newer perspectives that is unique to English Protestant identity. Mapping the construction of theatricality within early modern thinkers and writers is, therefore, useful to identify where their psychic, religious and political boundaries lay. Space is inextricably both a realization of psychic or religious and physical reality which allows us to read Foxean theatricality as both a symptom of early modern literary tradition as well as a continuity of the social space of everyday life. The following passages picture three different male and female martyrs, they show the continuous framing of spiritual and physical space, enacting this theatrical foregrounding which allows to frame a story within a literary boundary:

> In the late dayes of quene Marye, emonge other straunge dealing of the papists with the faythful, this is not with the rest to be forgottē that a godly Matrone named Gertrude Crokehay, the wife of maister Robert Crokhay dwelling then at saynte Catherins by the Tower of London, absteyned her selfe from the popishe church. […] now will I iustyfye tht she is here, and so she did, tellynge Mallet that those her handes did fele her: thys theffecte of thys story.[132]

[130] Fernandes, '"The Deformed Imp of the Devil"', *Angles*, 7.
[131] On the relation between "space" and "theatre" in the early modern period, see Edwards, Lloyd. "Experiencing the Space and Place of Early Modern Theater" *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 43-1 (2013).
[132] *A&M*, 5:1825.

> There was one Elizabeth Lawnson, dwelling in Bedfield, in the county of Suffolke, aboue the age of three score yeares, apprehended as an hereticke, by the Constables of the same town,
>
> Robert Kitrich, and Thomas Elas, in the yeare of our Lord, 1556. because shee would not go to church to heare Masse, & beleue in the sacrament and woorship it. […] he solde away her raiment, and woulde not helpe her, & after she was out of prison, she went home vnto him, and he would shew her no kindnes nor helpe her neither, and yet the house and land that he dwelt in, he had by her, as longe as she lyued: she was found of the congregation till she died.[133]
>
> About the time that this good Archbyshop was thus cruelly dispatched and burned at Oxforde, there were twoo honest Matrones, Agnes Potten, the wyfe of Robert Potten of Ipswich in Suffolk, & the wyfe of one Mychel Trōchfield a shomaker in þe same town, burnt at the said Ipswich the 19. day of Feb. An. 1556. Their opinion or rather certaine perswasion was, that in the Sacrament there was the memoriall of Christes death and passion. […] but when the sayd Myghels wyfe came to the stake & sawe nothing but presēt death before her, she much exceaded the other in ioye, then, although both of them did ioyfully suffer, as it was marueyled at of those that knewe her, and did beholde her ende. Thus these two martyrs ended their lyfes with great triumphe: the Lorde graunt we may do the lyke,[134]

These three excerpts were taken from three different stories of martyrdom, the introductory sentences and the ending sentences were taken as to show how Foxe played with the opening and closure of his literary frame. The will to foreground each individual in a spatial frame that is both psychic and physical allows for a greater focus on the reality of these martyrs, they are all here and there at the same time. The Aristotelian concept of *energeia* is particularly important when dealing with the negotiation of a dual space whose boundaries pushes the reality of binary distinctions.[135] Their death is livened by establishing their deaths first ("there were twoo honest Matrones […] burnt at the said Ipswich") then establishing how they came to be martyrized ("Thus these two martyrs ended their lyfes with great triumphe"). Life and death are discussed and negotiated in a way that revives the lively nature of Christian sacrifice—the power of God, the energy that is revived through the death of these martyrs establishes a continuum between two stages of human life which are no longer perceived as fully separate. The dramatization, therefore, lies within this very concept of exchange between

[133] *A&M*, 5:1758.
[134] *AM*, 5:1573.
[135] Bradshaw, David. *The Essence-Energies Debate: Philosophical Background and Issues* (Bern: 2009). Athanasopoulos, Constantinos, Christoph Schneider (eds.) *Divine Essence and Divine Energies: Ecumenical Reflections on the Presence of God in Eastern Orthodoxy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

two states, two energies that interact with each other.[136] Moreover, the gendering of public space as we have defined it is also inextricably connected with the social conceptions of gender boundaries and their meanings in these specific spaces. John Northbrooke, member of the Devon clergy, published *A treatise wherein dicing. dancing, vaine plaies or enterludes with other idle pastimes etc. Commonly used on the Sabboth days, are reprooved, by the authoritie of the word of God and auncient writers. Made dialoguewise by John Northbrooke* in 1579.[137] He attacked the performing arts culture of the time, especially denouncing the wickedness of theatre and suggests that it was unnatural and ungodly to embody in acting someone else, worse if they were to act as a woman. He wrote that,

> Vpon these people wil fal that woe and curse that Esay the prophet doth pronounce,* saying: wo vnto them that speake good of euil, and euil of good, which put dronkennesse for light, and light for dronkenesse, that put bitter for swete, & sweto for sowre. Salust also speaketh of them saying, I am *pridem equidem ver a rerum vocabula amisimus*quia bona aliena largire liberalitas, malarum yerum audatia fortitudu vocatur*, that is to saye, Now of late dayes we haue lost the true names of things, bycause the giuing a|way of other mens goods is called liberalitie, & vnshame fastnesse in noughtie things, is called high or gentle coutage.[138]

The culture of drama is a space of negotiation of beliefs and the space in which they can be expressed.[139] The openness of public space is not boundary-less, the ability to close or open or enlarge the access to these sacred spaces is limited to those that share these spaces. As such, we can infer that the liveliness of Foxean narratives and its theatricality not only confers the writings a Christian-like energy but also roots them within the literary tradition of his time. The almost-living nature of the visuals and of the texts proves the presence of God and the energy

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[136] On passion in early modern drama, this part of the demonstration has been influenced by this analysis. See Holmes, Jonathan. "To Move the Spirits of the Beholder to Admiration": Lively Passionate Performance on the Early Modern Stage' *Literature Compass*, vol.14, no.2 (2017). Andrew Spicer, Sarah Hamilton (eds.) *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Alderschot: 2006). Hunt, Alice. *The Drama of Coronation: Medieval Ceremony in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[137] Northbrooke, John. *A treatise wherein dicing. dancing, vaine plaies or enterludes with other idle pastimes etc. Commonly used on the Sabboth days, are reprooved, by the authoritie of the word of God and auncient writers. Made dialoguewise by John Northbrooke* (London: 1579).

[138] *Ibid*., 1.

[139] Further on the debate regarding drama and the censorship issue, see: England and Wales. *By the Quene. Forasmuche as the tyme wherein common interludes in the Englishe tongue ar wont visually to be played … The Quenes Maiestie doth straightly forbid al maner interludes to be played eyther openly or priuately, except the same be notified before hande…* (1559). Loades, D.M. *The Theory or Practice of Censorship in Sixteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Kelly, Erin E. "Conflict of Conscience" and Sixteenth-Century Religious Drama' *English Literary Renaissance,* vol 44, no.3 (2014), 388-419.

that is conferred thanks to that. In a seemingly perfect parallelism, it also proves the absence of God's energy within the Catholic community as they are led with evil intention and energy. As such, we have to turn to how violence is negotiated within this paradigm and is used to justify the creation of martyrs and witches.

III. The Role of Torture and Pain in the Creation of Martyrs and Witches

The violent prosecution of Protestants at the end of Henry VIII's reign as well as during Queen Mary I's reign fueled the Protestant eschatological ideas of extreme outbursts of violence. Coupled with the notions of necessary violence and perseverance in the face of the end of the world further ensured that violence was central to religious debates between Protestants and Catholics. Demonstration of the enemy's subordination was deeply embedded in the manners in which he was handled, to the degree of his legal crime against the state and to his spiritual crime against God. Labbie and Terry-Fritsch argue about the beholding of violence during the period:

> Public performance of mastery over one's inner drives was perceived as a supplementary demonstration of the rational calculation of the early-modern individual; since self-control was a necessary characteristic for political and social advancement, the assumption that manners equated progress was employed as a means of negotiating difficult political conflicts.[140]

Violence is both a symptom and a result of social and political control—these issues were intertwined with religious and spiritual matters which complexifies the social meanings of the religious conflicts which we have previously explored. The inability of English Protestants to adhere to irenic theories and apply it to their everyday life or to their writings thereby provides another view of the extent to which violence was rationalized. It is, therefore, impossible to distinguish the performance of violence—to keep with our earlier demonstration of the public drama stage—from its social and political considerations. Many historians have studied the typologies of violence throughout the period, sometimes described as "civilized". [141]

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[140] Terry-Fritsch, Allie & Labbie, Erin Felicia (eds.) *Beholding Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Farnham, Surrey, Burlington: Ashgate Press, 2012), 3.

[141] The quotation "civilized" is taken from the comparison between medieval and early modern barbarism. "Often hailed as the most violent and barbaric of the historical epochs, the medieval's era ostensible lack of civilization remains a marker of its alterity. Popular ideas maintain a fantasy of a barbaric Middle Ages, defined as a negative to the civilized "Renaissance" […] In fact, we argue that the later medieval and early modern representations of violence resemble and inform the very barbarism that our global visual cultures present on a daily basis." *Ibid.*, 1.
On gendered violence, see Lidman, Satu. "Violence or justice? Gender-specific structures and strategies in early modern Europe" *The History of the Family* 18-3 (2013), 238-260; Amussen, Susan D. '"Being Stirred to much unquietness": Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England" *Journal of Women's History* 6-12 (1994), 70-94. On domestic violence, see Muravyeva, M. *Domestic Disturbances, Patriarchal Values: Violence, Family and Sexuality in Early Modern Europe 1600-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). On public, political violence see, Clark, Henry. "Violence, "Capitalism" and the Civilizing Process in Early Modern Europe" *Society* 49 (2012), 122-130.

Showing that violence was overbearingly present in early modern culture and everyday life: in public, in the household, in literature and drama, in the church and in the language itself.

Religious violence has many faces, it is more than often a demonstration of power and an imposed form of subordination. The process of uniformization and of imposed conformity of a marginal community to the established dominant order began during the early modern period. However paradoxically, it was used as a means to unify as well as control. The case of martyrs and witches is seemingly where most of this demonstration was centered around: it was a necessary evil to eradicate another evil and was justified in present and past religious doctrines of the time, itself normalized through the legal and judicial system in place. The approach we have taken until now to deal with the topic of violence is a top-to-bottom approach: the legal system defined the issues of heresy and witchcraft (even though they were often likened to one another) in a way that would ultimately shape the ways it would be approached and discussed by accusers and accused. The culture of violence is something that any individual in the early modern period was steeped in, their reality was logically subjected to such a paradigm of thoughts and beliefs and could explain how they perceived their enemy, and in turn how they treated them.[142]

The Case of Martyrs: John Foxe, John Bale and a Gendered Typology of Violence

The martyr is, therefore, a witness to persecution and to a lack of justice, a Godless law. The goal of Protestant martyrologists was to showcase the extreme brutality that was exercised by the Catholic crown against their own people, they are writers and witnesses of an unjust and ungodly system which attempted to violently eradicate them. In the works of John Bale and John Foxe, violence is overbearing. It is visible within the edification of the historical past of the Protestant Church, to its links with Antiquity and the violent comparison between early Christian persecution, Constantine and Eusebius and the current English religious situation.[143] It is overbearing in the many representations of burning martyrs in woodcuts, images of martyrs

[142] Many sociologists have worked on the complex matter that is religion, French or English. Émile Durkheim wrote that "La religion est une chose éminemment sociale. Les représentations religieuses sont des représentations collectives qui expriment des réalités collectives ; les rites sont des manières d'agir qui ne prennent naissance qu'au sein des groupes assemblés et qui sont destinés à susciter, à entretenir ou à refaire certains états mentaux de ces groupes.' In Durkheim, Émile. *Le fait religieux* (Paris: 2022), 45. Foucault has also argued that the early modern period perceived the individual within its corporeal identity and justly explained the brutality with which the period reacted to collective and individual perceptions of self and other. See Foucault, Michel. *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (Paris : 1975).

[143] See Minton, Gretchen E. '"The Same Cause and like Quarell": Eusebius, John Foxe, and the Evolution of Ecclesiastical History" *Church History* 71-4 (2002), 715-742.

are more often than not depicted in a brutal and extreme manner. We have established early that these representations were rooted in the Christian tradition of eschatology, and the rising popularity of those ideas within the Protestant community resulted in a visual rendering of extreme violent and gruesome images of death. Hinting at the gruesome nature of the martyrs' death, Foxe pushed further the visuality of his texts and sets himself and his work apart from his predecessor, John Bale. Paradoxically enough, the liveliness of his textual rendering of martyrs' deaths is quite a remembered aspect of Foxe's literary uniqueness. Physical pain was not described in euphemisms or metaphors, it is described in almost gruesome details which yielded readers the ability to visualize the reality of the persecution. It also offered enough space for Foxe to mitigate traditional tropes and models of Christian martyrdom, negotiate the role of Protestant persecution and the unnatural and evil nature of Catholics. Dramatic, lively and visual, the martyr and his or her story are genuine and its truthfulness is likened to the true religion, Protestantism. Mark Breitenberg coined the "flesh made word" phrase in Foxean narratives of martyrdom.[144] Coupled with the corporeality of martyrs with their psychic and spiritual reality, Breitenberg explains that they legitimise their identity as martyrs in a Christian tradition and identify themselves to unique traits of Protestantism. As such, the visualisation of violence acts as negative picture for Protestants to portray Catholics as the real enemy, as the other evil side of the perfectly obedient and spiritual Protestant martyr. In the quote below, Foxe's insistence on the body allows him to portray the violence that the martyrs were victims of:

> they fel downe both vpon their knees, and made their hūble prayers vnto the Lord: whiche thing beyng done, they rose and went to the stake ioyfully, and were immediatly therto chayned, and after the fire had cōpassed them about, they with great ioye and glorious triumphe, gaue vp their soules, spirites & liues into the handes of the Lord, vnder whose gouernement and protection, for Christes sake we beseche him, to graunt vs his holy defense and helpe for euer more. Amen.[145]

The violence of the martyrs' deaths was mitigated with the presence of God and His holiness. The excerpt above is taken from Agnes Bongeor and Margaret Thurston's martyrdom. Their martyrdom is particular in the sense that Margaret Thurston is depicted by Foxe as having doubts about her ultimate sacrifice.

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[144] The phrase is taken from the title of one his articles. See Mark Breitenberg, 'The Flesh Made Word: John Foxe's "Acts and Monuments"' *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 13-4 (1989), 381-407.
[145] *A&M*, 5:1714.

> Oh good Lorde what piteouse mone that good woman made, how bitterly she wepte, what straunge thoughtes came into her mind, how naked and desolate she estemed her selfe, and into what plunge of dispaire and care her pore soule was brought it was piteous and wonderfull to see: which all came because she wente not with them to giue her life in the defense of her Christ. For of all thinges in the world, life was lest loked for at her handes.[146]

It is, therefore, important to note how the martyr's doubts are not frowned upon but rather, a necessary part of faith and proof of their God's mercy and ability to forgive the feeble minds of humans and especially women. Foxe writes that "God choseth the weake thynges of the worlde, to confounde myghtie thynges," and explains that these women overcame their weak nature because of their piety in the true faith.[147] The woodcut depicting their martyrdom further exemplifies the desire to show their perseverance with their praying hands, their calmness which is contrasted with the raging flames engulfing their bodies and the people, supposedly Catholics, surrounding them with swords.

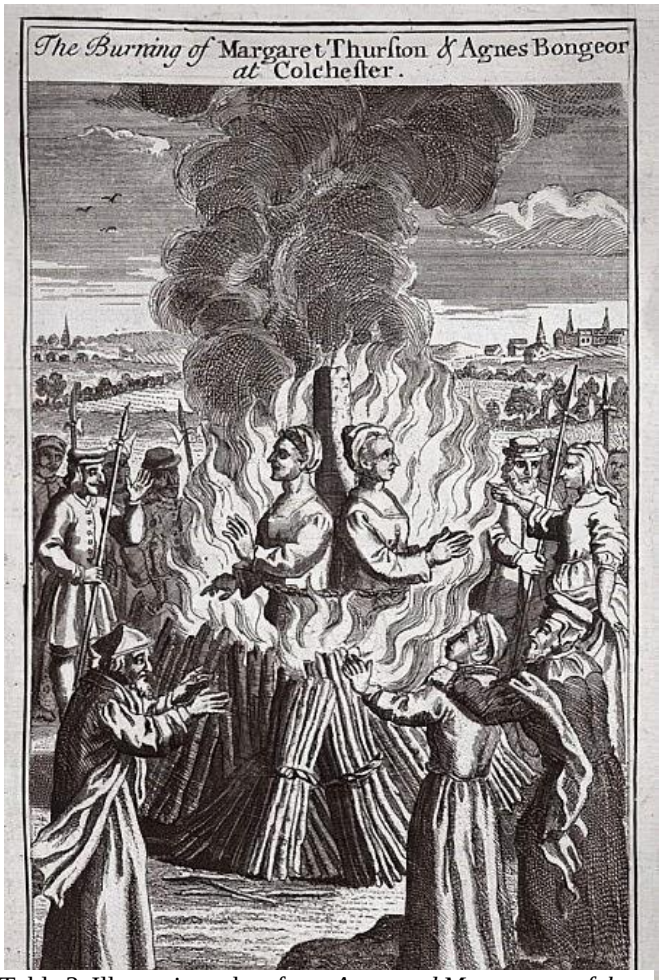

Table 3. Illustration taken from *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein ar comprehended and described the great persecutions horrible troubles, that have bene wrought and practised by the Romishe prelates, speciallye in this Realme of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lorde, a thousande, unto the tyme nowe present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies wrytinges certificatorie* (London: 1563), 5:1714.

Rose Allin's story is rendered with a detailed description of her Catholic persecutor assaulting her body and how her suffering was a proof of her pious perseverance even when her persecutor was violently enjoying her suffering:

> Then that cruell Tirrell taking the candle from her, helde her wriest, and the burninge candell vnder her hand, so long til the very sinowes crackte in sonder.[148]

Further in the text, Rose Allin responds to this disrespect of her body and her place as a woman by showing that her faith in God and in herself was stronger than the assault:

[146] *Ibid.*, 5:1713.
[147] *Ibid.*, 5:1714.
[148] *A&M*, 5:1687.

> while my one hand (quod she) was a burning, I hauing a pot in my other hand, might haue laide him on the face with it, if I had would. for no man held my hand to let me therin. But I thanke God (quod shee) I dyd it not, with all my hart.[149]

The conversation between this Catholic man and Protestant woman shows how she was able to keep to her womanly duties even when he attempted to discredit her for both her beliefs and her gender. The woodcut depicts the same and shows the martyr surrounded by men whose clothing and physical movement attempt to dominate her whilst her own family is only concerned with godly matters, as is seen with the kneeling man praying in the background of the woodcut below. The pleasure that these men take from assaulting Katherine in the passage is visible below with their smiles.

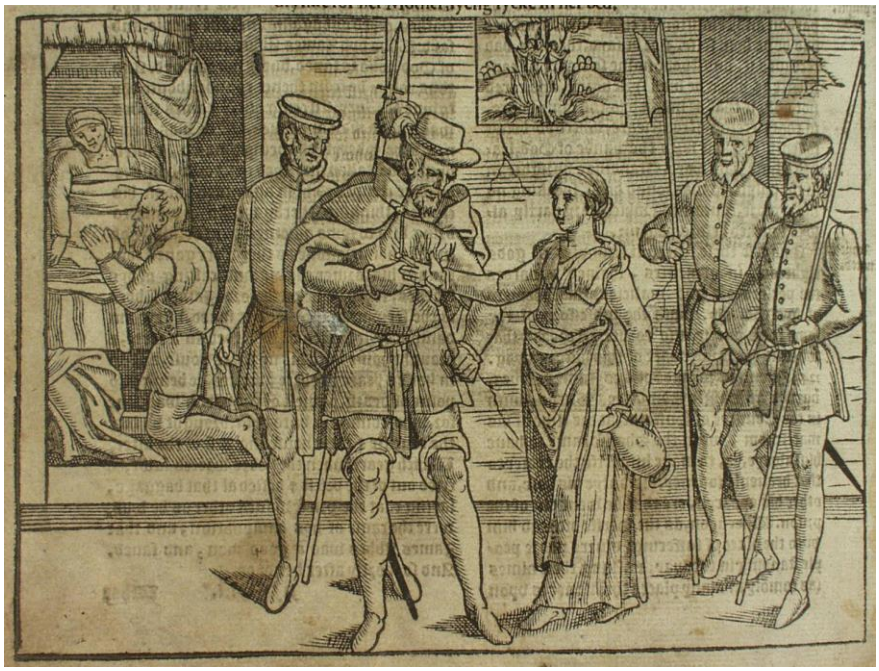

Table 4. Illustration taken from *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein ar comprehended and described the great persecutions horrible troubles, that have bene wrought and practised by the Romishe prelates, speciallye in this Realme of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lorde, a thousande, unto the tyme nowe present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies wrytinges certificatorie* (London: 1563), 5:1689.

In the martyrdom of Katherine Hut, a similar representation is made of her and her persecutors:

> From this her stable and constant assertion, when the bishop was to weak to remoue her, to ignoraunt to conuince her, he knockt her downe with the butcherly axe of his sentence. And so the holy virgine and martyr committed to the shambles of the secular sword was offered vp with her other felowes a burnt

[149] *Ibid.*, 5:1687.

> sacrifce to the Lord, in ordorem bonæ fragrantiæ in the sauour of a sweete and pleasaunt smell.[150]

The Catholic "butcherly axe" and "the secular word" are the negative pictures of the "sacrifice" and the "sauour of a sweete and pleasaunt smell". Catholicism is likened to weak and barbaric actions which are abhorrent in the face of these individuals who are pleasant and pious. By establishing an olfactive environment, Foxe pushes the reality of his narrative by rooting it in corporeality and establishing it within the tradition of *odor sanctorum*.[151] This allows another articulation between the body and the spirit of the martyr whose pleasant bodily fragrance contrasts with the ugliness of the "butcherly axe." The dramatization of the scene ultimately favours the sanctification of the martyr, Katherine Hut's martyrdom is thereby rooted within a continuum of Christian tradition and her martyrdom justified and legitimized. The "violent rage of the aduersaries" is nothing compared to the faith of these martyrs.[152] As such, the physical pain of persecution is perceived as a refuge to showcase individual demonstration of strength as well as an example of piety for all spectators and readers. The public portrayal of violence, and its social meaning, is particularly visible in the martyrdom of Joyce Lewes. Foxe congratulated the close relationships between the people of the town and the martyr, and the way her undying faith influenced the women to celebrate her sacrifice.

> Nowe when she was brought through the towne with a number of byl men, a great multitude of people beinge present, she beyng led by two of her frendes (of the which M. Michael Renigar was one) she was brought to the place of execution: & because the place was farre of, and the throng of the people great, & she not acquainted with the fresh ayre (being so long in pryson) one of her frendes sent a messenger to the sherifes house for some drinke.[153]

When she was put on the stake, her cheerful behaviour contrasted with the tyrannical behaviour of her Catholic persecutor. The public stage was a violent demonstration of faith and female friendship and sisterhood:

> the moste part of the people cried Amen, yea, euen the sherife that stode hard by her, ready to cast her in the fire for not allowing the masse, at this her praiers he said with the rest of the people, Amen. Whē she had thus prayed, she toke the

[150] *A&M*, 5:1589.
[151] See Roch, Martin. *L'intelligence d'un sens. Odeurs miraculeuses et odorat dans l'Occident du haut Moyen Âge (V^e-VIII^e siècles)* (2009). *Ibid.,* "The 'Odor of Sanctity': Defining Identity and Alterity in the Early Middle Ages (5th-9th century)", in *Identity and Alterity in Hagiography and the Cult of Saints*, ed. Ana Marinkovic and Trpimir Vedris (Turnhout : Bresolps, 2010) 73-87. Wicky, Érica. "Parfum de bonté et odeur de sainteté » *Arts et Savoirs* 11 (2019).
[152] *A&M*, 5:1780.
[153] *A&M*, 5:1701.

> cup into her hands, saying. I drinke to all them that vnfainedly loue the gospell of Iesus Christ, and wysh for the abolyshment of papistrie: when she had dronken, they that were her frendes, dranke also. After that a great nomber, especially the weomē of the town, did drinke with her: whiche afterwarde were put to open penaunce in the churche by the cruell papistes, for drinking of the cuppe of bere with that weoman.[154]

The passages above, therefore, exemplifies how the Protestant martyr was stronger than his or her enemy and tormentor because of his or her ability to rejoice willingly in the spirit of God. The individual martyr was rooted within a community whose persecution is seen as a necessary evil to showcase their true faith and religion. Standing on such a spiritual pedestal, they are able to justly and logically define the Catholic other as a weak and wrong example of Christian faith. Their pain is worth enough as it means they can access ultimate religious ataraxy by sacrificing themselves for the Protestant cause and for God. It is, thus, some sort of apotheosis in which they embodied their "true faith" as well as reveal the wrongness of the social organization when Catholics are the dominant group.

The Case of the Witch and Sorcerer: A Gendered Reversal of Violence

Hugh Latimer's sermon *Thou Canst Make Me Clean* argued for the miracles of God's mercy. It also argued for believers to act in a more pious and godly manner in order to avoid Satan's wickedness.

> Therefore it appeareth that he was in great misery, but what does he do? Where does he run for help and succour? Even to Christ, to Him only he runneth, not to witches or sorcerers as ungodly men do, but he seeketh for comfort of our Savior. Now when you are in distress, in misery, in sickness, in poverty, or any other calamity, follow the example of this leper: run to Christ, seek help and comfort only at His hands, and then thou shalt be delivered and made safe, like he was delivered after he came to Christ.[155]

Witches, unlike martyrs, were witnesses of the de-sacralization of the world and of the reversal of the established natural order of the world. Their existence, as pointed out by Latimer, presupposed the sinful nature of men and women and showed how they may have strayed away from their faith. In Latimer's second sermon in 1552, he says that,

> We require that all witchcrafts be removed; that art, magic, and sorcery, be pulled out, necromancy taken away; and so nothing left but his holy word, wherewith we may daily praise the name of God. For I fear me there be a great

[154] *Ibid.*, 5:1701.
[155] Hugh Latimer, *Thou Canst Make Me Clean* (London: c.1549).

> many in England which use such sorceries, to the dishonour of God and their own damnation. We require here further, that all heresy, all popery may be abolished and extinguished.[156]

The threat of witchcraft was therefore closely linked to a lack of faith—not always to a lack of religion, also understood as apostasy, which established once again the binary construction of good versus evil. God allows miracles to be brought forth, they are inherently good as they emanate from God's hand whereas the magic put forth by female and male witches is inherently bad because they are helped by Satan and idolatrous beliefs, likened to Catholicism. Catholic miracles are evil and are not from God which is why they were considered witchcraft by Latimer. The intermingling of these beliefs showcased how the persecution of witches and the cunning folk is necessary for a godly society to prosper—witches are constructed as the antithesis of the martyrs we have studied above but the beliefs of system, the way they are publicly put forth, resembles greatly how Protestant martyrs were dealt with. In Richard Galis's *A brief treatise containing the most strange and horrible cruelty* (1579) a similar theological argument was made to exemplify how the existence of witches presupposed a sort of willingness on God's part to let them exist yet it proves that God has given them—Protestants and England as a godly country—the task to fight against Satan and his devotees.[157] Galis relates how four women, all of them witches and devoted to the Devil, hurt him and escaped the judicial system until they were arrested and executed. He writes that "witches should be brought to the Church," explaining how if it "had not (been for) God his infinit mercy" these witches' lives would not have been spared.[158] He accuses Elizabeth Stile, also named Rockingham, Audrey, Mother Dutton and Mother Deuil to have bewitched his friends and him which resulted in his cruel imprisonment.

> during thexecution of which crueltie: a pittieful sound of groning voice opened the gates of mine eares, and presently my yrōs which before by workemās cunning were riuetted on, making a wonderfull great noyse much like to a Smyth working of his mettall, fell of of my legges, & I taken in so straunge a cace by the space of two houres, that I thought ye soule foorthwith would haue left the chariot of my mortall body. But still perseuering in my prayers, I ceassed not to call vpon the Lorde, not onely for my deliuerance: but also that it would please

[156] Latimer, Hugh. "Second Sermon upon the Lord's Prayer" *Sermons by Hugh Latimer* (London: 1552), 230. Accessed on Christian Classics Ethereal Library.
[157] See Galis, Richard. *A brief treatise containing the most strange and horrible cruelty of Elizabeth Stile alias Rockingham and her confederates, executed at Abingdon, upon R. Galis* (London: 1579).
[158] *Ibid.*, 4.

> him to turne the hartes of them which had so vniustly vsed their correction vpon me.[159]

The above description of both his physical and psychic state shows how he abhorred the social reversal: he views himself as the victim of an unjust legal system which punishes him instead of punishing witches. His belief in the goodness of the system, therefore, disposes him to argue that it is because of its evil nature that they have pushed his punishment. His prayers, nevertheless, have allowed him to understand the truth and reality of his situation. The insistence on the condition of his "mortall body" with the eerie noise further exemplifies the unnatural condition of his imprisonment. This supposes that the four witches' condition is, thus, unnatural and is linked with their "deuilish Sorceries and enchauntments cruelly practised vpon diuers honest men deseruēth not to liue."[160] The author is given the status of witness, witness of an unnatural and unjust condition which is further proved when he sees the Devil and "a payre of eies burning like the fiery flames."[161] Years after the confession of these witches and their execution, James I wrote that witches should be dealt with by the law of God and fire.[162] Like Galis, he argues that they should be condemned with the confessions of several witnesses which couples as a proof of existence and an experience of their wickedness. In this same section, James I notes the "confession of a young Lasse" who was "publicly known to be evil" and explains how a torturous test of insensibility proved his work with the Devil.[163] Unlike martyrs, it was not exceptional to find gendered representations of the woman-as-a-witch since they were predominantly targeted because of their weak, feeble nature. But like the aforementioned martyrs, these four witches are said to be able to sustain painful and intense interrogation which is this time seen as suspicious and another proof of their evil association with Satan, even when they are put to death:

> Mother Margaret béeing vpon the ladder and readye to playe the last act, of her life, and commiting her self to the merecie of the law, by the which shée was adiudged for her desarts to suffer death: began to say the Lordes prayer in the which shée continued til shee came to these woords and forgiue vs our trespases &c. at which place making a stay crying out against one Sauoye Haruy of Windesor Ostler her accuser, which then was comming towards the place of the execution where they all suffered to see her end, saying art thou come to cast mée away? and speak to the People then standing by, mark the end of him before

[159] *Ibid.*, 5.
[160] *Ibid.*, 3.
[161] *Ibid.*, 11.
[162] James I, *Daemonologie*, 62.
[163] *Ibid.*, 62.

> this time tweluemoonth, and waxing ougly to the terror of the Beholders shée impatiently ended her life.[164]

The witch is depicted as an actor, she is "readye to playe the last act" by sacrificing her life and her devilish beliefs even they cost her life. It appears, though, that a certain Christian lesson is made there when she turns herself to the "Lordes prayer" showcasing that even witches, in their most abominable nature, are actually idolatrous and heretics. Like Foxe, these anti-witchcraft authors used visuals to further their arguments and allow their readers to find witches more easily in their own neighbourhoods. The depiction of evil-looking animals, their proximity with the witches and sorcerers in the images below proves the genuine existence of these familiars.

Table 5. *Illustration taken from A Rehearsall both straung and true, of hainous and horrible actes committed by Elizabeth Stile, Alias Rockingham, Mother Dutten, Mother Devell, Mother Margaret, Fower notorious Witches, apprehended at winsore in the Countie of Bark* (London: 1579).

Table 6. Illustration taken from *A Rehearsall both straung and true, of hainous and horrible actes committed by Elizabeth Stile, Alias Rockingham, Mother Dutten, Mother Devell, Mother Margaret, Fower notorious Witches, apprehended at winsore in the Countie of Bark* (London: 1579).

[164] Galis, *A brief treatise*…, 16.

The belief systems in dominance shape the way certain aspects of religion are dealt with—the established religion recognizes the existence of witchcraft and magic, denounces and despises its existence and propagation in English society and in the minds of the people. Yet, it is apparent that the distinctions between heresy and witchcraft are rooted in how these popular beliefs were negotiated and associated with established beliefs. The account of these four witches is useful in understanding how many of the associations made with the condition and actions of these women were inherently linked to doctrinal positions: the case of using visual magic, their deceiving act within their neighbourhood, everything is impacted with the social culture and its subsequent organization during the early modern period. The languages used, whether it be in witchcraft treatises or in martyrological works, epitomizes how marginal people were treated in early modern England and how these feelings regarding these poor, heretical women and men were brought forth with the help of institutionalised religion. Their status as marginal people must be nuanced: witches were often seen as powerful because of their links with evil forces and their ability to influence other women (and sometimes men) to join them. How does gender complexify the languages of magic and religion? How do authors account for the liminal space of gender expression when establishing a specific Protestant discourse?

PART III. THE LANGUAGES OF BELIEFS AND GENDER: THE CREATION OF AN ENGLISH PROTESTANT DISCOURSE

Beliefs are negotiated through the space they are given. We have established until now that the mechanism of religious disputes is interchangeable, it is not set in stone yet its realization is deeply embedded in the organization of dominant and subordinate social groups. Engaging with the different ways in which beliefs, established and popular, are constructed and negotiated within specific spheres of early modern English society has allowed us to engage with the spaces they are given. The exploration of these issues has led us to engage with the margins of social spaces, and the beliefs associated with them. The languages of gender are like many beliefs in the early modern English society, constantly in tension with the unstable condition of society. As such, we cannot speak of a language of gender in the singular because there were not only one as it is inherently connected with the condition of beliefs of the time. We introduced earlier in this paper that the issue of witchcraft was "not sex-specific but sex-related," which is a concept that we intend to apply to the case of martyrs as well.[165] This part will thereby provide another picture of the coupled issue of beliefs and gender, by engaging with gender and its associated representations as an equation. Seen as an equation, the issue of gender within the broad spectrum of religion and witchcraft forces us to engage deeper with both the representations of women and men within the margins of society. The first section of this demonstration will engage with the languages of magic, the many forms and meanings associated with the term "magic" and the extent to which it is complexly embedded within the construction of a common Protestant theology as well as within the identity of English believers. The case of several male witches will be discussed in this section. The second axis of this demonstration lies in the way the languages of magic reinforce the languages of gender. The violent nature of early modern society has forced us to consider the tension between corporeality and spirituality, and the extent to which it constructs a discourse of the body and the flesh. The focus on the body, how it is described in martyrological and/or demonological works is crucial to study the way women and men are depicted as deviant. The demonstration lies, therefore, on the constant tension between gender roles and representations themselves imprisoned within the construction of a Protestant discourse mitigated by both dominant and subordinate categories. The last section of this part will attempt to conclude on all of the above issues by defining the liminal space of gender expression within English Protestant discourse.

[165] Larner, Christina. *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief* (1984).

I. The Languages of Magic: Witch, Sorcerer, Cunningmen and Martyr

Magic is inherently linked to religion; its legitimacy is created through trials and experiences by the individuals practicing it or by those who helps them perform these supernatural works. Like many forms of beliefs that we have dealt with until now, their legitimacy is also linked to their popularity and how the Church viewed them. Thinking that magic, witchcraft and religion are three different aspects of believing which are antithetical is partly wrong. Acts of magic are ranked based on how society perceives them, and in turn accepts or condemns them. The wonder of God, his spirit allowing for miracles to be brought forth is not condemned but rather celebrated by many believers whether they were Protestant or Catholic. These works of God are omnipresent in the sermons of many Protestant preachers, as in Latimer's sermons:

> In this we learn to know antichrist, which doth elevate himself in the church, and judgeth at his pleasure before the time. His canonizations, and judging of men before the Lord's judgment, be a manifest token of antichrist. How can he know saints? He knoweth not his own heart. And he cannot know them by miracles, for some miracleworkers shall go to the devil.[166]

The existence of miracles is substantial, the phenomenon is shrouded by God's impenetrable will which cannot be tempted nor changed because Catholic saints are not real and neither are Catholic miracles. The substance of miracles is often doubted, they befall on God's merciful spirit yet they can no longer be considered true miracles if human will disrespected these acts of reality of God as it is in the case of Christianity. In this sense, God's magic has to be experienced openly and fully because it is revealed in time. This doctrine, thus, reinforces the idea of an "open religion" and "open doctrine" itself depicting the negative picture of Christianity as a mystical, secretive religion shrouded by the Antichrist's influence.[167] This binary construction of peace versus violence and Protestantism versus Catholicism is something that we have encountered earlier when we dealt with the theological justification of violence—the issue of magical works is constructed in a similar way. The revelation of magic is embedded within the construction of doctrines of the period, the boundary between miracle and magic is unstable and dependent on the theological position of the individual who experienced one or

[166] Latimer, Hugh. "Third Sermon*"* in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer* (London: 1549), 107-8.
[167] *Ibid.*, "Fourth Sermon*"* in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer* (London: 1549), 111.

the other.[168] As such, we can wonder how these boundaries are placed by thinkers and writers and how these mental boundaries are effectively brought forth by the language used. Frances Timbers has extensively written on this issue, arguing that magic and witchcraft went under a process of "Christianisation":

> The entire universe was evidence of God's divine activity. The pseudoscientific aspects of magic involved drawing out the unseen or occult elements of the divine, natural world. […] But from a strictly theological perspective, magic was unorthodox because it implied that man could coerce God, or at least God's creation.[169]

He follows by stating that:

> The possibility of manipulating the natural world was underwritten by belief in the correspondences between the macrocosm (the spiritual realm of the heavens or the universe) and the microcosm (the material realm of earth, of which man was an example).[170]

The possibilities revealed through magic and its many forms disrupted the very foundational doctrines of the Christendom, also disrupting the on-going process of construction of English Protestant theology. Like many concepts of the early modern period, Protestant writers' understanding was rooted in classical sources of Antiquity and sets the precedent to believe and trust in God's plan.[171] The core of Protestant principles believes that the individual was able to access God directly through his faith thereby influencing some believers to take part in the idea that some rituals could be used to strengthen the relation between them and God. The Protestant idea of divine providence perhaps influenced in part the legitimization of certain forms of magic in early modern England. Unlike Timbers, historian Gamini Salgado argues that the Protestant Reformation "almost literally took the magic out of Christianity."[172] Salgado shows that Catholic sacraments and icons as well as Catholics' belief in the performativity of words supposes a form of magic, although linked to divinity and God, the nature of these services was inherently magical. In a sense, the Protestant Church advocated against these forms of religion because of its idolatrous nature yet their views were generally not as cut-throat. As such, the

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[168] See Matheson, Peter. "Monks, Miracles and Magic: Reformation Representations of the Medieval Church" *Church History* 77-1 (2008), 173-175.
[169] Timbers, Frances. *Magic and Masculinity: Ritual Magic and Gender in the Early Modern Era* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 18.
[170] *Ibid.*, 18.
[171] See Cameron, Euan. "Prodigies, Providences, and Possession: The Sixteenth-Century Protestant Context" *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason and Religion 1250-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 174-195.
[172] Salgado, Gamini. *The Elizabethan Underworld* (Sutton: Sutton Publishing Ltd.) 80.

distinction between popular and established beliefs is crucial if we want to avoid general accounts which in the end do not consider the extent of the reality of beliefs. Thomas argued that magic and religion came hand in hand, examining the way magic was realized and retained within the Protestant community did not ultimately make their beliefs any less Protestant or magical but rather an image of surviving beliefs negotiated with newer beliefs. He proposes another analysis of the situation:

> The boundaries of 'magical' activity were thus determined by the attitude of the Church to its own formulae and to the potentialities of nature. The Reformation in England saw a particular reduction in the power attributed to holy words and objects, so that the more extreme Protestants virtually denied the existence of any Church magic at all.[173]

He also notes that "any divide which seemed to produce miraculous effects for no discernible natural reason was immediately suspect."[174] Some of the retained forms of magic that were still popular to believers related for the most part to everyday ailments and dealt with a large range of living situations. The practice of white magic was popular even though witchcraft and acts of magic were still reprehended and punishable by death. In 1583 or 1584, a cunning woman was employed by churchwardens "to find out who had stolen the cloth from the communion table."[175] The connection between magic and the established church had not been erased because of Protestantism, it was rather socially accepted as long as it stayed within the boundaries of certain notions. In 1529, a wise man was consulted to find stolen goods after a robbery at Bilston.[176] Although the Reformations had been able to reduce the importance of magical elements in English society, the process had not eradicated all of its roots. Some of these aforementioned instances show how cunning-men and -women were still able to engage with religion and were included within the boundaries of these social spaces. The decisive role of the Church was still instilled in the popular minds of early modern people, surely a remnant of their Catholic past but more precisely, a feature of the organization of the society of the time which cannot be abolished by mere laws. The control of social spaces shared by English subjects was thus related to the established and popular beliefs of the local laity and wardens of the faith. It also shows that neither women or men were preferred when they were thought

[173] Thomas, *Decline of Magic*, 304.
[174] *Ibid.*, 304.
[175] *Ibid.*, 324. No primary source was cited. Salgado also wrote of this particular instance, see Salgado, *The Elizabethan Underworld*, 81.
[176] Poole, C.H. *The Customs, Superstitions and Legends of the county of Stafford* (Staffordshire: Rowney and Co., 1883) 72.

to be wise or cunning.[177] Nevertheless, magic was frowned upon by most Protestants as it was viewed as an easy solution to escape the tough work demanded to be pious and faithful to God. Francis Bacon reflected on the Christian doctrine of effort as explained below:

> yet I should hold them unlawful, as opposing to that first edict which God gave unto man, In *sudore vultus comedes panem tuum*. For they propound those noble effects, which God hath set forth unto man to be bought at the price of labour, to be attained by a few easy and slothful observances. Deficiencies in these knowledges I will report none, other than the general deficience, that it is not known how much of them is verity, and how much vanity.[178]

"In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread" is the Christian doctrine of effort and result. Francis Bacon, philosopher, urged his reader to work for knowledge and reason as it was indicted by God originally. His theories engaged with a thorough scientific demonstration as he was unsatisfied with the state of science of the time. Urged by a Christian desire to understand the divine inner-workings of the universe, Bacon's theories fundamentally influenced the period.

Although there were members of the clergy that took part in the advancement of magical works in religion, many of the practitioners of magic were not able to eclipse the control of the country's law against witchcraft and enchantments. The already very fragile boundary between 'good' and 'bad' magic made the growing numbers of witchcraft accusations that much complex to define. In the unusual case of Francis Coxe, the astrologer and necromancer, was forced to repudiate his crimes by denouncing the arts he was performing. In his *Short treatise declaring the detestable wickednesse, of magicall sciences as necromancie, coniurations of spirites, curiouse astrologie and such lyke. Made by Francis Coxe* (1559) he repents and writes: "I haue my selfe ben an offender in these moste detestable sciences."[179] The experience Coxe has gathered as a practitioner of different forms of magic, from necromancy to astrology, made his anti-witchcraft treatise quite unusual as it is difficult to know whether he believed what he related. He equated these crafts as emanating from Satan's influence, even touching priests:

> As I my self knew a Priest, not farre frō a toun, called Bridgewater, whcih as it is wel knowē in the contrye, was a great magiciā, in all his lyfe time, after he once begā these practises, he neuer wolde eat bread, but in stede thereof did eat

[177] The phrases wise man/women and cunning man/woman was interchangeable and designated people that performed acts of white magic and that were educated in those arts.
[178] Bacon, Francis. *Works of Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, and Lord High Chancellor of England: in Ten Volumes* (London: 1824), 129.
[179] Coxe, Francis. *A short treatise declaringe the detestable wickednesse, of magicall sciences as necromancie, coniurations of spirites, curiouse astrologie and such lyke. Made by Francis Coxe* (London: 1559), 1.

> always chese, which thing as he cōfessed diuers times, he did because it was so cōcluded betwene him & the spirit, which serued hī, for at what time he did eat bread: he should no lōger lyue.[180]

Because of the "hope of any earthly treasure" this Bridgewater priest practiced magic and no longer ate the bread of transubstantiation during the Catholic sacrament of transubstantiation. He followed by speaking of exorcism and animal sacrifice as a ritual to satisfy a female malevolent spirit, here named Egippia. The *Munich Handbook of Demonic Magic* dated from the fifteenth-century mentions Egippia as one of the spirits that can be contacted through demonic rituals such as "obtaining information about a theft by gazing into a fingernail."[181] Coupled with the information we gathered above, it appears that it is evident that suspicion of black magic—or witchcraft altogether—was easier to prove than natural, white magic since the boundary between the two was individual will and intention. Occult sources, whether they were about necromancy or natural magic, cited nature and the universe as the first and major source of energy that could be used and manipulated. Some of these occult thinkers, like Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa who was cited in Coxe's treatise, discussed the links between magic, religion and emphasized a further exploration of both magic and religion to understand the universe.[182] The influence of occult philosophy was relatively reduced especially as the process of Protestant reformation moved forward, yet its impact on how magic was perceived is still clearly visible. According to Coxe, Agrippa was said to have an abnormal animal which would most likely be a familiar:

> Cornelius Agrippa, of whome all the worlde speaketh, whose woorkes remayne vnto this daye, of whose ende are diuerse opinions, some rumors haue ben, that whā he rode abrode, he had alwayes a blacke dogge, waytinge vpon him, whiche dogge one day in iourneinge: caryed hym awaye body and soule, some say that the sworde seperate his headde from the bodye, soo that hys ende is vncertayne and moste like it is that he endid after some straunge sorte, that the trueth therof is no more manifest.[183]

The common trope of gossip, of witnessing some sort of suspicious activity which could explain the marginal opinion and action of the individual is omnipresent in Coxe's narrative. In John

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[180] *Ibid,* 1.
[181] Kieckhefer, Richard. *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (Pennsylvania: 1998), 133;289.
[182] On the mention of Agrippa, see Coxe, *A short treatise…*, 2. See the works on occult philosophy, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, *De Occulta Philosophia Iibri III* (Cologne: 1533). The latest translation of this work was published in 2021 and translated by Eric Purdue. On the influence of the Reformation on Agrippa, see Zambelli, Paola. "Magic and Radical Reformation in Agrippa of Nettesheim" *Journal of the Warbug and Courtauld Institutes* 39 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 69-103.
[183] Coxe, *A short treatise…*, 2.

Walsh's witchcraft interrogation, he was asked whether he ever had a familiar or not. His master, Robert of Dreiton, had one which he describes as such:

> And further he sayth vpon his oth, that his Familiar would somtyme come vnto hym lyke a gray blackish Culuer, and somtime lyke a brended Dog, and somtimes lyke a man in all proportions, sauing that he had clouen feete.[184]

The importance of animals as vessels for satanic and demonic acts is a recurring trope which, as in the case of Elizabeth Stile's familiars, is used to prove the existence of witchcraft and black magic. John Walsh shows the importance of prayers to avoid being bewitched:

> the Witch that vseth them cal forth an other to do the act, which if hee do not, then will they spy an other tyme when they maye cause the partye to be found lacking fayth, or els to bee more voide of grace, where he or they may be hurt. Furthermore he saith, that who so doth once a day saye the Lordes prayer and his Creede in perfite charitie, the Witch shall haue no power on hys body or goodes for that day.[185]

Father Rosimond, another cunning-man, is mentioned in Stile's examinations. His abilities show the implicit link between magic and nature even if the intention of the practitioner is evil through the art of shape-shifting:

> Elizabeth Stile confesseth, her self often tymes to haue gon to Father Rosimond house where she founde hym sittyng in a Wood, not farre from thence, vnder the bodie of a Tree, sometymes in the shape of an Ape, and otherwhiles like an Horse.[186]

And later, it is also noted that Father Rosimond can bewitch himself and others:

> Further she saieth, that she will stande vnto her death, to all and euery Article before rehearsed: and that father Rosimond can transforme hym self into the likenesse of an Ape, or a Horse, and that he can helpe any manne so bewitched to his health againe, as well as to bewitche.[187]

Because these powers that were manipulated by Walsh or Rosimond were part of the natural world, of the microcosm, they could not be part of the Protestant belief system.[188] Manipulating the microcosm meant manipulating the macrocosm which was inherently wrong because human will could not partake in the matters of the divine as long as they were still living

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[184] Anon, *The examination of John Walsh before Maister Thomas Williams, commissary to the Reuerend father in God William Bishop of Excester, vpon certayne interrogatories touching wytchcrafte and sorcerye, in the presence of diuers gentlemen and others. The .xxiii of August.1566* (London: 1566), 2.
[185] *Ibid.*, 2.
[186] *A Rehearsall both straung and true*, 6.
[187] *Ibid.*, 6.
[188] See page 55 for the definition of microcosm and macrocosm as per Frances Timbers.

amongst the material world. In all of these instances, the public space is used to disrupt and create instability which furthers our argument that the experience of beliefs—and subsequently, witchcraft, magic and religion—is deeply social and must be dealt with by all members of the society. This deep reversal of the natural order of the cosmos was inextricably part of a desire for more power and more control of these individuals' material environment. Timbers theorizes this aspect of magic as a demonstration of gendered construction of power as related to nature:

> Nature was personified as female and science (control of nature) as male. The educated male magician was viewed as an experimental scientist and, therefore, had an obligation to tame, cultivate and subdue nature.[189]

The fact that women were overwhelming accused of witchcraft in the sixteenth century lays out clearly how gender was constructed. The witch hunt is a firsthand example of the persecution and subordination of women. Yet, it appears that the presence of male witches and cunningmen in some works of magic and witchcraft shows that they were also part of the equation. The growing interest in male witches, and the matter of masculinity in magic in broader terms, has allowed for a renewed understanding of the construction of the gender equation in English society. John Walsh was said to be trained in "Phisicke or Surgerie by Arte" through the "natural operatiō of ye herbs."[190] Another man from the parish of St. Sepulchers says he can conjure spirits and communicate with them.[191] Sir Robert Brian was a conjurer, John Davye was a prophesier or Thomas Owldring who was also a conjurer.[192]

The case of male witches, thus, is exceptional in the sense that they were less likely to be accused and punished for their deviant beliefs as female witches would. Like female martyrs, the manner in which their stories are told and written ultimately formed a tale of masculinity which was performed within the gender equation. Alison Rowlands argues the following:

> Witches everywhere were the victims of processes of social interaction (before a formal accusation was made) and then of law (in the course of formal trials) in which they usually became ever more disempowered at the hands, first, of neighbours and accusers, and then of the men who exercised formal judicial power over them.[193]

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[189] Timbers, *Magic and Masculinity*, 39.
[190] *The examination of John Walsh…,* 1.
[191] Smith, Thomas. *An Examination taken by Sir Thomas Smith of Conjurer, and his Comlice at 1549* (London: 1559).
[192] *Narrative of the Days of the Reformation*, 334.
[193] Rowlands, Alison. "Not 'the Usual Suspects'? Male Witches, Witchcraft, and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe" *Witchcraft and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe* (Essex: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1-30.

How then can we account for these victims of the society that puts them at the margins? After having examined the different languages of magic, the confessional uses in witchcraft discourse and how masculinity within the social concept of gender has influenced the case of witchcraft, we intend to show how these marginal individuals were characterized. The focus on natural philosophy also dwells on the human body, reinforcing gendered representations of wickedness and evil while also socially subordinating the feminine body to a set of social and religious prerequisites.

II. Gender in the Christianised Body: The Sexualisation of Corporeality

The characterisation of magic has influenced the characterisation of gender, the experience of magic whether white or black is inherently linked to the social construction of gender and to the social spaces available to discuss and negotiate them. The explanation for the presence of malevolent magic was simple enough: the Devil had roamed the English country, introduced himself as the Catholic Pope and perverted the minds of people who would turn to magical arts in hope of finding material solutions to their issues. The Protestant Reformations were not able to eradicate of all these roots, the likening of idolatrous beliefs to witchcraft was also a quick diagnosis for the remaining beliefs of witchcraft and magic. Yet, it appears that even through repeated attacks on the magical properties of religion, the Protestant community itself was divided on these issues.

> And although this Realme is knowen by common experience, and of late, to be troubled with Witches, Sorcerers, and other such wise men and women (as they cal them) yet that the deuyl should so possesse actually men and women in such maner as advouched, and to make thereof a plaine matier, so constantly reported, and spread by their printed bookes, not publiquely license, is mere vanitie and falshood, as the parties throughly examined (and favourably used) have confessed the same, as hereafter shal ensue.[194]

Early modern English society was profoundly patriarchal, and so were religion and magic. Our earlier demonstration of the exceptional presence of male witches, or cunningmen, meant that there was more than eschatological urgency to explain the predominant attack on women and their experience within such an unstable societal model. Francis Coxe, the condemned necromancer, was allowed to write and publish almanacs in 1566 and 1567.[195] Almanacs were widely distributed books which included calendars, prognostics for upcoming years calculated using astronomy and astrology.[196] The popularity of these types of books meant that they were useful tools that we can use to uncover some of the underlying representations of gender and beliefs altogether. A.S. Weber examined the medical almanacs that were destined specifically to women, arguing that they played a crucial role in the construction of the female body.

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[194] Anon. *The disclosing of a later counterfeited possession by the deuyl in two maydens within the Citie of London* (London: c.1574)

[195] Coxe, *A progostication made for the yeere of our Lorde God 1566. Declaryng the change, Full & Quarters of the Moone, with other, accustomable matters, serving all England* (1566).

[196] Kassell, Lauren. "Almanacs and Prognostications" in Joan Raymond (ed.) *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture: Volume One: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 431-442.

Women's almanacs were in part prophecies, in part astrology, and in part medical.[197] The body was also a central part of Agrippa's *Three Books on Occult Philosophy* (1533) in which he used a combination of astrology and religion and natural science to explain the shape of the human body.

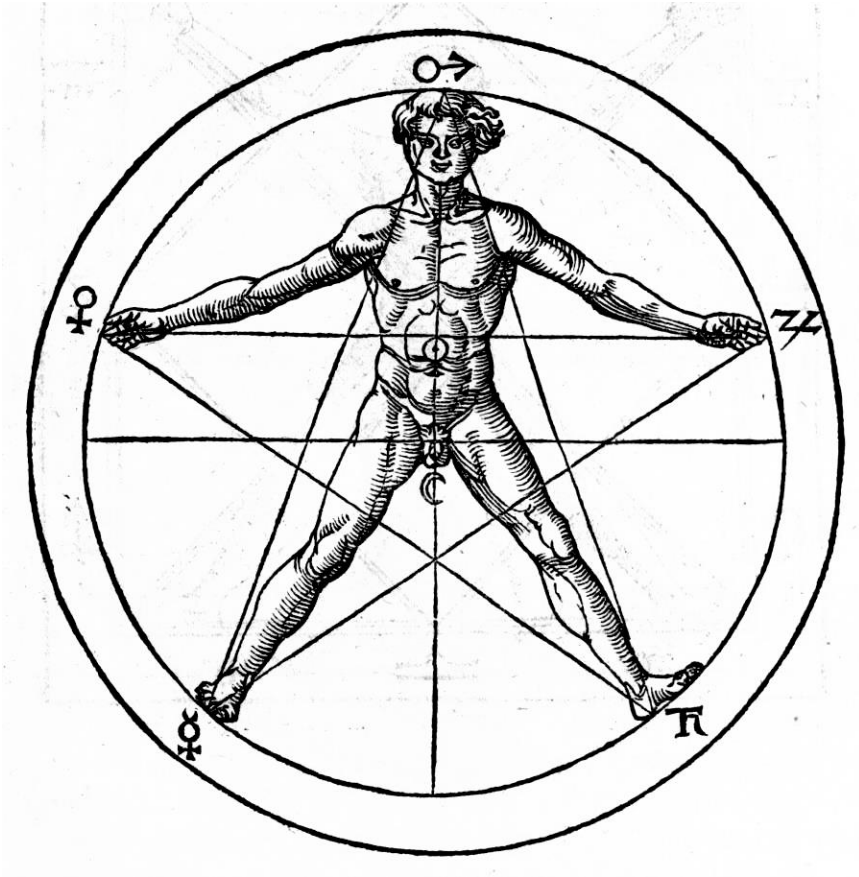

Table 7. Illustration taken from Agrippa, Heinrich C. *De Occulta Philosophia Iibri III* (1533).

Corporeality was thus a central part of many works, whether they were almanacs or large works, and the distribution of these representations of how the body is shaped according to God, how it ought to be looked after through the use of planetary hours or lunar phases, shows how popular beliefs of magic and established beliefs were intertwined. Girls and women were taught to experience and express their body in the way that is inspired from these models; many works, however, picture women in a very patriarchal manner. The body is depicted as the vessel that is the weakest and most influenced by demonic forces: in Christian theology, which was retained by Protestantism in that matter, Eve was the weaker part of Adam as she was made

[197] Weber, A.S. "Women's Early Modern Medical Almanacs in Historical Context" *English Literary Renaissance* 33-3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 358-402.

from his rib. The original sin committed by Eve is commonly used to explain the vicious and deceiving nature of women, this depiction is omnipresent in early modern culture:

> Rid me also quite and cleane of that his tempter the deceitfull Eue, which turneth vs away from the obedience of thy Father. Clothe me with thy self O my redeémer and sanctifyer, clothe me with thy self, which art the second man, and hast yealded thy self obedient in all things to God thy father, to rid away all lustes of the flesh, and to destroy the kingdome thereof, through righteousnes.[198]

According to Richard Daye, this prayer should be pronounced during the act of dressing. It refers to "the deceitfull Eue" as the original sinner alongside Adam. The original story of temptation and sinning is, thus, part of a larger discourse surrounding lust and sexuality. These depictions illuminate how these stories are implemented within the intimate space of the household, contributing to how these modes of experience and expression are thereby shown in public spaces. "All lustes of the flesh" are humanly experiences which have to be controlled through faith and prayers like they were provided in Daye's *Booke of Christian Prayers* (1578). Edward Gosynhill wrote in 1541 that women "trim themselves every day, / And all that ever they imagine / Is to lure the masculine."[199] Clothing the body affects how others perceive the reality of bodies, it is the embodiment of how the individual lends attention to their material existence which in itself reflects how the individual respects their spiritual existence. Great attention is given to the body and to prayers which are there to help deflect the Christian soul from material afflictions.

> This body of mine is but a pryson to my soule. Yea and that a most darck, and lothsome one. This world is but a banishmēt, and this life but sorow & wretchednes. But where as thou art, there is our home, our freédome, and our endles blisse.[200]

The focus on corporeality in Daye's prayers is a common early modern expression of anxiety regarding the relation between the soul and the body. As we have previously set, the body is almost always regarded as something that has to be controlled by the individual itself and by beliefs as well as society. It is, thus, not surprising to find that this culture is also omnipresent in martyrological and demonological writings which are embedded in religious discourse. The feminine body is constructed as deriving from the original curse. Sara Read reflected on the

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[198] Daye, Richard. *A booke of Christian prayers, collected out of the auncie[n]t writers, and best learned in our tyme, worthy to be read with an earnest mynde of all Christians, in these daungerous and troublesome dayes, that God for Christes sake will yet still be mercyfull vnto vs* (London: 1578), 3.
[199] Gosynhill, Edward. *The schoolhouse of women* (c.1541), in Brian J.Gibbons (ed.) *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought: Behmenism and Its Development in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 41.
[200] *Ibid.*, 136.

issue of physiology and menstruation by showing that it was perceived as a curse and a plague originating from Eve.[201] All of these depictions of the female body are rooted in the belief of sinfulness, their bodies reflect their innate nature and their condition is a constant reminder of the original sin of Eve.[202] Many representations of the female body are made, itself a reminder of a social culture of discourse around sexuality.

The Virgin versus the Whore

The figures of the Virgin Mary and Eve are often depicted against each other as two opposites—one figure that ought to be followed in order to be a good Christian woman while the other is sinful and an example of transgressive behaviours which disrupts the natural order of God and the universe. Foxe mentions the sexuality of Katherine Hut to celebrate her virgin status:

> And so the holy virgine and martyr committed to the shambles of the secular sword was offered vp with her other felowes a burnt sacrifce to the Lord, in *ordorem bonæ fragrantiæ* in the sauour of a sweete and pleasaunt smell.[203]

The phrase "holy virgine and martyr" shows that the two terms are of equal importance, from a biblical point of view her virginity is equated with that of Mary's. Her marital status sets her apart from the rest of the other female martyrs. Other figures of virginity were celebrated by Foxe, one of the most famous and important of them was Elizabeth I. Her refusal to marry and produce heirs is a direct refusal to participate in sexual endeavours. Hackett writes that "her virginity has been a form of dedication to God, and has directly brought about Elizabeth's special dedication to God."[204] Elizabeth I's position as a monarch and a woman shows the double-edged expectation that fell on her—she was both praised for her virginity, pushing her as a pious Christian figure in the religious realm yet this meant that her social role as a woman was not fulfilled. The importance of her marital status, I argue, reflects the anxiety surrounding women in power and the agency that they were given regarding their bodies. This culture of

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[201] See Read, Sara. *Menstruation and the Female Body in Early Modern England* (Basingtoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
[202] See Molekamp, Femke. *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 45. Ursula A. Potter, *The Unruly Womb in Early Modern English Drama: Plotting Women's Biology on the Stage* (Berlin, Boston: Medivial Institute Publications, 2019). McClive, Cathy & Pellegrin, Nicole (eds.) *Femmes en fleurs, femmes en corps: sang, santé, sexualité du Moyen Âge aux Lumières* (Saint-Etienne : Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 2010).
[203] *AM*, 5 :1689.
[204] Hackett, Helen. *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 55.

celebrating virginity is an example of how social norms often argued with religious norms: active virginity meant that the order of natural things could be maintained thereby proving a stable basis for society to provide in a godly manner. Yet, women could not possibly all hold this role whether they had a royal title or none at all which created grounds for an ambiguous representation of such matters. This anxiety is also a symptom of a society in crisis which desires to control and police both corporeality and spirituality. The internalisation of these moral and social codes is visible in many martyrological narratives, explicated in the quote below of Rose Allin's martyrdom:

> In the end, when the synnowes (as I sayd) brake that al the house hearde them, he then thruste her from him violently and sayde: ha stronge whore, thou shamles beast, thou beastly whore &c. with such lyke vile wordes.[205]

The concept of whoredom is conceptually a sort of negative light to that of virginity. Rose Allin is being physically and verbally abused. Her body is attacked, as well as her dignity, as Master Tirell repeatedly calls her a "whore" and a "beast." This language of violence is itself a reflection of the way sexual acts were gendered, the passivity of women in social and intimate spaces was socially coded and the inversion of these codes is thus something that is inherently wrong.[206] Lady Knevet's martyrdom deals with sexual assault and rape:

> she and her family wer many times threatned by messengers, that the Byshop would visit her ther fore, vnto which messengers she wold always answere, that if his Lordshippe sent woorde before what daye hee would come, hee should therafter bee entertayned at her hand. But god, whose prouidence ruleth the raging seas, neuer suffered them al that toyling tyme to molest her.[207]

The purposeful attack on female sexuality in both these instances show how embedded the control over women's bodies was ingrained in early modern culture. The process of dehumanisation in both cases reinforces generic representations of gender, as a sinful vessel for more sins to be perpetuated and has to be controlled, one way or another. The binary description of transgressive women against the figure of the maiden reflects the prevalent codes of manner for women which condemns and punishes either aspect.

[205] *A&M*, 5:1687.
[206] See Friday, Nancy. *My Secret Garden: Women's Sexual Fantasies* (New York: Quartet Books, 1976).
[207] *A&M*, 5:1779.

The Celibate and the Wife

The issue of sexuality is thus socially considered in the way women crossed the roles and codes that they are given by society. It is reflected in their social status, more specifically in their marriage status as wives, celibates or widows. The stages of a girl's life were considered in relation to her male environment, and rarely in relation to herself.[208] As the Reformed church denounced priest celibacy, the focus was thus turned to marital status of both men and women whether they were part of religious institutions or not. Celibacy was no longer a proof of spiritual elevation or genuine dedication to God, marriage was put forth as a way to respect God's plan as well as the codes of society. Jennifer Evans argues that:

> Beyond this it was also believed that marriage was the proper institution for the regulation of unbridled lusts. The marriage bed provided opportunities for the expression of sexuality and so negated the possibility of sinful acts such as fornication and adultery.[209]

The investigation into the norms of marriage shows how male and female interrelationships were coded both socially and theologically. The description of the sexed body, according to Evans, reinforces the representation of both manhood and womanhood. Obligations of performance and capacity were not reserved for either sexes or gender, she writes that "an infertile or impotent man was seen as less of a man, unable to achieve true masculine or patriarchal authority."[210] A similar rhetoric was applied to women who could not produce children. Anxiety around sexuality generated many debates among the writers and thinkers of the period. Many witchcraft treatises included these anxieties and targeted older women who were at the margins of those socially accepted groups. Elizabeth Stile speaks of four other women who were witches like her: all of them are older women as suggested by their title of "Mother" or widows.[211] By condition, these women were not able to occupy dominant social spaces because of age and gender which was further reinforced through their status of witches. In Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, many female martyrs are either praised for being good Christian motherly figures such as Agnes Bongeor who gives up her child to be martyred:

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[208] To read more about the representations of widows or working women, see McIntosh, Marjorie. *Working Women in English Society 1300-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), McShane, A. & Walker G. (eds.) *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp* (2010). Willen, Diane. "Women in the Public Sphere in Early Modern England: The Case of the Urban Working Poor" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19-4 (Kirksville: 1988), 559-575.
[209] Evans, Jennifer. *Aphrodisiacs, Fertility and Medicine in Early Modern England* (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2014), 19.
[210] *Ibid.*, 23.
[211] Galis, *Elizabeth Stile's examinations*.

> And also hauing a child, a litle young infant sucking on her, whom shee kept with her tenderly all the time shee was in prison.[212]

Her duty as a martyr surpasses her duty as a mother and woman, yet her tenderness toward a child highlights a very traditional notion of Christianity. The tension between these roles is nevertheless mitigated because the image sketched out by Foxe is inextricably violent: the contrast between Bongeor's "tenderly" attention to her child while "shee was in prison" is unusual. The contrast exists within the dissonance between the violent nature of a space like prison and the Bongeor's behaviour, itself softening the violent image. Yet, it proves how she is able to fulfil both her role as a mother and as a martyr at the same time. In the visual depiction of the three Garnesey martyrs, the image of the child being ripped out of its mother's belly as they are being burnt alive by Catholics is extremely violent.

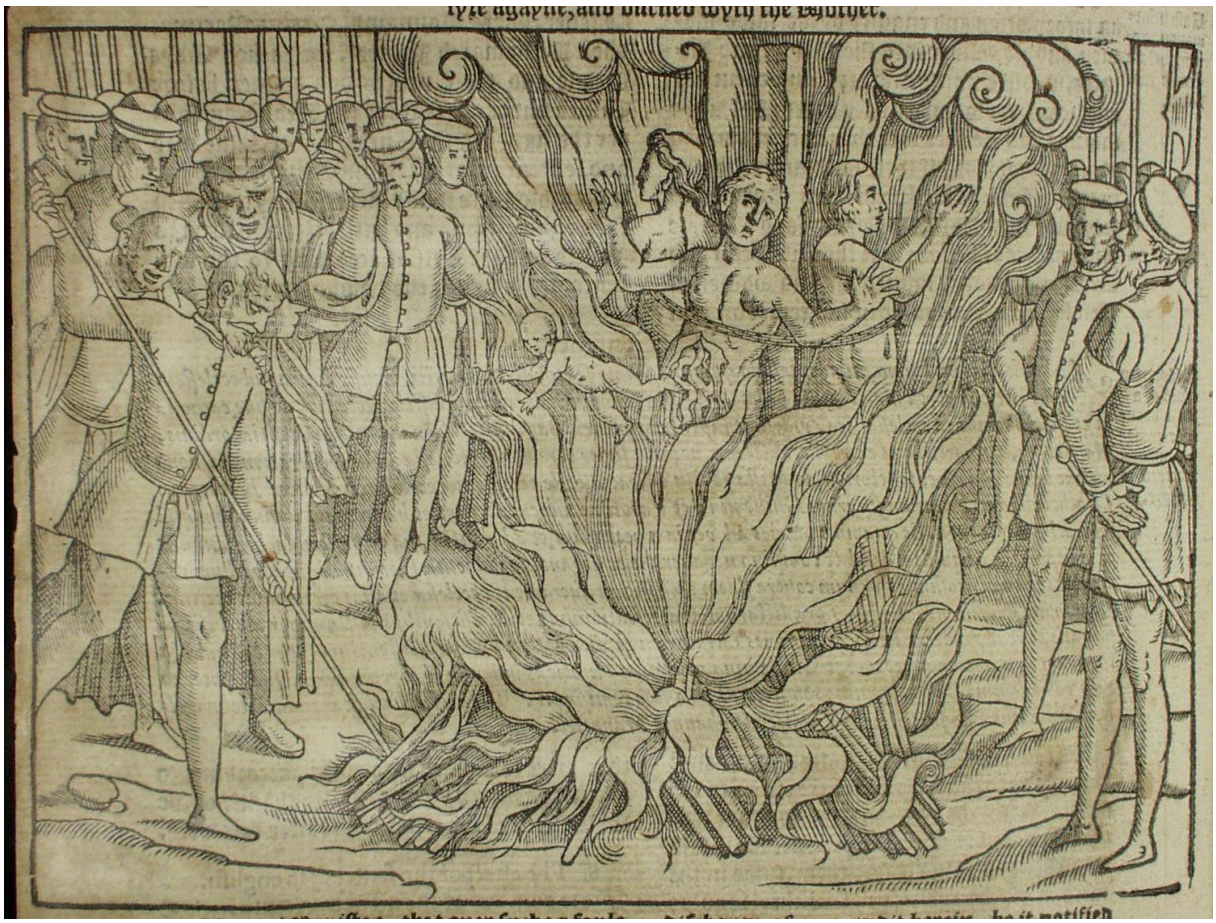

Table 8. Illustration taken from *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein ar comprehended and described the great persecutions horrible troubles, that have bene wrought and practised by the Romishe prelates, speciallye in this Realme of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lorde, a thousande, unto the tyme nowe present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies wrytinges certificatorie* (London: 1563) 5:1611.

[212] *AM*, 5:1712.

Motherly duties were central to the conception of a specific Protestant discourse as well as martyrdom, the image of the monarch as both a mother and divine figure of the English realm depicts this very tension. As Hackett argues, "the figure of the mother was therefore a popular means of representing female rule since the archetypal maternal virtues of mercy and loving care could be claimed as advantages to subjects in a monarch."[213] Elizabeth was the spouse and mother of the English nation while virgin martyrs became Christ's spouses after their earthly death. This view of women highlights how paradoxical some representations of gender were, negotiating between popular and established beliefs of how the world ought to be is a constant battle. For instance, Anne Askew was one of the most important female martyrs in Foxe's work. Her story constituted one of the longest narratives of female martyrdom, her accusation and execution encapsulates many of the tropes that we have explored up until now. Her status as a married woman is acknowledged by Foxe as he mentions her maiden and married name:

> I Anne Askew, otherwise called Anne Kyme, doo trulye and perfectly beleue, and so here presently confesse & knowledge.[214]

The use of her maiden name is something uncommon for the period, the absence of acknowledgement on Foxe's part is most probably a desire not to call attention to this transgression. Even though Foxe celebrates her transgressive nature, which inherently constructs her as a rightful Protestant martyr, this is something that he purposefully sets apart. This is something that would have rendered her martyrdom less legitimate and more criticised by many Catholic polemicists and some Protestants as well.[215] The negotiation of earthly matters which pertain to social and bodily duties and spiritual matters exemplifies the extent to which representations are dependent on the space in which they are produced and who they are concerned with.

[213] Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, 78.
[214] *A&M*, 3:729.
[215] Freeman, Thomas F. & Wall, Sarah E. 'Racking the Body, Shaping the Text: The Account of Anne Askew in Foxe's Book of Martyrs', *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001), 1180.

III. The Liminality of Gender Expression in Protestant Discourse

The conceptional dualities of the early modern period were stringent and stiff. Good versus evil, men versus women, Protestants versus Catholics, body versus mind. The hierarchical subordination of one or the other played with the way either one could access the social and mental spaces they desired. All of our demonstrations above have led us to inquire into the threshold between the dualities at stake. The unstable discourse surrounding religiosity and spirituality, their differences and similarities, have rendered the languages of individuality and community even more ambiguous. None of the dualities mentioned above were all encompassing, even if many of these subjects attempted to subjugate them to certain defined codes and roles. John Foxe's work applied this process of unification and confederation of the Protestant community around the same objects, subjects and beliefs. James I and his *Daemonologia* (1597) attempted to draw a scientific analysis of magic and witchcraft through theological justification and witness experience. Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) worked in similar ways even if most of his conclusions differed from other demonologists. Writers and thinkers attempted to stabilize the discourse around these pressing societal and religious issues, their beliefs falling within a liminal space in which they initiated newer forms of considerations and interpretations. The question of rituality is predominant in the early modern period—Foxe or Scot or even Francis Coxe were all influenced by the different spaces they shared and experienced. Therefore, how can we account for the liminality of gender as an overarching social construction? The constructions of masculinity and femininity are two concepts which work upon that dualistic culture of belief yet their inconstant representation pushes us to believe that there was more to the equation than two absolute values. Niall Allsopp's article *Threshold Rituals in Early Modern England: A Case Study in Robert Herrick* (2017) skillfully explores the importance of rituals and liminality in the social experiences of dissenting religious groups.[216] He writes the following:

> This essay has aimed to show the powerful effects thresholds had on the early-modern Protestant imagination, but also how early-modern Protestants could experience liminality differently. Although, as we have seen, thresholds were sites of doctrinal tension, the act of threshold-crossing reminds us how religious differences were experiential too, implicated in spiritual transformation and communal identity.[217]

[216] Allsopp, Niall. "Threshold Rituals in Early Modern England: A Case Study in Robert Herrick", *The Review of English Studies* 68-285 (Oxford: 2017) 405-427.
[217] *Ibid.*, 426.

Allsopp's study of the different considerations of liminality shows that most of the rites of passages of the early modern period operate on a constant tension between mind and body. From a vantage point of liminality, all of the stories that we have studied until now act as a ritual of passage from the individual to communal. Anne Askew, for instance, began her story by being represented solely as a woman and reducing her condition rooted in one dimension of individuality as well as on a social scale.

> He answeared that I was a woman, and that he was nothinge deceiued in me. Then my cosen Bryttaine desired him to take me as a woman, and not to sette my weake womans wit, to his Lordshippes verye greate wisdome.[218]

Yet, she is able to access another dimension of her condition and transform herself into a martyr through the performativity of both her Catholic persecutors and John Foxe's narrative.

> Thus she being troubled so many maner of waies, & hauing passed through so many tormēts, hauing now ended the lōg course of her agonies, being cōpassed in with flames of fire, as a blessed sacrifice vnto God, she slept in the Lorde, in An. 1546. leauing behind her a singular example of Christen constancie for all men to folowe.[219]

The rites of condemnation and execution played a role in her passage from one threshold to another, from one side to the other. The "so many maner of waies" constitute the societal rites of dehumanization and characterization as a heretic in which she was able to adjust her role as a religious martyr on an individual and societal scale. The phrase "hauing passed through so many tormēts" coupled with the images of "flames of fire" and how "she slept in the Lorde" binds together the liminal spaces she accessed and how her entire experience holds in itself an incompatible tension between mind, soul and body. Daneau Lambert's *Dialogue of Witches* depicts two gentlemen discussing the issue of witchcraft. Theophilus and Anthony's knowledge regarding this matter differ:

> Truely Theophilus, I doe not wish to haue ye knowledge of any such things but after a modest sort, nether haue I bin desirous of it otherwise: and vnlesse the present time, and the daily beating and handling of this question, moued occasion to bee somthing inquisitiue therof, I would not at all meddle with that kinde of matter. For the earnest and gréedie desyre to heare of these thinges, what els doth it signifie, but that they which inquire so much therafter, would faine also become witches & sorcerers them selues? Wherfore, answer I pray you to such things as I shal demaund, & so far as may be vnderstood, & decided by

[218] *A&M*, 3:729.
[219] *A&M*, 3:729.

> thauctoritie of that most excellent booke, wherin the word of God is con|ayned.[220]

Anthony appears to be more knowledgeable than Theophilus: they belonged to two different levels of knowledge. After these exchanges, Anthony establishes how witches and sorcerers can be found as well as how their existence is supported by the Scriptures. In other words, Anthony's words are performative as they shape a dimension, through his text and in Theophilus' reality, in which witches are real and tangible especially after Theophilus asks "How prooue you that?"[221] The passage from an implicit to an explicit existence of witches, of the Devil, proves and legitimizes the social and legal persecutions of this community whose nature, looks, condition are all made real through words. The realization of these issues thereby provides an insight within the mechanisms used, whether mental, literary or physical, to shape reality. The overwhelming gendered representations in Lambert's *Dialogue* for instance is another manner in which women or men access this state of liminality. The narrative of these spatial, religious or metaphorical passages can be considered as journeys which carries out social codes and norms in constantly different ways every time. Our attempt to demonstrate the similarities between witches and martyrs is rooted in the belief that they were part of a marginal space of society, and as such, they took part in these spatial and metaphorical journeys within liminal spaces. The gendering of these martyrs and witches further reinforces the importance of considering how they access, negotiate and construct their presence in either space. Gómez Reus and Gifford define their approach of "women in transit" as follows:

> […] liminality is both a spatial and a temporal notion. It may involve actual spaces in which the transition is enacted—places apart, or places to escape through or to escape to, places to occupy temporarily—as well as experiences of transition undertaken by an initiative to act in the decision to separate from a prior state of security.[222]

The definition, thus, gives importance to the transit journey between one dimension to another:

> Mobility, whether individually physical or socially metaphorical, is a crucial feature here […] Second, it is not a permanent state, but one which leads to transformation, not only within the self, but also hopefully in social recognition.

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[220] Lambert, Daneau. *A dialogue of witches, in foretime named lot-tellers, and novv commonly called sorcerers VVherein is declared breefely and effectually, vvhat soueuer may be required, touching that argument. A treatise very profitable ... and right necessary for iudges to vnderstande, which sit vpon lyfe and death. Written in Latin by Lambertus Danæus. And now translated into English* (London: 1575), 7.
[221] *Ibid.*, 9.
[222] Reus, Teresa Gómez & Gifford, Terry. (eds.) *Women in Transit through Literary Liminal Spaces* (2013), 6.

> Third, as in any rite of passage, the outcome is uncertain and therefore involves a certain degree of risk of failure in the trial, test or ordeal undertaken.

Whether the martyrs or witches whose stories we examined were aware of the way they performed the meanings of liminality or not, the conceptualization of these matters expands the understanding of the period and how gender, religion, magic transformed each other and gave shape to ritualistic journeys. Was Elizabeth Cooper aware that as she shrieked in pain, this would realize her path towards martyrdom?

> Whereat shee being as it semed thereby strēgthned, stoode as styll and as quiet, as one moste glad to fynysh that good woorke which before most happely she had begonne. So in fine she ended her lyfe with her companion ioyfully, committing her soule into the hands of almighty God. Vnto whose mercye I commit the good Reader. Amen.[223]

Foxe's retelling of her story actualizes her lives by imagining a space in which her legitimacy as a martyr is given to him, as a writer, and to "the good Reader". This is one of the crucial instances of martyrdom and witchcraft that is "social recognition" which leads us to consider once again the importance of public space in the ritual passages. The threshold, then, is a place of evaluation between the stories told and the readers; the norms governing this process of recognition are either confirmed through a public recognition or contested through public deflection as was conducted by some Catholic polemicists who criticized Foxe's works and martyrs. He was accused by Thomas Harding and Nicholas Harpsfield of having lied about two of his martyrs' stories.[224] These religious connotations contained in these critiques are representative examples of the risks included in the realization of liminality, as well as the need for accuracy. Freeman argues that:

> Foxe's accuracy in quoting and summarizing his sources cannot be assumed. Yet at the same time, the possibility that Foxe was reproducing sources accurately cannot be dismissed out of hand; when his didactic and apologetic purposes permitted, Foxe could be painstakingly accurate.[225]

The circulation, therefore, of ever-growing works which criticized narratives of liminality—whether about Protestant martyrdom or witchcraft—required accuracy and a quite large degree of belief on the part of the reader who received these stories and representation. As such, we

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[223] *A&M*, 5:1684.
[224] These issues are discussed in Mozley, J.F. *John Foxe and his Book* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1940), 185-86, 223-35.
[225] Freeman, Thomas. 'Texts, Lies, and Microfilm: Reading and Misreading Foxe's "Book of Martyrs"' *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 30-1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 45.

can argue that all in all beliefs overarched all of the issues that we have examined until now. Individual and societal transits between thresholds, dominant or subordinate spaces, are dependent on the realization performed by the minds of those subjects which themselves carried out their own system of beliefs. The woodcut of the burning of Anne Askew and other martyrs encapsulates many of the notions associated with liminality: spatial and metaphorical dimensions in which the representations of social and mental matters are carried out in order to punish one individual for a societal, communal sentence of death.

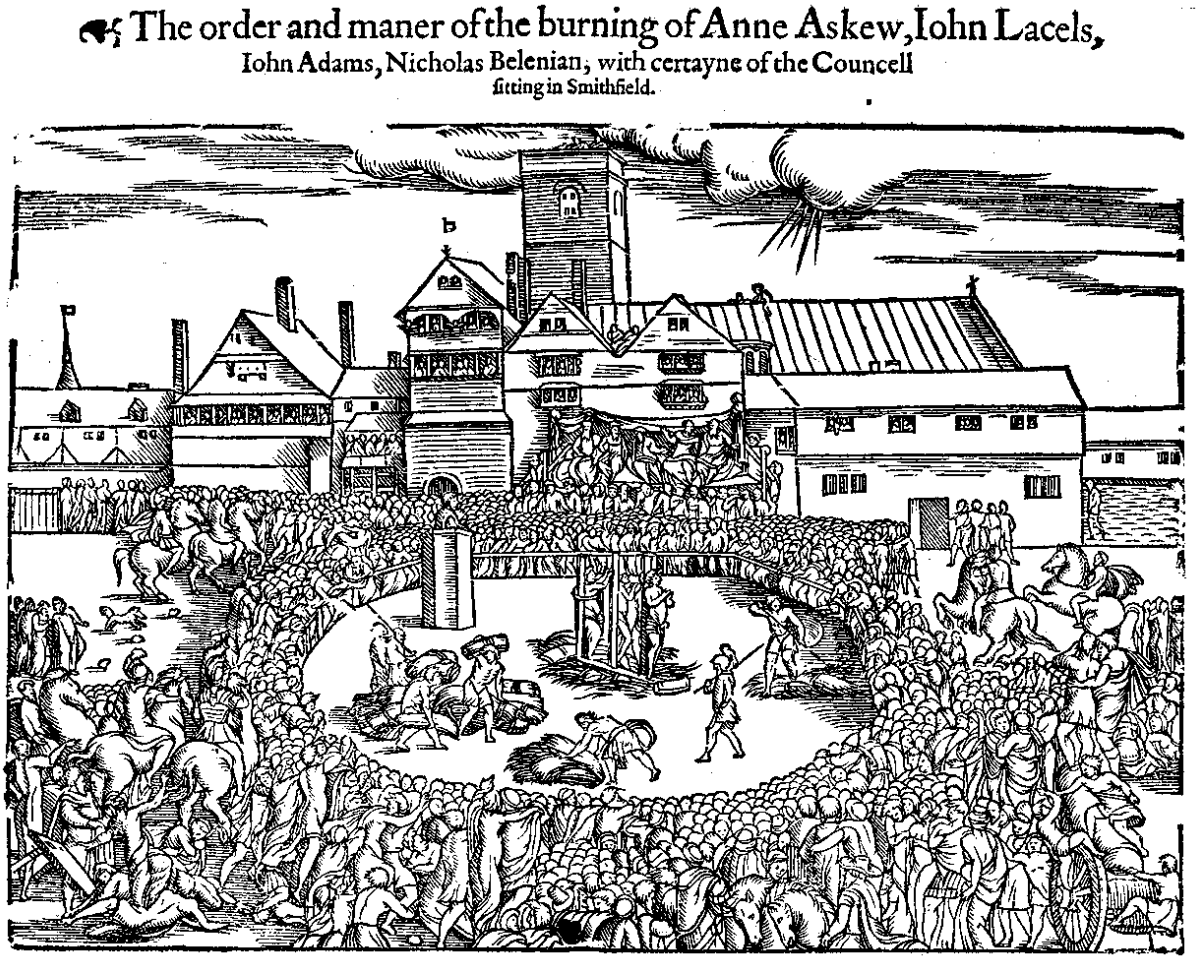

Table 9. Illustration taken from *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein ar comprehended and described the great persecutions horrible troubles, that have bene wrought and practised by the Romishe prelates, speciallye in this Realme of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lorde, a thousande, unto the tyme nowe present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies wrytinges certificatorie* (London: 1563), 3:730.

The depiction of so many elements in this woodcut points to the ritualistic dimension of execution—and of martyrdom—as a public demonstration of force and strength. The liminal meaning is given through the spatial passages of several martyrs, including Askew, from imprisonment of the body to the liberation of the mind through death sacrifice. Encapsulating

many of the usages of liminality, the transit from one threshold to another imbues these individuals and the community to which they belong with just as much divinity as normality.

CONCLUSION

Early modern society was enmeshed in a system of beliefs which relied on genuine experience of magic and divinity, the implications of these experiences were constantly negotiated and mitigated by the spaces in which they were produced. Studying the attitudes and practices emanating from the former helps us accept how the period encompassed a far broader understanding of religion and gender than what is commonly accepted. The goal of this demonstration was to dive into the structure and construction of beliefs and how gender transcended the common binary perception of Protestants against Catholics. Thomas discusses the way the practicality of religion, especially of the Reformed Church, created a hole that was filled by magical arts. The symbolism of magical arts, religion in relation to sixteenth century society never totally offered a convincing enough story of human existence to persist in the minds of English subjects:

> What is certain about the various beliefs discussed in this book is that today they have either disappeared or at least greatly decayed in prestige. This is why they are easier to isolate and to analyse. But it does not mean that they are intrinsically less worthy of respect than some of those which we ourselves continue to hold. If magic is to be defined as the employment of ineffective techniques to allay anxiety when effective ones are not available, then we must recognize that no society will ever be free of it.[226]

Sixteenth-century society was not free of magical thought. By teaching women and men how to avoid hardships and claim better, grander solutions to their daily problems, beliefs in God and magic appeared as guiding principles to endure the difficulties of the material world. The Protestant individual engaged with a plethora of social codes and models, beliefs regarding the universe and his or her close environment, with a certain degree of consistency and precision. The Catholic individual experienced the same engagement with his or her community, encompassing behaviours that related to the foundational meanings of what it means to be a Catholic. Within these close-knit communities, the common denominator was the attempted control of beliefs and subsequently the behaviours which resulted from believing in one doctrine or in another. Magic, as a core idea, functioned more or less on these bases as it was essentially a belief in a supernatural control of the universe and people. As such, the languages of religion and magic appeared to describe how people engaged with the associated beliefs. Witches, for instance, were the embodiment of certain beliefs regarding religion and Satan as well as gender beliefs. It is, thus, not exceptional for witches or sorcerers to be viewed and treated as scapegoats in many epochs. It is noted by Moro that:

[226] Thomas, *Decline of Magic*, 798.

> While witchcraft exists as a form of scapegoating and accusations—a method of explaining causation and healing, or avoiding, social rifts—other practitioners around the world actively seek to harness supernatural power in order to affect others or control the conditions around them.[227]

Popular magic thus was "a collection of miscellaneous recipes, not a comprehensive body of doctrine."[228] Throughout our demonstration, we have seen that the unity of popular beliefs does not exist or rather, it lacked ground and space to effectively propose a good enough guide to life. Unlike religion, magic does not engage with every aspect of life even though it can be accounted for, its influence is not as strong and the consensus in English society to eradicate magic from popular and established beliefs further stresses this point.

As a matter of fact, this study aimed to question three elements. Firstly, the extricable relation between early Catholic persecution and early modern Catholic and Protestant persecution and the way that they work upon one another to prove legitimacy. Protestants and Catholics were both targets of state-enacted violence, the conflict between them rooted in a desire to control the other and to deflect its identity and community to a subordinate role within society. The focus was, therefore, on shared discourses between believers. A second question was on how these religious conflicts influenced the construction of magic and witchcraft as an enemy that disrupts established religion as well as society in its entirety. These two questions work hand-in-hand, the process of vulgarisation of certain beliefs (such as magic) reinforced the process of legitimisation of established beliefs and religion such as Protestantism as it was criticised for its lack of social and historical roots. The last endeavour of this study was to re-evaluate the question of gender in relation to these matters of religion, magic and beliefs to question sociological, theological and intellectual constructions of systems of beliefs and how their boundaries were created, negotiated and supported by dominant and subordinate groups. Anthropological and sociological concepts of beliefs and society enabled us to consider these historical questions in a new light.

This study was, therefore, conducted in three parts. The first part focused on the structuration of beliefs between established and popular gender relations by exploring questions of liminality and beliefs. The major sources used for this study was the martyrological work of John Foxe and several demonological treatises. By drawing a picture of the inner-workings of gender beliefs in sixteenth-century England, we were able to examine how the similarities between Protestants and Catholics operated on a process of reversals. The concept of space as

[227] Moro, Pamela A. "Witchcraft, Sorcery, and Magic" in Hilary Callan (ed.) *The International Encyclopaedia of Anthropology* (2018) 1-12.
[228] Thomas, *Decline of Magic*, 761.

a social construct also proved useful to understand how dominant and dominated groups accessed and negotiated spatial and psychic spaces. This concept allowed us to examine these concepts within the literary tradition of martyrology and demonology to dwell further on the construction of theological and magical beliefs.

The second part worked upon the findings of the first part by introducing the social space of neighbourhood and toleration. This part was rooted in the examination of legal sources in a top-to-bottom approach of social domination and subordination. The conceptualisation of heresy is inextricably related to how martyrs and witches were socially perceived and later persecuted. The introduction of iconographical sources also encouraged us to consider how intertwined textual and visual cultures were in English society. The attempt to define concepts of religion and beliefs in legal and theological terms was essential to understand their influence on the representations that was made of those that were the victims of this system of violence and persecution. The dramatic effect of martyrological writings reinforced Protestant imagination of unity and conformity by exploring social behaviours in relation to established religion. The overwhelming eschatological fear of the imminent destruction of society as it was pressured many thinkers and writers of the period to portray violence as a necessary evil. Christian doctrine played an extensive role in how people were accused of heresy and/or witchcraft. The subsequent sacralisation and de-sacralisation of society offered an overarching idea which was deemed a good enough reason to condemn and execute those that disrupted the stability of English society.

The third and last part attempted to draw a broader picture of how beliefs of magic and religion operated on a local and societal level. We examined the different languages that defined the arts of magic and religion, the way these discourses influenced the gendering of magical beliefs. The study of masculinity and femininity as an embodiment of gender as an equation whose structure resemble that of religious dispute. The construction of a gendered discourse, thus, supposes a certain representation of codified behaviours and beliefs. In that, we turned to the duality of the mind versus the body which is an overwhelming concern in Christian doctrines and more specifically in Protestant discourse. The removal of religious and spiritual intermediaries gave more importance to the human condition of the believer, thereby focusing on the deviance of the body. The second sub-part focused on how gender was realized and constructed as a Christianised body: we examined several representations of the human body and more specifically of the female body.

> Religious ideology in many societies regulates self-presentation, and rituals and beliefs help shape body and mind. […] Yet the human body also has an impact on collective representations. Societies exploit the body as the basis for symbolization, as in symbolic classification, where many societies use the left hand and the right hand to symbolize oppositions such as in cosmological status (sacred/profane), moral notions (bad/good), or gender (female/male).[229]

As shown in the above quote, David Hicks deals with the dualistic representations of beliefs. The codification of women as motherly figures, sexual figures, and the way they interrogated their conforming or transgressive nature was central within the process of gendering of society. The exploration of social anxiety regarding the control of the body and the mind, especially in women as they were commonly thought to be weak, pushed us to consider how gender expression explored its liminal meaning in Protestant discourse. The growing interest in the re-evaluation of gender during the sixteenth century coupled with the theories of rituals and liminality allowed us to get a fuller picture of how all of these stories of martyrs and witches and women and men encapsulate the issues of defining and controlling the boundaries of established and popular beliefs.

The determination to a create a unified Protestant community, relying on traditional tropes and beliefs fostered an idea of duty to those who perished under the persecution of the Catholic crown. It also imbued writers and thinkers with a social duty to conform by sketching out dominant ideas and theologies regarding religion and magic. The extent of the success of this enterprise is mitigated as further religious divisions carried on through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although religion and magic appeared to work as two rival systems, the explanations they proposed were able to be transposed in many aspects of English life. The evaluation of gender in relation to religion and magic shows that distinctions are unfixed, English society was no stranger to instability which can perhaps explain how the polarization of moral codes and gender failed to give substance to the beliefs they were trying to control. The last words of John Foxe's 1563 edition of the *Actes and Monuments* epitomize the issues of control as well as the societal rituals of passages from one threshold to another:

> but as thou seest the worke to be great, so consider agayne how hard it is for no faultes to escape, as the Poet saith: *Namque opere in magno, fas est obrepere somnum.*[230]

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[229] Hicks, David (ed.) *Ritual and Belief: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion* (New York: AltaMira Press, 2010) 173.

[230] *A&M*, 5:1827. John Wade proposed the following translation: "For in a long work it is permissible for sleep to steal over one." https://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe/index.php?realm=more&gototype=&type=citation&book=12

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