

Silence, Speech and Gender in Early Modern Drama:

A Presentist, Palestinian Perspective

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
the Department of English and Creative Writing

University of Lancaster

April, 2016

Bilal Hamamra

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work. Literary criticism of others has been acknowledged in the text and references are given in the bibliography.

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I dedicate this thesis to Palestinian martyrs and to those who are unjustly killed. Their transcendental silence informs every word of my thesis.

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Abstract

Silence, Speech and Gender in Early Modern Drama: A Presentist, Palestinian Perspective considers the dialogue between male-and female-authored dramas in early modern England and the competing ideologies on speech, silence, hearing and gender they enact. Following the methodology of presentism, the thesis deploys some examples of gendering speech and silence in contemporary Palestine to illuminate aspects of early modern tragedies. This approach is a step towards reading the early modern tragedies as texts which offer a model for contemporary Palestinian teachers and readers to challenge traditional ideas about gender, speech and silence. From a feminist standpoint, the thesis argues that Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello*, Webster's *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* and Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* deconstruct the binary opposites of speech and silence and highlight that gender difference is a self-defeating ideology.

Following the critical line of new historicism, this thesis draws on the different cultural and historical contexts of both early modern England and contemporary Palestine. It interrogates

new historicists' conception of the comprehensive operation of dominant ideology and their emphasis on containment following subversion. While Elizabethan tragedies as revealed in *Titus Andronicus* end in containing female figures' subversive voices and asserting male figures' authority, the thesis contends that Jacobean tragedies by Webster and Middleton place female figures centre stage to interrogate and subvert male figures' corrupt voices. I use the gendering of nationalism as feminine in Palestinian nationalist discourse in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; honour killing; the Palestinian literary classic romance of Antar; the Palestinian practices of enforced marriage, rape and the circumscription of Palestinian women's voices by the discriminatory laws and legal systems as intertexts to analyse speech, silence and gender in the male-authored tragedies chosen here. This thesis proposes that male authority is unsettled rather than reaffirmed by the patriarchal construction of the binary opposites of speech and silence and by male deafness to female figures' voices.

The thesis argues that the boy actors impersonating female characters' speeches and silences in male-authored tragedies open up a space for female characters to participate in the tragic events and question the masculine construction of the binary opposites of speech and silence. In addition, the final chapter of the thesis considers the different gendering of discourse in female-authored tragedies where there is a continuity between author, character, and actor in private performances. The thesis argues the Lady Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia* (1555), Mary Sidney's *The Tragedy of Antonie* (1595), and Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613) reveal women's agency as writers and speakers in cultures antagonistic to female speech and writing. Fadwa Tuqan's *Autobiography, A Mountainous Journey* (1978) and the discourse of female martyrdom in contemporary Palestine are used as presentist intertexts that illuminate instances of transgressive public expression. Since the female texts under discussion are not

parts of An-Najah University's curriculum, the thesis takes a step towards opening up discussion of female-authored texts and spotlighting women's voices.

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Abbreviations

<i>AQ</i>	<i>Anthropological Quarterly</i>
<i>CD</i>	<i>Comparative Drama</i>
<i>EC</i>	<i>Essays in Criticism</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>The English Historical Review</i>
<i>ELH</i>	<i>English Literary History</i>
<i>ELR</i>	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
<i>EMLS</i>	<i>Early Modern Literary Studies</i>
<i>ERC</i>	<i>Explorations in Renaissance Culture</i>
<i>ES</i>	<i>English Studies</i>
<i>ESC</i>	<i>English Studies in Canada</i>
<i>FF</i>	<i>Feminist Formations</i>
<i>FR</i>	<i>Feminist Review</i>
<i>GEWE</i>	<i>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</i>
<i>ICT</i>	<i>International Institute for Counter-Terrorism</i>
<i>IJMES</i>	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
<i>JEMCS</i>	<i>The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies</i>
<i>JGS</i>	<i>Journal of Gender Studies</i>
<i>JPS</i>	<i>Journal of Palestine Studies</i>
<i>MER</i>	<i>Middle East Report</i>
<i>MLS</i>	<i>Modern Language Studies</i>
<i>MRDE</i>	<i>Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England</i>
<i>MS</i>	<i>Milton Studies</i>
<i>PCR</i>	<i>Peace and Conflict Review</i>

<i>PLL</i>	<i>Papers on Language and Literature</i>
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
<i>PQ</i>	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
<i>RD</i>	<i>Renaissance Drama</i>
<i>RES</i>	<i>The Review of English Studies</i>
<i>RP</i>	<i>Renaissance Papers</i>
<i>SAQ</i>	<i>The South Atlantic Quarterly</i>
<i>SCJ</i>	<i>Sixteenth Century Journal</i>
<i>SEL</i>	<i>Studies in English Literature</i>
<i>SP</i>	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
<i>SQ</i>	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>
<i>SS</i>	<i>Shakespeare Survey</i>
<i>SSt</i>	<i>Shakespeare Studies</i>
<i>STR</i>	<i>Social Thought and Research</i>
<i>SY</i>	<i>Shakespeare Yearbook</i>
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Theatre Journal</i>
<i>TP</i>	<i>Textual Practice</i>
<i>TSWL</i>	<i>Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature</i>
<i>WHR</i>	<i>Women's History Review</i>
<i>WP</i>	<i>The World Post</i>
<i>WSIF</i>	<i>Women's Studies International Forum</i>
<i>YJC</i>	<i>The Yale Journal of Criticism</i>

Chapter One

Introduction: Silence, Speech and Gender in Early Modern Drama:

A Presentist, Palestinian Perspective

The effects of the feminist movement on politics, legal systems and culture, have, in theory, opened routes for women in contemporary democratic western societies to speak their minds and publish their views without compromising their sexual reputations. More recently, the range of possibilities for public self-expression has broadened due to the World Wide Web. However, in early modern England women were inscribed as marginal to social and political power by the prevalent discourses and their production of speech or writing in such public domains was deemed illegitimate, with some notable exceptions. In the traditional culture of Palestine, in which I was brought up, many women are likewise marginalised from public discourse, their voices silenced. In his poem 'A Stupid Woman', Nizzar Qabbani (1923-1998) incites a woman to revolt against oriental traditions, and he gives the woman a voice to respond, stating:

O my Lord

I am afraid to say all the things in my mind

[...]

O my Lord your east will make

Its high honoured crown from the skulls of women.¹

Qabbani's words on honour killing and silencing Arab women's voices inspire me to use a presentist approach to read silence, speech and gender in early modern tragedy from my per-

¹Nizzar Qabbani, 'A Stupid Woman'

<http://www.adab.com/modules.php?name=Sh3er&doWhat=shqas&qid=284> [accessed: 18 March 2015], trans. by Bilal Hamamra.

sonal perspective as a Palestinian now teaching at An-Najah National University. This introductory chapter will set out the foundations of my approach in five sections. ‘Silence, Speech and Gender in Early Modern England’ recapitulates the early modern prescriptions on speech and silence in the context of historicist and feminist scholarship. In ‘The Context of Reading: Contemporary Palestine,’ I discuss the construction of gender roles in contemporary Palestine, introducing my perspective and the striking similarities to and differences from the constructions of gender roles in early modern England. ‘A Presentist Approach’ encapsulates presentism and explains its usefulness as an approach to the material and an arena that enables me to expand the teaching curriculum at An-Najah National University, where I teach. ‘Speech, Silence and Performance’ discusses the issue of performance as a key aspect of gender, speech and silence in male and female-authored dramas. In ‘Outline of Chapters,’ I summarise my critical approaches and explain my choice of texts.

Gender, Speech and Silence in Early Modern England

Historicist and materialist feminist criticisms have shown how early modern gender ideology associated women’s speech and writing with sexual looseness. The field of early modern studies came to be marked by a strong alignment between New Historicism and Feminist Criticism in that the former influences the objectives of the latter. Under the influence of historicism which involves, in Greenblatt’s words, ‘an intensified willingness to read all of the textual traces of the past with the attention traditionally conferred on literary texts’,² feminism became preoccupied with the relationship between text and context, exploring the position of women in early modern English society as Judith Bennett and Adrienne Rich assert.³ Nevertheless, in early modern studies the relationship between New Historicism and Feminist

²Stephen J. Greenblatt, *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 14.

³ Judith M. Bennett, ‘Feminism and History’, *Gender and History*, 7.3 (1995), 245-53 (p. 251); Adrienne Rich, ‘When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision’, *College English*, 34.1 (1972), 18-30 (p.18).

Criticism has always been an ‘uneasy alliance’,⁴ because New Historicists have tended to ‘marginalize gender issues’.⁵ New Historicism considered history mainly in public terms, male-dominated early modern power structures, and conceived of the nature of the ruling ideology as totalizing and rejected the possibility of resistance, subversion and change.⁶ Female agency and subversion was inevitably contained by powerful patriarchal structures, as Carol Thomas Neely puts it.⁷ While New Historicists marginalise issues of gender, they reiterate the association between women’s speech and sexuality in early modern England in order to enforce women’s subordination within early modern culture.

Some feminist critics have demonstrated how many early modern texts associate female speech with lasciviousness. As Karen Newman notes, ‘the period was fraught with anxiety about rebellious women and particularly their rebellion through language’ and women’s speech was ‘tantamount to open genitals and immodest acts’.⁸ Dymphna Callaghan finds clear evidence of an analogy between the sins of the tongue and those of the body. ‘Just as silence is equated with chastity and obedience, female utterance is equated with unruliness, sexual incontinence and untruth’.⁹ Samuel Rowlands asserts that a harlot ‘[i]s noted to be full of words, / And doth the streets frequent’.¹⁰ Benedetto Varchi announces that ‘[a] Maide that hath a lewd tongue in her head, / [Is] [w]orse then if she were found with a Man in bed’.¹¹ George Webbe suggests that the transgressive tongue is gendered as feminine: ‘there is no

⁴ David Bevington, ‘Two Households both Alike in Dignity: The Uneasy Alliance between New Historicists and Feminists’, *ELR*, 25.3 (1995), 307-19 (p. 307).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

⁶ Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California, 1988), pp. 21-65.

⁷ Carol Thomas Neely, ‘Constructing the Subject: Feminist Practice and the New Renaissance Discourses’, *ELR*, 18 (1988), 5-18 (p. 12).

⁸ Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 40, 10-11.

⁹ Dymphna Callaghan, *Women and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy: A Study of King Lear, Othello, The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1989), p. 82.

¹⁰ Samuel Rowlands, *Uncollected Poems (1603-1617)* (Gainesville: Scholars’ Press, 1970), p. 102.

¹¹ Benedetto Varchi, *The Blazon of Jealousie*, trans. by R. Toste (London, 1615), p. 205.

such common a whore as is the *tong* [...]. It is the very attire of an Harlot'.¹² Likewise, women's writing was associated with sexual and political transgression. F. E. Dolan notes that 'women's reading was policed and their writing prohibited or marked as transgressive even when they were not engaged in other criminal activities'.¹³ These common cultural perceptions about early modern women that historicist and materialist feminist criticisms established make a useful foundation for my study. However, Western feminist criticism leaves gaps for me as a researcher and teacher in Palestine, where the subtlety and complexity of gender constructions via the binary opposites of speech and silence form a subversive ground from which I deconstruct the binary opposites of speech and silence in the early modern tragedies under investigation.

The association between female speech and tragedy is linked with the prevailing comparison of women to Eve, whose persuasion of Adam to eat from the fruits of the forbidden tree shattered the established divine order and brought about sin and death.¹⁴ As Edward Reyner put it in his 1656 treatise, 'original sin came first out at the mouth by speaking before it entered in by eating. The first use we find Eve to have made of her language was to enter parley with the tempter and from that to become a tempter to her husband'.¹⁵ Tragedy is thus associated with female speech, and openness to persuasion through listening by both men and women.

My thesis takes up the early modern idea of Eve as a tragic protagonist to focus on gender, speech and silence in early modern tragedies, rather than comedies, the genre identified as more 'feminine' by critics such as Carolyn Lenz, Gayle Greene, and Carol Thomas Neely and Linda Bamber. They have considered that comedy gave women more freedom to express

¹² George Webbe, *The Arraignment of an Unruly Tongue* (London, 1619), p. 30.

¹³ F. E. Dolan, 'Reading, Writing, and Other Crimes', in *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects*, ed. by Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan, and Dymna Callaghan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 142-67 (p. 159).

¹⁴ Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983), pp. 110-11.

¹⁵ Quoted in Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 14.

their verbal dexterity while Renaissance tragedy was phallogentric. This view derives from the fact that the protagonists of tragedies are generally male characters, whereas comedies represent heroines as the dominant figures.¹⁶ Two of my primary texts, Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (1591) and *Othello* (1604) are indeed named after single male protagonists, but the titles of Webster's *The White Devil* (1612) and *The Duchess of Malfi* (1613-14) and Middleton's *The Changeling* (1622) and *Women Beware Women* (1625) suggest that women take centre stage. My thesis seeks to modify the feminist view that tragedy merely suggests that female characters face verbal and physical circumscription. I argue that tragic heroines are innocent victims of the repressive masculine ideology on female speech and silence but not because they do not have verbal dexterity. Rather, tragedy ensues because male figures are deaf to female figures' voices and such deafness makes the heroes lose control over their voices. Elizabethan tragedies such as *Titus Andronicus* endorse the conventional association of woman's speech with wantonness as illuminated in the figure of Tamora, possibly in connection with cultural anxieties about Elizabeth's public, often spectacular role. In contrast, Jacobean tragedies, written and performed under the shadow of James I's reassertion of absolute patriarchal rule, show that the heroines are tragic scapegoats of the ills of society, instead of tragic transgressors. In the tragedies studied here, the female figures' voices and silences – excluding Tamora's – which shape the plots, themes, conflicts and movements of the plays are associated with moral and dramatic authority while the male figures' voices and silences are associated with murder, incest, treachery and political and religious hypocrisies. Although these tragedies follow the view of Eve as a central figure in the "original" tragedy represented by the Fall, they do not endorse the view that the female protagonist is to blame for the tragedy.

¹⁶ See, Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene, and Carol Thomas Neely, 'Introduction', in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 3-16 (p. 6); Linda Bamber, *Comic Women, Tragic Men: A Study of Gender and Genre in Shakespeare* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), p. 2.

In addition to being associated with evil, women's speech was considered inferior to men's in physiological terms. Linda Woodbridge observes that in early modern English texts 'female speech is less rational than male speech in general; authors' diction often characterises female speech as meaningless sound, babbling, prating, chattering'.¹⁷ In her analysis of the humoral body as represented in medical discourse, Gail Kern Paster notes that many texts participated in a discourse that 'inscribes women as leaky vessels by isolating one element of the female body's material expressiveness—its production of fluids—as excessive, hence either disturbing or shameful. It also characteristically links this liquid expressiveness to excessive verbal fluency'.¹⁸ Female verbal abundance is a source of male anxiety and lack of male control. In *The Revenger's Tragedy*, Vindice associates urine with uncontrolled female speech: '[t]ell but some woman a secret overnight, / Your doctor may find it in the urinal i' the morning' (I.3.83-84).¹⁹ Women's speech and urine are liquids that cannot be controlled. Woman's excessive verbosity was deemed to destabilise masculine power structures and social hierarchies.

The transgressive woman often appears in the form of the chattering or scolding woman. According to the feminist critic Lynda Boose, 'one can speculate that a "scold" was, in essence, any woman who verbally resisted or flouted authority publicly, and stubbornly enough to challenge the underlying dictum of male rule'.²⁰ Because, according to the Bible, man was given superiority over woman by God, by refusing to submit to male authority, a woman was thus subverting the God-given order of Western, Christian society. Jonathan Gil Harris argues

¹⁷ Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womanhood, 1540-1620* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), p. 210.

¹⁸ Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 25.

¹⁹ Cyril Tourneur, *The Revenger's Tragedy* in *The Plays of Cyril Tourneur: The Revenger's Tragedy and The Atheist's Tragedy*, ed. by George Parfitt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 7-98.

²⁰ Lynda E. Boose, 'Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman's Unruly Member', *SQ*, 42.2 (1991), 179-213 (p. 192).

that ‘the specific danger presented by the female tongue was its potential confusion of gender categories, its usurpation of a patriarchal prerogative’.²¹ Religious and medical discourses combined to produce a violent hierarchy in which subjection was feminine and subjectivity masculine. Judith Butler observes that the binary opposition of male and female is ‘itself a ruse for a monologic elaboration of the masculine’.²² Early modern women were denied voices, exhorted to listen to male figures’ voices, and punished for shrewishness and transgression of gender boundaries. Boose describes a ‘history of silencing’ through which, she notes, women were ‘shamed, tamed, and reconstituted’ according to their defined subservient roles through the bodily degradations of being carted, bridled, or ducked in a ducking stool.²³ Because women’s infidelity and speech were intertwined as threats to male agency, punishing outspoken female characters on stage and in literary texts constitutes a reassertion of the patriarchal circumscription of the female voice. According to Patricia Parker, ‘one of the chief concerns of the tradition that portrays women as unflappable talkers is how to master or contain such feminine mouthing’.²⁴ As speech was bound up with women’s sexuality and disobedience, as Luckyj notes, ‘[i]t is almost obligatory for scholars who write about early modern women to begin with a nod in the direction of the triple feminine virtues of chastity, silence and obedience’.²⁵

²¹ Jonathan Gil Harris, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of Social Pathology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 113.

²² Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 25.

²³ Boose, ‘Scolding’, p. 213; Martin Ingram, “‘Scolding women cuckold or washed’: A Crisis in Gender Relations in Early Modern England?”, in *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England*, ed. by Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), pp. 48-80 (pp. 63-72).

²⁴ Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, and Property* (New York: Methuen, 1987), p. 26.

²⁵ Christina Luckyj, *A Moving Rhetoric: Gender and Silence in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 3. For an overview of this triad of silence, obedience and chastity, see, for example, Kim Walker, *Writers of the English Renaissance* (New York: Twayne, 1996), p. 8; Anne Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of Eros: Women’s Love Lyric in Europe, 1540-1620* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 1; Peter Stallybrass, ‘Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed’, in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 123-42.

Is feminine silence suggestive of male control? Luckyj notes that feminist critics have tended to accept that in the early modern period ‘speech is a privileged site of authority’ and ‘silence is a site of gendered oppression’.²⁶ Catherine Belsey argues that subjectivity is associated with speech and that silence negates the subjectivity briefly accorded to women through speech²⁷—a view with which many critics concur.²⁸ However, Luckyj recognizes that silence is ‘rhetoric parallel to speech’²⁹ while Wendy Wall proposes that silence can ‘replace a paradigm of victimization with one of enablement’.³⁰ Luckyj notes that silence might conceal subversive schemes, asserting that ‘the greatest weapon in the patriarchal arsenal was the demand not for women’s silence but for women’s speech’.³¹ While speech allows men to control women, silence can be an active subjective space that challenges male figures’ authority.³² Dissociating silence from chastity and obedience also unsettles the authority of speech. Luckyj asserts that ‘if feminine silence cannot be conflated with chastity and obedience in every instance, neither can masculine speech necessarily be seen as an unproblematic site of authority in early modern culture’.³³ My thesis argues against Catherine Belsey’s assertion that speech is a sign of power and that silence is a token of marginalization and lack of agency.

I am indebted to Luckyj’s argument that silence is a site of subversion. My thesis will expand on the foundation provided by her research by giving a full textual analysis of the contested sites of speech, silence and gender in nine Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedies. It will draw

²⁶Luckyj, *Moving*, p. 8.

²⁷Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985), pp. 191, 179.

²⁸Fletcher, *Gender*, pp. 12, 14; Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 166.

²⁹Luckyj, *Moving*, p. 7.

³⁰Wendy Wall, *Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 7.

³¹Luckyj, *Moving*, pp. 40-41, 6.

³²Sarah Kofman, *The Enigma of Woman: Woman in Freud’s Writings*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 48.

³³Lucyj, *Moving*, p. 8.

on the work of Gina Bloom to add in a crucial dimension that Luckyj does not consider: the act of listening and how it can be an arena of subversion for female and male characters. I argue that a shifting power dynamic between listeners and speakers needs to be observed, and attention paid to the act of listening. The deafness of female characters, even silent ones, to patriarchal voices is dangerous, since, as Bloom says, ‘communicative agency can inhere in the position of listening, not just in speaking’.³⁴ My work goes further than that of Bloom in revealing that the act of listening enables female characters to use silence as an empowering mode that allows them to undermine masculine structures and create space for their own authority as illuminated, for example, by the figures of Beatrice-Joanna in *The Changeling* and Graphina in *The Tragedy of Mariam*.

While critics discuss the link between female speech and sexual looseness, and silence and chastity, many have overlooked the prerequisite for obedience – hearing and its agent, the ear. The link between the ear and vagina is often ignored because of the proneness to perceive ears as passive orifices.³⁵ However, ears are vulnerable holes subject to penetration by external tongues. Reina Green shows that ‘in the early modern period, ears, like mouths and vaginas, were regarded not only as passive openings through which the body could be penetrated, but also as sites through which desire could be expressed’.³⁶ Bryan Crockett argues that in early modern protestant culture, there was a ‘cult of the ear’.³⁷ As Bloom has ably pointed out, the protestant preacher Robert Wilkinson, in his sermon *A Jewell for the Eare* (1605) reveals that God touches the human soul through the ears: ‘God never cometh so

³⁴Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p. 8.

³⁵ Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 131; Linda Woodbridge, *The Scythe of Saturn, Shakespeare and Magical Thinking* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 256.

³⁶ Reina Green, ‘Open Ears, Appetite, and Adultery in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*’, *ESC*, 31.4 (2005), 53-74 (p. 54).

³⁷ Bryan Crockett, ‘“Holy Cozenage” and the Renaissance Cult of the Ear’, *SCJ*, 24.1 (1993), 47-65; John N. Wall, ‘Shakespeare’s Aural Art: The Metaphor of the Ear in *Othello*’, *SQ*, 30 (1979), 358-66.

neere a manssoule as when he entreth in by the doore of the eare, therefore the eare is a most precious member *if men knewe how to use it*' (original italics).³⁸ As the act of listening is an organ of salvation, the agency is located in the hearer rather than the speaker, for the transfer of speech shifts authority from the narrator to the listener. Bloom argues that '[i]t is the act of audition, not vocalization, that attests to one's position in relation to God and one's potential for salvation'.³⁹ According to Christian and Muslim preachers an open ear is necessary for both faith and obedience⁴⁰ and those with a closed ear, who refuse to listen to God's word, are ungodly.⁴¹ God in the Qur'an associates those who are deaf to his words with the dead and as worse than animals that lack the discourse of reason.⁴² In their discussion of the speaker-listener dynamic in Shakespeare's plays, Laury Magnus and Walter Cannon suggest that '[t]he resistance to hearing or downright refusal to hear indicates some harsh rigidity on the part of the recalcitrant hearers that compromise their essential humanity'.⁴³

The openness of the ears could also, paradoxically, be morally dangerous. Bloom observes that while 'protestant sermons advocate receptive organs of hearing, [...] they express concern that ears are the bodily organs through which evil enters'.⁴⁴ John Donne preaches '[t]ake heed that you heare them whom God hath appointed to speake to you; But, when you come abroad, take heed what you hear; for, certainly, the Devill doth not cast in more snares at the eye of man, then at the eare'.⁴⁵ Bloom points out 'that early modern Protestant preachers ally deafness with spiritual fortitude'; the true faith is demonstrated by an ability to close the ears

³⁸ Bloom, *Voice*, p. 118.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁴⁰ Livestock 6. 36; Light 24. 51. *The Qur'an*, trans. by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Subsequent references to The Qur'an are taken from this edition and cited in the text by chapter and verse number.

⁴¹ The Cow 2. 171; Luqman 31. 7; Control 67. 10.

⁴² The Byzantines 30. 52; Battle Gains 8. 22; The Differentiator 25. 44.

⁴³ Laury Magnus and Walter W. Cannon, 'Introduction: Shakespeare's Auditory World: Text, Stage, and Screen', in *Who Hears in Shakespeare?: Auditory Worlds on Stage and Screen*, ed. by Laury Magnus and Walter W. Cannon (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), pp. xi-xxxiv (p. xii).

⁴⁴ Bloom, *Voice*, p. 133.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

to temptation and sin.⁴⁶ The vice figures in the tragedies of my thesis show good listening skills and the ability to contaminate their listeners in that they manipulate what they hear and return it to the ears of speakers so as to deceive. The invasion of voices into ears is central to the action of tragedies which are replete with the frailty of corporeal and political bodies, ‘at-tuned to the individual’s struggle to protect the self against aural and other onslaughts’.⁴⁷

Listening, the antecedent to obedience, underpinned the social hierarchy in that subjugated individuals should listen to the voices of the figures of authority. Conduct book writers and preachers urge women to listen to the figures of male authority as they cannot control their own speech and resist their supposedly transgressive natures.⁴⁸ Protestant and Catholic writers revered the Virgin Mary as the ideal listener because she obediently listened to God’s word, bearing Jesus as a result.⁴⁹ In contrast to Mary’s story, the Serpent that stung Eve’s ear in the Garden of Eden created a counter narrative to God’s word – a narrative of sexuality and death. Reina Green argues that ‘Eve was deemed the epitome of an unfruitful hearer not only because she failed to maintain belief in God’s word, accepting what the serpent said over God’s earlier directive, but also because her act of listening brought the antithesis of fruitfulness—death—into the world’.⁵⁰ As feminist critics have demonstrated, controlling the unruly female was associated in early modern England with managing what she said and heard.⁵¹ As female speech was seen as akin to the openness of the genitals, aural penetration was often associated with sexual looseness. Dorothy Leigh equates female listening to sexual promiscuity in her advice to her sons: ‘[t]he vchaste woman is proud, and always decking

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 8.

⁴⁷ Allison K. Deutermann, “‘Caviar to the general’?: Taste, Hearing, and Genre in *Hamlet*”, *SQ*, 62.2 (2011), 230-55 (p. 232).

⁴⁸ See, Thomas Gataker, *Marriage Duties Briefly Couched Together* (London, 1620), pp. 14-15; William Whately, *A Bride-Bush, or A Wedding Sermon* (London, 1617), pp. 40-41.

⁴⁹ R Chris Hassel, Jr., ‘Painted Women: Annunciation Motifs in *Hamlet*’, *CD*, 32.1 (1998), 47-84 (pp. 45-50, 69-72); Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), p. 37.

⁵⁰ Green, ‘Open’, p. 54.

⁵¹ Stallybrass, ‘Enclosed’, pp. 123-44; Green, ‘Open’, pp. 53-74.

her selfe with vanity, and delight to heare the vaine words of men, in which there is not only vanity, but also so much wickedness'.⁵² Shakespeare associates ear penetration with vaginal penetration in *Antony and Cleopatra*: '[r]am thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears, / That long time have been barren' (2.5.23-24).⁵³ Whereas speech and silence are constructed as binary opposites, the closure and openness of the ear is dichotomized.⁵⁴ In her reading of Shakespeare's *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest* in the light of Protestant sermons on hearing, Bloom investigates how 'hearing functions as a site of gender differentiation: aural obstruction is disruptive for men, but constructive for women, whose chastity is contingent on aural closure'.⁵⁵ While Bloom associates male aural openness with political authority and female aural openness with lewdness, I argue that the tragedies under investigation unsettle this dichotomy. For example, Shakespeare's *Othello* (1604) and Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1613-14) suggest that male figures' loss of control over their speech and that of female characters is attributed to their deafness to female figures' voices and their aural openness to male figures' voices. Dissociating male figures' aural openness from authority also unsettles the conventional association between female characters' listening to male figures' voices with sexual penetration. Desdemona does not lose her chastity by listening to Cassio's voice and the link between her listening and sexuality is figured out as a projection of Othello's evil mind. Likewise, what causes the tragedy in *The Duchess of Malfi* is Ferdinand's and the Cardinal's listening to the public voices of gossip and their deafness to the Duchess's chaste voice.

⁵²Dorothy Leigh, 'The Mother's Blessing', in *Women's Writing in Stuart England: The Mothers' Legacies of Dorothy Leigh, Elizabeth Jocelin and Elizabeth Richardson*, ed. by Sylvia Brown (Phoenix Mill: Alan Sutton, 1999), pp. 15-87 (p. 27).

⁵³William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra: Authoritative Text, Sources, Analogues, and Contexts, Criticism, Adaptations, Rewritings, and Appropriations*, ed. by Ania Loomb (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).

⁵⁴Bloom, *Voice*, p. 115.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 18.

The Context of Reading: Contemporary Palestine

The association of male figures' aural openness with loss of male authority is one I am familiar with from contemporary Palestinian society. Here male figures' loss of speech and control is attributed to their deafness to the female voice and listening to the masculine destructive voices of gossip. Sharif Kanaana, a Palestinian anthropologist and folklorist, notes that while Western culture relies on the sense of sight rather than hearing, Palestinian culture is an oral and aural culture that privileges the spoken over the written and the visual, the latter being a sign of deception and evil.⁵⁶ Consequently, reliance on the ear encourages women's suppression and victimization as intensified in the cases of honour killings. Because Palestinian men and women are imprisoned by ideologies of honour and public and private reputation, a mere accusation or piece of gossip may sanctify male figures' killing of women in order to silence the public voices of gossip and rumour, (*kalam al-nas* in Arabic) – the primary means through which society imposes the honour code on the individual.⁵⁷ The dangerously contested spaces between speech and silence that caused such anxiety in early modern England are thus not simply a thing of the past. The oft-repeated murdering of women in Palestine gives a chilling relevance to the texts written four hundred years ago that form my primary research material. In both the tragedies under investigation and in contemporary Palestinian society, there is a conflict between female characters who challenge the longstanding established traditions and male characters who resist the change that would disturb the existing social order. My thesis will deploy some examples of gendering speech and silence in contemporary Palestine to illuminate aspects of early modern tragedies. I will be drawing on anecdotes from my own experience growing up within traditional, non-metropolitan Palestinian culture and I will be approaching the primary texts as materials for my teaching to a student

⁵⁶ Sharif Kanaana, 'The Arab Ear and the American Eye: A Study of the Role of the Senses in Culture', trans. by Ibrahim Muhawi, *CA*, 4 (2005), 29-45 (pp. 32, 35-40).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

body in a large urban environment where the possibilities for change and critique are more immediate. My presentist approach in the thesis is thus a step towards reading the early modern tragedies as texts which offer a model for contemporary Palestinian teachers and readers to challenge traditional ideas about gender, speech and silence. By using this methodology, I immerse myself in the different cultural and historical contexts of both cultures and in this section, I will outline the Palestinian context with reference to critical readings and to my own lived understanding as a Palestinian reader, thus establishing ‘the Palestinian reader’ whose perspective I will invoke throughout the thesis. I define the Palestinian reader as one who shares my common understanding based on a shared knowledge of the Holy Qur’an, of traditions, proverbs, and of the situation of the Israeli occupation. Secondly, Palestinian readers will be my colleagues and students from the university and individuals who want to challenge the practice of honour killing and change those traditional views of gender, speech and silence.

The construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence in contemporary Palestine can be explained by a set of interlocking systems of traditions, legal laws and occupation. Rubenberg’s research on ordinary Palestinian women in the West Bank suggests that misogyny and patriarchy were ‘institutionalized and religiously and philosophically legitimated in Middle Eastern culture long before the advent of Islam’.⁵⁸ While early modern England was an imperial country, Palestine is an occupied country and occupation plays a part in the enhancement of male figures’ domination over women.⁵⁹ Israeli occupation reinforces Palestinian tribal systems which are resistant to the change of the conventional gender

⁵⁸ Cheryl Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), pp. 52, 121.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

roles, especially in the rural areas that are not open to the Western world.⁶⁰ The existence of tribes suggests that honour is collective; the community exerts pressure over the individual through public gossip to kill the supposedly transgressive female characters.⁶¹

Israeli occupation augments Palestinian traditions and prevents Palestinian scholars from travelling to Western cultures. Matthew Reisz examines the political difficulties that Palestinian scholars have to face to build the Palestinian future. Palestinian universities are in the crux of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; universities have been attacked by Israeli soldiers with bullets and tear gas causing injuries to students and staff members. During revolutions (*Intifadas*, in Arabic), Israeli soldiers impede students and staff members from going to universities, stopping them at checkpoints to examine their identification papers for a long time. Reisz suggests that the quality of education plays a role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the construction of independent nations. Palestinian scholars face the obstacles of mobility and access to resources while Jewish scholars are building Israel through the different fields of science, technology and humanities. Many Palestinian scholars have been exiled because of their political beliefs and their resistance to Israeli occupation. In recent years, Palestinian universities and the British Council provide scholarships to Palestinian students to pursue their higher studies in a variety of fields in UK universities to come back upon the completion of their studies to work in Palestinian universities.⁶² I hope that this thesis will help me to play a part in opposing occupation by arousing students' awareness of the destructive ideol-

⁶⁰Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 'The Physics of Power and the Challenges of the Palestinian Feminist Discourse: Between Thought and Practice', *JADAL*, 4 (2014) <http://mada-research.org/en/files/2009/10/jadal4/jadal4-eng/Jadal_Shalhoub-Kevorkian_FINAL.pdf> [accessed: 23 January 2015], 1-13 (p. 1); Al-Muntada (Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization against Domestic Violence against Women), 'Crimes of Women's Killing in Palestine – in the period 2004-2006', trans. by Malek Qutteina, ed. by Nicola Nasser (2007) <http://www.sawa.ps/Upload/Reports/CrimesofWomensKillinginPalestine_arabic.pdf> [accessed 20 August 2013], 1-47 (pp. 12-13); Nahla Abdo, 'Gender and Politics under the Palestinian Authority', *JPS*, 28.2 (1999), 38-51 (p. 41).

⁶¹Al-Muntada, 'Women's Killing in Palestine', pp. 36-37.

⁶²Matthew Reisz, 'The Palestinian Academy: Pressing Concerns and Future Prospects', *Times Higher Education* (2015) <<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/features/the-palestinian-academy-pressing-concerns-and-future-prospects/2019234.article>> [accessed: 22 April 2015].

ogy of gender difference that is reinforced by the Israeli occupation. For scholars of English at An-Najah University, the feminisation of Palestine under occupation mirrors women's private realm of imprisonment and of subjugation. Palestinian women's voices are circumscribed by discriminatory traditions and legal laws which allow the perpetrators of honour crimes to get away without criminal liability.⁶³

Despite the historical and ideological differences between early modern England and contemporary Palestine, the tragedies under investigation draw attention to striking anachronistic affinities. Evelyn B. Tribble and John Sutton suggest that the intrinsic nature of literary work, mind and cognition is anachronism. They assert that 'anachronism is intrinsic to human experience in time. Even where our memory operates against a background of lived temporal asymmetry, in which actions and events are irrevocably given the casual structure of the world, it is also animated by plural temporalities and by rhythms other than those of linear succession'.⁶⁴ The dialogue that early modern tragedies enact with some aspects of contemporary Palestinian society, when read from a presentist perspective, reveals the capacity of early modern tragedies to transcend their historical contexts and to speak to both present and future.

Palestinian women are, for the most part, excluded from participation in economic, political and cultural life, relegated to a marginal and dependent status and confined within the domestic sphere of the house. Women who transgress beyond the threshold of the house or speak in public are accused of being whores – both the open house and the open mouth are taken to signify sexual openness. The Palestinian Women's Affairs Technical Committee notes that '[women] and girls who speak out are often blamed for the violence inflicted upon them and

⁶³ Al-Muntada, 'Women's Killing in Palestine', p. 44.

⁶⁴ Evelyn B. Tribble and John Sutton, 'Minds in and out of Time: Memory, Embodied Skill, Anachronism, and Performance', *TP*, 26.4 (2012), 587-607 (p. 588).

their families are shamed for not exerting greater control over their sexuality'.⁶⁵ To my grandfather, gender was reflected through physical, spatial and architectural boundaries. To him, the house, the female and the land were synonymous in that their protection advertised his honour (*Sharaf* and *Ard* in Arabic), integrity and reputation. My grandmother told me that he used to lock the door when he went out. He did not trust men and ordered her not to open the door even if his brothers visited him in his absence. However, my grandmother justifies his behaviour by asserting that he was sick.⁶⁶ Yusuf Jabareen, an Israeli Arab university lecturer, explained that killing and beating women is a shameful part of Palestinian identity taken from Arab culture that has to be corrected.⁶⁷

Honour killing is a reinforcement of traditions with no basis in religious law. As Nizzar Qabbani says, '[w]e wear the cape of civilisation / But our souls live in the Stone Age'.⁶⁸ Furthermore, the vast majority of Palestinian proverbs – authoritative, masculine, pedagogical speeches that are a part of folkloric tradition – associate woman's speech with evil: 'A snake's hiss is more preferable to my ears than a girl's voice';⁶⁹ 'he who gives his secret to a woman is a woman, son of a woman'.⁷⁰ The latter proverb suggests that the culture of gossip and confidences is feminised and belittled. There are connections between the culture of gossip in contemporary Palestine and early modern England where women were traditionally accused of gossiping. Jennifer Holl argues that '[g]ossip, demonstrably exercised by both genders, was frequently feminized in treatises perhaps less a reflection of practice but more likely for the

⁶⁵Women's Affairs Technical Committee, 'Facts on Violence against Women in Palestine' (2012) <<http://www.watcpal.org/press/facts-violence-against-women-palestine>> [accessed 10 June 2014].

⁶⁶Najibba Fakhouri, Private communication (in Arabic), trans. by Bilal Hamamra, 20 March 2012.

⁶⁷Yusuf Jabareen, 'Killing and Beating Women', 'youtube.com', Palestinian Authority Television (24 June 2012) <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIgcdflcE90>> [accessed 26 October 2013].

⁶⁸Nizzar Qabbani, 'Verse', *Adab.com* <<http://www.adab.com/en/modules.php?name=Sh3er&doWhat=shqas&qid=326>> [accessed 15 October 2013].

⁶⁹Eissa Atta Allah, (*Altorath Al-Adabywal-sha'by Al-Falastiniwal-Arabi: Aljoz'Al-awal: Amthal*, in Arabic) *Arabian and Palestinian Folklore and Literary Heritage, Volume 1: Proverbs* (Jerusalem: Dar Al-Kattib, 1985), p. 114, trans. by Bilal Hamamra.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 327.

explicit purpose of discrediting it'.⁷¹ Bernard Capp concurs with this view that gossip is feminine gendered.⁷² However, the association of malicious and undisciplined gossip, traditionally associated with women, with male figures such as Iago in *Othello* and the public voices in *The Duchess of Malfi* illuminates my reading of this masculine practice in contemporary Palestinian society. In both early modern England and contemporary Palestine, gossip exposes the vulnerability of male speech. Othello kills Desdemona and loses his heroic identity that Desdemona consolidates by turning a deaf ear to Desdemona's speech and listening to Iago's lascivious discourse of gossip. In *The Duchess of Malfi*, the Cardinal and Ferdinand show aural closure to the Duchess's speech and they, in turn, listen to the public voices of gossip that accuse their sister of being a whore. Likewise, in contemporary Palestine, gossip leads families whose female relatives are unjustly accused of sexual transgression to kill the females to restore their honour by silencing the allegedly transgressive females and silencing gossip. A Palestinian journalist, Rula Jaber, asserts that 'Islam is the religion of woman, but traditions have been shown it to be the main factors behind oppressing women in the Palestinian society'. She says that 'unfortunately, we fear people and not the God of people'.⁷³

While over 1400 years ago Islamic law guaranteed rights to women that women in Europe and America only obtained recently, Palestinian readers recognise that feminist views are perceived as immoral and blasphemous symbols of Western culture.⁷⁴ This perception of feminist views as alien imports is intensified by the Israeli occupation of Palestine – an occupation that reinforces patriarchy and women's oppression. As Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian observes, '[s]ocial oppression has proliferated and taken on various hues as a result of the economic

⁷¹Holl, Jennifer, "'If This Be Worth Your Hearing': Theorizing Gossip on Shakespeare's Stage", in *Who Hears in Shakespeare?: Auditory Worlds on Stage and Screen*, ed. by Laury Magnus and Walter W. Cannon (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), pp. 61-80 (p. 64).

⁷² Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 51.

⁷³Rula Jaber, Private Communication (in Arabic), trans. by Bilal Hamamra, 22 April 2013.

⁷⁴Rema Hammami, 'Women, the Hijab, and the Intifada', *MER*, 164/165 (1990), 24-28 (p. 26).

stranglehold tightening its grip on the Palestinian community, attacks on the fabric and solidarity of Palestinian society, and the rise of masculine ideologies, which have grown, reproduced, and reconstructed themselves alongside and through the growth of Zionist policies'.⁷⁵ Indeed, honour killings are opposed to the high evidentiary standard set in the Qur'an for *zina*, the crime of adultery: '[a]s for those who accuse chaste women of fornication, and then fail to provide four witnesses, strike them eighty times, and reject their testimony ever afterwards: they are the lawbreakers'.⁷⁶ Those who accuse a woman of adultery without four witnesses will themselves be punished. The Prophet Mohammad urges his followers not to accept accusations, but rather to consider the accused innocent until proven otherwise:

When you heard the lie, why did believing men and women not think well of their own people and declare, 'This is obviously a lie'? And why did the accusers not bring four witnesses to it? If they cannot produce such witnesses, they are the liars in God's eyes.⁷⁷

God says that whoever unjustly accuses a chaste woman of committing adultery is cursed both in this world and in the hereafter.⁷⁸ The practice of honour crimes is prohibited in Islam, which liberated women from the oppression of the pre-Islamic era, during which time women were buried alive to spare men the shame.⁷⁹ Islam upholds the sanctity of human life, as the Holy Qur'an declares that killing one innocent human being is akin to killing the entire human race.⁸⁰

⁷⁵Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 'The Physics of Power', p. 1.

⁷⁶Light 24.4.

⁷⁷Ibid., 24.12-13.

⁷⁸Ibid., 24. 23-24.

⁷⁹The Bee 16. 58-59.

⁸⁰The Feast 5.32; Livestock 6. 151; The Night Journey 17. 33; Women 4. 93.

The Qur'an, the founding sacred text on which Palestinian culture is based, offers a different perspective on the Fall from that of the Christian story in Genesis representing Eve as a transgressive sinner who listened to the serpent and persuaded Adam to disobey God and eat from the forbidden fruit. This was the most powerful authority underpinning patriarchy in early modern England.⁸¹ As Capp notes, 'the principle of female subordination [is] an integral part of the creation story'.⁸² However, Islam does not consider women as evil temptresses and thus does not blame them for original sin. According to the Qur'an, Eve's banishment from Eden was not because she was a seducer, but rather because she was a participant. It was clearly Adam who disobeyed God's word and listened to Satan. Adam committed a sin, which led to the downfall of Eve. God says, '[b]ut Satan whispered to Adam, saying, 'Adam, shall I show you the tree of immortality and power that never decays?' and they both ate from it [...]. Adam disobeyed his Lord and was led astray'.⁸³ The Qur'an is explicit in its emphasis on the equality of women and men before God, regardless of gender, ethnicity or race.⁸⁴

Despite Qur'anic prohibitions of murder and condemnation of unjust accusations, Palestinian women are still killed to protect family honour. A Palestinian father killed his daughter, Amal, on the third day of Ramadan 19 July 2012, when she voiced her desire to study at An-Najah University, where I teach. He explained that her insistence to go to this university was a cover for sexual impulses.⁸⁵ The murder of this child in Ramadan constitutes a double crime: of

⁸¹ Support in Genesis for women's inferiority to men is taken from the story of 'Man's Shameful Fall' (*The Geneva Bible*, Genesis 3.1). The serpent tricked Eve into eating the forbidden fruit, and she in turn offered it to Adam, making her responsible for sin (*The Geneva Bible*, Genesis 3. 4-7). Robert Carroll and Stephen Prickett, *The Bible: Authorized King James Version* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). Subsequent references to The Bible are taken from this edition.

⁸² Capp, *Gossips*, p. 3.

⁸³ Ta Ha 20. 120-21.

⁸⁴ The Family of 'Imran 3. 195; The Joint Forces 33. 35.

⁸⁵ See, for example, Kawther Salam, 'Girl Murdered at Ramadan Breakfast', *Europa and Middle East News* (2012) <<http://www.kawther.info/wpr/2012/07/26/girl-murdered-at-ramadan-breakfast>> [accessed: 22 April 2015].

murder and of violating the holiness of Ramadan. In another case, this time a determination to work in the public realm, Nancy Zaboun was murdered by her husband ‘because she wanted to work for a few days to earn money to buy her son a birthday present’.⁸⁶ Several women voiced their challenge to such a killing and taunted Palestinian male figures with the chant, ‘[s]hame on us Palestinians for killing our women’.⁸⁷ Domestic violence is not prohibited by law. In 2006, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) reported that 25 percent of unmarried women had been physically abused and 52.7 percent had been psychologically abused.⁸⁸ Among married women, 61.7 percent were subject to psychological abuse, 23.3 percent were physically abused, and sexual abuse affected 10.9 percent.⁸⁹ Al-Muntada exposed 32 cases of ‘honour killings’ between 2004 and 2006.⁹⁰ Al-Muntada notes that shooting and strangling are the most common methods murderers used to kill and silence women’s voices.⁹¹ Many Palestinian women are innocent victims of the masculine construction of gender difference rather than transgressors. Kawther Salam asserts that ‘[i]n many cases women have been killed as a cover for incest inside their families, to cover up sexual abuse and rape committed by their brothers, fathers, uncles’.⁹² The ties between female sexuality and men’s defence of their honour and reputation are, therefore, used to justify male attempts to cloak their lustfulness and evil deeds of sexual abuse.

⁸⁶Itamar Marcus, ‘Special Report: Upsurge in “honor killings” triggers Palestinian calls for cultural charges, new laws’ (15 August 2012) <http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=7245> [accessed 20 April 2013], 1-8 (p. 5).

⁸⁷ Maher Abukhater, ‘Palestinian women’s killings spark outcry over lax laws’, *Los Angeles Times* (3 August 2012) <<http://articles.latimes.com/2012/aug/03/world/la-fg-palestinians-domestic-violence-20120803>> [accessed 30 May 2013].

⁸⁸Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), ‘Domestic Violence Survey (December 2005-January 2006): Main Findings’, *PCBS.org* (June 2006) <http://www.pcbs.org.ps/Portals/_PCBS/Downloads/book1258.pdf> [accessed 22 May 2013], 1-124 (p.33).

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁹⁰Al-Muntada, ‘Women’s Killing in Palestine’, p. 16.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁹²Kawther Salam, ‘Victims of Incest and Abuse in Palestine’, *Europa and Middle East News* (2009) <<http://www.kawther.info/wpr/2009/06/11/victims-of-incest-and-abuse-in-palestine>> [accessed 15 May 2013].

Furthermore, many Palestinian women are killed because of groundless suspicion based on gossip rather than listening to the voices of innocent, chaste women, as Itamar Marcus and Kawther Salam argue.⁹³ Aya Baradiya, who was thrown into a well and left to die in the name of an ‘honour killing’, was mourned as a chaste martyr. In response to this violent incident, several women’s rights and human rights organizations submitted and resubmitted a memorandum to President Abbas, urging the issue of a presidential decree treating ‘honour killings’ as murders.⁹⁴ However, Abbas has turned a deaf ear to their voices: no such decree has yet been issued and women continue to fall victims to honour killing.⁹⁵ An attorney asserts that ‘[a] man who murders his daughter, wife or sister stays in prison only three months’.⁹⁶ Because the concept of family honour is profoundly engrained in the fibre of Palestinian society, men who commit honour killings are considered more manly for their willingness to protect their family’s name, even at the cost of going to prison.⁹⁷ Civil Organizations for Struggle against Violence against Women in Palestinian Cities ‘explained that two women murdered in Bethlehem and Hebron had approached the police, but it did not supply them with protection and did not save their lives’.⁹⁸ Women’s words fall upon deaf male ears, which hear only the masculine cultural register that associates female speech with sexual openness. This is illuminated by the speaker-listener dynamic in the murder of Aya Baradiya, mentioned above, whose uncle threw her into a well suspecting her of having had a sexual affair based on the phone call she received from a man. In spite of her appeals to her uncle to

⁹³Marcus, p. 7; Kawther Salam, n. p.

⁹⁴ Rose Shomali Musleh, ‘People Behind Walls, Women Behind Walls: Reading Violence against Women in Palestine’, in *Violence and Gender in the Globalized World: The Intimate and the Extimate*, ed. by Sanja Bahun-Radunovic and V.G. Julie Rajan (London: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 59-74 (p. 68).

⁹⁵Quoted in Marcus, ‘Upsurge’, pp. 6-7.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 1.

⁹⁷Ibid., 2.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 6.

have mercy upon her in the name of God and Mohammed, and asserting that she had done nothing wrong, her uncle was deaf to her voice.⁹⁹

A Presentist Approach

These examples of the representation of speech and silence in Palestine of which I have become aware as my research has progressed are merely the tip of an iceberg; there is a lot more under the surface. This thesis gives me the opportunity to engage in an interpretation of my own culture and its spiritual foundations and to think about another historical period from the perspective of the present. To pursue this line of enquiry, I commit myself to the critical methodology of presentism which analyses early modern texts from the perspectives and concerns of present contexts. As defined by Ewan Fernie, presentism is ‘a strategy of interpreting texts in relation to current affairs which challenges the dominant fashion of reading Shakespeare historically’.¹⁰⁰ While New Historicists try to insert works of literature back into the historical, social and political contexts from whence they came, presentists turn the claims of the historicists upside down. Where David Scott Kastan urges that we need ‘more facts [...] that will reveal the specific historical conditions that have determined the reading and writing of literature’,¹⁰¹ presentists like Evelyn Gajowski call for ‘owning up to the meanings that we construct in Shakespeare’s texts and culture rather than projecting the authority of those constructions—our authority—elsewhere—on the author, the author’s culture, the author’s monarch, the unbearable weight of four centuries’ of theatrical and critical tradition’.¹⁰² My thesis aims to deconstruct gender binary opposition of speech and silence in early modern

⁹⁹Nasser Shiyokhi and Karin Laub, ‘Palestinian Woman Aya Baradiya’s “Honor” Killing Sparks Tougher West Bank Laws’, *WP* (19 May 2011) <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/19/palestinian-woman-aya-bar_n_864430.html> [accessed 31 May 2013].

¹⁰⁰Ewan Fernie, ‘Shakespeare and the Prospect of Presentism’, *SS*, 58 (2005), 169-84 (p. 169).

¹⁰¹David Scott Kastan. *Shakespeare after Theory* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999), p. 31.

¹⁰²Evelyn Gajowski, ‘The Presence of the Past’, in *Presentism, Gender, and Sexuality in Shakespeare*, ed. by Evelyn Gajowski (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 1-22 (p. 13).

England, using the trigger of the present to illuminate the past and reveal trans-historical and trans-cultural continuities between early modern England and contemporary Palestine. Bruce R. Smith argues that ‘Presentism [...] goes too far in denying continuities between past and present’.¹⁰³ However, reading early modern tragedies from a presentist, Palestinian perspective draws attention to how the plays collapse the temporal binary between past and present through anachronism. Catherine Belsey argues that fiction can be ‘genuinely at odds with its own chronological moment’, thereby revealing itself to be ‘capable [...] of anachronism’.¹⁰⁴ This anachronism enables me to deploy crucial aspects of gender construction via the binary opposition of speech and silence in contemporary Palestine to interpret early modern tragedies and to stress the contemporary resonance and relevance of the plays.

The dialogue between early modern texts and contemporary Palestine which I have constructed creates texts of literary hybridity. The trope of cultural hybridity that has become widely employed in the field of post-colonialism was shaped by the post-colonial critic Homi K. Bhabha. In his analysis of the interrelations between coloniser and colonised, he demonstrates that any cultural identity in the ‘contact zone’ of intercultural relations is constructed in a hybrid-transcultural space, which he calls ‘the Third Space of enunciation [that] may open the way to conceptualising an international culture, based on [...] the inscription and articulation of culture’s hybridity’.¹⁰⁵ He associates the term in-between to characterise the ‘Third Space [as] the inter-cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between [...] that carries the burden of the meaning of culture’.¹⁰⁶ This cultural hybridity offers a space for interaction and it is an enabling arena to unravel the ideologies and discourses of both cul-

¹⁰³ Bruce R. Smith, ‘The Play’s Not the Thing’, *RD*, 40 (2012), 37-45 (p. 41).

¹⁰⁴ Catherine Belsey, ‘The Poverty of (New) Historicism’, in *Literature as History*, ed. by S. Barker and J. Gill (London: Continuum, 2010), pp. 7-16 (pp. 9-10).

¹⁰⁵ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 37-38.

¹⁰⁶ Homi K. Bhabha, ‘Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences’, in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, ed. by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 206-209 (p. 206).

tures. This hybrid space in-between cultures should not overlook cultural and historical differences. So, entering into a comparative dialogue with the texts in this thesis, I intend to immerse myself as much as possible in the specific contexts in which they are embedded. As a Palestinian, the insights I offer are mediated through both critical and lived understanding. The thesis does not offer a full comparative study of the representation of women in early modern England and in contemporary Palestinian culture, for to discuss the latter in detail would make the thesis too long. However, I will draw attention to some alarming parallels between the two at the beginning of chapters and analyse examples that seem to correspond to the early modern stage. I thus follow the presentist techniques outlined by Grady and Hawkes: ‘Deliberately employing crucial aspects of the present as a trigger for its investigations, its centre of gravity will accordingly be ‘now’, rather than ‘then’’.¹⁰⁷ My thesis uses examples of the construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence in contemporary Palestine as a trigger for my investigations of a selection of early modern English tragedies. While I attempt to come to terms with the past from my presentist Palestinian perspective, I attend to the historical and cultural differences between both cultures. In Palestinian terms, this thesis will be new, for it is in opposition to my hometown’s university curriculum, where issues connected with sexuality are the most salient taboos and should, therefore, be avoided in academic research and public debate.

Critiquing or debating ideas of sexual difference in the Department of English at An-Najah National University is subversive. Drama and Shakespeare courses which are offered focus on genre. The former course teaches students samples of Western and English plays from 500 B.C to contemporary times. The course focuses on male authors such as Sophocles, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Synge, Pinter and Beckett and traditionally has not focused on issues of

¹⁰⁷ Hugh Grady and Terence Hawkes, ‘Introduction: Presenting Presentism’, in *Presentist Shakespeares*, ed. by Hugh Grady and Terence Hawkes (Routledge: London and New York, 2007), pp. 1-5 (p.4).

gender at all.¹⁰⁸ Shakespearean tragedies that are often taught in the above mentioned courses include *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cymbeline* and *Troilus and Cressida*. However, *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens* have never been taught.¹⁰⁹ Students are traditionally asked to comment on selected lines from the plays, identifying the speaker and context and commenting on figurative language and imagery embodied therein.¹¹⁰ With respect to gender presentation, instructors focus on male characters and male themes and female characters are depicted from the instructors' points of view as representing a threat to the male characters.¹¹¹ My experience of studying the representations of speech and silence in relation to sexuality and politics at Lancaster University for 4-year period has ironically made me a stranger in my own land. In the first month of my teaching at An Najah University, I have faced challenges in introducing the fruits of my research into the curriculum. Students initially complained to the president of the university and he, in turn, advised that I follow the steps of senior colleagues who omit discussion of sexuality in the course texts. More recently, however, as I have explained some aspects of the tragedies from a presentist, Palestinian perspective, the students have responded more positively and we have turned the plays into a creative encounter between early modern texts and our society. In addition to teaching male-authored plays, I teach Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613) alongside Shakespeare's *Othello* (1604). Introducing this female-authored text into the Drama syllabus was a challenge to the male-dominated scholarly tradition, for female dramas are not parts of the academic curriculum.¹¹²

While it was possible for me to discuss sexuality in the tragedies, the further innovation of performing some scenes of Shakespeare's *Othello* was rejected by staff and the students I

¹⁰⁸See Appendix 1, 2, 3, 6, 7.

¹⁰⁹See Appendix 1, 3, 4.

¹¹⁰See Appendix, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

¹¹¹ Odeh J. Odeh, Private Communication, 19 March 2015.

¹¹²See Appendix, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

chose based on their excellent academic record. Performance is perceived as subversive to the conventional norms of our society. I was advised that the traditions of our society restrict us and those female students' voices, facial expressions and dress would be interpreted by many as signs of lewdness. Female students expressed their objection to my idea of performing *Othello* by emphasising their feelings of shyness.

Speech, Silence and Performance

My female students' sense of a taboo about female performance echoes that which obtained in early modern England and led to the exclusion of female voices and bodies from the early modern professional stage. I, therefore, think that a consideration of early modern performance conditions is essential to my work on silence, speech and gender in drama. The social condemnation of female voices in early modern England is illuminated by the exclusion of women from the public stage, for a female actor would have been a vocal woman who transgressed the patriarchal ideology that discouraged women from speaking or making spectacles of themselves in public. Women were excluded from playing their own gender, for as David Mann in his research on performance studies asserts:

A 'woman-actor' is a contradiction, a cross-gender enormity, for a woman does not act, she is acted upon and for her to 'act' [...] is to transgress her assigned role in the scheme of things, hence the association with the prostitute who presumes to take charge of her own sexuality and dispose of it as she chooses.¹¹³

¹¹³ David Mann, *Shakespeare's Women: Performance and Conception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 6.

Actresses and prostitutes are juxtaposed in male discourse. Mann notes that ‘Robert Busse, Abbot-elect of Tavistock, was accused in 1324 of giving away valuable trinkets [...] “to actors, whores and other loose and disreputable persons”’.¹¹⁴ Based on research on early modern texts, Stephen Orgel argues that because chastity and silence are coextensive, ‘the appearance of women on stage [...] compromise[d] their modesty’.¹¹⁵

Many feminist critics maintain that, in the public theatre, where the playwrights who wrote women’s parts and the actors who played them were all male, the female characters were constructed to reflect male protagonists’ points of view. Phyllis Rackin, an influential feminist scholar writing on the boy actor and performance studies, argues that ‘on a stage where female characters were always played by male actors, feminine gender was inevitably a matter of costume’¹¹⁶ and since costumes created identity, then ‘the male actors’ performances of women’s parts were regarded as convincing and taken seriously’.¹¹⁷ Jardine suggests that ‘[t]he ordinary playgoer does not keep constantly in his or her mind the cross-dressing implications of “boys in women’s parts,” but it is nevertheless available to the dramatist as a reference point for dramatic irony, or more serious *double entendre*’ (original emphasis).¹¹⁸ While there is much use of double entendre surrounding the boy actor in early modern comedies, it has been generally assumed that the illusion of a woman is not disturbed in the tragedies. Jardine argues that ‘the eroticism of the boy player is invoked [...] and openly alluded to [...] in comedy, where role-playing and disguise is part of the genre’. However, in tragedy, ‘it is not alluded to’.¹¹⁹ For example, the Epilogue of *As You Like It* breaks the theatrical illusion in

¹¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 1-2.

¹¹⁵ Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare’s England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 1.

¹¹⁶ Phyllis Rackin, ‘Androgyny, Mimesis, and the Marriage of the Boy Heroine on the English Renaissance Stage’, *PMLA*, 102.1(1987), 29-41 (p. 29).

¹¹⁷ Phyllis Rackin, *Shakespeare and Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 74.

¹¹⁸ Jardine, *Harping*, p. 60.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 23.

order to complicate the multiple identities of the speaker as boy actor and female role (1-2, 13-15)¹²⁰ whereas *Antony and Cleopatra* breaks the illusion in order to reaffirm it, to defend Cleopatra's status as a woman (5.2.215-17, 300-02). Some critics propose that the convention of boy actors suggests that early modern playwrights were more fascinated with the masculine oral and written conception of feminine identity than with real femininity. Sue-Ellen Case notes that early modern theatre was guilty of 'suppressing real women and replacing them with masks of patriarchal production'.¹²¹ Jardine proposes that 'when a critic tells us that the Jacobean dramatist shows peculiar insight into female character, what he or she means is that a convincing portrayal of female psychology is given *from a distinctively masculine standpoint*' (original emphasis).¹²² Callaghan suggests that the goal in representing women on stage was an aesthetic in which '[f]emininity was *defined in and as a relation to masculinity* and bore only a troublesome and secondary commensurability with women' (original emphasis).¹²³

Other critics have challenged the view that the exclusively male early modern stage is a site of male dominance, arguing instead that the boy actor is in danger of becoming feminised and feminising spectators. Laura Levine, writing on the boy actor and performance studies, points out that antitheatrical pamphleteers such as Stephen Gosson and Anthony Munday noted that 'the real danger for the actor is that he must become the part in order to play it well'.¹²⁴ On the other hand, the convention of the boy actor is a site of misogynistic discourse because boy actors were painted to signal their feminine roles, but painted faces signified lascivious

¹²⁰ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. by Michael Hattaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹²¹ Sue-Ellen Case, *Feminism and Theatre* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), p. 7.

¹²² Jardine, *Harping*, p. 69.

¹²³ Dymphna Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing Gender and Race on the Renaissance Stage* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 51.

¹²⁴ Laura Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-theatricality and Effeminization, 1579-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 14.

women. Make up and ‘paintings’ are, markedly for Hamlet, the source of female dishonesty and hypocrisy; as he says to Ophelia: ‘God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another’ (3.1.142-43).¹²⁵ Hamlet believes that women are manipulative through their changeable appearance, and he constantly associates painting with female sexual and political corruption. Hamlet’s association of painting with female deception and sexuality belies Callaghan’s argument that there were ‘no recorded complaints about the *appearance* of male actresses in the Renaissance, only complaints about their sound’ (original emphasis). Callaghan claims that ‘it is on the vocal level rather than the visual register that the spectacle of femininity reaches its breaking point’.¹²⁶ The painting of the boy actors reinforces cultural prejudices about female deception and exposes the prejudice as prejudice because of the rift between the represented character and the representing actor that puts what the audience hear and see into question.

Voice plays a critical role in producing gender difference, a topic which has been extensively discussed by feminist critics such as Bloom and Callaghan. The impersonation of the female role was dependent on voice, for spectators were aware that ‘[t]he natural transition from playing women to playing men is at the breaking of the voice’. The boy actor’s voice may break and such ‘vocal crisis signals the interruption and rupture of seamless spectacle’.¹²⁷ Hamlet is worried about the boy actor’s voice: ‘lady and mistress! [...]. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring’ (2.2.351, 353-54). Hamlet addresses the boy as if he really *were* a woman; his address, ‘my young lady and mistress’, suggests that the boy actor is capable of playing femininity convincingly. At the same time he addresses the boy actor impersonating the female character with concern for his

¹²⁵William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Robert S. Miola (London: W. W. Norton, 2011).

¹²⁶Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women*, pp. 71, 52.

¹²⁷Juliet Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996), pp. 253, 72.

voice. Rutter argues, ‘Elizabethan spectators, understanding actors as professionals whose business was role, read the role played, not the player beneath the role’.¹²⁸ As Bloom observes, Hamlet’s comparison of this cracked voice to ‘a piece of uncurrent gold’ suggests that ‘the voice was part of a boy’s “currency” in the theater, and a fully broken voice altered a boy’s worth’.¹²⁹

Do boy actors open up a space in which established gender binaries can be called into question? Their part in early modern tragedies simultaneously reproduces and challenges orthodox political, social and religious assumptions of gender difference. My argument that theatrical performance is an arena for the subversion of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence is indebted to the theories of Judith Butler, who describes performativity as a continual process of reinscribing and redescribing gender. Judith Butler notes that the bodily acts that suggest a single gendered identity:

are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality.

Butler argues that the illusion of gender identity is constituted through these repeated performances. Using Butler’s idea, theatricality and the convention of boy actors are subversive since they ‘expose the contingent acts that create the appearance of a naturalistic neces-

¹²⁸ Carol Chillington Rutter, *Enter the Body: Women and Representation on Shakespeare’s Stage* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. xiv.

¹²⁹ Bloom, *Voice*, p. 38.

sity'.¹³⁰ In playing the woman's role, the boy actor puts the conventional association of reason and linguistic control with masculinity into question. This loss of control is exemplified by the boy actors' breaking voices. Alison Findlay points out that 'if both male and female identity is equally performative, the need to assert a fixed sense of self becomes irrelevant'.¹³¹ Bloom, in her examination of the implication of the boy actors playing male parts in John Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* (1599-1600) and *Antonio and Mellida* (1599-1600), John Madden's *Shakespeare in Love* and Michael Hoffman's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, argues that the boy actors were a site of complex subversion of gender difference.¹³² She asserts that as 'vocal control was a signifier of masculinity [...], the squeaky, pubescent voices of boy actors challenge the early modern masculine ideal of vocal control, destabilizing early modern systems of gender differentiation', for '[s]queaking is [...] an aural symptom of the body's surrender to irrational, lower passions'.¹³³ The boy actor engages in fashioning the self as other in performance.

The absence of women from the stage does not deny them agency and make them passive victims. While 'ventriloquism is an appropriation of the feminine voice, and [...] reflects and contributes to a larger cultural silencing of women', it 'open[s] cultural discourses to the "voices" it otherwise marginalizes and silences'.¹³⁴ The boy actors impersonating female characters' speeches and silences open up a space for female characters to participate in the tragic events and question the masculine construction of the binary opposites of speech and silence. The tragedies under discussion suggest that verbal and physical violence could have

¹³⁰ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 173, 44.

¹³¹ Alison Findlay, 'Playing the "Scene Self": Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley's *The Concealed Fancies*', in *Enacting Gender on the English Renaissance Stage*, ed. by Viviana Comensoli and Anne Russell (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 154-76 (p. 164).

¹³² Bloom, *Voice*, p. 21.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 17, 25.

¹³⁴ Elizabeth D. Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 12, 53.

been avoided had male figures listened to female voices. Furthermore, female characters' ventriloquism of male figures' speeches reveals male figures' violent and ruthless speeches as manifested in the figure of Tamora. Webster bequeaths his authoritative voice to the boy actors impersonating Vittoria and the Duchess of Malfi who speak against corrupt male figures' voices and challenge male dominance and the principle of woman's subordination. While female figures' voices reveal that male speech is a problematic site of authority, their silences negate male figures' voices and authority as exemplified by the silence of Lavinia, Desdemona, Beatrice-Joanna and Isabella.

The female-authored dramas which I will cover in Chapter Five involve a different set of performance criteria which complicate the issues of women's voices as portrayed in male-authored dramas. The continuity between female author and female actor constitutes a foundational shift in the representation of gender, speech and silence in early modern drama. While women's voices and bodies are absent from the public stage, female-authored dramas are a rich locus for an examination of representations of early modern women's agency. In performing female-authored dramas in country houses, women participated as actors and so female roles could have been presented by female voices and bodies. In this sense, female-authored dramas often constitute a direct response to representations of women on the male stage, creating a dialectical relationship between male-and female-authored drama and between competing ideologies of silence, speech and gender. Female-authored texts configure the voice differently from the examples to be studied in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, which will be the subject of Chapters Two to Four of the thesis. In performing female-authored texts, there is continuity between author, actress and character, where the voice remains consciously a female voice all the way through. While female silence in male-authored texts is usually a sign of oppression, in female-authored texts female silence turns

out to be a register of authority, as exemplified by the figure of Graphina in *The Tragedy of Mariam*.

Outline of Chapters

In this thesis, which focuses on the construction of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence, a subject marginalised in new historicist criticism, I engage with literary theories such as presentism, feminism and performance studies. Erickson notes that feminism is inherently presentist, characterizing historicism as apolitical because of its neglect of contemporary politics. He argues that ‘the main line of new historicism is more accurately characterised as apolitical because its attention to the politics of the Renaissance period is accompanied by neglect of politics in our modern period’. Although Greenblatt begins ‘with the desire to speak with the dead’, he admits ‘all I could hear was my own voice’,¹³⁵ affirming that the link to past is always one of projection of the contemporary voice onto the irrecoverable past. On the other hand, Erickson notes that ‘[t]he strength of feminist criticism comes from its beliefs that the present has a valid, positive role in historical studies and from its commitment to cultural and social change’.¹³⁶ In this sense, presentism appeals to feminist criticism because it politicises the subject and undermines the discourse of the dominant ideology. As Evelyn Gajowski argues, ‘[i]n opposition to historicist studies that theorize the subject as straitjacketed by manifestations of political, social, and economic power, presentism theorizes subjectivity as resistance. In opposition to ‘new materialist,’ or antiquarian studies that drain politics out of Shakespeare’s texts, presentism (re)politicizes Shakespeare’.¹³⁷ My choice of primary texts and my presentist literary approach for the thesis is one in which I

¹³⁵ Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, p. 1.

¹³⁶ Peter Erickson, ‘Rewriting the Renaissance, Rewriting Ourselves’, *SQ*, 38.3 (1987), 327-337 (p. 336).

¹³⁷ Evelyn Gajowski, ‘Beyond Historicism: Presentism, Subjectivity, Politics’, *Literature Compass*, 7.8 (2010), 674-691 (p. 674).

immerse myself in the texts' historical and ideological contexts mindful of the current Palestinian context in which I live and teach.

While the whole of Renaissance drama cannot be reduced to a single paradigm, I contend that the tragedies under investigation critique the masculine constructions of female speech that are particularly relevant to contemporary Palestinian culture. Early modern theatre was a mechanism for the subversion of conventional gender roles and the dominant ideology on binary opposites of speech and silence. While silencing the female characters may represent an assertion of masculine power structures and punitive consequences for women's assertive voices, I argue that male figures' deafness to female voices and their silencing of women's voices destabilise the patriarchal authority. Katherine Rogers notes that although 'misogyny remained a subject of lively interest, in drama it was no longer accepted as an acceptable attitude'.¹³⁸ Findlay perceives the 'stirrings of a feminist consciousness in Renaissance England'.¹³⁹ Though characters on stage frequently express misogynistic views, the plays themselves undercut that misogyny by fostering sympathy with the oppressed female characters. By examining tragedy as a phenomenon in and of Renaissance culture, we can, as Belsey argues, trace the 'history of man, and his other, woman'.¹⁴⁰ I think that most Palestinian readers will recognise that Palestinian tragedy is a conflict between religion, which protects women, and the stagnant traditions of honour killing, arranged marriage and silencing women's voices.

My presentist approach will show that similar processes are at work in early modern tragedies where female sexuality in the plays under discussion is articulated as oral and aural transgression, and where the playwrights have interrogated the sexual politics of their time, creating

¹³⁸ Katherine Rogers, *The Troublesome Helpmate: A History of Misogyny in Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), p. 118.

¹³⁹ Alison Findlay, *A Feminist Perspective on Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), p. 122.

¹⁴⁰ Belsey, *Subject*, p. 49.

complex female characters that deconstruct the stereotypes upon which masculine ideology is based and riddling the binary opposites of speech and silence with contradictions for both male and female characters.

My thesis treats nine early modern tragedies whose tragic male and female protagonists are trapped and destroyed by the culturally given conventions of gender difference, grounded in male supremacy. My selection of the plays springs from my wish to explore differences and similarities between works by major early modern dramatists. I have structured my discussion in Chapters Two, Three and Four in chronological order based on the author and the dates of the plays. In Chapter Two, I argue that Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello* reveal the destructiveness of the masculine construction of gender difference and binary oppositions between speech and silence. While *Othello* alongside *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* are parts of Drama and Shakespeare courses, I have included *Titus Andronicus* as a part of Shakespeare course at An-Najah University. *Titus Andronicus*, which focuses on Roman characters and Latin textual antecedents, produces explicit analogies between the classical past the play represents and an Elizabethan present. While Shakespeare's Elizabethan dramas focus on reigning monarchs who are male, Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* suggests that Tamora refers obliquely to Elizabeth and shows Shakespeare's disapproval of Queen Elizabeth whose rule destabilises and threatens to engulf the patriarchal fabric of society. After summarizing the historical context of the play, I analyse the representation of speech and silence through the critical lens of presentism, feminism and new historicism. While *Titus Andronicus* expresses its historical moment in 1590s, I demonstrate that the play speaks to me as a Palestinian of the gendering of nationalism as female in Palestinian national narratives, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, honour killing, and the construction of nation as narration. From a feminist standpoint, I argue that the verbal and physical violence that the

play enacts emanates from male figures' deafness to the female voice. However, under the lenses of Greenblatt's paradigm of subversion and containment, I argue that Tamora's and Lavinia's speeches and silences subvert patriarchal discourses. This subversion is, however, subtly contained because it leads to female characters' tragic deaths, which can be politically interpreted as their ultimate containment and the consolidation of the status quo. While *Titus Andronicus* ends with the restoration of patriarchal voices, I, following the critical line of feminism, argue that *Othello* is a conflict between female characters' moral and honest voices and male figures' treacherous and dishonest voices. In addition to the critical line feminism, I will make use of two approaches to read *Othello*. I will read the play alongside a Palestinian intertext, the *Romance of Antar* (525-608), in order to illuminate the ways in which traditional Palestinian culture can be more liberal than that of early modern England. The racial discourse that the *Romance of Antar* embodies enables me to scrutinize this discourse in *Othello*. While *Antar* reiterates his otherness without self-contempt, I assert that Othello's internalisation of the racial discourse leads to his self-degradation which he projects onto Desdemona. In addition, I will present a psychoanalytic reading of *Othello* which, perhaps more than any other critical approach, can expose uncomfortable truths about the ways in which hidden same-sex desires and loyalties combine with racial prejudices to challenge the heterosexual marriage of Desdemona and Othello. Both the intertextual and psychoanalytic approaches have immediate use in my teaching at An-Najah University because they may enable my students to scrutinize that male figures' openness to the destructive male voices of gossip and their turning a deaf ear to female voices lead to greater verbal and physical violence against women. I argue that Othello's projection of the racist and misogynist discourse that Iago breathes into his ears onto Desdemona and his eventual murder of her are signs of Othello's defeat and loss of self-respect. Many Palestinians project their verbal and

physical humiliation by the Israeli occupation onto Palestinian women, playing the role of the colonial power in the domestic sphere.

My thesis broadens its field of study because an exclusive focus on Shakespeare would produce a misleading picture of the representation of women's roles in the drama of early modern England. My inclusion of Webster's and Middleton's tragedies emanates from my desire to expand the picture for Palestinian readers at An-Najah National University and my wish to expand the curriculum. Webster and Middleton would be completely new dramatists for my students to encounter. Thus, Shakespeare's tragedies figure alongside those by Webster and Middleton, in which the heroines, who are placed centre stage and are the protagonists, transgress sexually, aurally and orally. In Chapter Three, I argue that Webster's *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* voice a comment on the corruption and abuse of absolute political power within the reign of King James I and the Catholic Church. Contrary to the new historicism's conception of all containing ideology, I argue that *The Duchess of Malfi* illuminates gender and power relations and the subversion of political and religious orthodoxies. Following the critical line of presentism, I show that *The Duchess of Malfi*'s criticism of male figures' abuse of their tongues has present affiliation with the Islamic condemnation of loud speech and giving free rein to the tongue. I contend that *The Duchess of Malfi* challenges the Palestinian association of male figures with the soul and female figures with the body. While *The Duchess of Malfi* ends with the destruction of male figures' voices, *The White Devil* reveals male figures' social and political abuses without eliminating them. In Webster's fashioning of his female characters, one perceives a powerful resistance to oppression, suppression and female silencing. The misogynist discourse that *The White Devil* enacts reflects the jaundiced view of women echoed in the seventeenth-century 'Woman Debate' pamphlets. I contend that male figures' silencing of female figures enacts a dialogue with contemporary

Palestinian society where women's voices are circumscribed by the patriarchal discriminatory laws and traditions. I argue that the subversion of gender roles in both plays is linked to theatrical performance. Both plays reveal that the boy actor disrupts the rigid gender difference and challenges male dominance. The boy actor impersonating female voices appropriates masculine agency while male figures' voices are deceptive and hypocritical. In both plays, Webster shows that the male figures valorise silence and obedience to keep the female figures submissive to male immoral voices. I argue that Webster dissociates his female characters from ventriloquism, instead associating their speech with truth and male figures' voices with corruption, evil and deceit as does Shakespeare in *Othello*.

The subject of Chapter Four is Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women*, in which the female protagonists are even more transgressive figures because Bianca and Beatrice-Joanna have relationships with more than one man. I explain that Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* suggest that the sexual ideology of domestic relations is homologous to the ideology of patriarchal power that shores up King James I's rule. Middleton's tragedies criminalise the absolute right of the monarch to command through a critique of Renaissance practice of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to the female voice. I use the critical theories of feminism, psychoanalysis and cultural materialism in my analysis of speech, silence and gender in *The Changeling*. From a feminist standpoint, I argue that the play is a criticism of the masculine practice of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to female figures' voices. Beatrice-Joanna's speech, silence and action act out the analogy between the impurity of masculine language and blood in that she ventriloquises a pre-scripted text of chastity and honour to transgress it from within. From a psychological perspective, I argue that De Flores represents Beatrice-Joanna's id that always urges the ego to rebel against the cultural super ego. Beatrice-Joanna's aural and sexual submission

to De Flores is a transgression of gender and class conventions. However, she does so privately with the purpose of keeping up the public impression of her chastity. Following Jonathan Dollimore's cultural materialist reading of the play, I argue that Beatrice-Joanna is a pawn of class struggle in that De Flores' violation of Beatrice-Joanna is a rebellion against his master. Beatrice-Joanna's inability to live up to the male-defined imperative to be and seem emanates from the fact that a boy actor performs her role. In *Women Beware Women*, Middleton presents the household as a site of feminine authority which male figures reappropriate to curb female characters' voices and subjectivity. However, Middleton gives the women a means of linguistic retribution through the masque stage, which exposes the failure of the patriarchal circumscription of female characters' voices. I argue that Middleton's tragedies question and interrogate the dominant patriarchal discourse by locating subversion within the dominant discourse. While women are complicit with male figures' voices, the male figures show no recognition of the inadequacy of their voices.

While the curriculum at An-Najah University has been dominated by patriarchal texts and interpretations which have had a vested interest in perpetuating established misogyny,¹⁴¹ the study of Middleton's texts may change students' and teachers' perceptions of gender in early modern period and they may lead to different perceptions of gender in contemporary Palestine. I contend that Middleton's *Women Beware Women* and *The Changeling* enact a dialogue with contemporary Palestinian practices of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to female voices. This deafness and objectification of the female breed female figures' subversive complicity to subvert male figures' dictates. *The Changeling* has a chilling parallel with contemporary Palestine concerning the construction of female figures as agents of transgression. Beatrice-Joanna's attempt to keep the veneer of obedience reflects contemporary

¹⁴¹ Odeh J. Odeh, Private Communication, 19 March 2015.

Palestinian constructions of honour as a public performance rather than an inherent signifier. I argue that the psychological reading of Beatrice-Joanna's hatred of De-Flores as a sign of unconscious sexual desires subverts the Palestinian construction of honour based on women's repression of their interests in men. Isabella's exercise of her agency in the madhouse without losing her chastity resonates with Palestinian women's assertion of their power within the household and the political sphere without compromising their sexual reputations. Alibius's turning a deaf ear to Isabella's truthful voice and his insistence on imprisoning her emanate from the traditional Palestinian construction of women as dishonest and untrustworthy creatures. For Palestinian readers and audiences I argue that *Women Beware Women* stages their perception of honour as a signifier that is assigned and confirmed in public rather than inherent. Palestinian male figures' verbal disowning of their male and female relations as traitors and sexually transgressive women enables me to scrutinize Livia's usurpation of masculine discourse in her re-naming of Isabella to defy Fabritio's absolute authority. I argue that the bloody masque of women's retributive and destructive voices is a foil to Palestinian women's celebration of male figures' honour in weddings.

In Chapter Five I address the issue of how questions of female speech and silence operate differently in female-authored dramas and how examples of transgressive female behaviour in contemporary Palestine can illuminate such early modern instances of transgressive public expression. Early modern patriarchal discourse marks women's writing, like women's speech, as sexually and politically transgressive. The homology of tongue/pen and penis reveals that discourse is a masculine domain and the woman who speaks and writes is symbolically a phallic woman. Daniel Tuvil remarks that writing is a threat to women's sexual purity: '[t]he pen must be forbidden them as the tree of good and evil [...]. It is a pander to a virgin

chastity'.¹⁴² Margaret Cavendish was addressed as an 'illustrious whore', and many critics draw an analogy between the 'Punk', which means a prostitute, and a 'Poetess'.¹⁴³ This condemnation and association of women's writing with lewdness in early modern England has present implications in contemporary Palestinian society. For example, the journalist Maysa Abu Ghannam got divorced and branded as a whore because she writes about matters considered taboo, such as problems of sexual violence, the unfairness of laws, and problems of female marginalisation and exclusion. Her family threatened to disown her if she did not stop writing.¹⁴⁴ Maysa's writing is subversive when it is read against the backdrop of silencing that has traditionally thwarted Palestinian women's self expression. In his study of early modern gender, Mark Breitenberg notes an 'obvious opposition [...] between the speaking and writing man over and against the silenced woman'.¹⁴⁵ The feminist historian Joan Kelly-Gadol in her famous essay, 'Did Women Have a Renaissance?' asserts that a period of cultural rebirth did not apply to women.¹⁴⁶ Anne Rosalind Jones cautions, '[i]f women had a Renaissance, it was a problematic one, fraught with prohibitions'.¹⁴⁷ The prohibition of early female literary activity led Woolf to suppose that there were no women who wrote in an age when 'every other man, it seemed was capable of song or sonnet'.¹⁴⁸ In Constantia Munda's counter attack on misogynistic writing *The Worming of a Mad Dogge* (1617),¹⁴⁹ she highlights the patriarchal control over speech and writing and the deprivation of women of these privileges.¹⁵⁰ The cultural commonplace that women should use needles and distaffs instead

¹⁴² Daniel Tuvil, *Asylum Veneris, or A Sanctuary for Ladies* (London, 1616), p. 87.

¹⁴³ Jacqueline Pearson, *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists, 1642-1737* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988), pp. 10, 9.

¹⁴⁴ Maysa Abu Ghannam, Private Communication, 20 June 2013.

¹⁴⁵ Breitenberg, *Anxious*, p. 192.

¹⁴⁶ Joan Kelly-Gadol, 'Did Women Have a Renaissance?', in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. by Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 137-64.

¹⁴⁷ Jones, *Eros*, p. 14.

¹⁴⁸ Virginia Woolf, *A Room Of One's Own* (London: Panther Books, 1977), p. 41.

¹⁴⁹ Constantia Munda, *The Worming of a Mad Dogge: Or, A Soppe for Cerberus The Jaylor of Hell* (1617), in *The Women's Sharp Revenge: Five Pamphlets from the Renaissance*, ed. by Simon Shepherd (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), pp. 125-157.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

of pens deliberately separates women from the act of writing. ‘It is not spurious to note that chaste, silent and obedient women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are frequently occupied in sewing’, says Callaghan.¹⁵¹ Ferguson points out that ‘the idea of the “woman writer” is a veritable paradox or oxymoron, one eliciting attitudes of outrage and /or scorn’. As writing is a ““masculine” activit[y] and also in opposition to “silence”, then the phrase “woman writer” will be seen as a contradiction in terms’.¹⁵²

Nevertheless, some women did take up the pen and Chapter Five will consider three female-authored tragedies that enact a form of gendered negotiation with their culture and male-authored dramas and resist and recast the masculine discourse of the binary opposites of speech and silence. I analyse Lady Jane Lumley’s *Iphigenia at Aulis* (1555), the earliest English translation of a Greek play (Euripides’ *Iphigenia*). I continue with Mary Sidney’s *The Tragedie of Antonie* (1595), translated from Robert Garnier’s *Antoine* (1578). Subsequently, I will discuss the first original play by an English woman, Elizabeth Cary’s *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613). I read early modern tragedies alongside Fadwa Tuqan’s *Autobiography, A Mountainous Journey* (1990), which charts Tuqan’s struggle in the personal, political, and literary arenas and reveals her criticism of her family in particular and the Palestinian society in general. While the female dramatists differ in their methods – autobiography, translation, so-called closet drama – they raise issues concerning the conditions of women’s speech, and the relationships between gender and silence, which add another invaluable strand to the topic of my thesis. My inclusion of female-authored texts is an attempt to offer cross-gendered comparative study, emphasising representation of women’s agency as speakers and writers in cultures antagonistic to female speech and writing. Furthermore, as I pointed out earlier, female-authored texts are not included in An-Najah University’s curriculum. My analysis of

¹⁵¹ Callaghan, *Women and Gender*, p. 84.

¹⁵² Margaret Ferguson, ‘Renaissance Concepts of the “Woman Writer”’, in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1500-1700*, ed. by Helene Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 143-68 (p. 145).

female-authored texts alongside male-authored ones is, thus, a step in opening up discussion of female-authored texts and spotlighting women's voices.

Because women's bodies and voices were subject to scrutiny and circumscription, women use writing, a form of silent speech, to express their thoughts. As a 'silent' form of self-expression, writing functions as both a substitute for speaking and a desire to speak beyond death. As Roland Barthes points out:

Speech is a substitute for life: to speak is to lose life, and all effusive behavior is experienced initially as a gesture of dilapidation: by the avowal, the flood of words released, it is the very principle of life that seems to be leaving the body; to speak is to spill oneself, that is, to castrate oneself.¹⁵³

Barthes's assertion linking speech and death has implications for women's writings which are separated from their feminine bodies. By writing it is possible for female authors to enter the symbolic order and displace phallic power while reiterating their silencing process on the page. Don Ihde notes that '[w]riting creates the possibility of a word without voice'.¹⁵⁴ This reiteration allows the author to make sense of her position as a silent being and become an agent of her own silencing through writing. Self-initiated silencing is violent to the subject because 'writing is the dissimulation of the natural, primary, and immediate presence of sense to the soul within the logos. Its violence befalls the soul as unconsciousness'.¹⁵⁵ The author diverts the immediacy of presence through the process of writing. Writing thus enables women to create texts that open up a space for female agency through the process of silencing. Female characters' silencing is an act of displacement in that female authors create heroines who are si-

¹⁵³ Roland Barthes, *On Racine*, trans. by Richard Howard (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publication, 1983), p. 119.

¹⁵⁴ Don Ihde, *Listening and Voice: A Phenomenology of Sound* (Athens: University of Ohio Press, 1976), p.154.

¹⁵⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 37.

lenced and employ the strategy of silence to maintain hegemonic selfhood like Graphina's silence in Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*. As Margaret Ferguson has observed, Graphina can be read allegorically in relation to Cary's authorship of *The Tragedy of Mariam*, which deconstructs conventional order and the binary opposites of speech and silence.¹⁵⁶ In my analysis of female-authored texts in Chapter Five, I argue that the death of female heroines which signals their movement from the physical to the spiritual realm reveals the female authors' elimination of their sexual bodies so as to liberate their textual bodies.

In this Chapter, my analysis of the representation of speech and silence in the dramatic texts draws together female authors from a range of early modern historical and cultural contexts to focus on issues particular to gender and writing and to alternative types of performance in a non-commercial theatre. From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, I read the early modern scripts with reference to the work of Fadwa Tuqan, an eminent Palestinian poet who was born in Nablus in 1917 to a wealthy family. Her autobiography, *A Mountainous Journey*, published in 1990, is a criticism of masculine domination over women in 1920s and 1930s, describing the domestic sphere of women in Nablus as a prison. Tuqan interrogates the entanglement of gender and politics, a feature associated with early modern England's female authors. I read Lady Lumley's translation of Euripides' *Iphigenia* (1550), one of the most popular of the Greek dramas in early modern England, in the context of her family's participation in the religious and political culture of the 1550s. The play's dramatization of the events surrounding the sacrifice of a daughter/niece for the sake of a political cause must have been potent subject matter in the Lumley household in the 1550s because of Lumley's father's role in the events surrounding Lady Jane Grey's death. Following Paulina Kewes, I contend that Mary Sidney's *The Tragedie of Antonie* (1595) is a political message to Queen Elizabeth I to fulfil her role as a mother of England in freeing the Protestant Netherlands from Catholic

¹⁵⁶Ferguson, 'Renaissance Concepts of the 'Woman Writer'', p. 155.

Spain. Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613), the first known original play in English by a woman, appropriates the story of Antony and Cleopatra and the transition from republic to monarchy focusing on the intersection of family and politics.

I will consider the different performance contexts for these plays before I analyse the representation of speech, silence and gender that the plays enact. The plays under investigation employ implicit and explicit stage directions which provide evidence that female authors had performance in mind when they adopted the genre of drama. Female-authored dramas highlight the importance of dramatic performance as a means of women's self-representation. Although women did not make their entry into the professional theatre until 1660, the lack of women's physical presence on the public stage did not necessarily prohibit women from performing at home. Indeed, the tragedies under investigation have been performed in different contexts which imply that female texts are playing spaces in which it is possible to interrogate the conventional construction of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence.

Chapter Two

Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello*

Revolt! I want you to revolt,
 Revolt against an Orient of slaves, convents and incense
 Revolt against history, and vanquish the great illusion. Fear no one.
 The sun is the cemetery of eagles.
 Revolt against an Orient that sees in you a feast in the bed.¹

Nizzar Qabbani (1923-1998), woman's poet (a title publicly attributed to him),² constantly berates the exploitation of women in the Arab World through his poetry. The above lines show Qabbani inciting women to undermine the repressive patriarchal order and revolt against an Orient that sees them as 'feast[s] in the bed'. He encourages women to resist customs and traditions that impose so many restrictions on them while licensing men to do whatever they desire. However, Qabbani's voice, a scripture for feminine liberation, falls on deaf ears, for his deconstruction of gender roles is considered immoral by traditional Arab societies. Palestinian male readers often see Qabbani as feminised because he writes about women and their liberation from the confines of men, where many consider the Middle East as the birthplace of politics and religion. While gender and nationalism is inextricably connected in the Palestinian context, Qabbani's poems do not receive recognition from many Palestinians because he is writing against Arab traditions that oppress women instead of putting his pen to

¹ Nizar Qabbani, 'A Diary of an Indifferent Woman', trans. by Bilal Hamamra, *Adab.com* <<http://www.adab.com/modules.php?name=Sh3er&doWhat=shqas&qid=69043>> [accessed 20 May 2013].

² Nizar Qabbani, *Republic of Love: Selected Poems in English and Arabic*, trans. by Nayef al-Kalali, ed. by Lisa Kavchak (Kegan Paul: London, 2003), p. 1.

the service of national narrative that negates the Israeli claim on Palestine. Qabbani's poems were, therefore, censored and excluded from school and university curricula.³

I use Qabbani's words as a provocation which inspires me to undertake a feminist approach in my analysis of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (1591)⁴ and *Othello* (1604).⁵ In these tragedies, I argue that Shakespeare interrogated the masculine construction of gender difference, created complex female characters that transcend the stereotypes upon which masculine ideology is based and subjected the binary opposites of speech and silence to contradictions for both male and female characters. In their analysis of Shakespeare's tragedies, Lenz, Greene and Neely state that 'powerful women are always threatening and often, in fact, destructive' to male figures' voices and authority⁶ while Woodbridge notes that 'the first decade of the seventeenth century had witnessed unprecedented misogyny in the drama'.⁷ She points out that early Jacobean drama 'produced a body of plays' in which 'women had joined other character types as scapegoats for the ills of society'.⁸ These early feminist readings are parts of the historicist turn, for feminist criticism has moved on since these studies were published. The eclectic range of critics I am using in this chapter opens up gender-based readings in the teaching context of An-Najah University. While Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello* do not seek revolution and call to action on the part of women as Qabbani's text suggests, they represent female characters whose silences and voices oppose male figures' voices and

³ Wisam Mansour, 'Kabbani's Women: From the Sultan's Wife To The Lady Friend in Exile', *Ankra Universitesi Dilve Tarih – Cografya Fakultesi Dergisi*, 44.1 (2004), 1-15 (p. 2)

⁴ William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. by Jonathan Bate, , The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd edn (Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1997). Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act, scene and line number.

⁵ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann (Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1997). Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act, scene and line number.

⁶ Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene, and Carol Thomas Neely, 'Introduction', in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 3-16 (p. 6).

⁷ Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womanhood, 1540-1620* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), p.249.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

reveal the destructiveness of the dominant ideology of gender difference exemplified by the binary opposition of speech and silence and male figures' deafness to female characters' voices. While *Titus Andronicus* ends with the assertion of masculine voices, Shakespeare shows that both Tamora's speech, which mimics masculine voices, and Lavinia's problematic silence reveal the weaknesses and contradictions of gender difference. *Othello* grants Emilia a heroic agency similar to that which Qabbani encourages women to obtain, for her speech reveals the truth of Desdemona's innocence and destroys Iago's plot. In addition to feminism, I will use historicist and presentist approaches to analyse the representation of silence, speech and gender in *Titus Andronicus*. I teach *Othello* alongside the romance of Antar (525-608) as a Palestinian literary intertext that would offer Palestinian readers – teachers and students – a combination of western and local approaches to *Othello*. I use the Romance of Antar, familiar to students and to me from the school curriculum, to scrutinize the significance of female figures in constructing male figures' heroic identity and to illuminate the racial discourse and the destructive verbal marriage between Othello and Iago. In addition, I will present a psychoanalytic reading of Othello to expose the ways that heterosexual desires and racial prejudice challenge and destroy the heterosexual marriage between Othello and Desdemona. These intertextual and psychoanalytic readings may provide my students a ground to scrutinize the ways that Palestinian male homosocial bonds, male figures' aural openness to the destructive male voices of gossip and their turning a deaf ear to female figures' voices lead to the destruction of heterosexual relationships and to the killing of women in the cause of honour. I have followed the psychological approach in my analysis of *Othello* in Literary Criticism Course and Drama Course. In my teaching of *Othello*, I alert my students that the readings of homoeroticism in *Othello* are late twentieth and early twenty first century approaches adopted by some critics and theatre practitioners.⁹ My students and I analyse the tragedy by drawing

⁹ See, for example, Edward Snow, 'Sexual anxiety and the male order of things in *Othello*', *ELR*, 10.3 (1980),

on the archetypal approach of projection. My students understand that Iago's projection of misogynistic and racist discourse onto Othello is a sign of homosexuality. I argue that the cause of tragedy emanates from the fact that Othello weds his shadow Iago and ignores his anima Desdemona. The archetype of projection is useful for my presentist and pedagogical agenda. While Antar's aural closure to racist discourse may suggest that traditional Palestinian culture can be more liberal than that of early modern England, contemporary Palestinian male figures' oppression of Palestinian women is inextricably associated with the Israeli occupation. I argue that Othello's projection of the misogynist and racist discourses that Iago pours into his ears onto Desdemona may provide scholars of English a ground to consider the association between oppressing Palestinian women and Israeli occupation. Many Palestinians project their verbal and physical humiliation by the Israelis onto women so as to assert their lost manhood and power.

Contrary to the dominant teaching styles at An-Najah University, this chapter offers students different, subversive dimensions to Shakespeare's tragedies by discussing the representation of speech, silence and gender. Shakespeare's *Othello* is part of Shakespeare and Drama courses at An-Najah University's Department of English while *Titus Andronicus* has never been taught in either of these courses.¹⁰ Both courses traditionally have not focused on issues of gender at all.¹¹ Students are traditionally asked to comment on selected lines from the plays, identifying the speaker and context and commenting on figurative language and imagery embodied therein.¹² With respect to gender presentation, instructors focus on male characters and male themes and female characters are represented from the instructors' points

384-412; Bruce Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England: A Cultural Poetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 61-64; Robert Matz, 'Slander, Renaissance Discourses of Sodomy, and *Othello*', *ELH*, 66.2 (1999), 261-276; *Othello*, dir. by Oliver Parker (Columbia, 1995) [on DVD]. See Appendix 13.

¹⁰See Appendix 1, 3, 4.

¹¹See Appendix 1, 2, 3, 6, 7.

¹²See Appendix, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

of view as representing a threat to the male characters.¹³ In their discussion of *Othello*, instructors attribute Desdemona's death to her disobedience of her father's voice in choosing Othello and eloping with him. However, my re-reading of *Othello* through a feminist critical line, inspired by the work of Qabbani, and using the critical lines of new historicism and presentism seeks to change the ways this text is thought about at An-Najah University and for my Palestinian students. Students might recognise that both Palestinian women who are killed unjustly in the cause of honour, and female characters in *Othello* are innocent victims of the destructive masculine construction of gender difference rather than tragic transgressors. Students recognize that listening to the public voices of gossip and turning deaf to female figures' truthful and moral voices are the causes of the tragedy in contemporary Palestine and *Othello*. Next term, *Titus Andronicus* will be introduced to the Shakespeare course for the first time, and I hope that students and I will be able to scrutinize the parallels between this tragedy and contemporary Palestine. I argue that *Titus Andronicus* constitutes a promising text that enables me to discuss the gendering of Rome as a female in the figure of Lavinia, the antagonism between the Goths and the Romans, Titus's killing of Lavinia to get rid of her shame and the construction of nation as a narration from a Palestinian perspective.

¹³ Odeh J. Odeh, Private Communication, 19 March 2015.

Titus Andronicus

Titus Andronicus was derided by earlier literary critics as the goriest of Shakespeare's plays.¹⁴ However, it has had stage success in recent decades¹⁵ and has become the focus of criticism from the schools of feminist and postcolonial studies with which I enter into a dialogue. *Titus Andronicus* is a drama in which the antagonism between barbarism and civilisation is played out rhetorically in the service '[o]f murders, rapes and massacres' (5.1.63). Sara Hanna points out that 'language has very little civilising power in *Titus*: oratory fails to persuade; charming erotic poetry introduces a scene of murder, rape, and mutilation; and pretty rhetorical embellishments sound grotesque in the face of atrocity'.¹⁶ Following the critical line of new historicism, I consider that the identification of Tamora with Queen Elizabeth I's iconography is a veiled criticism of Queen Elizabeth whose rule defied patriarchal conceptions of femininity. From a feminist standpoint, I argue that Shakespeare dismantles the virgin-whore dichotomy in the figures of Lavinia and Tamora, who mimic patriarchal prescriptions on female speech and silence and, in the latter case, the patriarchal speech of authority. The play suggests a conflict between matriarchal and patriarchal voices. I point out that Tamora subversively inscribes herself within masculine ideology in silencing Lavinia's unbridled tongue. While Lavinia's imposed silence embodies the patriarchal fantasy that women remain silent, her silence is uncanny, challenging male figures' interpretations. Shakespeare shows that the boy actor impersonating Tamora's voice is a mouthpiece of Titus's ruthless speech and his deafness to female figures' voices. However, I contend that the association of Tamora's voice with hypocrisy, cunning, violence, vengefulness and cannibalism shifts the

¹⁴ T.S. Eliot, 'Seneca in Elizabethan Translation', in *Selected Essays*, 3rd edn (London: Faber, 1969), pp. 65-105 (p. 82); Edward Ravenscroft, 'To the Reader', in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp. 375-76 (p. 375).

¹⁵ See, Jonathan Bate, ed., William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* (Croatia: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), p. 1; Alan Hughes, ed., William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 37.

¹⁶ Sara Hanna, 'Tamora's Rome: Raising Babel and Inferno in *Titus Andronicus*', *SY*, 3 (1992), 11-29 (p. 11).

blame for Rome's disintegration away from a self-destructive patriarchy towards the transgressive Tamora. The elimination of Tamora's voice in the play's tragic closure can be explained by the view that the boy actor impersonating her speech has adopted fully empowered masculine discourse which is self-destructive. In the case of Lavinia, while the boy actor impersonates chaste and obedient silence and speech in the opening scenes, her grotesque silence is associated with the boy actor's lack of space to articulate her feminine voice. While Tamora's masculinised voice destroys her, Lavinia's writing of her rape and rapists, by taking her father's hand in her mouth, leads to her destruction. In this context, following new historicist criticism of Renaissance literature, I argue that the play reinforces the dominant ideology of patriarchal structures, ending in containing female subversive voices and affirming male figures' authority. As Greenblatt proposes, 'actions that should have the effect of radically undermining authority turn out to be the props of that authority'.¹⁷ Tamora's and Lavinia's speeches and silences are contained to sustain the very patriarchal authority they seem to contest.

Robert Fisk reads the phenomenon of honour killing in *Titus Andronicus* alongside presentist contexts. He notes that honour killing is a global phenomenon and that the perpetrator of this violent act in contemporary societies and *Titus Andronicus* are motivated by cultural values and customs.¹⁸ This immediate resonance of some aspects of *Titus Andronicus* in contemporary societies reveals that the play produces meanings in historical and geographical contexts different from that in which it was begotten. From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, I think that this bloody revenge tragedy suits the feverish atmosphere of Palestine and the taste of many Palestinian readers and spectators. *Titus Andronicus* speaks to me as a Palestinian of

¹⁷Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 53.

¹⁸ Robert Fisk, 'The Truth about 'Honour' Killings', *The Independent* (2010) <<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/fisk/robert-fisk-the-truth-about-honour-killings-2075317.html>> [accessed: 12 March 2015].

the gendering of nationalism as a female in Palestinian national narratives, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, honour killing and the construction of nation as narration. I read the Goths' and the Andronici's opposing voices alongside Palestinian-Israeli rhetorical conflict over the ownership of Palestine. While Israeli and Palestinian opposing narratives and voices are still in play, I demonstrate that the conflict between patriarchal and matriarchal voices in the play ends with the restoration of masculine voices.

Titus Andronicus engages in scapegoating logic, which transforms Tamora from a compassionate and supplicating mother to a pitiless and voluptuous cannibal. Titus's voice evokes military intrigues; both Bassianus and Saturninus are subdued by his words when plunged into conflict (1.1.47-62) and commit themselves 'to the love and favour of [their] country' (1.1.60). However, Titus's affirmative voice contains the seeds of a self-destructive patriarchy. He chooses the vicious Saturninus over the virtuous Bassianus as emperor of Rome (1.1.228-29), assuring the survival of a social structure founded on primogeniture rather than choosing Bassianus who bases his claim on 'pure election' (1.1.16). Titus kills his son Mutius when the latter opposes his father's and Saturninus's commands by helping Bassianus to snatch Lavinia away. While he kills Mutius in a 'wrongful quarrel' (1.1.298), claiming that Mutius has 'dishonoured all our family' (1.1.350), his sons recognise that '[h]e is not with himself' (1.1.372). By killing his own son to defend his family's honour, he undermines his integrity and that of fathers from within. While the Goths denounce Roman retaliation as primitive and inhuman (1.1.118,133), Titus is deaf to Tamora's voice, bidding her: 'patient yourself, madam, and pardon me' (1.1.124). He says that his surviving sons' 'brethren whom your Goths beheld / Alive and dead' (1.1.125-26) demand a sacrifice. Titus's aural openness

to their voices and his deafness to Tamora's pleas set in motion the cycle of revenge.¹⁹ Later, Shakespeare introduces a language of blame for Titus, rendering his utterance ineffective and powerless (1.1.455-60, 3.1.12-13, 27-29, 32). However, despite Titus's violent voice and actions, transgression is projected onto Tamora who cloaks her revenge and adulterous affair (1.1.320) with 'a barbarous Moor' (2.2.78) under the veil of Roman civilisation.²⁰

Titus Andronicus represents Tamora as a 'foul adulteress' (2.2.109), capable of murder, infanticide and revenge, even though she enters the play as a captive mother begging Titus to 'rue the tears I shed, / A mother's tears in passion for her son' (2.1.108-09). Her apparent subordination is called into question when she constructs her own maternal status as equivalent to Titus' status as patriarch (1.1.106). In response to Saturninus's proposal (1.1.320-26), she appears decorous in constructing herself as a 'handmaid [...] to his desires' (1.1.335). However, her description of herself as '[a] loving nurse, a mother to his youth' (1.1.336) implies that she will use her feminine roles to dominate Saturninus. Indeed, he agrees to 'be ruled by' her wit and speech (1.1.446-47), feigning reconciliation with Titus to avoid censure by the Roman voices (1.1.440-60). Her oath of revenge (1.1.455-56) is hidden behind her verbal commitment to 'look graciously on [Titus]' (1.1.444). Writing on this scene, Liz Oakley-Brown notes that 'Tamora's vocabulary depicts her move from the position of the suffering subject to the agent of tyranny'.²¹ While Lavinia is the 'imperial seat to virtue *consecrate*, / To justice, continence and nobility', Tamora's 'sacred wit' is '[t]o villainy and vengeance *consecrate*' (1.1.14-15, 620-21, my italics).

¹⁹ Dorothea Kehler, 'Titus Andronicus's lusty widow, wife, and m/other', in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp. 317-32 (p. 320).

²⁰ Douglas Green, 'Interpreting "her martyr'd signs": Gender and Tragedy in *Titus Andronicus*', *SQ*, 40 (1989), 317-26 (p. 321); Francesca T. Royster, 'White-Limed Walls: Whiteness and Gothic Extremism in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*', *SQ*, 51.4 (2000), 432-55 (p. 433).

²¹ Liz Oakley-Brown, "'My lord, be ruled by me': Shakespeare's Tamora and the failure of queenship", in *The Rituals and Rhetoric of Queenship: Medieval to Early Modern*, ed. by Liz Oakley-Brown and Louise J. Wilkinson (Dublin: Four Courts, 2009), pp. 222-37 (p. 234).

Titus Andronicus, which focuses on Roman characters and Latin textual antecedents, produces explicit analogies between the classical past and the Elizabethan present. While Shakespeare's Elizabethan dramas focus primarily upon reigning monarchs who are male, the exception of Tamora in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* refers obliquely to Elizabeth and shows Shakespeare's disapproval of Queen Elizabeth whose rule destabilises patriarchal society. Heather James declares that in *Titus Andronicus* Shakespeare's 'critique of Elizabethan political iconography begins with the figure of Lavinia and ends with Tamora, who parodies the guises that Queen Elizabeth appropriated from Vergil – Dido, Astraea, and *Venus armata* [armed Venus]'.²² James notes that in the shooting scene 'Shot in the lap, Astraea, virgin goddess of justice and forerunner among Elizabeth I's celebratory guises, is anatomically exposed as the whoring queen of Goths'.²³ In associating Tamora with an anti-Dido, an inverted Diana, a notorious Semiramis, and a perverse Astraea – figures that are all associated with the portrayal of Elizabeth I, Shakespeare reveals the corruption of Elizabeth's iconography in *Titus Andronicus*. According to John Knox, a woman with political authority disrupts 'good order' which is maintained by having 'the "head" govern the "body"'.²⁴ Female rulers have masculine characteristics such as courage, strength and cunning as contrasting with the traditional feminine virtues of silence, modesty, obedience.

Titus Andronicus endorses the conventional association between female speech and lasciviousness in the figure of Tamora. Some critics scrutinise Tamora's challenge to early modern

²² Heather James, *Shakespeare's Troy: Drama, Politics, and the Translation of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 48.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

²⁴ John Knox, *The Works of John Knox*, ed. by David Laing (Edinburgh: James Thin, 1895), IV, pp. 366-67, 375, 415. Quoted in Constance Jordan, 'Representing Political Androgyny: More on the Siena Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I', in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. by Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty Travitsky (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990), pp. 157-77 (p. 158).

England's construction of women as 'chaste, silent, obedient'²⁵ by identifying her as a 'whore queen'.²⁶ Sara Hanna compares her to Semiramis who 'def[ies] the ideals for a Renaissance woman: the empress of Babel is neither chaste, submissive, nor silent'.²⁷ Aaron's child is a sign of 'stately Rome's disgrace' (4.2.60) and man's lack of control over the unbridled womb, as Coppelia Kahn suggests.²⁸ While Tamora and her sons decide to kill the fruit of her adulterous affair with Aaron to keep secret her sexual and political transgression against Saturninus's authority and against Rome (4.2.69-71, 77, 84), it is the baby's inarticulate cry that gives a public voice to her transgression (5.1.24-26, 42-43). While Tamora's initial pleas on behalf of Alarbus may generate sympathy from the audience, the play questions the power of maternal love in Tamora by its representation of her ordering the death of her baby son and her repulsive cannibalism of her progeny. The Nurse, who is the mouthpiece of Tamora's commanding voice (4.2.68-71), refers to Tamora as 'empress' four times (4.2.60, 70, 130, 145) and as 'the mother' only once (4.2.84), which implies that by valuing empire over motherhood, she loses her earlier claim to maternity. Shakespeare humanises Aaron, making his paternal instincts (4.2.101-02, 122-29) a potent alternative to Roman fatherhood and Tamora's failing maternal role.

Aaron's silence is a site of fiendish resistance (5.1.45-48) and his speech is employed in the service of brutal rape, mutilation and murder. Aaron is reconciled to the stereotype of black diabolic wickedness, lust, and malignity (3.1.205, 4.2.119-20). Aaron, who curses the days 'wherein [he] did not some notorious ill' (5.1.127), is 'one of the most diabolical, treacher-

²⁵Suzanne W. Hull, *Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women, 1475-1640* (San Marino, Calif: Huntington Library, 1982), p. 142.

²⁶Susan Dunn-Hensley, 'Whore queens: the sexualised female body and the state', in *'High and mighty queen' of Early Modern England: Realities and Representations*, ed. by Carole Levin, Debra Barrett-Graves and Jo Eldridge Carney (New York: Palgrave, 2003), pp. 101-16 (pp. 101-02); see also, Kehler, 'widow', p. 327.

²⁷Hanna, 'Babel', p. 17.

²⁸Coppelia Kahn, *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds, and Women* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 55, 69.

ous, consummate villains in all of Shakespeare'²⁹, 'the precursor of Iago'.³⁰ Bate notes that 'an Elizabethan audience would have known that the biblical Aaron had an eloquent, persuasive tongue'.³¹ In the Bible, Aaron who 'can speak well' (Exodus 4. 14), acts as a mediator between Moses, who is 'slow of speech, and of a slow tongue' (Exodus 4. 10), and the people. From a contemporary Palestinian perspective, I think that Muslim readers would also find a parallel in the Prophet Aaron, Mariam's brother, as mentioned in the Qur'an.³² Shakespeare's Aaron is a parody of the Biblical and Qur'anic Aarons (5.1.45-48, 71). MacDonald notes that Aaron 'recognizes his blackness as the sign of absolute resistance to incorporation in any system of social or moral order'.³³ His speech is, therefore, transgressive in advertising such failure to conform to the dominant social and moral hierarchies. His verbal and physical transgressions (2.2.1-25) are enacted in the forest, from which he initiates villainous acts against Rome.

Aaron's fiendish imagination, darkness and secrecy are manifested in the secluded and dark woods where he conceives his villainous plots of rape and murder. Lavinia is violated not in Rome, for the court, as Aaron says, is 'full of tongues, of eyes and ears', but in the woods, which are 'ruthless, dreadful, deaf and dull' (1.1.627-28), '[f]itted by kind for rape and villainy' (1.1.616). This suggests that the forest is silent and secluded, safe from the spying and hearing; the voices of the court have the power to censure and thus govern and pretend order. In this sense, Aaron's location has a bearing upon his speech and silence. While Shakespeare gives Aaron the freedom to manoeuvre close to the court, he nevertheless keeps him an out-

²⁹ Philip C. Kolin, 'Titus Andronicus and the critical legacy', in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp.3-48 (p. 30).

³⁰ Alan Sommers, "'Wilderness of Tigers': Structure and Symbolism in *Titus Andronicus*", in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp. 115-28 (p.121).

³¹ Bate, *Titus Andronicus*, p. 125.

³² Mary 19. 28; The Story 28. 34; Ranged in Rows 37. 114.

³³ Joyce Green MacDonald, 'The Force of Imagination: The Subject of Blackness in Shakespeare, Jonson, and Ravenscroft', *RP* (1991), 53-74 (p. 63).

sider whose malice is directed from the forest. Aaron keeps silent in the court and when he speaks, he subordinates his voice to Tamora's and Saturninus's voices (4.3.73, 3.1.151), as Bartels notes.³⁴ He unleashes his eloquence and schemes of rape and murder in the deaf and dull forest which is an alternative site to the voice of law. Aaron's evil is associated with his tongue (5.1.104-20), when he asserts that this day is 'the day of doom for Bassianus' and Lavinia's loss of chastity and speech (2.2.42-44). As Aaron's threat is vocal, Lucius's revenge against him is oral. Willbern notes that 'Aaron's torment is [...] an image of that of the mythical Tantalus, whose fate represents the *locus classicus* of oral revenge'.³⁵ After Aaron confesses his 'notorious ills' (5.1.127), Lucius demands that the guards 'stop his mouth, and let him speak no more' (5.1.151) and deprive him of a listening audience (5.3.178-82). However, while Aaron's vocal transgression is contained in the end of the play, he allies his diabolic speech and silence with Tamora's to silence Titus.

Tamora attempts to silence Titus just as he has turned deaf to her pleas for Alarbus, who is silenced offstage (2.2.161-67) by revenging herself on Lavinia. Some feminist critics assert that rape is an act primarily aimed at humiliating men – even though it humiliates women in the process; it is about male rivalry and domination of women.³⁶ Tamora emulates Roman modes of vengeance in that she is deaf to Lavinia's pleas (2.2.137, 157-60) the same way Titus is deaf to her maternal pleas.³⁷ As Titus identifies himself with Procne, Tamora is associated with Tereus because she has refused to acknowledge her 'womanhood' (2.2.182) and has adopted the masculine subject position of the vocal aggressor (2.3.136, 182). However,

³⁴ Emily C. Bartels, 'Making More of the Moor: Aaron, Othello, and Renaissance Refashionings of Race', *SQ*, 41.4 (1990), 433-54 (p. 446).

³⁵ David Willbern, 'Rape and Revenge in *Titus Andronicus*', in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp. 171-94 (p. 189).

³⁶ Alison Findlay, *A Feminist Perspective on Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), p. 76; Catharine R. Stimpson, 'Shakespeare and the Soil of Rape', in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 56-64 (p. 58).

³⁷ Robert S. Miola, 'Titus Andronicus: Rome and the Family', in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp. 195-224 (p. 199).

Shakespeare breaks the illusion of the absent female body in order to create and sustain the illusion of woman that would hold spectators' conviction (2.3.136). Tamora uses her sons as agents of Lavinia's rape and mutilation, suggesting that a woman has to use male instruments (their tongues/penises) to take revenge and action (2.2.120, 124-25). In instructing her sons to rape Lavinia, Tamora, as Stimpson puts it, 'expresses her enjoyment of her son's potency, which veers toward and approaches a sublimated incest [...] and denies, as Lady Macbeth will do, her own femaleness'.³⁸ In speaking of 'the honey ye desire' (2.2.131), Tamora identifies with her sons' lust. This is further intensified by her swallowing of them, which 'symbolizes incestuous intercourse', as Willbern puts it.³⁹ Thus, while Tamora's verbal and physical violence reinscribes the masculine view that a woman's primary concern is for her children, her desire for revenge destroys her maternal potential.

Tamora is defeated by her own elaborate rhetorical self-construction as 'Revenge' (5.2.3) sent 'from th' infernal kingdom' (5.2.30), even though she believes that becoming a goddess of revenge allows her to transcend even her worldly power as empress. Tamora's and her sons' identities, through a change of costume, take on the status of personifications: '[e]nter Tamora and her sons [Demetrius and Chiron] disguised' (5.2). Her first words confirm her dissemblance through costumes and facial expressions and, arguably, her verbal caution that she should restrain her anger (5.2.1-3). While Tamora thinks that her adopted role of revenge will enable her to outwit Titus and 'fill his aged ears / With golden promises' (4.4.95-96), Titus gloats over his own success in tricking Tamora that he is mad (5.2.142-44). Tamora uses her maternal influence to persuade her sons to '[y]ield to [Titus's] humour, smooth and speak him fair, / And tarry with him till I turn again' (5.2.140-41), consigning them to their silence. Her suggestion that Titus gather his family for a banquet, to which his enemies come

³⁸Stimpson, 'Rape', p. 60.

³⁹Willbern, 'Revenge', p. 179.

to ‘stoop and kneel’ at his mercy (5.2.110-20), provides Titus with a scene in which he uses, as Alexander Leggatt puts it, ‘the allegory of Revenge, Rape and Murder’ against them, in that Tamora swallows her sins/sons.⁴⁰ However, while Tamora’s voice is eliminated in the play’s tragic closure, she curtails Titus’s linguistic authority through her silencing of Lavinia’s offensive tongue – a silencing which supports and problematises the masculine desire for female silence.

Lavinia’s silencing suggests early modern culture’s need to control the challenge represented by a woman speaking rather than passively accepting her identification with the homeland as a silent icon of Rome. As ‘Rome’s rich ornament’ (1.1.55), ‘Rome’s royal mistress’ (1.1.245), Lavinia personifies the state and embodies the power of patriarchy. Lavinia verbally degrades Tamora for her ‘goodly gift in horning’ (2.2.67) and her ‘raven-coloured love’ (2.2.83). Lavinia’s speech piques Tamora’s anger and leads to the former’s violation. While Lorraine Helms claims that ‘silence, which proclaims the victim’s ritual consent, is the key-stone of Lavinia’s role, marking its sacrificial trajectory from the opening scene’,⁴¹ Lavinia is in fact capable of provocative speech, which is described by Brooke as exhibiting a ‘vulgarity of tone [that] is at once cheap, stupid, and dangerous’.⁴² This movement towards linguistic complexity recurs in the play’s rejection of the common stereotyping of women into virgins and whores.⁴³

⁴⁰Alexander Leggatt, *Shakespeare’s Tragedies: Violation and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 24.

⁴¹Lorraine Helms, “‘The High Roman Fashion’: Sacrifice, Suicide, and the Shakespearean Stage’, *PMLA*, 107.3 (1992), 554-65 (p. 557).

⁴²Nicholas Brooke, *Shakespeare’s Early Tragedies* (London: Methuen, 1968), p. 33.

⁴³See, for example, Liz Oakley-Brown, *Ovid and the Cultural Politics of Translation in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 36; Cynthia Marshall, “‘I can interpret all her martyr’d signs’: *Titus Andronicus*, Feminism, and the Limits of Interpretation’, in *Sexuality and Politics in Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Carole Levin and Karen Robertson (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), pp. 193-213 (p.195).

The words that Marcus uses to describe Lavinia's loss of her tongue and hands represent an attempt to justify her silencing. He says that 'had he [the rapist] heard the heavenly harmony [of] that sweet tongue', he would have been enchanted into a sleep and 'dropped his knife' (2.3.48-50). Ironically, Marcus invokes Lavinia's speech which had unleashed her assailants' murderous and lustful desires, and the spectators perceive that her tongue's 'heavenly' harmony had failed to elicit mercy from them. Marcus explains:

O, that delightful engine of her thoughts,
 That blabbed them with such pleasing eloquence,
 Is torn from forth that pretty hollow cage
 Where, like a sweet melodious bird, it sung
 Sweet varied notes, enchanting every ear (3.1.83-87).

His use of the word 'blabbed' has the implication of excessive speech that denotes a failure of discipline. His comparison of Lavinia's tongue with a bird, which underlines the unbridled nature of her speech, 'is inescapably offensive', as Albert Tricomi suggests.⁴⁴ The punishment for the unbridled tongue was the actual 'bridle' that women were forced to wear.⁴⁵ From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, I think that the comparison of Lavinia's tongue to a bird is offensive. In terms of gender and nationalist politics, Palestinian women are traditionally relegated to silence and chastity to bear the sign of, and to produce, the nation while men are constructed as the protectors of the nation and their speech should be subsumed to that of Palestine. Those who step out of this construction are called birds. In relation to the female, a bird (*Asfoura* in Arabic) suggests a woman whose speech is a sign of sexual desire and who moves from one person to another. In association with male figures, a bird suggests a Pales-

⁴⁴ Albert H. Tricomi, 'The Mutilated Garden in *Titus Andronicus*', *SSt*, 9 (1976), 89-106 (p. 98).

⁴⁵ Lynda E. Boose, 'Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman's Unruly Member', *SQ*, 42.2 (1991), 179-213 (pp. 179-213).

tinian who allies his action and speech with the Israeli forces. Traitors are birds (*Assaffear* in Arabic) that are placed in cells to collect information from and about prisoners to entrap them further. The bird is a cage within a cage.⁴⁶ The fate of women and men who are called birds is death. From a Palestinian perspective, then, Tamora's silencing of Lavinia supports male desires to control the verbal threat that she poses. This interpretation is enhanced by Aaron's use of the word 'babble' when referring to the midwife's and the nurse's 'long-tongued, babbling gossip' (4.2.152). He smothers their threatening voices (4.2.145-48). Furthermore, the metaphor of an encaged bird implies Lavinia's enclosed speech. The silencing of Lavinia and setting her free from the cage unleashes her uncanny power and makes Lavinia more dangerous in silence than she was in speech.

Tamora's revenge turns Lavinia, who is a symbol of virtue (1.1.171, 242), into a grotesque epitome of the feminine ideal (2.2.137, 179-80). As Christina Luckyj has pointed out, 'her [Lavinia's] silence utterly disrupts the established relation between signifier and signified; here, feminine silence is monstrously unchaste'.⁴⁷ Lavinia's silence becomes the very means to conceal her sexual violation. Shakespeare makes Lavinia's verbal defence against rape unconvincing (2.2.156), for it is the 'one thing [...] / That womanhood denies [her] tongue to tell' (2.2.173-74). Lavinia is destroyed by her speech. She begs Tamora to 'keep me from their worse than killing lust, / And tumble me into some loathsome pit' (2.2.175-76). As Eric Patridge notes, Lavinia's unwitting pun upon the word 'tumble', meaning, '[t]o copulate with (girl or woman); to cause to *fall backward*', foreshadows her violation.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ See, for example, Palestinian News and Info Agency, 'Birds' Cells, The Occupation Trap for Palestinian Prisoners', *Wafa Info* (2010) <<http://www.wafainfo.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=3991>> [accessed 25 May 2013], trans. by Bilal Hamamra.

⁴⁷ Christina Luckyj, *A Moving Rhetoric: Gender and Silence in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 91.

⁴⁸ Eric Patridge, *Shakespeare's Bawdy: A Literary and Psychological Essay and a Comprehensive Glossary* (London: Routledge, 1969), p. 210.

Titus Andronicus, which plays on the notion of the state as the body of an aristocratic female, problematises the conventional view that masculine identity is based on silencing women and speaking for them in the figure of Lavinia. The rape and silencing of Lavinia underscores the linguistic impotency of the Andronici and the rhetorical control of the Goths, the virile actors. James Calderwood argues that the rape of Lavinia is the ‘rape of language’. He notes that, with the mutilation of Lavinia, ‘[l]inguistic authority [...] passes into the possession of the Goths and Titus’s solicitations for his sons cannot elicit a merciful word’.⁴⁹ Tamora’s silencing of Lavinia is a silencing of Titus, for Lavinia’s silence epitomises Titus’s rhetorical impotency. While Tamora at the beginning of the play is a disappointed and marginalised petitioner (1.1.108-23), Titus becomes a disempowered petitioner (1.1.455-60) whose pleas with Rome’s ‘grave fathers’ for his sons (3.1.1) go unheard. His writing is also futile (3.1.12-13, 27-29, 32). Deborah Willis observes that ‘[i]n triumphing over Titus, Tamora also makes him into her double’.⁵⁰ Titus is unheard, even though the audience can hear and, presumably, sympathise with him. Whigham asserts that ‘speech and other significations reveal not power but powerlessness, a pleading with the audience for a hearing, for recognition, for ratification’.⁵¹ Because Titus’s pleas are unheard, the play depicts an inversion of gender difference with respect to discourse; Tamora is in possession of language while Titus is cast to powerlessness and passive grief (3.1.220-33).

The gendering of Rome as a female in the figure of Lavinia and the representation of Lavinia’s sexual violation as a violation of Rome has present implications in Palestinian national narratives where the feminised homeland and the female are associated with the concepts of

⁴⁹ James L. Calderwood, *Shakespearean Metadrama: The Argument of the Play in ‘Titus Andronicus’, ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’, ‘Romeo and Juliet’, ‘A Midsummer’s Night Dream’ and ‘Richard II’* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), pp. 29, 33.

⁵⁰ Deborah Willis, ‘The Gnawing Vulture: Revenge, Trauma Theory, and *Titus Andronicus*’, *SQ*, 53.1 (2002), 21-52 (p. 46).

⁵¹ Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 39.

honour and integrity. Palestine has been represented as a chaste woman in the roles of virgin and mother to be defended.⁵² From a Palestinian perspective, the loss of Palestine represents the loss of female virginity and male potency, since the virile actor is now the rapist, Israel. An Iraqi poet, Muzaffar Al-Nawwab, introduces the theme of invasion of Palestine through feminine metaphors in his poem, 'Jerusalem is Arab Nationalism's Bride'.⁵³ Both Lavinia's and Jerusalem's violations signify an affront to the patriarchal order of the nation. As the Goths attack and destroy Lavinia's sexual and linguistic powers, Israeli forces eliminate the Palestinian presence and voices from Jerusalem. Israeli rhetoric treats Jerusalem as the spiritual, political, and historical capital of the Jews so as to wrest control of Jerusalem from Palestinians and to legitimise their invasion of Palestine. Chiron and Demetrius, driven by political ambition, desire Lavinia because she is the emblem of imperial power. In their misogynistic discourse, Lavinia's womanhood and its tropic significance as the body of Rome justifies their violation of her (1.1.582-84). To a Palestinian reader, the invasion of Lavinia's body by the Goths represents the violation of the homeland Rome⁵⁴ and Jerusalem's invasion by the Israelis signifies the violation of Palestine. Lavinia's body is 'a living metaphor of the dismembered Roman state, reflected in the quarrels between Saturninus and Tamora and the family of Titus'⁵⁵ and the dismembered Palestine that is plunged into factionalism and chaos as illuminated in the conflict between Fateh and Hamas.

Lavinia, tongueless and handless, embodies the patriarchal fantasy that women will keep silent and obedient to male voices. Many critics assume that when Lavinia loses her tongue and

⁵² Nabil Marshood, *Voices from the Camps: A People's History of Palestinian Refugees in Jordan*, 2006 (Lanham: University Press of America, 2010), p. 100; Amal Amireh, 'Between Complicity and Subversion: Body Politics in Palestinian National Narrative', *SAQ*, 102.4 (2003), 747-72 (pp. 750-51).

⁵³ Muzaffar Al-Nawwab, 'Jerusalem is Arab Nationalism's Bride', *Adab.com*<<http://www.adab.com/en/modules.php?name=Sh3er&doWhat=shqas&qid=54>> [accessed 18 July 2013].

⁵⁴ Albert H. Tricomi, 'The Aesthetics of Mutilation in *Titus Andronicus*', *SS*, 27 (1974), 11-19 (p. 17).

⁵⁵ Alison Findlay, *Women in Shakespeare: A Dictionary* (London: Continuum, 2010), p. 231.

hands (2.3.1-8, 38-43) she also loses her agency, and becomes a blank page on which men inscribe their meanings.⁵⁶ Titus declares that he ‘can interpret all her martyred signs’ (3.2.36) and ‘of these will wrest an alphabet’ (3.2.44), assuming an ability to ‘wrest’ a meaning from her gestures; ‘wrest’, according Pascale Aebischer, is ‘a verb that implies forceful usurpation and perversion of meaning – is indication of the violence that is always already involved in attempting to speak of and for Lavinia’.⁵⁷ However, Lavinia does not just disappear but remains an unreadable signifier. As critics assert, her silence is ‘polysemic and disruptive’⁵⁸, ‘problematic’⁵⁹, ‘troubling’⁶⁰ and ‘unknowable’⁶¹ as it ‘lies beyond masculine rhetorical control’.⁶² Some critics have noted that Lavinia’s silence is a kind of persuading speech.⁶³ Arguably, her silence unfolds an oppressive ideal of feminine silence and encourages spectators to reconsider the damage of the woman subjected to sexual violence and to acknowledge their own complicity in the antagonistic patriarchy that circumscribes women’s agency.

The Andronici’s reactions to Lavinia expose their inability to respond appropriately to her silent gestures. While Titus and Marcus appear to sympathise with Lavinia, their words are intensely self-centred (2.3.34-35, 3.1.149). Leggatt notes that ‘[t]rying desperately to read Lavinia, Titus reads only himself [...] and the only voice he can give her is his own’.⁶⁴ Lavinia’s silent body is a text that invites and defeats interpretation, forcing male figures into

⁵⁶ Gillian Murray Kendall, “‘Lend me Thy hand’: Metaphor and Mayhem in *Titus Andronicus*”, *SQ*, 40.3 (1989), 299-316 (p. 314); Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence, Subjectivity, and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), p. 108.

⁵⁷ Pascale Aebischer, *Shakespeare’s Violated Bodies: Stage and Screen Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 31.

⁵⁸ Green, ‘Interpreting’, p. 325.

⁵⁹ Oakley-Brown, *Ovid*, p. 27.

⁶⁰ Emily Detmer-Goebel, ‘The Need for Lavinia’s Voice: *Titus Andronicus* and the Telling of Rape’, *SSt*, 29 (2001), 75-92 (p. 75).

⁶¹ Marshall, ‘Signs’, p. 204.

⁶² Luckyj, *Moving*, p. 93.

⁶³ Carolyn Asp, “‘Upon her wit doth early honour wait’: Female Agency in *Titus Andronicus*”, in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp. 333-46 (p. 339); R.S. White, *Innocent Victims: Poetic Injustice in Shakespearean Tragedy* (Newcastle: Tyneside Free Press, 1982), p. 302.

⁶⁴ Leggatt, *Violation*, p. 21.

speech that is instantly subverted (2.3.13-15, 53, 3.1.61-62, 114-15). More immediately for an early modern audience, Lavinia's subversive silence may be linked with the condition of performance. The boy actor is silenced when his voice breaks and he is no longer able to impersonate the female voice convincingly. Lavinia's mutilated silenced body presents an unbearable challenge to the men around her, for her body, on stage, is not a passive object. The fact that an actor is performing a silent body, an actor who hears, makes it possible for the silence of this body to open up a space potentially resistant to male figures' voices. Lavinia's function as a listener subverts the authority of dominant male voices. Bloom argues that early modern understanding of voice as reliant on the unstable phenomenon of 'breath's ephemeral, unpredictable material nature—which necessarily reveals itself in performance—undermines such confidence in vocal authority'.⁶⁵ Lavinia's ravishment is communicated by the mingling of blood at her 'rosed lips', stirred with wind and '[c]oming and going with thy honey breath' (2.3.24-25) which is, in theatrical terms, arguably a response to Marcus's question, '[w]hy dost not speak to me?' (2.3.21).⁶⁶ Spectators will recognise that Marcus's aestheticisation of Lavinia (2.3.16-57), which suggests that Lavinia 'is being raped all over again', foregrounds his attempt to overcome his emotional shock at the expense of any engagement with Lavinia's trauma.⁶⁷

Marcus's poetic rhetoric to the violated Lavinia resonates with Palestinian nationalism, in which the aestheticisation of the mutilated body of Palestine acts as a futile attempt to enable Palestinians to overcome their phallic and linguistic defeat that sustains nationalism itself. As Amal Amireh argues, while 'the major nationalist milestones in the Palestinian national narrative tend to be occasions of military loss [...], the dominant palestinian national narrative

⁶⁵ Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 17-18.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁶⁷ Leggatt, *Violation*, p. 18.

[...] cast[s] Palestinian defeats as victories'.⁶⁸ Lavinia's and Palestine's violated bodies become sites for romanticizing injuries. In both contexts, the female body bears the sign of the nation and the power of patriarchy. The destruction of the sign reveals male figures' impotency and loss as illuminated through the rhetoric of aestheticisation. While Palestine is feminine gendered, honour killing suggests that the destruction of supposedly transgressive female figures emanates from Palestinian desire for a pure Palestine. This equivalence between nationalistic desire and the destruction of the female can be the reason for Titus's killing of Lavinia. Because Lavinia moves from bearing the sign of Rome to bearing the sign of the Goths' violation, she is sacrificed. Titus's desire for Rome forces him to kill his daughter, the polluted sign of Rome.

Lavinia's silence shows that a woman's oppression does not deny her agency. While the play's depiction of Titus and Marcus as interpreters of Lavinia's silence highlights 'men's desire of control over language, reading and interpretation',⁶⁹ without Lavinia's voice the Andronici will not be able to discover her rape and the rapists in order to perform their revenge. Lavinia resists the view that agency is linked with speech, for, as Leggatt puts it, 'in silencing her they have inadvertently made her the most powerful character in the play'.⁷⁰ Shakespeare shows that Lavinia's silence is a troubling signifier that is beyond male characters' control and it is, arguably, an act of subversive mediation that leads her to appropriate a masculine Ovidian narrative and reveal her rapists. In voicing her desire for revenge and revealing her rapists, Lavinia subverts the patriarchal restraint of the female voice.

The substitution of the father's hand for the daughter's tongue indicates the masculine nature of language. While Lavinia uses Ovid as the father text, she inscribes herself into the *Meta-*

⁶⁸ Amireh, 'Between Complicity and Subversion', p. 751.

⁶⁹ Detmer-Goebel, 'Lavinia's Voice', p. 85.

⁷⁰ Leggatt, *Violation*, p. 8.

morphoses and feminizes Ovid (4.1.41). Furthermore, the fact that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was given to Lucius by his mother (4.1.42-43) highlights 'the connection between motherhood and readerhood', as Philip Kolin notes.⁷¹ Indeed, Marcus compares Lavinia to Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, who taught her sons (4.1.12-13). Having her tongue mutilated, Lavinia becomes a silent Cornelia who is no longer able to read to Lucius. However, she reclaims the power of speech by taking her father's hand in her tongueless mouth. Marion Wynne-Davies asserts that:

she consumes the means of self-expression, thus encompassing what has been a masculine prerogative of subjectivity, and transmutes it into a feminine rhetorical practice [...]. But the action is also threatening, for the female mouth in *Titus* must also signify the womb, and the link between pen and phallus inevitably follows.⁷²

In writing Lavinia's words on 'a leaf of brass' (4.1.102), Titus silences her voice. The play shows that male figures contain and curb female voices so as to assure their control over discourse. Fawcett observes that 'it is true that her [Lavinia's] discovery of the book brings about her death by the book'.⁷³ While Lavinia's violated body is a text written by Chiron and Demetrius, Lavinia is the author who *rewrites* her shameful text of rape, which initiates her death. Lavinia assumes the agency of revenge in taking up Titus's severed hand, as critics argue.⁷⁴ She becomes a self-determining subject who can read and write while Chiron and Demetrius are detectable and readable ciphers (4.2.8). Lavinia's revelation of her rapists is

⁷¹ Philip C. Kolin, 'Performing Texts in *Titus Andronicus*', in *Titus Andronicus: Critical Essays*, ed. by Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), pp. 249-260 (p. 251).

⁷² Marion Wynne-Davies, 'The Swallowing Womb': Consumed and Consuming Women in *Titus Andronicus*, in *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Valerie Wayne (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 129-51 (p. 147).

⁷³ Marry Laughlin Fawcett, 'Arms/Words/Tears: Language and the Body in *Titus Andronicus*', *ELH*, 50.2 (1983), 261-77 (p. 275).

⁷⁴ Katherine A. Rowe, 'Dismembering and Forgetting in *Titus Andronicus*', *SQ*, 45.3 (1994), 279-303 (p. 301); Kahn, *Roman Shakespeare*, p. 60; Fawcett, 'Arms', p. 266.

shown to have a divinely sanctioned authority (4.1.73-75). Shakespeare shows that the silent authority of writing is a means for divine retribution.⁷⁵ '[W]hat is written shall be executed' (5.2.15), in that Titus converts the words that Lavinia scrawls into weapons thereby enacting the analogy between pens and swords. This poetic justice is the very essence of revenge tragedy – an artful return of the wrong committed.

While the Goths use the myth of Philomela to silence Lavinia and the Andronici, Titus exploits this myth to turn Tamora and her sons' oral threat back on them and 'o'er reach them in their own devices' (5.2.143). Titus's exchange of the voice and role of Pandion, the injured father, for that of Procne (5.2.194-95), the revenging sister, points to a conventional tendency to gender revenge as feminine. Callously denied her tongue and hands, as J. L. Simmons has argued, Lavinia 'comes almost to represent a violated lady Rhetorica'.⁷⁶ As Rhetorica is feminine gendered, the patriarchal discourse emerges from a femininity inscribed outside the prerogative of language as Patricia Parker suggests.⁷⁷ While Tamora tries to win over Titus by filling his ears with sweet words, Titus employs such a discourse of hypocrisy to kill his enemy in the guise of friendliness. He assumes the role and the voice of a humble cook (5.2.204), hiding his treachery in the guise of hospitality. Titus's robbing Chiron and Demetrius of their ability to speak (5.2.164, 167) mimics Tamora's 'I will not hear her speak' (2.3.137). Tamora's swallowing (5.2.190-91) of her sons is an oral revenge that stops her voice: she does not then speak any word before she is stabbed. She literally plays out the male fantasy of the 'suffocating mother', as defined by Janet Adelman, who describes *Coriolanus*'s Volumnia as the 'cannibalistic mother who denies food and yet feeds on the

⁷⁵ In the Qur'an, speech is human while writing is divine. The first verse revealed to the Prophet Mohammad spells out the primacy of reading and writing over speech, The Clinging Form 96. 1-5.

⁷⁶ J. L. Simmons, 'The Tongue and Its Office in *The Revenger's Tragedy*', *PMLA*, 92.1(1977), 56-68 (p. 57).

⁷⁷ Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, and Property* (New York: Methuen, 1987), p. 107.

victories of her sweet son'.⁷⁸ In a triumph of the patriarchal order, Tamora, whose 'life was beastly' (5.3.198), is eliminated from the public and political voices of Rome by being thrown into wilderness where she, in an inversion of Aaron's punishment, will be devoured (5.3.195-98).⁷⁹ Tamora's and Aaron's subversion ends up in a consolidation of the status quo. In this sense, *Titus Andronicus* prefigures perfectly Stephen Greenblatt's argument on the ultimate ideological function of literature. 'Thus the subversiveness, which is genuine and radical, sufficiently disturbing so that to be suspected of such beliefs', as Greenblatt puts it, 'could lead to imprisonment and torture, is at the same time contained by the power it would appear to threaten. Indeed the subversiveness is the very product of that power and furthers its ends'.⁸⁰ *Titus Andronicus* can, therefore, be read as a text that subverts male power structures. This subversion is, however, subtly contained because it leads to their deaths and the elimination of their voices which can be politically interpreted as their ultimate containment and the consolidation of the status quo.

The repetitive pattern of violent sacrifice in *Titus Andronicus* makes comparisons with contemporary Palestine and Israel mutually illuminating. From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, the Andronici are treated in the same way most Palestinians eulogise their martyrs while Tamora and Aaron are dehumanized the same way many Palestinians dehumanize traitors. Many Palestinians exalt martyrs verbally and visually and cast traitors into silent oblivion, depriving the latter of funeral and burial rites. The Palestinian martyr is buried in the clothes

⁷⁸ Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's plays, Hamlet to The Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.158.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Joan Fitzpatrick, 'Foreign Appetites and Alterity: Is there an Irish Context for *Titus Andronicus*?', *Connotations*, 11.2-3 (2001/2002), 127-45 (p. 140); Wynne-Davies, 'Swallowing', p. 146; Willbern, 'Revenge', p.189.

⁸⁰ Stephen Greenblatt, 'Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and its Subversion, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*', in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 18-47 (p. 26).

in which he was killed.⁸¹ The bloodied body underscores heroic sacrifice and honours the courage of martyrs. Most Palestinians do not pray over martyrs because they die for Palestine and they are purified from sin, living in paradise with prophets.⁸² Likewise, the silent dead in *Titus Andronicus*, being precedents of honour, underpin the family's performances of emotion (1.1.394-95, 3.1.10-11). While many Palestinians memorialise martyrs, they consign villains to silent oblivion by denying them funeral and burial rites and throwing them outside the walls of the public graveyard to keep the village, city and burial place free of contamination. While the Andronici 'shed obsequious tears upon [Titus's] trunk' (5.3.151), Palestinian traitors do not receive farewell words, sympathetic feelings and public mourning. Moreover, most Palestinians believe that uttering the traitors' names or talking to their families would contaminate people's speech and fuel people's suspicion of one's morality and patriotism. Similarly, while Rome rewards its heroes 'with love' and 'burial' (1.1.85-86), Lucius's casting of Tamora's corpse outside Rome and his insistence that none speak to Aaron can be a defensive strategy against their tainting bodies and speeches (5.1.151, 5.3.178-79).

Shakespeare shows the destructive silencing of women in favour of male protagonists when Titus kills Lavinia to purify masculine voices from dishonour. *Titus Andronicus*, which enacts 'murderous hostility against women',⁸³ can be examined as a 'meditation of language and the body'⁸⁴ embodied in the relation of the grotesque body to the classical in terms of language. Although Titus admits that it was 'Chiron and Demetrius [...] that did her all this wrong' (5.3.55, 57), he kills Lavinia because she has lost 'that more dear / than hands or tongue, her spotless chastity' (5.2.175-76) and tainted his reputation (5.2.170-71, 184, 5.3.45-46). From a Palestinian perspective, this is immediately understandable since male honour

⁸¹ Laleh Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 126.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁸³ Willbern, 'Revenge', p. 175.

⁸⁴ Fawcett, 'Arms', p. 263.

and reputation apparently depend on woman's chastity.⁸⁵ While in Palestinian culture the loss of a girl's virginity is considered her fault, even if she is raped, the only way men can restore this honour is to remove the stain that brought the shame on them by committing murder.⁸⁶ That a Palestinian woman is killed for having tarnished her own 'honour' implies that she brings death upon herself. Likewise, Lavinia arguably consents to her death, and Titus and Lavinia make a silent agreement before Titus kills her. Lavinia appears, according to stage directions, 'with a veil over her face' (5.3.25), conjuring up images of the virgin martyrs who glorify their chastity through willing sacrifice.⁸⁷ As the purity of masculine language and blood is articulated through the chaste woman, Lavinia's death is a redemptive act that restores the Andronici's lost honour, restores Lavinia to patriarchal blessing, and rejuvenates the state (5.3.69-71).

Titus's revenge ensures the triumph of patriarchal order and voice. Titus's death may represent his loss of control over discourse as 'he is displaced by the text of his revenge'.⁸⁸ However, Titus's death brings resolution to the speech and writing that have incited and perpetuated violence. Leggatt observes that '[t]he mouth becomes again the seat of affection, and with its healing the language is healed', in that 'Titus's own body is honoured by the kisses of his family'.⁸⁹ Shakespeare suggests that writing enables the Andronici's revenge upon the Goths, because in writing their trauma can be shared, understood and remembered, as illuminated through Aaron's inscriptions on corpses so that their families can remember their sor-

⁸⁵ Julie Peteet, *Gender in Crisis: Women and the Palestinian Resistance Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 186.

⁸⁶ Joseph Ginat, *Blood Revenge: Family Honor, Mediation, and Outcasting* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1997), pp.129-30.

⁸⁷ See, Robin L. Bott, "'O Keep Me from Their Worse than Killing Lust": Ideologies of Rape and Mutilation in Chaucer's *Physician's Tale* and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*', in *Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature*, ed. by Elizabeth Robertson, Christine M. Rose and Christopher Cannon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp.189-211.

⁸⁸ David Cutts, 'Writing and Revenge: The Struggle for Authority in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*', *ERC*, 22 (1996), 147-59 (p. 147).

⁸⁹ Leggatt, *Violation*, p. 25.

rows (5.1.135-40). However, it is the tongue that is employed to narrate their stories and victory. Unlike Aaron, who cannot participate in the making of history as he is without memories, homeland and parents, Titus's story and that of Rome could be referenced in the language of telling and remembering (5.3.159-70) which draws generations together. 'This repetition of the past', as Willbern puts it, 'is essential to the process of developing psychological control over the ferocities just passed. Remembering becomes re-membering'.⁹⁰

The Andronici's storytelling and their remembering of their past stories resonate, through anachronism, with the contemporary Palestinian national context which emphasises the Palestinian need to tell their stories and put their pens to the service of national cause. Narration exposes the nation as discursively constructed. Edward Said argued that 'nations themselves are narrations'⁹¹ – power structures created and controlled through discourse. Zionist colonial discourse is based on generating narratives that shape the conscience of the Jewish people, legitimate the establishment of Israel and erode Palestinian narratives that negate Israeli claims on Palestine.⁹² While Qabbani speaks for gender struggle, a subject that most Palestinians consider trivial within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008) emphasised the importance of speaking and writing down the voices of Palestinian refugees to preserve memory and subvert the hegemonic Israeli voices that labour to obliterate Palestinian memory and narrative. 'Write down. / I am an Arab';⁹³ 'You will grow older, My son, and you will tell the tale to those who inherit the rifles, / The tale of blood on steel'.⁹⁴ While the competing narratives and voices of the Goths and Romans end

⁹⁰ Willbern, 'Revenge', p.188.

⁹¹ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage Books, 1994), p. xiii.

⁹² Khalili, *Martyrs of Palestine*, p. 1.

⁹³ Mahmoud Darwish, 'Identity Card', in *Leaves of Olives* (Beirut: Dar Al-Awda, 1964), pp. 47-50 (p. 47), trans. by Bilal Hamamra.

⁹⁴ Mahmoud Darwish, 'The Eternity of Cactus', in *Why You Left the Horse Alone?* (Beirut: Riyad El-Rayes, 1995), pp. 32-35 (p. 33), trans. by Bilal Hamamra.

with the triumph of the Andronici's voices, the Palestinian-Israeli feverish conflict is still fought on literary, political and religious grounds.

Titus Andronicus is a conflict between matriarchal and patriarchal voices that ends with the containment of female voices and the reassertion of masculine voices. While the play endorses the conventional association between female speech and sexual and political transgression in the figure of Tamora, it dissociates female silence from chastity and obedience in the figure of Lavinia. Tamora's speech which mimics the masculine ideology of vengeance and Lavinia's oppressive silence reveal the destructive nature of male figures' attempts to turn deaf to and silence female voices. However, superficially, the play confirms the new historicist paradigm of subversion and containment because it ends with the containment of female figures' voices and the reassertion of dominant power structures. *Titus Andronicus* suggests that marital consent is analogous to political consent. The Goths' mutilation of Lavinia's hands and tongue is a criticism of Titus's depriving Lavinia of voice to choose her partner reflected in his depriving the Romans of their voices to choose the emperor. *Titus Andronicus* ends with Lucius giving people voices with which to consent to the authority of the monarch rather than depriving people of their voices as does Titus.⁹⁵ The play concludes with the people of Rome voicing their consent over the effective and honourable Lucius who submits himself to the will and voice of the Romans (5.3.136-39).⁹⁶ The organ of renewal and the instrument of power are the tongue and the hands (5.3.79-80,134-35), the body parts of which Lavinia was deprived. For Palestinian readers, I think that such a reading of the play, which equates marital oppression with the mutilation of Rome and Roman voices, is a criticism of the Palestinian practice of enforced marriage and of silencing female figures – silenc-

⁹⁵Sid Ray, "Rape, I fear, Was Root of Thy Annoy": The politics of consent in *Titus Andronicus*, *SQ*, 49.1(1998), 22-39 (pp. 32, 39).

⁹⁶Ralph Sargent, 'The Source of *Titus Andronicus*', *SP*, 46.2 (1949), 167-83 (p. 183); Frederick Boas, *Shakespeare and His Predecessors* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896), p. 141.

ing that reflects Palestinian absolute authority, the loss of Palestinian voices in their struggle against Israel and their deterioration into factions that struggle over Palestine.

Othello

Othello is, unlike *Titus Andronicus*, a domestic tragedy of speaking and hearing. Following the critical lines of feminism and psychoanalysis, I argue that *Othello* is a conflict between female figures' moral and honest voices and male figures' villainous, treacherous and murderous voices. Othello is destroyed by his deafness to female figures' moral voices and by listening to Iago's lies. Drawing on the concepts of Jungian and Freudian psychoanalysis, I argue that Othello's deafness to the female voice is a defensive strategy in that he punishes Desdemona for the passions he strives to deny in himself. The association of female speech and silence with sexuality is a projection of misogynistic and racist discourses. I read Iago's projection of his evil onto Othello as a verbal intercourse of homosexuality. I argue that the cause of tragedy emanates from the fact that Othello weds his shadow, Iago, and ignores his anima, Desdemona. As Shakespeare yokes together the otherness of gender and race, Othello's loss of trust in Desdemona is a result of his inability to trust his racial identity. While the verbal marriage between Othello and Iago results in Othello's accusation of Desdemona of being a whore, I argue that Desdemona escapes this category because a boy actor impersonates her physically and vocally. Silencing Desdemona and the boy actor impersonating her speech elicits Othello's self-condemnation rather than affirming his perception of Desdemona as a whore. While *Titus Andronicus* ends with the containment of Tamora's subversive speech and the reassertion of male figures' voices, I show that *Othello* has no such catharsis, for Othello does not recognise that patriarchal deafness to female voices is self-destructive.

Following the methodology of presentism, I argue that *Othello* stages for readers in contemporary Palestine their perception of the female as dishonest and untrustworthy creatures and their deafness to female voices and the feminist views that challenge the Palestinian masculine construction of gender difference. I use the romance of Antar (525-608) as an intertext to discuss the role of language in winning female characters and the significance of female characters in constructing Othello's and Antar's heroic identities and their assimilation to the mother countries, and the internalization of, resistance to, racist discourse in both texts. While Antar's resistance to the discourse of racism arouses the possibility of freedom in contemporary Palestine, I argue that the potential for freedom is doomed to failure because of the Israeli occupation that consolidates conventional gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence and fuels Palestinian men's verbal and physical violence against women. I argue that Othello's projection of Iago's misogynist and racist discourses onto Desdemona may form a ground from which scholars of English at An-Najah University scrutinise the relationship between Palestinian male figures' shame about Israeli occupation and their violence against women. I argue that many Palestinians project their defeat by Israeli occupation onto women, playing the role of the colonizing power in domestic relationships in the same way Othello projects Iago's racist and misogynist discourse and his loss of self-esteem onto Desdemona.

While Tamora's and Aaron's inter-racial relationship is one of lustful passion, Othello's and Desdemona's love is founded on sympathy and admiration. *Othello* suggests that the conventional association between woman's speech and sexuality is presented as a perverse projection of the evil male imagination. Karen Newman proposes that 'Desdemona is presented in the play as a sexual subject who hears and desires, and that desire is punished because the

nonspecular, or nonphallic sexuality it displays is frightening and dangerous'.⁹⁷ The love and marriage of Othello and Desdemona show the triumphant power of language. Othello wins Desdemona by telling his life story:

This to hear
 Would Desdemona seriously incline
 [...]
 and with a greedy ear
 Devour up my tale (1.3.146-47, 150-51).

As the words 'greedy' and 'devour' imply, listening to Othello's stories persuades Desdemona to revolt against the norms of her 'country, credit, everything' (1.3.98). Othello's story gives Desdemona 'a world of sighs' (1.3.160) to communicate her amorous pains (1.3.161-62, 67) and to compensate him for his suffering. The Duke of Venice's attestation, 'I think this tale would win my daughter too' (1.3.172), implicitly approves of their marriage.

Desdemona boldly voices her sexual desires. She is portrayed as 'half the wooer' (1.3.176), declaring that she has married Othello of her own will (1.3.146-70). Although she asks the Duke to 'lend [his] prosperous ear' (1.3.244-47) and his authoritative voice to support her, she is not afraid to 'trumpet to the world' (1.3.251) her love for Othello. Carol Thomas Neely comments that 'Desdemona's energy, assertiveness, and power are made possible by Othello's loving response to her'.⁹⁸ Othello has responded to Desdemona's insistent voice

⁹⁷ Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 86.

⁹⁸ Carol Thomas Neely, *Broken Nuptials in Shakespeare's Plays* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), p. 127.

with joyful pleasure (1.3.161-67), affirming that to be ‘free of speech,’ to sing, play or dance in public is a mark of virtue: ‘[w]here virtue is, these are more virtuous’ (3.3.188-89).

Confident of her relationship with Othello, Desdemona announces that she will play the shrew (3.3.23-26) and attack Othello verbally until he takes Cassio, Othello’s lieutenant, back into his service. While Desdemona, upon Cassio’s request, pleads on his behalf, Iago uses Cassio, as I will point out later, as the bait to arouse Othello’s jealousy. Some spectators in 1604 would probably have read her as a shrew (3.4.151) whose speaking position competes with Othello’s. Emily Bartels suggests that ‘[s]he (and Shakespeare) make clear from the outset that, while the agenda is Cassio’s, at issue is her will and her right to voice it’.⁹⁹ Othello’s response underlines that Desdemona oversteps the bounds of female speech. Although he insists ‘I will deny thee nothing’ (3.3.76, 83) and asks to be left ‘but a little to myself’ (3.3.85), his acquiescence serves to silence her speech. However, in Jordan’s words, Desdemona ‘reaffirm[s] the value of her duties as her husband’s subordinate’ to justify her speech.¹⁰⁰ In placing her speech within appropriate wifely behaviour (3.3.76-82), Desdemona challenges the traditional view that insistent female speech is subversive to male authority.

Men’s oral adulation of women as goddesses or reviling them as whores suggests the misconceived association of woman’s speech with sexuality, for this construction leaves no room between oppressive silence and debasing speech. While Brabantio says that Desdemona’s true nature is obedience and chastity, Iago perceives her as deceitful and lascivious (1.3.350-52, 2.1.224-28). Brabantio perceives Desdemona as a ‘jewel’ (1.3.196), ‘gentle mistress’ (1.3.178), and ‘[a] maiden, never bold’ (1.3.95), supposing that her sexual transgression is caused

⁹⁹Emily C. Bartels, ‘Strategies of Submission: Desdemona, the Duchess, and the Assertion of Desire’, *SEL*, 36.2 (1996), 417-33 (p. 425).

¹⁰⁰Constance Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism: Literary Texts and Political Models* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 13.

by Othello's magic charms (1.3.62). However, Desdemona undermines the passivity wished on her by Brabantio's voice (1.1.122, 1.2.62), for she has eloped of her own free will to be with Othello. Once she moves from the role of possession and becomes a dangerously desiring subject, she is accused of rebellion and wantonness. As Roderigo says, her elopement is a 'gross revolt' (1.1.132), and Brabantio states that it is 'treason of the blood' (1.1.167). Once Brabantio recognises that Desdemona is won by Othello's stories and her 'heart was pierced through the ear' (1.3.220) confirmed by her oral defence of her love, he reacts to her marriage with a sense of disobedience and warning: 'Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds (1.1.168). Brabantio disowns her (1.3.59-60, 196), asserting that she will prove unfaithful to Othello (1.3.293-94) – a view that Iago's slanderous tongue reiterates (3.3.200) to destroy Othello's faith in Desdemona.

Cassio's voice is destructive to women, whom he divides into goddesses and whores. While he perceives his mistress Bianca as a whore and bauble (4.1.97, 134), for him, Desdemona is 'divine' (2.1.73), 'most exquisite', 'indeed perfection' (2.3.18, 25). However, Desdemona's speech in voicing and defending her love, mediating for him and joining Iago's discourse of misogyny challenges Cassio's idealization of her. Both divisions of women into goddesses or whores collapse into each other in the discourse of misogyny which suggests that women are simultaneously 'seeming' to be virgins and 'being' whores (1.3.335-36, 2.1.72, 105-06, 109-12), as Wayne observes.¹⁰¹ Significantly, while Cassio ennobles Desdemona, he shares Iago's misogyny, saying to Desdemona in response to Iago's misogynist discourse that 'he speaks home' (2.1.165). To topple a goddess into a whore is a turn in context which Iago's speech and silence accomplish. As Maud Bodkin observes, '[i]f a man is wedded to his fantasy of a

¹⁰¹Valerie Wayne, 'Historical Difference: Misogyny and *Othello*', in *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Valerie Wayne (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 153-79 (p. 171).

woman [...] he grows frantic and blind with passion at the thought of the actual woman [...] as a creature of natural varying impulses'.¹⁰²

The handkerchief, a stage prop, is a symbolic extension of female silence (3.4.71). Women were associated with the needle and distaff – Desdemona is idealised as ‘so delicate with her needle’ (4.1.185) – while men were associated with the pen and sword. In describing the origin of the handkerchief, Othello tells Desdemona that an Egyptian charmer gave it to his mother and told her that it would subdue Othello’s father to her love as long as she keeps it. But if she loses it, ‘my father’s eyes / Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt / After new fancies’ (3.4.58-63). Othello believes that marital fidelity is based on possession, stating that the handkerchief has the power to subdue his father. The loss of the handkerchief provokes Othello’s jealous impulses, for he believes that its loss signifies Desdemona’s unfaithfulness. Desdemona’s loss of the handkerchief, like her speech with Cassio, is a proof of her infidelity, for both speech and the handkerchief mediate between the public and private and blur the distinction between the classical and the grotesque body.¹⁰³ The handkerchief is a mobile object, a fetish that ‘enters into a diverse array of actor networks’.¹⁰⁴ Desdemona’s handkerchief was woven by an old Sibyl using silk from sacred ‘worms’ and dye from the hearts of mummified ‘maidens’ hearts’ (3.4.72-77). Othello associates the loss of the handkerchief with inconstancy (3.4.62, 64-65). Furthermore, the handkerchief is a symbol of the male control and love that Desdemona has betrayed (5.2.212-15), hence ‘she must die, else she’ll betray more men’ (5.2.6). Jungian critics such as Alex Aronson and Katherine S. Stockholder have analysed Othello’s problem using an archetypal approach which focuses on

¹⁰² Maud Bodkin, *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry: Psychological Studies of Imagination* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 222.

¹⁰³ Newman, *Fashioning*, pp. 90-92; Peter Stallybrass, ‘Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed’, in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 123-42 (p. 138).

¹⁰⁴ Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 181.

projection. For Aronson, Othello is a 'victim of the archetype' when he relies on the handkerchief as "ocular proof", allowing anima and shadow (Iago) to overcome his ego.¹⁰⁵ Stockholder points out that Othello 'confuse[s] the handkerchief [...] with the human love it represents',¹⁰⁶ projecting his psychic content on the handkerchief and blurring the lines between the subject and the object.

Desdemona's lie deconstructs the conventional association between woman's verbal dishonesty and her sexual infidelity. Desdemona lies about the handkerchief to conquer Othello's inscrutable rage (3.3.287-88, 3.4.48): '[i]t is not lost [...]. I say, it is not lost' (3.4.85, 87). For Othello, Desdemona's lie is a proof of her sexual infidelity (5.2.62, 127-28). As Neely has suggested, Desdemona's lie 'signals the loss of her maiden's power and innocence; it confirms – Othello believes – his notions about female depravity'.¹⁰⁷ However, the handkerchief is lost, but Desdemona's chastity, which the handkerchief is taken to symbolise, remains intact. In serving as a sign of Desdemona's adultery through the manner in which Iago constructs its loss (3.3.306), 'it remains also a symbol for the woman's text – for the work that women do, since in the play they do not write books but serve as bodies to be written upon'.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, I argue that Othello inscribes the word "whore" on Desdemona's body, projecting onto her Iago's insinuations.

¹⁰⁵ Alex Aronson, *Psyche and Symbol in Shakespeare* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), pp. 27, 110.

¹⁰⁶ Katherine S. Stockholder, 'Egregiously an Ass: Chance and Accident in *Othello*', *SEL*, 13 (1973), 256-72 (p.265).

¹⁰⁷ Carol Thomas Neely, 'Women and Men in *Othello*: "What Should such a fool Do with so good a woman"', in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 211-39 (p. 231).

¹⁰⁸ Wayne, 'Misogyny and *Othello*', p. 171.

Iago's speech, not Desdemona's, is the real poison in the play (3.3.452-53, 4.2.15-16). Othello's 'manly language' becomes rude and abusive under Iago's influence.¹⁰⁹ Greenblatt has identified storytelling as Othello's mode of 'self-fashioning', and he argues that Othello's ability to make others submit to his narrative is reflected by Iago, who constructs the illusive narrative of Desdemona's adultery to which Othello submits.¹¹⁰ Othello submits to Iago's narrative as '[t]o Othello, Iago's is the absolute by which others' honesty is measured'.¹¹¹ Shakespeare shows that 'honesty' is attached to an absolute villain and liar (2.3.330, 3.1.40-41, 3.3.262) to prove that words can lose reliability. Iago's pretended honesty is conveyed through his speech (3.3.215-16) and facial expressions (2.3.173). Furthermore, while the narrative of Desdemona's infidelity is based on lying (4.1.35, 5.2.176-77), Othello believes Iago because he is 'the voice of society' and his lies represent the ideology of gender difference, as Leggatt notes.¹¹² Because Iago's voice is representative of the society's construction of gender roles that Othello internalises, the superego, in Freudian term, is acting as an alienating force in the psyche of Othello's character. Like Aaron, Iago is an outsider whose location has a bearing on his speech and silence. Iago's construction of Othello as a lascivious Moor is undermined in the court setting where Othello appears a regal, eloquent and accomplished general. It is significant to note that Iago stands silent when Othello defends himself against Brabantio's charges. His silence in the court suggests that his racial prejudice is unspeakable at court and that he, unlike Othello, is relegated to the margins of power. As Aaron takes the forest as an alternative court within which to perform his villainous schemes, Iago, who remains in a subjugated position in Venice, poisons Othello with his speech in Cyprus where there is no higher authority to mediate the conflict. His vow that he 'will [...] turn her virtue

¹⁰⁹Terence Hawkes, *Shakespeare's Talking Animals: Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy* (London: Methuen, 1970), p. 214.

¹¹⁰Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 232-47.

¹¹¹Bertrand Evans, *Shakespeare's Tragic Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 118.

¹¹²Leggatt, *Violation*, p. 126.

into pitch' (2.3.355) gives way to his use of two overlapping discourses – misogyny and racism – that create poisonous magic in the web of language to enmesh and destroy them all. As Carol Chillington Rutter asserts, 'Iago is the originator of discourse, then its wrecking; the first inventor of misogyny and racism'.¹¹³

Iago's speech is associated with the Renaissance discourse of misogyny (2.1.109-12), articulating women's deception and sexual lasciviousness (4.1.67-69). His misogyny is illuminated through his conversation with Desdemona in Act 2, Scene 1, where she sets her voice within the conventional style of misogynist discourse. Like Lavinia's insults to Tamora, her style has disturbed critics. Ridley, for example, notes that 'it is distasteful to watch her engaged in a long piece of cheap backchat with Iago, and so adept at it that one wonders how much time on the voyage was spent in the same way'.¹¹⁴ Yet, Iago's misogynist discourse and his condemnation of female speech and silence (2.1.100-07) and women's response to it serve as the backdrop of the verbal and physical violence that follows.

I think that there are striking parallels between Othello's racial insecurities and the story of Antar (525-608), the illegitimate son of Shadad, a well-respected member of the Arabian tribe of Bani Abss, and his mistress Zebeebah, an African female slave. Antar won the heart of Abba by entertaining her with wondrous poems and narratives, as did Othello with Desdemona. The romance of Antar, which is part of the Palestinian school curriculum, enables me to explore Iago's use of the racial discourse to entrap Othello in the logic that Desdemona's marriage to him is a sign of deceit and sexual looseness. In both texts, male eloquence and heroism are the instruments of wooing the female figures. While Desdemona and Abba consolidate Othello's and Antar's assimilations to the Venetian society and the tribe of Bani

¹¹³ Carol Chillington Rutter, *Enter the Body: Women and Representation on Shakespeare's Stage* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 147.

¹¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by M. R. Ridley (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 54.

Abss, Antar, unlike Othello, does not internalise the racist discourse. So, I argue that with Othello's loss of his trust in Desdemona, he loses his heroic identity. 'Abla was deeply moved by Antar's distress, for she loved him both for his courage and his eloquence'.¹¹⁵ She overlooked Antar's blackness in favour of his heroic deeds and poems, as did Desdemona with regards to Othello. While Abla (like Desdemona) was sought after by many, she wished to be his wife the same way that Desdemona wished to be Othello's.¹¹⁶ While Othello's marriage was opposed by male figures in Venice, Antar's declaration of his love to Abla was challenged by the tribe of Bani Abss because he was a son of a slave.¹¹⁷ However, Antar's heroic deeds and poetry triumphed over the stigma of birth, class and racial prejudice and compelled his father to acknowledge him as his son and allow him to marry Abla.¹¹⁸ Both Antar and Othello identify themselves with their beloveds as the basis of their heroic identities.¹¹⁹ Desdemona is 'Othello's "fair warrior"' (2.1.179), and '[t]he fountain from the which my current runs' (4.2.60), as well as a shield from 'chaos' (3.3.91-92). Calbi notes that:

To Othello, Desdemona unmistakably stands for a body that matters. It matters especially because it consolidates, or is supposed to consolidate, Othello's transformation – what the play ambiguously calls 'redemption' (1.3.138) – from the monstrous black and Islamic 'other' to the valiant noble white Moor of Venice.¹²⁰

Othello's and Antar's identification with the female heroines undoes the phallogocentric scenario, for both Abla and Desdemona are father surrogates or mother surrogates symbolising

¹¹⁵ Anonymous, *The Romance of Antar*, trans. by Terrick Hamilton, ed. by W. A. Clouston (Gloucester: Dodo Press, 2008), p. 22.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 13, 32.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 11, 133.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 24.

¹²⁰ Maurizio Calbi, *Approximate Bodies: Gender and Power in Early Modern Drama and Anatomy* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 76.

the heroes' adoption by the mother country. This comparative reading which suggests that Othello's and Antar's relation to Venice and tribe of Bani Abss depend on possessing female figures will offer Palestinian students a different interpretation from that of An-Najah's instructors who claim that female figures (such as Desdemona) are threats to male figures' identities. Unlike Antar who does not listen to the racial discourse and keeps his love to Abla, Othello's loss of his Venetian identity is caused by his deafness to Desdemona's voice and his listening to Iago's racist and misogynist voice.

Both Othello and Antar were victims of the surrounding men who hurled racist abuse against them to reduce them from persons to objects. Most characters address Othello with racial epithets, such as 'the thick lips' (1.1.66), 'an old black ram' (1.1.87), or 'a lascivious Moor' (1.1.124). Iago uses the rhetoric of racism to undermine Othello's security and problematise his marriage to Desdemona, 'producing Othello's abduction of Desdemona as an act of racial adulteration'.¹²¹ Iago's diabolic rhetoric convinces Othello that Desdemona is unfaithful to him because of his race (3.3.209). Iago has verbally castrated Othello, who admits that with Desdemona's infidelity he has lost his identity as a heroic soldier (3.3.351-53). Antar (unlike Othello) did not internalise others' racist discourse. He said, '[m]y complexion is no injury to me, nor the name of Zebeebah, when I exercise my courage amongst the foe'. He proceeded, 'I will work wonders and marvels; and I will protect myself from the tongues of the wicked'.¹²² Othello's murder of Desdemona thwarts his desire to secure a place in discourse after death: '[w]hen you shall these unlucky deeds relate, / Speak of me as I am' (5.2.339-40). In these lines, Othello declares that he is 'the base Indian', 'a malignant and a turbanned Turk' and 'the circumcised dog' (5.2.345, 351, 353). Commenting on these lines, T. S. Eliot asserts that 'I have never read a more terrible exposure of human weakness—of universal

¹²¹Michael Neill, 'Unproper Beds: Race, Adultery, and the Hideous in *Othello*', *SQ*, 40 (1989), 383-412 (p. 399).

¹²²Anon, *Antar*, p. 11

human weakness—than the last great speech of Othello’.¹²³ Othello’s speech is terrible because it expresses his self-alienation and his internalization of the Venetian discourse of racial otherness. His perception of himself as both a Venetian hero and a treacherous Turk, who is killed by Othello the Venetian, denies him an authentic self. I, therefore, agree with T. S. Eliot’s assertion that Othello’s defensiveness and his need that others speak of him suggest that he is ‘*cheering himself up*’ (original emphasis). Othello’s speech is self-centered because ‘he has ceased to think about Desdemona, and is thinking about himself’.¹²⁴ Lodovico’s and Gratiano’s responses to Othello’s speech (5.2.354-55) suggest that Othello’s suicide signifies destruction without catharsis. Unlike Othello whose last speech does not receive sympathetic audition from characters onstage,¹²⁵ Antar’s speech outlived his silencing. As Antar says, ‘I am the well-known Antar, the chief of his tribe, and I shall die; but when I am gone, history shall tell of me’.¹²⁶ When Antar is stabbed from behind during battle, an old man addresses his corpse and glorifies his heroic deeds.¹²⁷ I think that this comparative reading can enable Palestinian students to recognize that Antar keeps his subjectivity because he shows deafness to the discourse of racism while Othello transforms from being a hero into a villain because of his aural openness to Iago’s racist and misogynist discourses. In my teaching of *Othello* alongside the Romance of Antar, the latter hero appeals to my students while the former does not receive sympathy from them. My students recognise that Othello is like many Palestinian men who listen to the voices of gossip and kill female figures unjustly, pondering that ‘Othello is a badge of shame for us’.¹²⁸

¹²³ T. S. Eliot, ‘Shakespeare and the stoicism of Seneca’, in *Selected Essays*, 3rd edn (London: Faber, 1958), pp. 126-40 (p. 130).

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹²⁵ Neill, ‘Unproper Beds’, p. 383.

¹²⁶ Anon, *Antar*, p. 19

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹²⁸ This observation was uttered by many of my drama students at An-Najah University in summer session 2015.

Shakespeare suggests that Iago's silence and verbal withdrawal invade and torment Othello's mind. Iago constructs feigned asides that he equates with nothing (3.3.34, 93, 36, 112-13) to push Othello into the whirlpool of jealousy and suspicion. When Othello chooses to explore Iago's nagging thoughts, 'what dost thou think?' (3.3.107), Iago hides his hypocritical answer beneath the veil of a question, '[t]hink, my lord?' (3.3.108). Iago, then, introduces Othello to a 'new discourse of interiority', a discourse that seeks for hidden/hideous meanings, as Neill suggests.¹²⁹ Othello interprets Iago's procrastination as a manifestation of a 'monster [...] / Too hideous to be shown' (3.3.110-11). Othello is seduced by the assumption that Iago's silence suggests that '[t]his honest creature doubtless / sees and knows more – much more — than he unfolds' (3.3.246-47). As Calderwood has noted, 'meaning resides now in the unspoken aspects', for 'with Iago, the unspoken always says more than the said'.¹³⁰ Iago's last words are silence: '[f]rom this time forth [he] never will speak word' (5.2.301). Iago's withdrawal behind the wall of defiant silence is a refusal of self-incrimination. His silent refusal to articulate his diabolic reasons has made his motives impenetrable.¹³¹ Iago, therefore, exploits silence as a seductive technique with which to arouse the hunger of Othello's ears, to poison them and to challenge Venetian authority.

Othello's and Iago's verbal exchange is a parody of the vocal marriage between Desdemona and Othello. Desdemona's adultery is conceived by verbal intercourse between Othello and Iago, whose tongue ravishes Othello's ears and inseminates them with adulterous 'noises, ears and lips' (4.1.41-43) to implant suspicion of Desdemona's adultery. As John Wall notes:

¹²⁹ Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 159; Neill, 'Unproper Beds', p. 394.

¹³⁰ James L. Calderwood, 'Speech and Self in *Othello*', *SQ*, 38.3 (1987), 293-303 (p. 301).

¹³¹ Honigmann, *Othello*, pp. 33-41.

Othello's ear and Iago's tongue become displaced organs of generation, and Iago is revealed as the Moor's aural-sexual partner. Iago's words thus become the seed which impregnates Othello's mind through his ear so that it will produce the 'monstrous birth' of jealousy, the 'green-eyed monster'.¹³²

Othello shows aural openness to Iago's insinuations, urging Iago not to make Othello's 'ear / A stranger to thy thoughts' (3.3.146-47). Iago exploits the openness of Othello's ignorant ear, resolving 'to abuse Othello's ear' (1.3.394) and 'pour this pestilence into his ear' (2.3.351). Wall notes that 'Iago's private language [...] confronts and subverts the power of official, public language to create a true marriage between Othello and Desdemona'. As Iago abuses Othello's ear 'in daylight', this is, as Wall observes, 'an inversion of Othello's wedding night'.¹³³

Iago's speech uses homoerotic rhetoric to ravish Othello's ears. Iago's account of his dream is replete with sexual overtones of homoeroticism and masturbation: the punning references to 'hand' (masturbation) (3.3.165), 'hard' (tumescence), 'pluck' (coitus) and 'root' (the phallus) (3.3.424-25) underscore a discourse of sodomy, as Mark Burnett notes.¹³⁴ The real reason for Iago's malevolence, according to Rogers, is that 'he is a paranoid personality suffering from repressed homosexuality who unknowingly regards Desdemona as a rival for the love of Othello'.¹³⁵ This reading explains why Iago has usurped Desdemona's place (3.3.481-82), joining Othello in 'exchanging the vow that blasphemously mocks marriage in perverted "service"' and in the ritual kneeling that guarantees his pledge (3.3.463-78), the fruit of which is Othello's conception of Desdemona's and Cassio's deaths (3.3.480, 5.1.28, 31-

¹³² John N. Wall, 'Shakespeare's Aural Art: The Metaphor of the Ear in *Othello*', *SQ*, 30 (1979), 358-66 (p. 361).

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 362-63.

¹³⁴ Mark Thornton Burnett, *Constructing "Monsters" in Shakespearean Drama and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p. 105.

¹³⁵ Robert Rogers, 'Endopsychic Drama in *Othello*', *SQ*, 20.2 (1969), 205-215 (p. 206).

33).¹³⁶ Using the Jungian approach to *Othello*, Desdemona is to anima as Iago is to shadow and Othello's ego attempts to mediate between these psychological imperatives. Othello's tragedy emanates from the fact that his nonintegration of the shadow dooms his attempt to embrace the anima. Gregg Andrew Hurwitz notes that 'Rather than integrating his shadow and wedding his anima, Othello weds his shadow and neglects his anima'.¹³⁷ The oath is a powerful language that Iago uses to convince Othello of the honesty of his words.¹³⁸ John Hartley writes, '[t]he oath was the boldest approach a [...] person had to defend a claim to innocence [...]. [A]n oath raised a person's [...] claim to evidence accepted as proof'.¹³⁹ Othello, therefore, turns against Desdemona by engaging his ears to Iago's tongue which speaks of adultery.

While the play is constructed as a sequence of speaking, listening and responding to what one hears and sees, Shakespeare shows that the means of communication are unreliable in *Othello*, which dramatises an epistemological crisis. While Iago's diabolic silence and speech fuel Othello's desire for verbal and visual knowledge, Iago's schemes fling Othello to fatal ignorance and erroneous assumptions. In response to Othello's demand of 'ocular proof' (3.3.363), Iago stages a conversation with Cassio, translating the visual into the verbal (4.1.24-25).¹⁴⁰ As Cassio embraces Iago in imitation of Bianca (4.1.135), he acts out Iago's narrative of Cassio's alleged dream of Desdemona (3.3.416-28). Othello's ear is an agent of illusion in that what his ears receive is not consistent with the reality known to the specta-

¹³⁶ Rutter, *Enter*, p. 160.

¹³⁷ Gregg Andrew Hurwitz, "'The Fountain, from which my current runs': A Jungian Interpretation of *Othello*", *The Upstart Crow*, 20 (2000), 79-92 (80).

¹³⁸ Frances A. Shirley, *Swearing and Perjury in Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979), p. 25.

¹³⁹ John E. Hartley, 'From Lament to Oath: A Study of Progression in the Speeches of Job', in *The Book of Job*, ed. by W. A. M (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994), pp. 79-100 (p. 87).

¹⁴⁰ Nova Myhill, "'Hark, a Word in Your Ear": Whispers, Asides, and Interpretation in *Troilus and Cressida*', in *Who Hears in Shakespeare?: Auditory Worlds on Stage and Screen*, ed. by Laury Magnus and Walter W. Cannon (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), pp. 163-78 (pp. 164-65).

tors.¹⁴¹ While Cassio's taunting performance of Bianca's love is not the site of Desdemona's transgression (4.1.145), Othello's language becomes abusive, reducing Desdemona to a 'whore'. Othello's question about the handkerchief (and, implicitly, Desdemona herself), '[w]as that mine?' (4.1.171) shows that he depends on Iago's words rather than perceives the truth, and that he is only a puppet under the control of Iago's rhetoric.

Bianca's role suggests that *Othello* dramatises the problems of a masculine structure that gives women no voice and perceives the female body as a book the male figures read or a blank page onto which male characters write and voice misogynist discourse. Bianca (whose name means white) provides a model of the men's misconceived construction of women as whores. Bianca who is 'most fair' (3.4.170) seems to contradict her name's association with sexual purity because of her role as courtesan.¹⁴² Although Bianca sews, she exchanges sexuality along with material objects (4.1.95-96), dissociating needlework from the feminine virtues of silence and chastity.¹⁴³ The equation of the needle and the pen is demonstrated by the fact that, as Callaghan asserts:

the handkerchief serves as a visual text which is treated like a printed book – and as we have seen is repeatedly described with the scribal term 'copy', which renders needlework as especially analogous to writing as the physical activity that produces a manuscript.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Wall, 'Aural Art', p. 359.

¹⁴² Findlay, *A Dictionary*, p. 40.

¹⁴³ Dymna Callaghan, 'Looking well to linens: women and cultural production in *Othello* and Shakespeare's England', in *Marxist Shakespeare*, ed. by Jean E. Howard and Scott Cutler Shershow (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 53-81 (pp. 54, 64, 66).

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.72.

However, Shakespeare deconstructs the dominant association between women's speech and sexuality through his sympathetic representation of Bianca (4.1.99-100). While Bianca protests against false charges and accusations, Iago scapegoats her for Cassio's wounding (5.1.116, 125) as Othello constructs evidence against Desdemona. Kay Stanton notes that 'the label of whore more properly belongs to Iago himself, as it does also to Othello'.¹⁴⁵ Emilia's castigation of Bianca (5.1.121) unleashes Bianca's voice that male figures' voices would wish to smother: 'I am no strumpet / But of life as honest as you' (5.2.122-23). As Eamon Grennan points out, Bianca's 'speech [...] brings into sharper focus the moral deficiencies of the world that would condemn her'.¹⁴⁶ While Bianca's speech depicts her as an honest and passionate human being (3.4.173-76), Cassio denies her humanity, perceiving her as a strumpet, monkey, bauble, fitchew (4.1.97, 128, 134, 145). Cassio's and Othello's tainting of Bianca and Desdemona suggests, as Gayle Greene observes, that 'Bianca and Desdemona are analogous in that to which they are subject, and in an ability to return devotion for revilement which is simultaneously virtue and folly'.¹⁴⁷ The analogy between Desdemona and Bianca is revealed in Othello's metaphorical transformation of Desdemona into a book where the word whore is written (4.2.72-74).

The white pages of Desdemona's 'goodly book' (4.2.72) are blackened when Othello projects Iago's misogynist and racist discourses onto Desdemona (3.3.109-10), 'replicating in Desdemona the contagion of projection itself'.¹⁴⁸ Shakespeare suggests that the racial stereotype of the Moor overlaps with the gender stereotype of the woman. Othello perceives Desdemona as black because of her alleged sexual relationship with Cassio (3.3.391-393). The fact that

¹⁴⁵Kay Stanton, "'Made to write 'whore' upon?': Male and Female Use of the Word 'Whore' in Shakespeare's Canon", in *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. by Dymphna Callaghan (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 80-102 (p. 97).

¹⁴⁶Eamon Grennan, 'The Women's Voices in *Othello*: speech, song, silence', *SQ*, 38 (1987), 275-92 (p. 283).

¹⁴⁷Gayle Greene, "'This That You Call Love': Sexual and Social Tragedy in *Othello*", in *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*, ed. by Deborah Barker and Ivo Kamps (London, New York: Verso, 1995), pp. 47-62 (p. 55).

¹⁴⁸Janet Adelman, 'Iago's Alter Ego: Race as Projection in *Othello*', *SQ*, 4.2 (1997), 125-44 (p.143).

Othello is 'light of brain' (4.1.269) and 'fall[s] into an epilepsy' (4.1.50) suggests the injustice of his association of Desdemona's speech and silence with an adulterous affair with Cassio, for his 'passion' 'collided' his 'judgement' (2.3.202). Desdemona unwittingly associates herself with the traditional representation of 'Fortune' as a whore (4.2.129). However, 'the concept of whore [is a] male-initiated inscription onto the female as scapegoat';¹⁴⁹ it is Othello who is writing the misogynist discourse onto Desdemona's body / book. As Emilia says, '[a]las, Iago, my Lord hath so bewhored her' (4.2.117). Othello is entangled in ventriloquism; he is the lascivious author who reads what he writes. Emilia's line, '[a]las, what does the gentleman conceive?' (4.2.97) suggests that 'the brothel has been the construction of Othello's mind'.¹⁵⁰ Desdemona's inability to utter the word whore (4.2.119-21, 163-64) shows that her adultery is a projection of the evil in Othello's mind.

Shakespeare suggests in his juxtaposition of the otherness of the black race and the female gender that 'women accept the otherness of the actor in the men they love' while men project their otherness onto the female.¹⁵¹ While the boy actor impersonating Desdemona accepts the otherness of the actor playing Othello, Othello projects the racist and misogynist discourses onto Desdemona. As Callaghan puts it:

Desdemona is a *tabula rasa* in a most curious sense. She is pure, white, and also blank; existing and not existing, and, since blank, open to any inscription, and therefore, in a

¹⁴⁹ Stanton, 'Whore', p. 95.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 96.

¹⁵¹ Marianne Novy, 'Shakespeare's Female Characters as Actors and Audience', in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 256-70 (pp. 267, 264).

sense, undecipherable. Othello's judgement of her as whore is the inscription she must bear [...]. Condemned to silence, she is to be read and not to speak herself.¹⁵²

Desdemona is 'condemned to silence' when Iago has impregnated Othello's ears with glamorous pornographic word-pictures that make Othello perceive Desdemona as a cipher that he fills with his rank writings. However, Desdemona defeats his interpretation, for she is a *tabula rasa*, an absence and a negation of his inscription. While both Othello and Desdemona are implicated in performance, he projects his passion onto her. Desdemona's turning from outspokenness to passivity is punctuated with Othello's turning from Europeanised assimilation to Moorish self-abasement. From a psychological standpoint, Othello's internalisation of the cultural association of blackness with sexual corruption and social disgrace is a defence against the idealisation of Desdemona since her fidelity is significant to him as a mirror of his idealized self image. Desdemona's alleged infidelity leads to the collapse of Othello's character because he recognises the discrepancy between his idealised image and his true self (3.3.267-276). Othello's destruction by his inability to enact the roles he desires to perform confirms Stephen Orgel's argument that public theatre 'is a world in which masculinity is always in question'.¹⁵³ Othello's redefinition of Desdemona as a whore is a projection of his self-degradation that results from his aural openness to Iago's insinuations.

Othello's verbal castration and his projection of the racist and misogynist discourses that suggest his loss of self respect onto Desdemona offer many Palestinian readers a point of focus to scrutinise the relationship between oppressing Palestinian women and Israeli occupation. Shalhoub says, violence against Palestinian women 'is closely linked to this dynamic of

¹⁵² Dymna Callaghan, *Women and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy: A Study of King Lear, Othello, The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1989), p. 78.

¹⁵³ Stephen Orgel, 'The Subtexts of *The Roaring Girl*', in *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage*, ed. by Susan Zimmerman (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 12-26 (p. 25).

continuous oppression and political occupation'.¹⁵⁴ '[E]masculated men become additional agents in the process of gender oppression'.¹⁵⁵ As Othello's listening to Iago's lascivious speech unleashes his verbal and physical violence against Desdemona, Palestinian male shame about occupation leads to greater violence towards women.

Desdemona's narrative of self-sacrifice is a testimony of her fidelity and Othello's faulty voice. Generations of critics have exalted Desdemona's silent submission and obedience to Othello despite his rage and violence.¹⁵⁶ However, Desdemona's obedience is analogous to self-assertion for while she defends Othello, she also implicates him.¹⁵⁷ While Desdemona asserts her love and obedience to Othello (1.3.184-89, 251-52, 3.3.88-89, 4.1.248) and refrains from speaking for herself and Cassio (3.4.131-32, 4.2.116), Othello reads her subjection as a cover for adulterous impulses (4.1.255, 261). When Othello strikes her in public, she asserts that she has 'not deserved this' (4.1.240) while addressing herself to his 'will' and 'pleasure' (4.2.22, 24). She also calls on heaven that she 'shall be saved' (4.2.89) to dispute Othello's authority and voice.

The willow song scene invokes the relaxed atmosphere of feminine companionship set apart from the earshot of men whose vicious voices would silence female characters' tender voices. Emilia's energetic speech suggests the nature of this scene as a protected feminine enclosure and that the silence imposed upon Emilia by Iago harbours subversion to male figures'

¹⁵⁴ Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *Militarization and Violence against Women in Conflict Zones in the Middle East: A Palestinian Case Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 35.

¹⁵⁵ Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 'Counter-Narratives of Palestinian Women: The Construction of Her-story and the Politics of Fear', in *Gender and Violence in The Middle East*, ed. by Moha Ennaji and Fatima Sadiqi (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 29-59 (p. 31).

¹⁵⁶ *Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth*, ed. by A. C. Bradley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 133; Robert B. Heilman, *Magic in the Web: Action and Language in Othello* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1977), p. 214; Michael D. Bristol, 'Charivari and the Comedy of Abjection in *Othello*', in *True Rites and Maimed Rites: Ritual and Anti-Ritual in Shakespeare and His age*, ed. by Linda Woodbridge and Edward Berry (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), pp. 75-97 (p. 92).

¹⁵⁷ Harry Berger Jr., 'Impertinent Trifling: Desdemona's Handkerchief', *SQ*, 47.3 (1996), 235-50 (p. 249); Bartels, 'Strategies', p. 430.

voices. Desdemona and Emilia voice their resistance to their victimisation and claim equal rights within marriage.¹⁵⁸ Desdemona's willow song, which reveals the beauty of her voice, allows her to create a 'sisterhood of grief' with Barbary who died of love and constitute her own story, using her own voice for her own grief.¹⁵⁹ She interrupts her song with '[n]ay, that's not next' (4.3.52) at the point when the song endorses female victimisation: '[l]et nobody blame him, his scorn I approve' (4.3.51). René Girard proposes that Desdemona's song suggests her preparation 'for death as she would for a night of love', since 'the tragic outcome fulfills her most secret expectation'.¹⁶⁰ However, the fact that Desdemona's song provokes Emilia's condemnation of conjugal injustice and her advocacy of the wives to revenge themselves for their husbands' 'peevish jealousies' (4.3.88) and verbal and physical violence suggest that the scene goes in the opposite direction from that proposed by Girard.

Shakespeare criticises Othello's deafness to Desdemona's voice (4.2.40, 43) and his inability to voice his suspicions directly. The divorce of harmonious dialogue between Othello and Desdemona (3.4.81, 4.2.40-42) provokes Desdemona's praise that 'Lodovico is a proper man' (4.3.35) who 'speaks well' (4.3.36) – a characteristic that Iago eradicates from the landscape of Othello's mind (2.1.198-99). Othello decides to kill Desdemona to put an end to the discrepancy between words and deeds (5.2.7-9). However, Desdemona's function as a listener disrupts the authority of his voice. The power of her breath diverts him from his 'sacrifice' (5.2.16-17). Desdemona challenges Othello's accusation of her as a whore and redefines his 'sacrifice' as 'murder' (5.2.65).¹⁶¹ Othello's deafness to Desdemona's voice reso-

¹⁵⁸ Carole McKewin, 'Counsels of Gall and Grace: Intimate Conversations between Women in Shakespeare's plays', in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 117-32 (pp.118-19, 122-23, 128-29).

¹⁵⁹ Grennan, 'Voices', p. 279.

¹⁶⁰ René Girard, 'Shall We Desire to Raze the Sanctuary? Desire and Death in *Othello* and Other plays', in *A Theatre of Envy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 290-96 (p. 293).

¹⁶¹ Leggatt, *Violation*, p. 139.

nates with many Palestinians' deafness to female figures' voices, revealing striking cultural assumptions on the issue of discourse and gender. Othello, who turns deaf to her voice because he doubts her verbal and sexual honesty, is like Palestinian men who hold on to the oft-repeated comparison between 'talk of men', which is of courage, responsibility, honour and honesty and 'women's talk', which is a symbol of deception, inconstancy and dishonesty.¹⁶² As Kenneth Muir points out, Othello 'does not give her a chance of defending herself by naming her supposed lover, her accuser, or the evidence against her'.¹⁶³ Othello silences Cassio's speech which may support Desdemona's truthful voice and unravel Iago's insinuations. Othello's assertion that Cassio's 'mouth is stopped' (5.2.71) provokes Desdemona's exclamation, '[a]las, he is betrayed, and I undone' (5.2.75), which augments Othello's conviction that she is a whore and prompts him to kill her (5.2.76-77, 83). Othello's speech, therefore, exposes his own paranoid interpretation, abusing the facts that Desdemona's moral speech will clarify.

The boy actor impersonating Desdemona physically and vocally evades the speaking position of a whore, declaring him/herself: 'not to be a strumpet, I am none' (4.2.87). Othello describes her tears as a 'well-painted passion' (4.1.257) and casts her in the role of a prostitute who 'can turn, and turn, and yet go on / And turn again. And she can weep, sir, weep' (4.1.253-54). Othello's misogynistic line, which alludes to the boy actor's ability to grieve and cry, foregrounds Desdemona's (the boy actor's) own theatricality. Desdemona's transformation from outspokenness to silence may suggest Othello's ability to control her speech. However, this transformation is, arguably, linked to theatrical performance in that the boy actor impersonating her speaks with a voice which is about to break, about to become a male voice.

¹⁶² See, for example, Cheryl Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), pp. 42-43.

¹⁶³ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 209.

Desdemona's subversive silence is linked to the condition of performance. Silencing the boy actor who transcends his imitative role as a female reveals an uncanny agency that destabilises male figures' authority as illuminated by an early modern response to the convention of the boy actor. Henry Jackson's account of a production in 1610 suggests that Desdemona fulfils a more important dramatic function when silent and dead than when alive:

But indeed, Desdemona, killed by her husband, although she always acted the matter very well, in her death moved us still more greatly; when lying in bed she implored the pity of those watching with her countenance alone.¹⁶⁴

Jackson's famous comment upon the tragic effect of Desdemona's death in performance reminds us of how good these boy actors were at impersonating women. Jackson praises the boy actor's speech and sustained eloquence in saying that 'she always acted the matter very well'. His words indicate that the illusion of the boy actor as woman could be very convincing; Jackson shows in his choice of pronouns that he thought of Desdemona as both actor and character as feminine gendered. His account challenges the view that, in death, Desdemona is victimised and subjected. Jackson's comment implies that the boy actor utilises active silence to draw attention to the communicative abilities of his body. Jackson reveals that the boy actor playing Desdemona's dead body moves his audience and arouses passions for Desdemona by focusing on her facial expressions. Jackson sympathises with Desdemona rather than with Othello, who is identified as 'her husband'. While Othello silences Desdemona, her look – 'This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven / And fiends will snatch at it' (5.2.271) – that judges and condemns him (5.2.271-73) dissociates her speech from sexual transgression.

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in Gamini Salgado, *Eyewitnesses of Shakespeare: First Hand Accounts of Performances, 1590-1890* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1975), p. 30.

Shakespeare shows that listening to female speech suggests a way out of the physical and verbal violence that the play enacts. For example, tragic misinterpretation could have been avoided had Emilia's observation—that jealousy is 'a monster / Begot upon itself, born on itself' (3.4.161-62)—been given the same credibility and attention as Iago's destructive voice. Emilia, who is 'dramatically and symbolically the play's fulcrum', is the spokesperson of the women's rights (3.3.333, 3.4.104-07).¹⁶⁵ Palestinian readers and spectators, steeped in traditions, might perceive Emilia's argument that women's infidelity is a response to their husbands' promiscuity as subversive, along with her criticism of the double standard that allows men a freedom denied to women (3.4.104-07). From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, male figures turn a deaf ear to the feminist views that overturn the conventions of gender roles. Thus, I think that *Othello* stages for audiences in contemporary Palestine their double standard where male figures can express their sexual desires and act on them while silencing women's voices and desires. Furthermore, in both cultures, female voices are ineffective in changing the status quo because their voices fall on deaf ears. While men speak about their sexual experiences, as illuminated through Cassio's speech about Bianca to Iago, women are not allowed to talk about sexuality, as revealed in Desdemona's inability and abhorrence to utter the word 'whore'. However, Emilia's speech counters the voices of male figures who, in their idealisation and degrading of women, do not see women as human beings. Emilia's protests against men's oppression of women echoes the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani's constant attempts to incite women to 'revolt against an Orient that sees in [them] feasts in the bed'. Qabbani is ineffective in changing the status quo due to male constructions of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence and male figures' deafness to the female voice. Likewise, Iago and Othello turn deaf to Emilia's truthful speech. Iago silences her

¹⁶⁵ Neely, 'Women and Men', p. 213.

threatening speculation that '[t]he Moor's abused by some most villainous knave' (4.2.141) by invoking his authority (4.2.146). Othello turns deaf to Emilia's reflection that someone has abused his ears, for Emilia's words to Othello oppose 'honest' Iago's lascivious discourse (4.2.27-30). Kay Stanton notes that 'Shakespeare [...] "worries" the word whore in the play, and in deliberate juxtaposition with "honest"'.¹⁶⁶ Othello turns deaf to Emilia's assertion that Desdemona is chaste and 'honest' (4.2.12, 17) because Emilia's 'answer does not fit his disposition to believe in the whorishness of his wife'.¹⁶⁷ Desdemona moves from outspokenness in Venice to silence in Cyprus and Emilia progresses from silence to outspokenness. As Emilia hears Desdemona's final words (5.2.85, 89-101, 116-22), 'Emilia's voice uncannily picked up where Desdemona's was stopped', as Rutter has observed.¹⁶⁸ Othello tries to silence her (5.2.158), but she calls out the truth that '[t]he Moor hath killed my mistress' (5.2.63).

While Othello 'kills the real woman to rescue that ideal', Emilia's speech shows him that the ideal resides in Desdemona's speech.¹⁶⁹ Emilia questions Iago's manliness (5.2.174) and insists on reporting the truth (5.2.180), despite Iago's order to 'charm your tongue', 'get you home' (5.2.179, 191) and his misogynistic assault on women (5.2.226, 229). 'Good gentlemen', she appeals to the congregated company, 'let me have leave to speak' (5.2.192); this request links her to Desdemona's moral voice at the beginning of the play.¹⁷⁰ Emilia defies all the forces that would silence her—her husband, men, religion and the world (5.2. 192-94, 218-20). Mary Beth Rose points out that 'Emilia's declarations summon the paradoxical associations of speech throughout the play with truth and with the incipient violation of estab-

¹⁶⁶Stanton, 'Whore', p. 94.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 95.

¹⁶⁸Rutter, *Enter*, p. 174.

¹⁶⁹Martha Anderson-Thom, 'Thinking About Women and Their Prosperous Art: A Reply to Juliet Dusinberre's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*', *SSSt*, 11 (1987), 259-76 (p. 264).

¹⁷⁰Grennan, 'Voices', p. 291.

lished order'.¹⁷¹ Emilia binds her voice to Desdemona's, asserting Desdemona's chastity (5.2.247-48) and proclaiming the play's resolving truth 'that handkerchief thou speak'st of / I found by fortune and did give my husband' (5.2.223-24). Emilia's truthful voice leads to her silencing at the hands of Iago (5.2.249), making a final point about the destructive nature of male attempts to silence women.

The murder of Emilia suggests that, as Neill observes, 'Shakespeare's tragedy shows us a society incapable of learning, desperate only to cover what it feels should never have been disclosed'.¹⁷² As a 'malignant [...] Turk' (5.2.351), Othello admits his baseness and turns against himself the verbal and physical aggression he has unjustly directed against Desdemona. His fatal strike against himself (5.2.354) may mark his acceptance of responsibility for his actions and serve as his self-punishment. However, it is his otherness that Othello murders (5.2.353-54). In Freudian terms, Othello the superego kills the id Turk that had been assailing the Venetian ego. Othello's awareness of his racial identity indicates his desire to obliterate it to save his Venetian self and annihilate himself in the process. Othello's perception of Desdemona as being 'cold' as her 'chastity' (5.2.273-74), and his comparison of his irrational murder of Desdemona to the Indian who 'threw a [lifeless and voiceless] pearl away' (5.2.345) imply no recognition of her as a speaking person; Desdemona is still a passive object of love, which is the crux of the patriarchal ideology of containing female voices. Othello's killing of his otherness and his comparison of Desdemona to a jewel set him apart from the majority of Palestinian men, who pride themselves on killing female relatives that allegedly voice or act upon their sexual desires outside the sphere of marriage. Most Palestinians show no remorse over killing the allegedly transgressive female. Any sense of guilt would debase the killer in the public sphere that would label the killer as a complacent man, or a man who accepts dis-

¹⁷¹Mary Beth Rose, *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 154.

¹⁷²Neill, *Issues*, p. 170.

honour and shame. Both Othello and most Palestinians who perform the acts of honour killing attempt to fulfil their obligations as defenders of the state. While Othello's marriage to Desdemona symbolises his integration into Venetian society, his murder of Desdemona signals the loss of his heroic identity and the dissolution of his link to Venice. In contrast, killing the supposedly transgressive female figures in Palestine marks the public respect of the killers.

Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello* are critiques of male figures' defensive constructions of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. While *Titus Andronicus* ends with the restoration of male figures' voices, Shakespeare shows that language, the instrument through which patriarchy finds expression, emerges from a femininity inscribed outside the privilege of speech. Titus uses deceptive, hypocritical discourse, typically associated with women, to take revenge and assure the affirmation of patriarchal discourse. *Othello*, which figures a link between female speech and sexuality as a projection of the evil in men's minds, shows that male figures' deafness to female moral voices is the cause of tragedy. Following the methodology of presentism, I have argued that *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello* introduce striking affinities with contemporary Palestine with respect to gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. In teaching *Othello* as a part of the Drama course, I have emphasised, as I have done here, that *Othello* stages for audiences and readers in contemporary Palestine male figures' deafness to the feminist views that overturn the conventions of gender roles. As I have pointed out, *Titus Andronicus* speaks to me as a Palestinian of the gendering of nationalism as female in Palestinian national narratives, Palestinian-Israeli conflict, honour killing and the construction of nation as narration.

Chapter Three

Webster's *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*

Palestinian women and girls who speak out [in public] are often blamed for the violence inflicted upon them, and their families are shamed for not exerting greater control over their sexuality [signified by their speech].¹

These lines reveal that in contemporary Palestine the female voice and sexual looseness are interrelated. Stephanie Chaban, Reema Daraghmeah and Garance Stettler assert that the construction of gender difference in contemporary Palestine can be attributed to the interrelated systems of traditions, Israeli occupation and discriminatory laws and legal systems which reinforce the dynamics of each other and limit the advancement of women.² Some Palestinian women are confined to the private spheres of the house, barred from the public domain and discourse to preserve their reputations which could be tarnished by their movement in public space and by speech to others.³ Women who challenge Palestinian traditions and sexual norms are subject to the cultural forces of gossip, scandal, shame and honour killing – forces which control and subordinate women to the dominant ideology of gender hierarchy. Honour killing is an omnipresent danger that suggests a reclaiming of patriarchal honour through the eradication of a rebellious woman and serves as a warning to other female figures, as Diane Baxter notes.⁴

¹ Stephanie Chaban, Reema Daraghmeah and Garance Stettler, *Palestinian Women and Security: Why Palestinian Women and Girls Do Not Feel Secure* (Switzerland, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2010), p. 10.

² Ibid., pp. 18-22, 42, 51.

³ Ibid., pp. 23-28.

⁴ Baxter, Diane, 'Honor Thy Sister: Selfhood, Gender, and Agency in Palestinian Culture', *Anthropological Quarterly*, 80.3 (2007), 737-775 (p. 753).

Chaban *et al* underline the web of collective traditions that can oppress and silence women. They consider that women are often victims of physical, sexual and verbal violence perpetrated by male members of the family.⁵ In interviewing women from different Palestinian locations, they note that ‘Women often mentioned situations where a female family member was known to have been sexually abused by a male relative but was pushed to remain silent, in order to preserve the family’s honour’.⁶ While these women are discouraged from public speech, their submission and silence are put at the service of male immoral desires. Women who suffer from verbal and physical violence at home refrain from going to the court, so as not to bring public shame to themselves and to their families and because ‘the vast majority of laws within the Palestinian Territories not only discriminate against women, but also tolerate violence against women and girls’.⁷ In this chapter I use contemporary Palestinian constructions of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence as a ground from which I analyse the representation of silence, speech and gender in Webster’s *The White Devil* (1612)⁸ and *The Duchess of Malfi* (1613-14).⁹

I have chosen Webster’s *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* because they differ from the Shakespearean tragedies I investigate by privileging female protagonists. Pioneering feminist critic Mary Beth Rose argues that ‘Webster acknowledges the female hero’s pivotal role in the process of historical exchange, exploring the workings of the components of female identity in Renaissance sexual ideology as Shakespeare never does’.¹⁰ Following the

⁵ Chaban *et al*, *Palestinian Women and Security*, pp. 29-39.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁸ John Webster, *The White Devil in The White Devil, The Duchess of Malfi, The Devil’s Law-Case, A Cure for a Cuckold*, ed. by René Weis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 1-100. Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act, scene and line number.

⁹ John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. by John Russell Brown, *Revels Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997). Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act, scene and line number.

¹⁰ Mary Beth Rose, *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 173.

critical line of feminism developed across the 1990s, I argue that Webster's assertive tragic heroines speak for his rejection of the hierarchical ideology of his time. Webster critiques conventional gender roles and a dramatic tradition that has tended to emphasise male characters, male themes and fantasies – especially in tragedy. As I have shown in Chapter Two, Shakespeare's apparently conservative silencing of outspoken women in the tragic closures of *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello* nevertheless critiques patriarchal discourse and its representation of speech and silence as binary opposites. While Shakespeare's Tamora is the mouthpiece of evil patriarchal voices, Webster dissociates his female characters from such ventriloquism, instead associating their speech with truth and male figures' voices with hypocrisy, evil, deceit and murderous desires, as does Shakespeare in *Othello*. In addition to the methodology of feminism, I deploy the critical approaches of new historicism, early modern performance study and presentism (and teaching) to consider Webster's subversion of gender roles and the binary opposites of speech and silence.

Following the critical line of new historicism, I argue that Webster's *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* are a critique of the corruption and abuse of absolute political power within King James's reign. Because censorship and threat of imprisonment for treason restricted English playwrights' comments on King James's court, anti-Catholic discourse and the setting of the plays in Italy offer a veiled message of criticism. Ann Rosalind Jones writes that Italy was 'another country, a country of others, constructed through a lens of voyeuristic curiosity through which writers and their audiences explored what was forbidden in their own culture'.¹¹ As John Russell Brown, an eminent Shakespearean scholar and theatre director, writes, 'the foreign subject-matter allows representations of matters which, if shown within an English or contemporary setting, would have had the play banned and its author impris-

¹¹ Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Italians and Others: *The White Devil* (1612)', in *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, ed. by David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 251-62 (p. 251).

oned'.¹² Dena Goldberg sees Webster as sceptical of the 'old order in church and state' and concerned with the conflict 'between the desire of the individual will to express and fulfil itself and the conflicting demands of the public world'.¹³ Vittoria and the Duchess of Malfi are driven by individual will to speak out against societies which are, as Goldberg argues, 'essentially opposed to life'.¹⁴ This equation between man and death questions and challenges the early modern commonplace, fundamental to revenge tragedy, that woman rather than man brings death into the world. Webster and other Jacobean playwrights inverted the Renaissance convention that female speech is associated with evil, as noted by the authoritative early critic of the drama Gerald Eades Bentley: '[m]any of the Jacobean dramatists were preoccupied with this conception of an evil world — a world in which dishonesty, ingratitude, hypocrisy, corruption, lechery, and cruelty seemed to dominate the actions of men'.¹⁵ I argue that Webster condones Vittoria's and the Duchess of Malfi's bold voicing of and acting on their sexual desires in defiance of male hypocritical voices.

While new historicist criticism of Renaissance literature conceives the nature of the ruling ideology as totalizing and rejects the possibility of resistance, subversion and change, I argue that female figures' subversion is not contained and in the case of *The Duchess of Malfi*, it leads to the destruction of the dominant voices of male figures. The Cardinal's and Ferdinand's failing voices are attributed to their aural closure in contrast to the Duchess's oral openness. Furthermore, the destruction of male figures' religious and political voices and the Duchess's son's inheritance of Malfi suggest that matrilineal succession overrides patrilineal succession.

¹²Brown, *Duchess*, p. 5.

¹³ Dena Goldberg, *Between Worlds: A Study of the Plays of John Webster* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1987), pp. 6-7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁵ Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Development of the English Drama: An Anthology* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1950), p. 257.

I commit myself to the methodology of presentism, ‘Deliberately employing crucial aspects of the present as a trigger for its investigations, [presentism’s] centre of gravity will accordingly be “now”, rather than “then”’, as pointed out by Grady and Hawkes.¹⁶ I thus use the trigger of the masculine construction of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence in contemporary Palestine to illuminate this representation in Webster’s tragedies and reveal continuities between both cultures despite historical and ideological differences. I argue that *The Duchess of Malfi*’s criticism of male figures’ abuse of their tongues has present affiliation with the Islamic condemnation of loud speech and giving free rein to the tongue. While previous interpretations of early modern texts at An-Najah University endorse discourses of misogyny, I deploy the critical line of psychoanalysis to challenge discourses of misogyny in the fictional world of *The Duchess of Malfi* and contemporary Palestine. I argue that Ferdinand’s misogyny is an unconscious indulgence in his incestuous desire towards his sister. His madness involving lycanthropy is a sign of incestuous frustration and a strategy for concealing his incestuous attraction to the Duchess. The association of Ferdinand’s voice with incestuous desire subverts the Palestinian construction of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence and puts the Palestinian ideology of honour that is based on silencing female voices into question. The appearance of the Duchess as a disembodied voice undermines the Palestinian association of women with embodiment and men with disembodiment. In *The White Devil*, I explain that male figures’ silencing of female figures enacts a dialogue with contemporary Palestinian society where women’s voices are circumscribed by patriarchal discriminatory laws and traditions. The depiction of the outspoken woman in Palestine as a whore or a phallic woman enables me to scrutinize the problematic position of Vittoria in the trial scene, which subverts the masculine ideology characteristic of both early

¹⁶ Hugh Grady and Terence Hawkes, ‘Introduction: Presenting Presentism’, in *Presentist Shakespeares*, ed. by Hugh Grady and Terence Hawkes (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 1-5 (p. 4).

modern England and contemporary Palestine. The association of Vittoria's and the Duchess of Malfi's voices with truth and dramatic authority subverts the Palestinian traditions that equate female speech with sexual looseness. Teaching these tragedies will not only undermine the Palestinian masculine construction of gender difference, but they will also challenge the curriculum at An-Najah University which has been dominated by Shakespeare's plays and by traditional interpretations interested in consolidating established traditions of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence.¹⁷ Webster's tragedies which privilege female characters and associate their speeches with truth and dramatic authority and link male voices with political and religious hypocrisies will lead my students to different perceptions of gender construction in early modern England and contemporary Palestine. These texts may, therefore, be an arena of potential change and transformation of students' and instructors' analyses.

I argue that the deconstruction of gender stereotypes via the binary opposites of speech and silence is linked to theatrical performance. Drawing on Gina Bloom's, Christina Luckyj's and Catherine Belsey's research on boy actors, I argue that Webster's tragedies generate a radical challenge to hypocritical male voices, showing that the boy actors impersonating female voices are morally superior to male hypocrites' voices. Indeed, the boy actors playing female roles speak against and reveal male figures' religious and political hypocrisies. While Webster associates the boy actors impersonating female voices with truth and honesty, he also associates their deafness to male figures' voices with morality. In *The Duchess of Malfi*, Webster presents the Duchess's deafness to the Cardinal's and Ferdinand's speeches as a defensive strategy against their incestuous and murderous voices. In an inversion of the patriarchal construction of silence as passive and gendered feminine, *The White Devil* shows that a noble

¹⁷ Odeh J. Odeh, Private Communication, 19 March 2015.

death is associated with silence while *The Duchess of Malfi* suggests that the Duchess's silent corpse elicits male figures' self-condemnations.

The White Devil

The White Devil reveals that the boy actors impersonating female characters' voices and silences are morally superior to male figures' religious and political hypocrisies. While in Shakespeare's *Othello* the male figures are deaf to female voices, to whom it would be a debasement to listen, in *The White Devil* Webster shows that the demand for women to be chaste, silent and obedient is a self-protective strategy, a way for men to keep women submissive to their immoral voices. Women's speech is without value in *Othello* and feared in *The White Devil*. The valorisation of female chastity and modesty is, therefore, utilised in the service of a more general oppression of women. Such silencing has been a long-standing problem in contemporary Palestine, a problem exacerbated by the Israeli occupation. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian argues that 'Refusing to acknowledge women's voices, their hidden transcripts of power and powerlessness, and their roles, deeply affects our understanding of women's ways of survival and of the way they deal with victimization, resistance, and activism'.¹⁸

Teaching Webster's *The White Devil* with its victimised but outspoken heroines offers an opportunity for my students at An-Najah University to analyse the practices of silencing and the resistance offered by women's voices in their contemporary culture. In the wooing scene of *The White Devil*, for example, Brachiano, shifts 'the cause of all ensuing harm' (1.2.99) onto Cornelia. His words are repeated in Flamineo's rejection of his mother (1.2.327-32) when he

¹⁸ Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *Militarization and Violence against Women in Conflict Zones in the Middle East: A Palestinian Case Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 14.

suggests that a whore would have been a better mother since then he would have had '[p]lurality of fathers' (1.2.330). While Francisco and Flamineo position women as the origins of their deceptive practices (4.1.26-28, 4.2.171-78), men's corruption is evident throughout the play. Lodovico blames his banishment on the 'whore' Fortune (1.1.4), but his followers' speech in the first scene presents a list of his crimes and his vicious desire for revenge (1.1.10-12, 30-31, 50-52). The association of men's speeches and silences with evil (4.1.35-36, 4.2. 57-60, 4.3.152-53) and the fact that male characters speak of love, marriage and women in a degrading way (2.1.187-91, 5.1.157) reveals that male figures articulate misogynist discourse so as to keep women submissive to their immoral voices.

Conversely, Webster represents female characters as the mouthpieces of morality and sexual control, as is illuminated in the figures of Cornelia, Isabella and Vittoria even when their physical actions, such as adultery, would be deemed immoral by early modern spectators. Bromley claims that 'Cornelia is certainly the voice of traditional morality'.¹⁹ However, when women trespass into the domain of masculine discourse, they are labelled 'whore', 'fury' and 'devil' (1.2.252, 3.2.56, 107, 4.2.82-83, 88, 5.1.86). A similar situation dissuades women from entering the public domain in contemporary Palestine. Chaban, Daraghmeh and Stettler note that:

Very little attention has been paid to documenting and combating violence against Palestinian women and girls in the public sphere. Yet focus group discussions with Palestinian women and girls reveal that the public sphere, especially the street, is perceived as a 'male only' space and, thus, a source of insecurity and instability. Fear of entering the public sphere prevents women and

¹⁹ Laura G. Bromley, 'The Rhetoric of Feminine Identity in *The White Devil*', in *In Another Country: Feminist Perspectives on Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Dorothea Kehler and Susan Baker (London: Scarecrow Press, 1991), pp. 50-70 (p. 51).

girls from taking part in professional and educational activities.²⁰

A university student from Ramallah remarked on discrimination against female students in her university, stating that:

*At the university, the ones who are dominant are the male students. Girls feel inferior. As a girl, if you want to participate in certain activities they say to you: No, you are a girl. Even for specialisation in the university, some of the colleges are only for males; at most they accept eight males and only two female students. This leads to domination of male's rights over female's rights. Also, in the student council you will hardly ever find female members (original emphasis).*²¹

Examples from the fictional world of Webster's early modern play offer a counter-text to such norms in contemporary Palestine. Cornelia's impersonation of masculine speech opens up a space for parody and caricature of the norms. As Luckyj states, 'the women of *The White Devil* who usurp masculine rhetoric are positioned not only to gain access to male privilege but also to offer a savage critique of that privilege'.²² Although Flamineo receives the eavesdropping Cornelia's denunciation of Brachiano's relationship with Vittoria as the words of a 'fury' (1.2.260), and Brachiano murmurs '[f]ie, fie, the woman's mad' (1.2.289), associating Cornelia with evil portent (1.2.299), Cornelia castigates male sexual transgression as she speaks up for Christian monogamy. Her condemnation of 'my son the pander' (1.2.206) turns attention away from Vittoria's transgression and towards Flamineo's part in it. She calls Brachiano 'adulterous Duke' (1.2.276), censures '[t]he lives of princes' (1.2.279),

²⁰ Chaban et al, *Palestinian Women and Security*, p. 23.

²¹ Ibid., p. 27.

²² Christina Luckyj, 'Gender, Rhetoric, and Performance in John Webster's *The White Devil*', in *Enacting Gender on the English Renaissance Stage*, ed. by Viviana Comensoli and Anne Russell (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 218-32 (p. 223).

compares Vittoria's sexual act to male treachery (1.2.290) and associates Flamineo with a ruthless patriarchal system (1.2.315-16).

Webster undercuts the power of Cornelia's and Isabella's moralistic voices to some extent, by making them less dramatically dynamic and appealing than Vittoria, who speaks more lines and controls the speeches of those around her. Cornelia, J. W. Lever says, 'is soon silenced by Flamineo's withering scorn', and he notes that Cornelia and Isabella, though '[i]nnocent and virtuous [...] have no vitality on the stage', and that their virtuous speech 'has no field of action'.²³ Ultimately, the virtuous voice of Cornelia is undermined by her silence and acceptance of the favour that Brachiano offers her (4.2.11-15). The self-destructive power of such silent acquiescence is shown when Cornelia becomes totally ineffective and isolated from the political voices of her society by madness.

Cornelia's madness and the elimination of her voice may seem a reaffirmation of gender difference and patriarchal discourse that consolidates itself by containing female vocal transgression. However, the fact that Cornelia's voice is impersonated by a boy actor blurs sexual difference calling attention to the boy actor's failure to perform the feminine role signified by his voice. As Judith Butler points out, '*in imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself*' (original emphasis).²⁴ While Catherine Belsey claims that the roles assigned to women deny them a unified subject position from which to speak,²⁵ Cornelia's marginalised and ineffective voice condemns male figures' hypocritical voices (1.2.206, 276, 290, 315-16). Her transgression of her feminine role and her vocal challenge would, arguably, move her toward the position of a speaking subject occupied by male hypocrites. The

²³ Julius Walter Lever, *The Tragedy of State* (London: Methuen, 1971), pp. 194-5.

²⁴ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 175.

²⁵ Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985), p. 149.

boy actor who is impersonating Cornelia's voice is, arguably, destined, once he faces a vocal challenge, to play a male role characterised by a desceptive voice such as Flamineo's, Brachiano's and Monticelso's in the future.

Like Cornelia, Isabella simultaneously plays out the demonisation of female speech and criticises the privilege of male discourse. The play exposes the double standard whereby Isabella is urged to be patient since a husband's faithlessness is only '[a] slight wrong' (2.1.240) and to suppress her 'killing griefs which dare not speak' (2.1.277). She is a pawn of male rivalry and class antagonism in that Brachiano feels humiliated by his political marriage to her (2.1.187-89). Isabella's speech reveals that she is subordinate to male figures' voices (2.1.277-78); she addresses Brachiano as 'my dear lord' (2.1.155) as does Desdemona in *Othello*. Isabella, who is called '[b]lessed lady' (3.2.320), sacrifices herself to settle the conflict between her brother and her husband by pretending that she is herself guilty (3.1.217-18). Similar to Desdemona, Isabella is murdered by her husband in the very act of reverencing him. The stifler of Isabella's love 'suffocate[s] her spirits' (2.2.31) and she dies 'feed[ing] her eyes and lips / On the dead shadow' (2.2.27-28) of her murderer.

Isabella's anger suggests that her initial obedience and submission to her husband is a subjective space that conceals rebellious desires. Isabella's anger reveals her wish for revenge by impersonating a masculine voice (2.1.242-44), which she equates with the power to act upon her desires and take revenge. Webster empowers her by giving her speech. Second-wave feminist critics, eager to recover lost female voices as are contemporary Palestinian women, note the power of female enunciation in Webster's play. Joan Lord Hall notes that 'Isabella recreates herself, in language that carries energetic conviction, as the aggrieved party instead

of the peacemaker'.²⁶ Isabella repeats Brachiano's words (2.1.251-57) in a way that undermines the opposition between her subject position and Brachiano's, caricaturing his ceremony (2.1.196-97, 255-57). Like Cornelia, whose voice reveals the evil of male speech, Isabella's speech reveals the corruption of Francisco, who associates himself with the diabolical, Moorish maid, Zanche (5.3.225-29). Isabella speaks about the failure of Francisco to fulfil his allotted role of protecting her (2.1.241-43). What is important is that in this performative role, Isabella directs her anger at another woman – her rival (2.1.245-50) – rather than at the husband who has wronged her.

Isabella's verbal aggression towards Vittoria rather than towards her husband has striking affinity with some contemporary Palestinian women who unleash their pent-up passions against other wives rather than their husbands who humiliate them. Anne Sofie Roald cites the example of Umm Khalid whose husband left her in order to marry another woman. Instead of fighting her lustful husband, she verbally attacks his new wife, while she keeps treating her husband 'non-confrontationally and politely'.²⁷ In tyrannical patriarchal societies such as the fictional world of *The White Devil* and contemporary Palestine, women are set against each other. However, while Webster associates Isabella's speech with truth, he confirms the men's demonisation of female speech – Isabella is called 'Fury' (2.1.244). Her verbal outburst reveals that the boy actor impersonating her has released genuine anger and, arguably, broken out of his demure, feminine, imitative role.

²⁶ Joan Lord Hall, *The Dynamics of Role-Playing in Jacobean Tragedy* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 140.

²⁷ Anne Sofie Roald, "Benevolent Patriarchy": Palestinian Women Between "Ideal" and "Reality", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 24.3 (2013), 333-347 (p. 340).

Webster shows that the convention of the boy actor subverts gender difference on which sexual stereotyping depends, as feminist materialist critics such as Bloom have argued.²⁸ When the boy actor breaks out of his imitative role, his loss of control over his voice suggests ‘poor masculine performance’, as Callaghan notes.²⁹ It could be argued that the boy actor’s lack of space to articulate Isabella’s moral speech can be associated with tragedy for the boy actor who perfected this style of acting and will, arguably, move to perform male figures’ deceptive voices in the future. Like Cornelia, whose powerlessness and demonisation is expressed by her madness even though she is morally correct, in performance Isabella becomes a ‘foolish, mad, / And jealous woman’ (2.1.262-63). Belsey comments that ‘predictably, these creatures who speak with voices which are not their own are unfixed, inconstant, unable to personate masculine virtue through to the end’.³⁰ This construction of the unstable female voice alludes to the boy actor whose physiological state hinders his impersonation of the female voice over the course of the performance, as Bloom argues.³¹ It could be argued that the boy actors are stretching their lungs and beginning to speak in a passionate or angry way that could be read as a sign of their (and women’s) frustration with the restrictions placed upon their speech and action.

Webster shows that male figures voice and act on their desires for revenge, which is against Christian teaching. The New Testament points out that ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord’ (Romans 12.19). Findlay argues that ‘[r]evenge tragedy is a feminine genre in spite of the fact that the revenge protagonists are usually male’, for ‘revenge [...] is diametrically

²⁸ Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 17, 23, 25.

²⁹ Dymphna Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing Gender and Race on the Renaissance Stage* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 71.

³⁰ Belsey, *Subject*, p. 188.

³¹ Bloom, *Voice*, p. 21.

opposed to the paternal Word, the Law of the Father'.³² While Hieronimo, Titus and Hamlet are forced to voice and act on their revenge against corrupt courts, in *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*, the avengers are the heads of corrupt political and religious institutions. The political and religious figures' voices, therefore, arise not from immortal souls but from passionate mortal bodies. The male figures of authority usurp and undermine the integrity of the divinely ordained hierarchal structures that authorise and empower them. At the same time Monticelso maintains the pretence of 'noble pity' (3.2.259) in giving up revenge, he rationalises the manipulation of Camillo to create the opportunity of Vittoria's adultery (2.1.323-4, 351-55). Although Francisco, 'the most hypocritical and the most devilish of all',³³ agrees with Monticelso that the wicked will be destroyed by their deceit, he asks Monticelso for his black book 'of murderers, / Agents for any villainy' (4.1.86-7). Webster highlights the corruption and abuse of divine power, representing the Pope as a servant of God who possesses a black book listing the names of murderers and villains. The air of secrecy inherent in their revenge shows that it is men's silence rather than women's speech that upsets the order and the political authority of the state. Vittoria's speech and sexual transgression, therefore, come out of class antagonism and rivalry between men. The male figures' misogynistic discourse through which they voice their revenge is, therefore, a challenge to God's authoritative voice.

A similar framework of masculine (self-) deception characterizes Flamineo, who speaks in asides and soliloquies, hiding behind the roles of malcontent, madman, pander and machiavel.³⁴ He aligns himself with the corrupt forces of the church and men of higher rank (1.2.325-27, 3.3.18-23) in order to improve his social status. When he confronts his superiors

³² Alison Findlay, *A Feminist Perspective on Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), pp. 49, 52.

³³ H. Bruce Franklin, 'The Trial Scene of Webster's *The White Devil* Examined in Terms of Renaissance Rhetoric', *SEL*, 1 (1961), 35-51 (p. 47).

³⁴ Bromley, 'Rhetoric', 63.

for calling his sister a whore (3.3.107, 116-17, 4.2.43) this is more self-oriented than affectionately protective, for to affront Vittoria as a 'whore' is simultaneously to affront Flamineo as a 'pander' (4.2.48). Yet Flamineo, whom Layman calls 'the dedicated disintegrator of his own family,' is indeed a pander.³⁵

Flamineo's procuring Vittoria for Brachiano and his deployment of silence as a strategy to keep women submissive to male figures' immoral voices resonates with the rape of Palestinian girls and women by members of their own families, a familiar phenomenon for contemporary Palestinian women in the occupied territories. The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs notes that while a large number of Palestinian women are subject to physical and verbal violence, 'it is believed that the bulk of sexual violence against women and girls is located within the family'.³⁶ In some Palestinian instances, women are ordered to keep silent to fulfil male figures' sexual desires. As Chaban, Daraghmeh and Stettler note, 'There are also indications that family members sometimes not only tolerate the sexual abuse of females, but also arrange for their female relatives to provide sexual favours to uncles, brothers-in-laws or other family members'. However, the victim 'was pressured to remain silent, in order to preserve the family's honour'.³⁷

Moreover, Flamineo blames Vittoria for the chain of events that he himself sets in motion. When Flamineo claims that women conceal their lust as a ploy to arouse men's desire (1.2.20-22), he deconstructs the stereotypical association of female silence with chastity (4.2.194-6): '[a] quiet woman', he tells Brachiano, '[i]s still water under bridge. / A man may shoot her safely' (4.2.176-77). These lines suggest that silence is associated with sexuality, as

³⁵ J. B. Layman, 'The Equilibrium of Opposites in *The White Devil*: A Reinterpretation', *PMLA*, 74 (1959), 336-47 (p. 388).

³⁶ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women-2011-2019', *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* (2011), 1-76 (p. 10).

³⁷ Chaban et al, *Palestinian Women and Security*, p. 35.

the word 'shoot' implies sexual penetration. Vittoria's response, '[o] ye dissembling men' (4.2.78) accentuates that Flamineo is defining women's silence according to men's immoral interest. In short, women can't win. If they speak, it is to express desire. If they keep silent, it is to conceal it.

Webster makes Brachiano the author of sexual indecency while Vittoria is the target for his sexual corruption (1.1.41-42). By giving the initiative to Brachiano, Webster questions the convention that a woman's speech seduces men into sexuality. Vittoria does not conform to this stereotype as she has committed herself to Brachiano and objects to being used for dalliance (as does Bianca in *Othello*). However, Brachiano leaves her to her accusers, despite having earlier boasted, 'I'll seat you above law and above scandal' (1.2.252), and charges her with duplicity on the basis of Francisco's wanton letter, which shows that men solicit women's favour. Where Monticelso describes her as a dangerous temptress, Brachiano constructs Vittoria as his seducer (4.2.83-86). He depicts her tears as those of her 'dissembling trade' (4.2.93), echoing the Cardinal's scornful response that 'your trade instructs your language' (3.2.62). It could be argued that Brachiano's misogynistic line that associates Vittoria's tears with deception alludes to the boy actor's ability, as Rosalind says in *As You Like It*, to:

grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles; for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything, as boys and women are, for the most part, cattle of this colour (3.3.338-342).

While Brachiano says that ‘all the world speaks ill of thee’ (4.2.98), Vittoria accuses him of duplicity and lechery (4.2.105-25). Brachiano’s revilement of Vittoria (4.2.97) is a projection of his own failure and inconstancy as he repents his words (4.2.126-27, 137-40). Vittoria’s constant love to Brachiano and Brachiano’s wavering emotions challenge the conventional association of masculinity with reason and femininity with emotion.

Vittoria’s complicity with Brachiano’s speech and her devotion towards him have a similarity with Palestinian women’s submission to their husbands. Vittoria is self-effacing, addressing Brachiano as ‘my loved lord’ (5.3.7) and comforting him (5.3.130-31). The study of Vittoria’s submission and obedience to her husband by Palestinian readers, such as those at my University, illuminates current practices in contemporary Palestine where women reveal devotion and submission to their husbands even though they are mistreated. For example, in her discussion of polygyny in Islam, Anne Sofie Roald cites the example of Umm Khalid, a woman in her mid-forties, who submits to her husband’s intention of remarriage, expressing a sense of self-effacement even though she recognises that her husband is not ruled by religion but by his lust, exploiting Islam for his sexual desires. She sees ‘polygyny as being exploited by men to satisfy their own lust (shahwa). “It is not Islam that makes them remarry”, she said. “They just use Islam when it is convenient for them”’.³⁸ Likewise, Vittoria reveals obedience and devotion to her husband despite his accusations of inconstancy and deception. When he is poisoned, his speech breaks (5.3.12-14); he is ‘come to himself again’ (5.3.167) to call for Vittoria (5.3.17-19). Herward Price claims that this is an affirmation of his ‘deep and selfless’ love that outshines all hypocritical voices of the play.³⁹ However, I agree with McLeod, who

³⁸ Roald, “Benevolent Patriarchy”, p. 339.

³⁹ Hereward T. Price, ‘The Function of Imagery in Webster’, *PMLA*, 70 (1955), 717-39 (p. 729).

argues that Brachiano's words are a parody of the *Commendatio Animae*, the holy rite of commending a departing soul to God.⁴⁰

In the same way as Isabella prevented those about her from touching the poisoned picture, Brachiano says to Vittoria 'Do not kiss me, for I shall poison thee' (5.3.26). Price notes that '[t]he moral law [...] has vindicated itself with a resolute exactness. "An eye for an eye..." But further, Brachiano speaks the horrible truth about his love. It was poison for Vittoria'.⁴¹ While Webster represents Brachiano damned by his passion for Vittoria, he dissociates her from this condemnation, associating Brachiano's mouth rather than her body with poison. For scholars of English at An-Najah University, reading Webster's text thus offers a critique of the masculine-motivated gossip which can poison a woman's or girl's reputation. Chaban, Daraghmeh and Stettler observed that 'Ultimately, gossip and rumours, whether factual or not, were just as immobilising as verbal or physical harassment'.⁴² One interviewee called gossip 'the thing that oppresses you most'.⁴³

While Cornelia's and Isabella's speeches are instances of heroic defiance that reveal male figures' unruly voices, Webster's protagonist Vittoria reveals the corruption of patriarchal voices and realises Isabella's wish to impersonate a masculine voice without disintegrating into madness. Vittoria's trial, which has been celebrated as 'one of the great moments of the English stage',⁴⁴ challenges the view that women are excluded from discourse through the speech of Vittoria, whose motives vary in a way that, as Belsey observes, leaves her with 'no place, intelligible to the audience as single and continuous, from which to speak, to be recog-

⁴⁰ Susan H. McLeod, *Dramatic Imagery in the Plays of John Webster*, *Salzburg Studies in English Literature: Jacobean Drama Studies* (Salzburg: University of Salzburg, 1977), p. 65.

⁴¹ Price, 'Imagery', p. 728.

⁴² Chaban et al, *Palestinian Women and Security*, p. 25.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴⁴ Jack Landau, 'Elizabethan Art in a Mickey Spillane Setting' (1955), in *Webster: The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi: A Casebook*, ed. by R. V. Holdsworth (London: Macmillan, 1975), pp. 233-235 (p. 234).

nized'.⁴⁵ However, Vittoria dominates the scenes and reveals male avengers' religious and political hypocrisies. Sara Deutch Schotland argues that '*White Devil* arises in the context of debate about the church courts, criticized for their procedural deficiencies in comparison with common law courts'.⁴⁶ She notes that the trial of Vittoria for murder and adultery via the Catholic Church's inquisition is a comment on the brutality of the judicial system.⁴⁷

The lawyer begins reading the accusations in Latin: '*Domine judex, converte oculos in hanc pestem / mulierum corruptissimam*' (3.2.10-11) – in translation, '[m]y lord judge, turn your eyes upon this plague, the most corrupt of women'.⁴⁸ The lawyer speaks Latin to give authority to his words and in so doing, he underestimates Vittoria's capacity to understand the language. However, Webster shows Vittoria as a woman with control over language, as she has good listening skills (3.2.13-14). She insists that the trial be conducted in a language that everyone can understand, so that '[a]ll this assembly / Shall hear what you can charge me with' (3.2.19-20). Schotland notes that 'This emphasis on intelligibility recalls [Sir Walter] Raleigh's protest about the use of Latin mumbo jumbo at his trial'.⁴⁹ While Latin is a language associated with the exclusively masculine fields of the law and ecclesiastical authority – in which women had no legitimate voice – Vittoria mocks the language of the law and deems it irrelevant (3.2.35-39). As Monticelso describes evidence against Vittoria as 'nought but circumstances' (3.1.4), he redirects the ambassadors' eyes and ears to Vittoria's 'black lust' (3.1.7) in order to besmirch and silence her. Monticelso's accusations of Vittoria elucidate what Belsey describes as 'patriarchal and reductive' definitions of women generated 'in a so-

⁴⁵ Belsey, *Subject*, p. 163.

⁴⁶ Sara Deutch Schotland, 'Women on Trial: Representations of Women in the Courtroom in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama', *WHR*, 21.1 (2012), pp. 37-60 (p. 45).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁴⁸ Weis, *The White Devil*, p. 375.

⁴⁹ Schotland, 'Women on Trial', p. 44.

ciety where the circulation of discourses is controlled by men' and where women are associated with silence.⁵⁰

For scholars of English at An-Najah University, this masculine silencing of women resonates with the circumscription of Palestinian women's voices by the patriarchal structures of Palestinian society, the discriminatory laws and legal systems, collapsing the binary between present and past through anachronism. Shalhoub-Kevorkian observed that women's resistant voices and actions in contemporary Palestine 'were and are affected by the juxtaposition of local factors (historical legacy, geopolitics, and a spatial policy of colonization; the existing context of a gender hierarchy; the politico-economic and social conditions) and global ones involving conflicts and political developments.'⁵¹ As Bought-Brooks, Duaibis and Hussein argue, 'Existing laws in the occupied Palestinian territory are often discriminatory and do not offer sufficient protection for women'.⁵² They note that the Israeli occupation 'impedes progress in improving women's rights within the occupied Palestinian territory and limits the opportunities and capacity to transform the legal and social structures within the society'.⁵³

The legal systems in contemporary Palestine 'focus on the promotion of male power in Palestinian communities'.⁵⁴ Many Palestinian women avoid defending themselves against the verbal and physical violence they are subject to in the domestic and public spheres lest their voices be interpreted as signs of infidelity, just as they could have been in early modern England. Furthermore, a Palestinian reader may recognise that a man's word carries more weight than a woman's in any court hearing, as the widespread prejudice that women are untrust-

⁵⁰ Belsey, *Subject*, pp. 164, 178-83.

⁵¹ Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *Militarization*, p. 11.

⁵² Hannah Bought-Brooks, Salwa Duaibis, Soraida Hussein, 'Palestinian Women: Caught in the Cross Fire between Occupation and Patriarchy', *FF*, 22.3 (2010), 124-145 (p. 124).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁵⁴ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 10.

worthy, manipulative, and dishonest tips the scales against them. Vittoria's challenge and defiance of male figures' hypocritical voices may enable my students to scrutinise abusive practices of silencing Palestinian women and their resistant voices. As Shalhoub-Kevorkian notes:

By analysing the dynamics of the silencing and agency of women's victimization, while we begin the process of hearing their voices, we can perhaps create new sites for a different kind of knowledge that is not complicit with hegemonic circuits of power where what is available for consumption (within the seemingly unavoidable nexus of colonialist capitalist and consumerist global structure) only reinvigorates the power structures that allowed for its consumption in the first place.⁵⁵

While Webster dramatises Vittoria's disenfranchisement in the apparently male-dominated trial scene, Vittoria defeats her accusers, who condemn her on frail evidence.⁵⁶ In response to Monticelso's condemnation of her for the "crime" of adultery (3.2.192-98), she says that she was tempted, but that 'temptation to lust proves not the act; / *Casta est quam nemo rogavit*' (3.2.199-200). Her defence – which is a reference to Ovid in Latin, meaning 'she is chaste who no one has solicited'⁵⁷ – is thrust at the lawyer who has attempted to silence her by speaking in Latin. The Cardinal delivers a conventional caricature of the murderous whore and makes her eloquence proof of her deceit, which is associated with Eve (3.2.68-69, 79-101, 108-09). However, by asking the listeners to 'sum up [her] faults' (3.2.208), Vittoria says that the Cardinal lacks rhetorical accuracy (3.2.101, 146, 190-91), turning his accusa-

⁵⁵ Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *Militarization*, p. 55.

⁵⁶ Franklin, 'Trial', p. 51.

⁵⁷ Weis, *The White Devil*, p. 376.

tions against him.⁵⁸ The Raleigh trial could be considered as a direct source for Vittoria's criticism of the Cardinal's manipulation of the law through rhetorical irrelevance. As Schotland says, 'Sir Walter Raleigh's treason trial in 1603 exemplifies the procedural problems with trials at that time'.⁵⁹ Raleigh's response to the attorney general's accusations regarding treason resonates with Vittoria's defence: "'Mr Attorney, I pray you to whom, or to what end speak you all this?'"⁶⁰

In this tendency of men to scapegoat women as the source of evil, the trial scene of Webster's play may be the inspiration for Swetnam's pamphlet *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant women* (1615) and for the anonymous play, *Swetnam, the Woman-Hater, Arraigned by Women* (1620),⁶¹ which is a response to the former. Swetnam's pamphlet caricatures the considerable anxiety generated in men by deceptive women: '[f]or women have a thousand ways to entice thee and ten thousand ways to deceive thee'.⁶² *Swetnam the Woman-Hater* is preoccupied with this misogynist controversy. The character of Swetnam, derived from the pamphlet, is a notorious author who disguises himself as 'Misogynos' to avoid female figures' retributive voices while voicing and writing misogynist discourses (3.2.25-27). However, in Act 5, he is exposed as a coward and a liar in an all-female court (5.2.218-25). After he 'denie[s] all' (5.2.278) of his misogynist words, the female court sentences him and casts him outside the city to 'liue amongst the Infidels' (5.2.338).

⁵⁸ Franklin, 'Trial', p. 40; Lisa Hopkins, 'The Part with Ne'er a Bone in't: Webster's Women and the Politics of Speech', *JGS*, 4.2 (1995), 181-87 (p. 181).

⁵⁹ Schotland, 'Women on Trial', p. 40

⁶⁰ David Jardine, *The Lives and Criminal Trials of Celebrated Men* (Philadelphia, 1853), p. 407.

⁶¹ Anonymous, *Swetnam the Woman-hater, Arraigned by Women*, in *Swetnam the Woman-Hater: The Controversy of the Play: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes*, ed. by Coryl Crandall (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Studies, 1969). Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act, scene and line number.

⁶² Joseph Swetnam, *The Arraignment of Lewde, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women* (1615), in *Half Human-kind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640*, ed. by Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), pp. 189-216 (p. 201).

Ester Sowernam's *Esther hath hanged Haman* (1617) is another response to Swetnam's *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women*. Sowernam locates the conventional construction of the female as a projection of men: '[d]o not say and rail at women to be the cause of men's overthrow, when the original root and cause is in yourselves'.⁶³ Valerie Wayne argues that Sowernam, a pseudonym, 'is a sour imitation of "Swetnam,"'⁶⁴ and notes that regardless of the genders of authors, the pseudonymous publications that challenge Swetnam 'enabled alliances with and among women, and textual disruptions of gender offered some resistance to the polarizing effects of the controversy as a whole'.⁶⁵

Sowernam's reading of misogynist discourses as a projection of male figures' villainy onto female figures offers students and teachers of English at An-Najah University a critique of the Palestinian construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. While Vittoria has committed adultery and is complicit in murder, her misdeeds have exposed the even greater crimes of the patriarchal society that has condemned her. Further, her self-presentation has inspired the creation of new dialogues, ideas, and texts.

In a doubly-heightened performance—in court and onstage—Webster juxtaposes the boy actor's impersonation of the female character with those of male hypocrites and shows that, ironically, the boy actor's voice is closer to the truth. Whereas Puritan attacks on the theatre blur the distinction – Prynne in *Histriomastix* insists on 'Hypocrites, Stage-players, as being

⁶³ Ester Sowernam, *Esther hath hang'd Haman: or An Answer to a Lewd Pamphlet, entituled The Arraignment of Lewd, Idle Forward, and Unconstant Men, and Husbands* (1617), in *The Women's Sharp Revenge: Five Women's Pamphlets from the Renaissance*, ed. by Simon Shepherd (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), pp. 86-124 (p. 110).

⁶⁴ Valerie Wayne, 'The Dearth of the Author: Anonymity's Allies and Swetnam the Woman-hater', in *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England*, ed. by Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 221-40 (p. 222).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

one and the same in substance'⁶⁶ – *The White Devil* dismantles this equation by highlighting that the boy actor speaks against corrupt patriarchal voices. Luckyj argues that 'Vittoria's accomplished performance of masculinity exposes those cultural paradigms that underlie the rhetorical posturing of the men in the play'.⁶⁷ Vittoria draws the listeners' ears to the fact that the accusations reflect on the accuser, rather than the accused (3.2.148-51).

The boy actor's playing the role of Vittoria and his defiance of male figures' voices may provide off-stage audience a point of focus to Sir Walter Raleigh whose verbal dexterity and wit exposes the corruption of the judicial systems and arouses the audience sympathy towards him. This resonance between the boy actor who is playing the role of Webster's protagonist Vittoria and Raleigh can be substantiated by the fact that Raleigh performed his part like an actor in a play. Dudley Carleton, an astute spectator at Raleigh's trial for treason in 1603, emphasises Raleigh's theatrical performance:

Sir Walter Raleigh served for a whole act, and played all the parts himself [...]. He answered with that temper, wit, learning, courage and judgment, that, save it went with the hazard of his life, it was the happiest day that ever he spent. And so well he shifted all advantages that were taken against him, that [...] in the opinion of all men, he had been acquitted.⁶⁸

Webster's play challenges the convention that a woman's silence is equated with virtue, as Vittoria's appeal to justice is equated with freedom of speech. While Vittoria internalises her society's injunctions to silence (3.2.130-34), she realises that to defend herself she '[m]ust

⁶⁶ Quoted in Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 91-92.

⁶⁷ Luckyj, 'Performance', p. 224.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Robert Zaller, *The Discourse of Legitimacy in Early Modern England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 44.

personate masculine virtue' of speech (3.2.136). While Vittoria takes 'woman's poor revenge / Which dwells but in the tongue' (3.2.283-84), her public speech condemns her. As Callaghan observes, 'Vittoria takes up contradictory subject positions here as on the one hand, the (phallic) speaker, and on the other, the ravished woman'.⁶⁹ This depiction of the vocal woman as a whore or a phallic woman has present Palestinian resonance. It is a common folkloric tradition that Palestinians call a vocal woman *mostarjelli* (mannish woman) or *emzanebrri* (horny woman). Vittoria speaks from two subject positions, which is reflected in the way that a boy actor impersonates the female character's voice. However, the boy actor's potential transitional status evades the speaking positions of phallic speaker and whore. While Vittoria impersonates masculine speech, Webster dissociates Vittoria's speech from male hypocritical and deceptive voices.

However, as female public speech and sexual looseness are equated, Vittoria's voice, like Desdemona's, falls on unreceptive ears: '[n]ay, hear me, / You shall have time to prate (3.2.245-46). Vittoria aligns male speech with 'prat[ing]' (5.6.67-69) to belittle their uncontrollable communication and their deafness to her truthful voice. Vittoria's response to the Cardinal's caricature – 'A rape! a rape! [...] [Y]ou have ravished justice, / Forced her to your pleasure' (3.2.272-74) – shows that silence is a sign of sexual violation and highlights the association of men's speech with immorality. Ania Loomba notes that:

Patriarchal legality conceives of female sexuality as criminal, so [Vittoria] seizes on its own analogy and inverts it by employing the language of sexuality to describe a

⁶⁹Dympna Callaghan, *Women and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy: A Study of King Lear, Othello, The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1989), p. 76.

legal procedure; thus she is the first to employ the connection between sexuality and power in favour of the woman'.⁷⁰

While women were perceived as a threat to the social and political order under the absolutist reign of James I's rule, Webster shows that male figures demonise female speech to keep women subservient to male immoral voices, and justifies Vittoria's rebellion against male figures' abuse of power. Though the Cardinal counteracts Vittoria's truthful words by calling her 'mad' and a 'fury' (3.2.275, 278), I think that readers and spectators accept her assertion that the Cardinal made a 'corrupted trial' (3.2.260) and 'ravish'd justice' (3.2.273). Vittoria's performance of the persecuted woman, therefore, carries the audience's sympathy along with her because Webster associates her speech with truth and in so doing makes spectators bypass the question of her guilt.

Webster further challenges the patriarchal construction of silence as passive and feminine gendered by associating noble manly death with silence. Vittoria combines traditionally masculine and feminine attributes, maintaining her courage, dignity, and integrity to the end. She rejects the traditional expressions of feminine weakness, tears (3.2.284-86). She insists that 'my servant / Shall never go before me' (5.6.216-17), 'welcom[ing] death [...] As princes do some great ambassadors' (5.6.219-20). Her feminine bravery in the face of death (5.6.222-25) refutes male characters' misogynistic voices, for she impresses Flamineo as imparting a model 'to teach [man] manhood' (5.6.242). As she is dying, Flamineo says that '[s]he hath no faults, who hath the art to hide them' (5.6.246), revealing that a convincing performance, even if it conceals moral duplicity, will win the assent of the audience who are accomplices to the actors.

⁷⁰Ania Loomba, 'Women's Division of Experience', in *Revenge Tragedy: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. by Stevie Simkin (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 41-65 (p. 55).

Demonstrating, finally, a willingness to heed Vittoria's voice and example, Flamineo achieves self-affirmation through his silent death (5.6.203-04). He refuses the flattery of the church (5.6.274) and demands thunder (5.6.275), the expression of nobility. Unlike Brachiano's death, which is marked by a breakdown of speech and hearing due to panic and fear (5.3.39-40, 109-10), both Vittoria and Flamineo assert their identities when they lose their voices '[m]ost irrevocably' (5.6.270). Flamineo rejects even inarticulate crying and prayer, the expressions of the dying (5.6.200-04).

Some critics argue that Vittoria confesses her sin and accepts the judgement of her society when she says 'O my greatest sin lay in my blood. / Now my blood pays for 't' (5.6.238-39). Brown argues that there is a 'sense of sin behind her courage and passion'.⁷¹ However, although Vittoria responds to Cornelia's rebuke in Act 1 with 'O me accursed!' (1.2.293), she also dissociates her speech from licentiousness, insisting that she has tried to avert Brachiano with a 'chaste denial' (1.2.284). Hall notes that '[t]hose words of hers that sound most vulnerable are ambiguous; "O me accurst" could be spoken with angry sarcasm (the stress on me registering indignation that her mother is cursing her rather than Bracciano)'.⁷² Webster sanctions Vittoria's aural submission to Brachiano's marriage proposal to set herself free from the confines of enforced marriage as a financial contract to the impotent Camillo (1.2.53-54, 307-24, 3.2.235-38). Webster represents Vittoria as trapped in a masculine fantasy that leaves little room between oppressing silence and debasing speech. In her defiant response to male figures' voices, Vittoria anticipates the Duchess of Malfi's voicing of and acting upon her sexual desires in defiance of her tyrannical brothers' incestuous and murderous voices.

⁷¹ John Webster, *The White Devil*, ed. by John Russell Brown (London: Methuen, 1960), p. lvi.

⁷² Hall, *Role-Playing*, p. 143.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Vittoria's and the Duchess of Malfi's voicing of and acting on their sexual desires and their defiance of male figures' dictates subvert the Palestinian traditions that struggle to oppress and dehumanise women. Zehavit Gross argues that 'Arab society attributes importance to social and family loyalty and prefers collective to individual behaviour'.⁷³ In this context, these tragedies will appeal to my students and have the potential of furthering change because of their emphasis on female individual desires. The association of Vittoria's and the Duchess of Malfi's voices with authority and truth and male figures' voices with political and religious corruption will enhance my students sense of individuality that contradicts the collective web of stagnant traditions that oppress and silence women.

The Duchess of Malfi

Whereas *The White Devil* is an unresolved conflict between the boy actors' voices and the male hypocrites' voices, *The Duchess of Malfi* portrays a conflict between patriarchal and matriarchal discourses, which gives way to the renunciation of the patriarchal voices of Church (the Cardinal) and State (Ferdinand). The Duchess of Malfi is not 'simply one',⁷⁴ as she is at once sexual, dominant, subservient, and unlike Vittoria, maternal and canny. This shows that the Duchess 'speak[s] from a position which is not that of a full, unified, gendered subject', as Belsey puts it.⁷⁵ This multiple subjectivity that embraces a range of voices produced by the Duchess is consistent with the fact that the voice of the boy actor is not fixed but in a process of change consistent with his process of maturation. While most critics read the Duchess as a

⁷³ Zehavit Gross, 'Muslim Women in Higher Education: Reflections on Literacy and Modernisation in Israel', in *Women in Islam: Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Research*, ed. Terence Lovat (Dordrecht: Springer E-books, 2012), pp. 149-164 (p. 150).

⁷⁴ Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, trans. by Catherine Porter and Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 31.

⁷⁵ Catherine Belsey, 'Disrupting Sexual Difference: Meaning and Gender in the Comedies', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. by John Drakakis (London: Methuen, 1985), pp. 167-90 (p. 181).

wanton and wordy widow who challenges patriarchal conventions,⁷⁶ Webster idealises the Duchess's speech that sanctions her love and marriage and makes her brothers representative of evil.⁷⁷ Following the critical line of feminism, I argue that Webster associates the Duchess's voice with truth and authority and male figures' voices with lasciviousness and political and religious hypocrisies. Webster shows that male figures valorise silence and obedience to keep female figures submissive to their immoral voices. From a psychological perspective, I demonstrate that Ferdinand's misogyny is a defensive mechanism against his incestuous desire towards his sister; his repressed incestuous impulses have erupted in the form of misogyny. This psychological interpretation is substantiated by Ferdinand's descent into lycanthropic madness which can be read as a sign of his unconscious, incestuous frustration. The association of Ferdinand's voice with an unconscious incestuous desire towards his sister offers me a ground to scrutinise the traditional feminine virtues of silence and obedience that some Palestinian men deploy to keep their female relatives submissive to men's immoral desires. These critical lines of feminism and psychoanalysis may enable my students at An-Najah University to confront the traditional male-oriented critical analysis and the masculine construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence.

Following the critical line of presentism, I argue that *The Duchess of Malfi*'s criticism of male figures' abuse of their tongues has present affiliation with the Islamic condemnation of loud speech and giving free rein to the tongue that renders man inhuman. I contend that *The Duchess of Malfi* exposes the Palestinian destructive practice of male figures' deafness to the female voice. In both the fictional world of *The Duchess of Malfi* and contemporary Palestine, I argue

⁷⁶ Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983), pp. 71-72, 77; Gunnar Boklund, *The Duchess of Malfi: Sources, Themes, and Characters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), p. 91.

⁷⁷ William Empson, "'Mine Eyes Dazzle'", A Review of Clifford Leech's *John Webster: The Duchess of Malfi*, *EC*, 14 (1964), 80-86; John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. by Elizabeth Brennan (London: Ernest Benn, 1967), p. xii.

that male figures' loss of their identity and linguistic authority is attributed to their aural closure to the female figures' oral openness. The association of Ferdinand's voice with incestuous desire subverts the Palestinian ideology of honour which is based on controlling women's bodies and voices and puts the Palestinian feminine virtues of silence, chastity and obedience into question. The appearance of the Duchess of Malfi as a disembodied voice shatters the Palestinian association of man with disembodiment and woman with embodiment.

The Duchess of Malfi's choice of a husband and getting married in defiance of her brothers undermines the Palestinian construction of women as objects of exchange in the marriage market. The Duchess of Malfi, like Desdemona and Vittoria, follows her desires instead of following the constraints imposed by her brothers. The Duchess is not confined by patriarchal law symbolized by her 'father's poniard' (1.1.331) from getting married to her servant Antonio. She is willing to risk 'going into a wilderness' (1.1.359) in order to voice her desires boldly. The Duchess of Malfi's awareness of the prohibitions on her marriage as she will be subject to gossip (1.1.348-50) has present implications in contemporary Palestine, especially in rural areas where women are denied their voices in the choice of partners. Palestinian women who marry themselves in defiance of their male relatives will be subject to public gossip and scandal. However, the Duchess takes the part of a wooer due to the class disparity between them: 'because none dare woo us' (1.2.344). Findlay notes that the ring in the wooing scene symbolises 'the struggle to open or close the ring of the female aristocratic body'.⁷⁸ It is also evocative of the opened mouth, as illuminated through the Duchess's silencing of Antonio with his '*Quietus est*' (1.1.464). While the Duchess controls Antonio's phallic pen (1.1.364, 377) and appropriates a masculine voice, 'she does not', as Allman says, 'barter sex for tyrannical authority, nor does she feminize her husband in order to maintain command

⁷⁸ Findlay, *Perspective*, p. 101.

and control [...]. She uses her authority to erase her authority, her voice to give him speech, her body to initiate a mutual embrace'.⁷⁹ The Duchess instructs Antonio to 'lead your fortune by the head, / Unto your marriage bed' (1.1.495-96), assuring him that her words which he tells her 'should be [his]' (1.1.472) are indeed his (1.1.497). She challenges her brothers by exercising her power as a ruler and denying the corrupt Catholic Church its right in legitimising her marriage (1.1.47, 50, 478-79). Palestinian readers steeped in traditions will perceive the Duchess's voicing of and acting on her sexual desires as subversive to the Palestinian construction of women as objectified creatures in the marriage market. However, by associating the Duchess's voice with morality and her brothers' voices with religious and political hypocrisies, teaching this tragedy at An-Najah University may offer students and teachers a critique of Palestinian male figures' deafness to, and objectification of, the female.

Cariola, hiding behind the arras as a 'woman of my counsel' (1.1.477), shares the Duchess's secret and acts as a legal witness. Cariola's silent obedience to the Duchess's voice subverts the rhetorical control of male protagonists. Significantly, the Duchess is never named explicitly, even though she constructs her betrothal. From the viewpoint of a Palestinian reader or spectator, this anonymity would be perfectly recognisable. In Palestinian rural areas, the name of the bride is never mentioned in the wedding card invitation as the circulation of a woman's name is understood to be akin to the circulation of her body.⁸⁰ Perhaps Webster leaves her unnamed to legitimise her voice and action. The majority of women in Palestine and early modern English tragedies, with some notable exceptions like Desdemona and the Duchess of Malfi, are deprived of their voices and choice of partners. The Duchess's vows of

⁷⁹ Eileen Allman, *Jacobean Revenge Tragedy and the Politics of Virtue* (London: Associated University Presses, 1999), pp. 180, 179.

⁸⁰ Hani Aka Hanitizer, 'Bizarre! Arabic Wedding Invitations/Announcements', *My Hannitizer: Terrorizing the English language* <<http://hanistan.blogspot.co.uk/2012/08/bizarre-arabic-wedding.html>> [accessed 18 March 2013].

marriage and choice of a partner are in contrast to the arranged marriage of Vittoria, which generates her murderous and sexual desires.

The Duchess's secret marriage (1.1.341-43) is a result of her brothers' attempt to silence her desire (1.1.265, 459-61, 3.2.137-39); having been slandered with the stereotype of lusty widow, she arguably determines to become one. The fact that she gives her ring to the man she loves (1.1.406-07) highlights her desire for monogamous marriage, for procreation. While the Duchess initiates the marriage proposal to Antonio, she listens to him as his desire of fatherhood and hearing his child 'chatter / Like a taught starling' (1.1.402) parallels her pride in her maternity. This private speech is in contrast to the silence that the couple must maintain in public, which stands in contrast to the dehumanising ventriloquism that Ferdinand demands from his subordinates (1.1.122-24). Because the Duchess, like Vittoria, lives in a world antagonistic to her desires, she pursues her desires by the defensive means of deception (1.1.301-02). Jacqueline Pearson notes that the Duchess 'is forced by the threatening society around her into an equivocal situation, hiding behind "masks and curtains" (3.2.159) when she would prefer frank and open demonstration of feeling, expressing herself in "riddles and dreams" (1.1.446) when she would prefer to speak clearly and unambiguously'.⁸¹ This riddling and dreaming speech in the marriage scene reveals that the Duchess must use her voice to separate herself from her brothers' dehumanising rhetoric.

The court of Malfi is full of parasitic flatterers who say what their superiors want to hear (1.1.47-53) in contrast to the French court, where the 'first' act of the 'judicious king' is the banishment of 'flatt'ring sycophants' (1.1.6, 8). Ferdinand forces the men around him into ventriloquism to ensure his own status as a ruler: '[m]ethinks you that are courtiers should be my

⁸¹ Jacqueline Pearson, *Tragedy and Tragicomedy in the Plays of John Webster* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), p. 84.

touchwood, take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh when I laugh, were the subject never so witty' (1.1.122-24). As the fire metaphor reveals, Ferdinand's insistence that those around him echo him not only denies them independent action, but it also consumes them (1.1.122-24) as the figure of Bosola reveals (1.1.258, 261). Webster presents Bosola perceiving himself to be conditioned by the debased environment (1.1.48-59) of those in power whose language he internalises (1.1.282-85). Ferdinand's absolute rule and his request of his subjects to reproduce his speech could be read as a comment on absolute monarchism that shored up King James I's rule. Russell Brown points out that the initial speech by Antonio was used by Webster to 'nail his play to the affairs of England in his own time'.⁸² As an absolutist monarch, James I ruled by taking a patriarchal role that restrained his subjects' ability to enforce their voices and prerogatives. Judith M. Richards notes that 'James's masculine, patriarchal language [...] contrasted sharply with Elizabethan discourses of accessibility, accommodation, mutual complaisance'.⁸³ Like James I's absolute authority, Ferdinand attempts to reduce his subjects into 'mere effective witnesses to his absolute authority'.⁸⁴ Ferdinand, therefore, uses the power of his own voice to control the Duchess's potential usurpation of masculine language.

The Cardinal and Ferdinand construct their sister in exclusively erotic terms, because they fear her power as a widow (1.1.293-98). They speak with a single misogynistic voice which creates the impression of their dominion over discourse and intensifies their evil construction of the Duchess (1.1.316-20). Allman observes that 'they use the misogynistic signifiers of

⁸²Brown, *Duchess*, p. 5.

⁸³Judith M. Richards, 'The English Accession of James VI: 'National' Identity, Gender and the Personal Monarchy of England', *EHR*, 117.427 (2002), 513-535 (p. 529).

⁸⁴Frank Whigham, 'Incest and Ideology: *The Duchess of Malfi*', in *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, ed. by David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 263-74 (267).

gender to construct themselves as absolute'.⁸⁵ Ferdinand associates his control of his sister's body with the management of his realm. He threatens the Duchess with his 'father's poniard' (1.1.331), conflating the symbol of lineage with sexual domination. This language of the patriarch as the head can be read as a criticism of James I's absolute authority. James ruled his country as her metaphorical husband and father, justifying his constraints of his subjects.⁸⁶ While the Duchess of Malfi separates her body natural from her body politic in using her sexuality,⁸⁷ her brothers conflate their body natural with their body politic. While they voice their anxiety to protect the dynastic bloodline and keep wealth under their own control, their voices harbour murderous and incestuous desires towards her. The Duchess recognises that the stereotypical picture of the 'lusty widow' her brothers have described (1.1.329-30, 312) is a projection of their own minds. Ferdinand threatens her with his 'father's poniard' (1.1.331), claiming that women are tempted to marry because they 'like that part, which, like the lamprey / hath never a bone in it' (1.1.336). The Duchess interprets Ferdinand's speech as a lewd association of the tongue with the penis. In response to his sister's '[f]ie' (2.1.337), Ferdinand says that he does not mean the phallus by reference to that part, but

the tongue: variety of courtship;-

What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale

Make a woman believe? (1.1.338-40).

Ferdinand reveals that man's speech rather than woman's is associated with lust, and woman's aural openness is a sign of lewdness highlighted by his implicit link of the tongue with the penis, as the pun on tale / tail suggests. While Ferdinand warns the Duchess against

⁸⁵ Allman, *Virtue*, p. 147.

⁸⁶ See, Andrew Hadfield, 'The Power and Rights of the Crown in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*: 'The King: The King's to Blame'', *RES*, 54.217 (2003), 566-586 (p. 580).

⁸⁷ Theodora A. Jankowski, 'Defining / Confining the Duchess: Negotiating the Female Body in John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, *SP*, 87.2 (1990), 221-245 (p. 222).

men's speech (1.1.338-40), it is his and Bosola's deceptive dialogue that in fact entraps the Duchess.

Cariola's silent witnessing and confirmation of the secret marriage is associated with honesty, but Bosola's speech and silence are much more sinister. Bosola's speech seduces the Duchess to eat the fruit that brings on her labour (2.1.154-58, 2.2.2). The Duchess's ignorance of the fruit's dangers reveals that she is a victim rather than an intentional sinner. The equation between man's voice and evil questions the masculine ideology inherent in the myth of humanity's Fall. Like Flamineo, who commits criminal acts to gain status, Bosola is authorised to learn the Duchess's secret 'to be rais'd' (3.2.332). In contrast to the officers who criticise Antonio, Bosola refuses to be that 'sort of flatt'ring rogue' (3.2.239), instead complimenting Antonio (3.2.248-277). Frank Whigham claims that Bosola's speech is both genuine and deceptive: it is his 'own sincere response managed in pursuit of his employer's goal' to disclose the Duchess's secret.⁸⁸ Bosola's praise of Antonio falls sweetly on the Duchess's ear (3.2.277), which makes her confess that '[t]his good one that you speak of is my husband' (3.2.278), revealing the information that Bosola needs in order to ensnare her. The Duchess is, therefore, entrapped by Bosola's deceptive speech and listening (3.2.241-42). Once she has revealed that Antonio is her husband, he denounces the latter as a 'base, low fellow' (3.5.118). While Antonio and Bosola are of the same class, Bosola's condemnation of Antonio emanates from Bosola's support of masculine power structures that rest on female subordination. Bosola allies his speech and action to Ferdinand and the Cardinal rather than to the Duchess as does Antonio. Cariola is strangled because of the power she possesses in knowing that Bosola is her mistress's murderer. She may have 'kept [the Duchess's] counsel' (4.2.246), but Bosola must silence her to keep his.

⁸⁸ Frank Whigham, 'Sexual and Social Mobility in *The Duchess of Malfi*', *PMLA*, 100.2 (1985), 167-86 (p. 179).

Webster suggests that women are freed from obedience to the voices of patriarchy when its heads of Church (the Cardinal) and state (Ferdinand) no longer represent the principles of benign patriarchy. *The Duchess of Malfi* addresses the corruption of the Catholic Church by associating the Catholic clergy with the devil. Like Monticelso in *The White Devil*, the Cardinal has usurped and undermined the papal authority that empowers his speech (1.1.184-86, 2.4.6-8, 10-12, 5.2.146-147) by taking ‘bribes [...] as if he would have carried it away without heaven’s knowledge’ (1.1.165-66). While the Cardinal says that ‘[t]he royal blood of Aragon and Castile’ is ‘attainted’ (2.5.23-24), his words are hypocritical as shown by his adulterous affair with Julia (2.4.1-43) in contrast to the Duchess’s marriage. The Cardinal’s dealings with Bosola (1.1.27-39) and his attempt to cover up Julia’s murder (5.2.309) suggest that his speech is deceptive. The Cardinal murders Julia secretly by the use of a holy book (5.2.275-78) to silence her moral speech (5.2.255-57, 268-70), blasphemously claiming for himself an authority that is higher than that of God. The pilgrims say that Ancona has no right to ‘determine of a free prince’ (3.4.29), emphasising the discrepancy between the Cardinal’s ‘too cruel’ actions (3.4.27) and his clerical role. In associating the Cardinal with the devil, Webster is attacking James I’s absolute authority and his Catholic tolerance and sympathy.

The Cardinal’s deceptive speech with Bosola (5.2.295-96, 303) recoils upon him, for he gives Bosola the ‘master-key to our lodgings’ (5.2.326-27), confining himself to the domestic sphere. He plays the role he had scripted for the Duchess, ‘howling’ (5.5.13) and begging for mercy (5.5.45-46). As the word ‘howl’ denotes animal sounds, the Cardinal can be understood as deteriorating into the bestial world of wordless speech. The Cardinal has been destroyed by his own words, for he himself tells listeners not to credit his cries for help (5.4.3-7). His death is like that of Cariola, who lies, begs and pleads pregnancy to spare her life

(4.2.247-48, 251-53, 255). Webster suggests a link between the Cardinal and the Duchess by having him echo her final word, ‘Mercy!’ (4.2.353), just before Bosola kills him (5.5.42). While the Duchess has appealed to God, the Cardinal’s plea for mercy to Bosola reveals that ‘[his] greatness was only outward’ (5.5.43). Bosola’s assertion of the Duchess’s authority in denying the Cardinal mercy (5.5.38-40) is repeated by the Cardinal’s acknowledgement that her authority supersedes his (5.5.53-55), which emphasises the deconstruction of his association of the Duchess’s oral/aural libido with infidelity. While in life the Cardinal hides the murderous passions he projects onto the Duchess, in death he prays to ‘be laid by, and never thought of’ (5.5.90), a stark contrast to the Duchess, who joins the communion of saints.

Whereas the Cardinal deals with the Duchess in the public world, Ferdinand – the voice of the corrupt state – penetrates her room, an action equivalent to rape. Reina Green claims that ‘the Duchess of Malfi [...] fails to listen appropriately and is punished because she refuses to listen to those in authority over her and listens instead to other men’.⁸⁹ However, Webster makes Ferdinand’s voice incestuous. Ferdinand—to whom the Duchess is forced to listen—assumes Antonio’s place as a wooer. While the punishment for class transgression is combined with punishment for gender transgression, the play critiques both as unjust. Whigham argues that ‘Ferdinand’s incestuous inclination toward his sister is a social posture, of hysterical compensation – a desperate expression of the desire to evade degrading association with inferiors’.⁹⁰ However, I agree with critics who observe that Ferdinand’s concern with class is a defensive strategy intended to cloak his incestuous desire.⁹¹ In response to the Cardinal’s caution against creating ‘so wild a tempest’ (2.5.16), incest justifies Ferdinand’s outrageous reaction (2.5.17-20, 40-42), which is manifested in granting Antonio permission to

⁸⁹ Reina Green, “‘Ears Prejudicate” in *Mariam and Duchess of Malfi*, *SEL*, 43.2 (2003), 459-74 (p. 465).

⁹⁰ Whigham, ‘Mobility’, p. 169.

⁹¹ Brown, *Duchess*, pp. 17-18; Molly Smith, *Breaking Boundaries: Politics and Play in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p. 86.

‘[e]njoy thy lust still’ (3.2.98). Calbi suggests that ‘Ferdinand abandons, at least momentarily, the “discovery” of Antonio because this discovery would be tantamount to bringing to light his unconscious identification with the male rival who heterosexually “enjoys” his sister’.⁹² Ferdinand’s misogyny is a defensive mechanism against his incestuous desire towards his sister; his repressed incestuous impulses have erupted in the form of misogyny. Thus, Ferdinand’s incestuous desire has ‘come to light’ (1.1.315-16), articulating the causes of his and the Cardinal’s defeat: ‘[w]hether we fall by ambition, blood, or lust, / Like Diamonds, we are cut with our own dust’ (5.5.72-73, original emphasis).

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, this association of male figures with murderous and incestuous desires subverts the Palestinian construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. In her analysis of honour crimes among Palestinians in Israel, Nahla Abdo points out that the Israeli policy of not interfering in traditional Palestinian norms including the practice of honour killing emanates from the Israeli strategy to keep ‘Palestinian citizens socially and culturally under the grip of their traditional leadership’.⁹³ While traditional norms such as honour killing are put in the service of the colonial power, many Palestinians perceive feminist views that overturn gender roles as immoral symbols of Western and colonial cultures. However, like the Cardinal and Ferdinand who harbour murderous and incestuous desires towards their sister, some Palestinian men kill their female relatives to hide their sexual abuse of them. As Chaban, Daraghmeh and Stettler note, ‘It is believed that the bulk of sexual violence against women and girls is located within the family’.⁹⁴ While some Palestinian male figures ravish the signs of their honour, they kill these

⁹² Maurizio Calbi, *Approximate Bodies: Gender and Power in Early Modern Drama and Anatomy* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 30.

⁹³ Nahla Abdo, ‘Honour Killing, Patriarchy, and the State: Women in Israel’, in *Violence in the Name of Honour: Theoretical and Political Challenges*, ed. by Shahrzad Mojab and Nahla Abdo (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University, 2004), pp. 57-91 (pp. 75-76).

⁹⁴ Chaban et al, *Palestinian Women and Security*, p. 10.

ravished signs (female figures) to hide their sins and claim publicly that they are the protectors of their honour.

Webster subverts the dominant ideology of women's speech not only by presenting it as a projection of the evil in the minds of the Duchess's brothers but also by identifying it as a misogynistic discourse. Webster uses Julia, whose speech is associated with wantonness, to deflect the stereotype away from the Duchess and to emphasise the general degradation of women in the tyrannical brothers' discourse. Luckyj claims that the reading of Julia as a whore emanates from a misogynistic discourse proposing that 'it is precisely this sensual Duchess that Webster wanted to capture in Julia'.⁹⁵ Clifford Leech argues that '[i]t is difficult to resist the idea that Julia is meant to provide a comment on the behaviour of the Duchess: they are sisters, Webster hints, in their passions and in their consequent actions'.⁹⁶ Julia prides herself on being one of the 'great women of pleasure' (5.2.192) whilst the Duchess prides herself on being a mother. Furthermore, the Cardinal's secrecy about his affair with Julia reflects on the Duchess's secret marriage to Antonio. However, Julia's lust (2.4.3-4) is a foil to the Duchess's domestic fidelity. Bosola's assertion that the Duchess is, like the proverb, '*oft found witty, but is never wise*' (2.3.77, original emphasis) echoes the Cardinal's description of Julia as 'a witty false one' (2.4.5). Julia counters the Cardinal's accusation of inconstancy by saying that she is a constant woman whose sexual fault is the Cardinal's (2.4.4-5) and whose speech overcomes her reason (2.4.6-8). However, Julia's deceptive voice is revealed when Delio, one of the suitors before her marriage to Castruchio, tells her plainly what his suit is (2.4.72-76) and then asks: '[i]s this her wit or honesty that speaks thus?' (2.4.78). As she is the Cardinal's mistress, she is wittily using language to deceive her husband and Delio. While the Duchess and Julia play wooer and marry below their ranks (1.1.441-58,

⁹⁵ Christian Luckyj, "'Great Women of Pleasure': Main and Subplot in *The Duchess of Malfi*", *SEL*, 27.2 (1987), 267-83 (pp. 274, 276).

⁹⁶ Clifford Leech, *John Webster: A Critical Study* (London: Hogarth Press, 1951), p. 75.

5.2.156-59), Julia's wooing is a parody of the Duchess's, and, significantly, the Duchess can keep a secret while Julia cannot. Julia has not contained the 'witty false one' (2.4.5) as her lust enables Bosola to eavesdrop on the Cardinal, whose soliloquy which carries a threat to Bosola's voice (5.4.29-31) is heard by Bosola, and this signals the movement of agency from the speaker to the listener (5.4.32-3).

In the battle between the matriarchal and patriarchal voices of religious and political hypocrisies, the imprisonment of the Duchess is a failed attempt by male characters to silence her. Ferdinand assumes Antonio's place and transforms the Duchess's domestic place into what Findlay describes as 'fossilized'⁹⁷ within a theatre of revenge so as to silence her, Philomela-like (3.2.69-70, 108-09). Indeed, the wax images associate Ferdinand's attack on marriage and children with witchcraft. In her examination of witchcraft and queenship in Shakespeare's Jacobean plays, Kirilka Stavreva argues that the fascination with witches may have come out 'on the heels of witchcraft trials in the last decades of Queen Elizabeth's reign' but the association of witchcraft with queens undermines female authority and the concept of women as good rulers.⁹⁸ Those women accused of witchcraft were 'vulnerable to demonic deception because they were afflicted by melancholy or because they were of weak faith'.⁹⁹ In an inversion of gender roles, the association of Ferdinand with witchcraft undermines his authority. While Ferdinand emphasises the Duchess's femininity in order to deprive her of her political title, the Duchess defends herself against his stereotypes. She compares herself to Brutus's faithful wife, Portia (4.1.72), but does not similarly swallow fire or commit suicide.

⁹⁷ Findlay, *Perspective*, p. 100.

⁹⁸ Kirilka Stavreva, "'There's Magic in Thy Majesty': Queenship and Witch-Speak in Jacobean Shakespeare', in *High and Mighty Queens of Early Modern England: Realities and Representations*, ed. by Carole Levin, Jo Eldridge Carney and Debra Barret-Graves (New York: Palgrave, 2003), pp. 151-168 (p. 152).

⁹⁹ Brian Levack, *The Witchcraft Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 277.

The Duchess's metaphor of the world as a 'theater' in which she plays a part 'gainst [her] will' (4.1.84-85) may suggest that she has lost agency. Some critics suggest that the female characters' reflections on why they are acting are consistent with the boy actors' impersonations of female speech and action. Sara Eaton proposes that they become 'characters whose subjectivity can be doubted – by themselves, by male characters, by the audience'.¹⁰⁰ The Duchess defies Bosola by saying '[w]ere I a man / I'd beat that counterfeit face into thy other' (3.5.119-20). Such a line is a sign of the boy actor's (and woman's) frustration with the restrictions placed upon his / her speech and action. Luckyj argues that '[s]uch fantasies of crossing gender lines are destined to remain merely fantasies partly because these women endorse a gender system from which they are necessarily excluded'.¹⁰¹ However, Webster shows that the Duchess's performance unifies her (4.2.60) as the Duchess, the mother and the sacrificial woman. 'Who am I?' (4.2.122), she asks Bosola – a question that 'seems [s] to raise great problems of personal identity', as Hodge puts it.¹⁰² Bosola focuses on her natural rather than her political body 'to induce in her a *contemptus mundi* rather than the passionate involvement with life that has characterized her throughout'.¹⁰³ However, the Duchess answers her own question and insists that 'I am Duchess of Malfi still' (4.2.141). I agree with critics who note that this statement suggests the Duchess's assertion of her autonomous political and maternal identity and her refusal to internalise the patriarchal discourses' condemnation of her voice and action.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Sara Eaton, 'Defacing the Feminine in Renaissance Tragedy', in *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. by Valerie Wayne (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp. 181-98 (p. 186).

¹⁰¹ Luckyj, 'Performance', p. 219.

¹⁰² Bob Hodge, 'Mine Eyes Dazzle: False Consciousness in Webster's Plays', in *Literature, Language, and Society in England, 1580-1680*, ed. by David Aers, Bob Hodge and Gunther Kress (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1981), pp. 100-21 (p. 114).

¹⁰³ Michael Cameron Andrews, *This Action of Our Death: The Performance of Death in English Renaissance Drama* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989), p. 64.

¹⁰⁴ Belsey, *Subject*, pp. 35, 49; Findlay, *Perspective*, pp. 104-5.

Authority and dignified submission define the Duchess's death speech (4.2.209-11, 229-30) as she sees her stranglers 'pull[ing] down heaven upon [her]' (4.2.230). The Duchess's apparently submissive words (4.2.169-70) are in fact parodic, mocking the convention of female obedience to male tyranny. Findlay remarks that strangling 'silences the self-proclaiming female voice'.¹⁰⁵ However, as the Duchess accepts death in the spirit of martyrdom (4.2.230), her last thoughts are with her children (4.2.203-4). Speaking as a mother she implies that her death is an affirmation of life (1.1.129-31). Antonio's son's inheritance of the duchy through his 'mother's right' (5.5.113) suggests that matrilineal succession overrides patrilineal succession and that 'the discourses that empower her as ruler and as wife and mother supersede theirs'.¹⁰⁶ While *The White Devil* shows that the world continues its vicious course of discourse, *The Duchess of Malfi* reveals that the line of the Duchess's integrity emerges and the voices of political and religious hypocrisies are destroyed.

The male figures' speeches represent madness but the Duchess speaks sense. The Chorus of madmen who appear in Act 4 Scene 2 are powerful male types that parodically caricature male voices of authority—astrologer, lawyer, priest, doctor. One of the Chorus sings a mad song howling like aggressive animals (4.2.61-72). While Ferdinand uses this grotesque spectacle of madness as a weapon for achieving authority over the Duchess, it reveals his impotency. This Chorus is designed to break down her subjectivity, but it actually makes her surer of it, for madness is 'nothing but noise' that serves to keep her in her 'right wits' (4.2.5-6). While Ferdinand attempts to drive the Duchess to madness, the play is replete with animal imagery that foreshadows Ferdinand's lapse into madness (3.5.86, 5.5.67). Bosola's letter informing Ferdinand about the Duchess's childbirth is described by a servant as 'put [ting] him out of his wits' (2.4.69) and Ferdinand feels that he has 'grown mad' (2.5.3). The inten-

¹⁰⁵ Findlay, *Perspective*, p. 103.

¹⁰⁶ Allman, *Virtue*, p. 176.

sity of Ferdinand's incestuous rage is substantiated by his failure to hear the Cardinal's warning that '[y]ou fly beyond your reason' (2.5.46). The Cardinal compares Ferdinand's raving to:

deaf men's shrill discourse,
Who talk aloud, thinking all other men
To have their imperfection (2.5.52-54).

This connects the ability to hear with the ability to speak. I think that the play's condemnation of Ferdinand's loud voice has an affiliation with the Islamic condemnation of loud speech which is associated with animals. It renders people who partake in it less than human. In the Qur'an, God says, '[g]o at a moderate pace and lower your voice, for the ugliest of all voices is the braying of asses'.¹⁰⁷ Ferdinand submits to the throes of 'apoplexy', 'frenzy' (5.1.58-59) and 'lycanthropy' (5.2.6, 13-16)¹⁰⁸ where his violence and 'deed of darkness' (4.2.335) recoil upon him (4.2.308-11).

Webster shows that the failing power structures and unstable male voices are linked to male deafness to female figures' voices and aural openness to gossip. While the Duchess is whole, Ferdinand 'speaks with other's tongues, and hears men's suits / With others' ears' (1.1.173-74). Ferdinand's loss of speech and listening that leave him 'deform'd' and 'beastly' (2.5.57) results from his aural closure in contrast to the Duchess's oral openness. When the Duchess wishes to speak with him about the 'scandalous report' (3.1.47), he declares that he will 'be ever deaf to't' (3.1.48). He shows deafness to the Duchess's request to 'hear me' (3.2.72) and when she persists, 'I pray sir, hear me: I am married' (3.2.82), he silences her: '[d]o not

¹⁰⁷ Luqman 31. 19.

¹⁰⁸ Smith argues that Ferdinand's 'lycanthropy, a malady sometimes afflicting pregnant women, emerges as a demented state caused by his sister's fertility', *Boundaries*, p. 85.

speak' (3.2.74). The Duchess's transgression reveals the weakness of male figures as they are unable to control the common voice that accuses the Duchess of being 'a strumpet' (3.1.26). While Ferdinand hears and reproduces the rumours that echo his own perception of his sister as a strumpet (3.2.134-36), these outside voices represent the unreliability of linguistic transmission and the dependence of Ferdinand on those of a subordinate status. Webster shows that Ferdinand's deafness to the Duchess's voice ultimately renders him inhuman (3.2.88-89); he rants about 'the howling of a wolf' (3.2.88) and is remembered afterwards as 'this apparition [...] this terrible thing' (3.2.142, 147).

Ferdinand's aural openness to the public voices of gossip and his aural closure to the Duchess's voice may offer many Palestinian scholars of English a criticism of the destructive Palestinian discourse of gossip and male figures' deafness to the truthful female voice. For example, in 2012, Aya Baradiya was thrown into a well by her uncle who suspected her of having a sexual relationship based on the phone call she received from a man. In spite of her appeals to her uncle to have mercy upon her in the name of God and Mohammed, and asserting that she had done nothing wrong, her uncle was deaf to her voice. Aya Baradiya was mourned as a chaste martyr and her uncle was imprisoned.¹⁰⁹

Webster subverts the convention that female silence is passive by showing that the Duchess's silence, in death, has power over Ferdinand. Kathleen McLuskie suggests that '[t]he Duchess of Malfi is ultimately overcome by the political power of one brother and the physical violence of the other'.¹¹⁰ However, the Duchess's corpse presents an uncanny power to possess Ferdinand (4.2.264). While revenge heroes (like Hieronimo, Titus and Hamlet) vindicate

¹⁰⁹ Nasser Shiyukhi and Karin Laub, 'Palestinian Woman Aya Baradiya's "Honor" Killing Sparks Tougher West Bank Laws', *WP* (19 May 2011) <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/19/palestinian-woman-aya-bar_n_864430.html> [accessed 31 May 2013].

¹¹⁰ Kathleen McLuskie, *Renaissance Dramatists* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 145.

murder, the Duchess's silence elicits Ferdinand's self-condemnation (4.2.298-304) and loss of control. His transformation of the Duchess from a lustful woman into his 'dearest friend' (4.2.279) and his twist to the question of the double (4.2.267-9) suggests that the Duchess affirms the permanence of the spirit that separates man from beast (5.5.120-21) while he is a soulless beast. Ferdinand regrets his pitiless 'revenge' against 'her innocence' (4.2.278-82) and disavows his connection to her execution (4.2.273-74), blaming Bosola for performing the part imposed upon him (4.2.288-90) and for not having protected the Duchess (4.2.273-80). He regards Bosola as the embodiment of his own guilt of silencing an innocent victim and tries to disown and banish him (4.2.326). Because Bosola carries the sword in the name of the Duchess to silence the Cardinal and Ferdinand who oppose her voice, Ferdinand attributes the cause of his death to the Duchess: '[m]y sister! O my sister! There's the cause on't' (5.5.71).

Ferdinand's self-condemnation and his remorse over killing the Duchess of Malfi enact a dialogue with some Palestinian men who unjustly kill their female relatives in the cause of honour. For example, Iqab Baradiya showed remorse in killing his niece, Aya Baradiya, mentioned above: 'I feel like a criminal', he said. 'I wasn't thinking'.¹¹¹ Iqab's and Ferdinand's confessions that they were motivated by passion and committed their crimes in emotional distress suggest that women in early modern England and contemporary Palestine are victims of the ills of male figures.

Ferdinand's and the Cardinal's confession of their crimes and their recognition of the Duchess's innocence cancels out their previous association of the Duchess's speech with licentiousness. Their public recognition of her authority questions the prerogative of male govern-

¹¹¹ Nasser Shiyukhi and Karin Laub, 'Palestinian Woman Aya Baradiya's "Honor" Killing Sparks Tougher West Bank Laws', *WP* (19 May 2011) <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/19/palestinian-woman-aya-bar_n_864430.html> [accessed 31 May 2013].

ance. Foucault describes confession as a ritual in which the confessor asserts his own position in a social context by acknowledging the power of others. The confession is ‘a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession’.¹¹² It is hearing that elicits Ferdinand’s confession which is, in turn, mimetic of the Duchess’s authoritative voice. As the Cardinal and Ferdinand die, leaving ‘no more fame behind ’em than should one / Fall in a frost, and leave his print in snow’ (5.5.114-15), ‘the associations of the past with pathology and corruption also recede, while the dead Duchess’s elegiac role assumes greater prominence’, as Rose puts it.¹¹³ Therefore, *The Duchess of Malfi*, as Salkeld notes, ‘can be read as [an] allegory [...] of the collapse of dynastic monarchy and the emergence of a new bourgeois individualist conception of the state and the subject’.¹¹⁴ This political and social change is accentuated by the failing of patriarchal voices and the affirmation of the Duchess’s masculine voice.

The Duchess’s disembodied voice (5.3.1, 4, 6, 345) dissociates her from the sexual looseness of which her brothers accuse her. Whereas Bosola and her brothers are like ‘vaulted graves, / That, ruined, yields no echo’ (5.5.97-98), an echo is heard from the Duchess’s grave. I think that this Renaissance inversion of the spiritual nature of men and the physical nature of women carries strong resonance from a contemporary Arab context. The importance of disembodiment, and thus freedom from mortal weakness, is recognisable in Arab objections to the U.S - produced film, made specifically for YouTube, about the Prophet Mohammad. The

¹¹² Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), p. 61.

¹¹³ Rose, *Expense*, p. 172.

¹¹⁴ Duncan Salkeld, *Madness and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 101.

film features an actor portraying the prophet Mohammad, which is forbidden in Islam.¹¹⁵ While there have always been film productions depicting Mohammad, what provokes violent protests in Arab countries is the fact that an embodied Mohammad configures him as over-ruled by his own lusts and passions. In contrast, the dramatic technique employed in Webster's play dissociates the Duchess from the wanton embodied voice.

The Duchess's powerful Echo may recall Christ's resurrection following on from the earlier allusion that, at her murder, the world returned 'to its first chaos' (4.1.98), alongside her protestation 'I long to bleed' (4.1.109). The female appropriation of Christian discourse suggests that the Duchess's masculinity displayed through her controlled voice is contrasted with the effeminacy and the vocal failure of Ferdinand and all male characters as the mad scene reveals. The Echo, which Antonio says sounds 'very like my wife's voice' (5.3.26), thwarts masculine rhetorical control. As Bloom has proposed, in oral terms the disembodied voice is 'defined by ambiguity and instability' that 'threatens men's assumptions about their capacity for vocal control, producing instead, unexpectedly robust models of female agency'.¹¹⁶ Troubled by Echo's 'very deadly Accent' (5.4.21), Antonio calls the Echo a mere 'Thing' (5.3.23) without agency. Belsey asserts that '[t]o be a subject is to speak, to identify with the 'I' of an utterance, to be the agent of the action inscribed in the verb'.¹¹⁷ Antonio's claim that '[t]hou art a dead thing' (5.3.39) suggests that he perceives the Echo as a voice without agency – a voice that cannot speak its own 'I'. Whether Echo is the subject of her own utterance troubles editors who print one of the dialogues as follows:

Antonio. 'Tis very like my wife's voice

¹¹⁵ Sam Bacile, 'Prophet Muhammad Movie', 'youtube.com' (12 September 2012) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_wTvx6-ok4&bpctr=1365617241> [accessed 22 April 2013].

¹¹⁶ Bloom, *Voice*, pp. 161, 187.

¹¹⁷ Belsey, *Subject*, p. 15.

Echo. Ay, wife's voice (5.3.26-27).

Lucas produces a different version:

Antonio. 'Tis very like my wi[f]es-voyce

Eccho. I, wifes-voyce (5.3.32-33).¹¹⁸

In this editorial controversy over the Echo's agency or lack thereof, Lucas attributes agency to the Echo as there is a subject behind the utterance of the first person pronoun 'I'. However, Brown denies the subjectivity of the Echo by taking her words as a repetition; '[a]y' echoes Antonio's '[m]y'. The agency of the Echo only works in written language, for I and ay are homophonous. Reina Green's claim that 'after death she (the Duchess) behaves as the ideal listening wife, echoing her husband's words'¹¹⁹ implies that Green, like Antonio, does not acknowledge the agency of the Echo. However, she also asserts that 'Antonio may have survived if he had listened more carefully to his dead wife's advice'.¹²⁰ While Hopkins claims that language is 'less effective' in women's 'mouths',¹²¹ I agree with Lynn Enterline who observes that the Echo perverts Antonio's words and calls into question the agency he claims to possess.¹²² Whereas the Duchess advises him to 'fly your fate' (5.3.35) and Delio tells him, '[h]ark: the dead stones [...] / give you good counsel' (5.3.36-37), Antonio is deaf to her voice, telling Delio that it is 'impossible to fly your fate' (5.3.34), '[l]ose all, or nothing' (5.4.51) and that '[n]ecessity compels me' (5.3.33). Antonio's combination of attitudes suggests his irrational and unstable voice and implies the problem of Antonio's search for autonomy outside the influence of the Duchess's Echo.

¹¹⁸ John Webster, *The Complete Works of John Webster, Volume II, The Duchess of Malfi and The Devil's Law Case*, ed. by F. L. Lucas (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966).

¹¹⁹ Green, 'Prejudicate', p. 467.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 468.

¹²¹ Hopkins, 'Part', p. 185.

¹²² Lynn Enterline, "'Hairy on the Inside': *The Duchess of Malfi* and the Body of Lycanthropy", *YJC*, 7.2 (1994), 85-129 (pp. 115-21).

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, the association of the Duchess with the soul and her brothers with the body subverts the Palestinian association of male figures with disembodiment and female figures with embodiment. The Duchess's disembodied voice that troubles male figures' voices and authority subverts the Palestinian belief that ghosts and spirits are reserved to male figures. Female figures that are supposedly killed justly in the cause of honour have no right to protest and so do not appear as ghosts or disembodied voices to haunt male figures. However, male traitors who are buried outside the walls of graveyard and village are reported to return as ghosts that haunt and threaten to undo anyone who sees them. In my village, families keep warning their children not to approach traitors' graves, fearing that the villains' apparitions will drive their children to madness. Local people also verbally attribute the ominous deeds of rape and violent deaths to Ehraish's divine curse. The tale that people circulate is that Ehraish was a religious man, but that people accused him of religious and political hypocrisies, killed him and burned his body. However, he rose from the ashes as a bird that perched on a rock on a mountain named after him, Ehraish Mountain. I think that Palestinian oral tales about the appearance and speech of the male ghosts of villains and innocents and their silence on female ghosts can be explained by the fact that Palestinians experience no guilt over killing women whose breaches of chastity cannot be rationalised. Given such a cultural context, a Palestinian reader / spectator would interpret the Echo of the Duchess's voice as disruptive of the whole belief system. Her disembodied voice, which disturbs the gender construction that links masculinity to disembodiment and femininity to embodiment, should not exist.

Antonio's oral construction of the Duchess is set against that of the Cardinal and Ferdinand. He praises her for both her eloquence and the accompanying language of her eyes (1.1.190-97). While he acknowledges that her speech is erotic and has the power to inspire a man lying

in a 'dead palsy' (1.1.197) to dance a sexually suggestive galliard, he transforms it to virtue and her 'countenance' to 'continence/ As cuts off all lascivious, and vain hope' (1.1.198-200). His voice is judgemental, for his analyses of the nature of Ferdinand, the Cardinal, and the Duchess are confirmed by the subsequent action. However, while Antonio prospers in his intimate relationship with the Duchess, he surrenders his authority to her and in the public world to her tyrannical brothers.¹²³ Because Antonio fails to assume a masculine public role and voice and remains within a feminised private sphere, his voice is doomed to failure. He meets the Duchess's induced labour with indecision and panic (3.2.154) and his aggression remains verbal in contrast to the Duchess's order 'not [to] think of them' (1.1.468). In response to the Duchess's instruction that he leave for Padua, he says obediently '[y]ou counsel safely' (3.5.60) which shows his dependence on the Duchess's voice. However, in the final act, Antonio not only refuses the agency embodied in the Echo, but he—unlike Bosola who develops affinity with the Duchess's values—is deluded by his 'hope of pardon' (5.4.44), opposing the Duchess's voice. Thus, as he calls the Echo 'a thing', he similarly becomes '[a] most wretched thing' (5.4.49).

Bosola's bond with the Duchess is redemptive and transformative, for he becomes the agent through which the Duchess's voice permeates the world, through speech as well as actions. While the Duchess's silence signals the annihilation of Ferdinand's subjectivity and voice,¹²⁴ it provokes Bosola's moral outrage. As long as he is enmeshed within the corrupt male authority embodied in Ferdinand, Bosola shares Ferdinand's misogyny (2.1.36-65). Bosola 'rails at those things which he wants' (1.1.25), suppressing his honesty, that is embodied by the Duchess, in order to be 'a true servant' (4.2.332) of the patriarchal order. However, he

¹²³ Allman, *Virtue*, pp. 153, 170-71; Whigham, 'Mobility', p. 176.

¹²⁴ While incestuous frustration urges Ferdinand to retaliation as he seeks the purgation of his own tainted blood in the purging of the Duchess's, his identification of his own sin with the Duchess has led him to attribute to her his defects and internal chaos.

turns from his masters (5.4.81-82) to become an honest man once he listens to the Duchess's dramatic and moral voice after death (4.2.340-42) and silence in imprisonment (4.1.9-10). He notes her nobility and 'sacred innocence' (4.2.354) that dismantles her brothers' oral construction of her (4.1.6, 9-10). After her death, he continues his dialogue with her and binds his ears to her spiritual voice (4.2.354-69) to lead him out of the '[h]ell' (4.2.341-42, 346-48) that the Cardinal's and Ferdinand's voices create. However, while Bosola has learnt from the Duchess, and has grown mentally and morally, he is ultimately caught up by the masculine, destructive power for revenge into which he was brought by becoming Ferdinand's servant at the beginning, and so he is inextricably involved in the bloodbath at the end – as both agent and victim. The Duchess's last word before she dies – '[m]ercy' (4.2.352) – is directed to Bosola, which, arguably, opposes his vengeful voice. As Allman observes, 'Bosola is still a revenger, a victim rewriting himself as a man in the shape of his oppressor'.¹²⁵ While Bosola carries the 'sword of justice' (5.2.344), he dies in '[r]evenge, for the Duchess of Malfi' (5.5.81) as he does not listen to her warning against revenge.

Webster's *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* are comments on the corruption and abuse of absolute political power within King James I's reign. The *Duchess of Malfi* criticises the absolute authority of the voices of the church and state in the figures of the Cardinal and Ferdinand who conflate their body natural with their body politic. *The White Devil* criticises the deficiency of the court and legal power in Jacobean period. At a metatheatrical level, Webster's *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* suggest that the boy actor disrupts gender difference and challenges male dominance and the principle of woman's subordination. *The White Devil* reveals that male figures' voices are associated with lasciviousness, religious and political hypocrisy and revenge. This, in turn, shows that misogynist discourse poses a

¹²⁵ Allman, *Virtue*, pp. 164-65.

challenge to God's authority. While new historicist criticism denies the possibility of resistance to the dominant ideology and claims that resistance is the very means by which patriarchal discourse strengthens itself, the Duchess of Malfi's death leads to social and political reform, subverting and containing male figures' voices. *The Duchess of Malfi* affirms the matriarchal aural/oral libido and condemns patriarchal speech and hearing. Like *Othello*, *The Duchess of Malfi* reveals that masculine identity is unsettled by the very ideology that shapes it in that men's failing voices are attributed to their deafness to the female voice. Webster shows that the Duchess's powerful, troubling disembodied voice is linked with theatrical performance. The role of the Duchess, especially the Echo scene, may also contain a dramatization of the position of the boy actor who is no longer able to impersonate the female physically and vocally, and looks forward to playing a default male role of the failing voice such as Ferdinand's.

Following the methodology of presentism, I have shown that Webster's tragedies form a dialogue with contemporary Palestinian construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. In *The White Devil*, Vittoria's speech that reveals the corruption within the patriarchal society is a criticism of Palestinian legal discrimination against women and the Palestinian masculine construction of the outspoken woman as a whore and a phallic woman. Ferdinand's incestuous desire towards his sister enables me to problematise the Palestinian association of female speech with sexual looseness and female silence with chastity and obedience, for female silence is put in the service of some Palestinian male figures' immoral desires. The Duchess of Malfi's silence in death that elicits Ferdinand's self-condemnation resonates with contemporary Palestine where silencing female figures in the cause of honour elicits the murderers' confession of their unjust crimes and their self-condemnations. *The Duchess of Malfi* affirms Islamic condemnations of loud speech and it

subverts the Palestinian association of male figures with the soul and female figures with the body. Teaching these tragedies, which associate female speech with truth and dramatic authority and female voices with religious and political hypocrisies, will offer my students a new perception of the construction of gender via the binary opposites of speech and silence in early modern England and contemporary Palestine. As Zehavit Gross notes, higher education 'empowers the individual to resist discrimination and to be committed to enhancing equality and combating social injustice'.¹²⁶ If my students read and analyse these tragedies from a position of complicity and critique, they could begin to critically reflect on elements of their own traditional culture that oppress and silence women.

¹²⁶ Zehavit Gross, 'Muslim Women in Higher Education', p. 153.

Chapter Four

Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women*

In many cases of early marriage, girls are often denied their right to choose and decide their own fate by their fathers, brothers, and other male family members, who force them to marry in order to protect the dignity of the family, as well as to decrease the family's financial burden under the strain of the current political and economic context.¹

The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs is a national committee to combat violence against women by improving the legal laws that discriminate against them. The ministry attributes the verbal, physical and sexual violence unleashed against Palestinian women to the interrelated oppressive network of traditions, legal systems and Israeli occupation.² The preface of this chapter suggests that in Palestinian culture, women are denied voices with which to express their desires and choose their husbands and they are exhorted to listen to and obey male figures' dictates. The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs suggests that the very difficult living conditions Palestinians face due to the Israeli occupation – mobility restrictions, increasing unemployment, and high poverty levels – lead families to marry their daughters young to manage household poverty.³ The Palestinian female's defiance of patriarchal voices would tarnish the family honour and this defiance would sanction and force men to kill her so as to restore honour to the family. Violence against Palestinian women 'is a behaviour that expresses a direction of thought and culture based on control'.⁴ In this chapter, I use

¹ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women-2011-2019', *GEWE* (2011), 1-76 (p. 11).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 9-12, 19-24.

³ *Ibid.*, pp.11-12, 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

the contemporary Palestinian issues of arranged and enforced marriage, the female position of subservience, and the right of women to choose their husbands as presentist intertexts to examine Thomas Middleton's *The Changeling* (1622)⁵ and *Women Beware Women* (1625)⁶, which depict the evils of enforced marriage and male deafness to female voices.

My inclusion of Middleton's tragedies in this thesis emanates from my desire to expand the curriculum at An-Najah University and, above all, to play a part in trying to change the masculine construction of gender via the binary opposites of speech and silence. As I have pointed out earlier, instructors and students follow discourses of misogyny when they explain the conflict between female and male characters in early modern tragedies taught at An-Najah University.⁷ The study of Middleton's tragedies which describe the destructive effects of the renaissance practice of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to the female voice may offer my students at An-Najah University a critique of the Palestinian traditions that silence and objectify women in the marriage market. For students of English at An-Najah University, even the titles of the tragedies may suggest that women are given the central focus and that Middleton opposes the ideology of his time that reinforces male concerns and fantasies.

I have chosen Middleton's *The Changeling* (1622) and *Women Beware Women* (1625) to introduce students to different perspectives on silence, speech and gender from those of Shakespeare's and Webster's tragedies chosen in this thesis. Middleton is ranked alongside Webster and Shakespeare in his creation of great tragedies and psychologically complex female

⁵ Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Changeling*, ed. by N. W. Bawcutt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998). Subsequent references to this edition are cited in the text by act, scene, and line number.

⁶ Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women in A Chaste Maid in Cheapside, Women Beware Women, The Changeling, A Game at Chess* ed. by Richard Dutton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 73-163. Subsequent references to this play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act, scene and line number.

⁷ Odeh J. Odeh, Private Communication, 19 March 2015.

characters. His reputation has already been strengthened by the Oxford publication of his Complete Works in 2007.⁸ I argue that, like Webster, Middleton privileges female protagonists and criticises Jacobean political and domestic power structures. While Webster makes the boy actors impersonate female protagonists whose voices and actions reflect a conception of selfhood that is autonomous rather than relational, I contend that the speech and silence of Middleton's boy actors / heroines suggest a relational form of self-fashioning, at least on the surface. However, their silent and vocal forms of complicity constitute ways of subverting the authority of male figures whose voices they seem to obey. While sexual transgression in Shakespeare's *Othello* and Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* is presented as a perverse projection from the imaginations of evil men, the sexual transgression of Middleton's heroines stems from their own motivations.⁹ Stilling argues that Middleton accepted the stereotype of woman's 'frail moral character',¹⁰ and he does create heroines like Webster's Vittoria who boldly voices her sexual desires. While Desdemona's silence is associated with morality, silence for Middleton's heroines conceals erotic and murderous impulses, disrupting the established relation between silence, chastity and obedience.

Following the critical line of presentism, I argue that there are similarities in situations concerning the construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence in both the fictional worlds of Middleton's tragedies and in contemporary Palestine, despite the differences in historical and ideological contexts. In the classrooms where I teach, *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* offer implicit criticisms of the Palestinian practice of enforced marriage and male deafness to female figures' voices. Middleton's heroines and

⁸ Gary Taylor, 'Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives', in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 25-58 (p. 25).

⁹ Ania Loomba, 'Women's Division of Experience', in *Revenge Tragedy: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. by Stevie Simkin (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 41-65 (pp. 51-52).

¹⁰ Roger Stilling, *Love and Death in Renaissance Tragedy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), p. 260.

contemporary Palestinian women subversively inscribe their speech and silence with rebellious subtexts, turning their apparent subjection into subversive schemes of resistance. For Palestinian readers and audiences Middleton's tragedies stage their perception of honour as a signifier that is assigned and confirmed in public rather than inherent. I argue that, for Palestinian readers, *The Changeling* stages their preconceived convention that the female is the agent of transgression and exploitation. My students may perceive that male figures' attacks on Beatrice-Joanna are associated with Palestinian men's loss of honour and their shame about occupation that leads to greater verbal and physical violence against women.

Palestinian male figures' verbal disowning of their male and female relations as traitors and sexually transgressive women enables me to scrutinize Livia's usurpation of masculine discourse in her re-naming of Isabella to defy Fabritio's absolute authority in *Women Beware Women*. While it is Palestinian male relatives who disown traitors verbally, Livia usurps this linguistic authority in her attempt to delegitimise the relationship between Isabella and Hippolito. I argue that the bloody masque of women's retributive and destructive voices is a foil to Palestinian women's celebration of male figures' honour in weddings.

While Middleton's heroines who transgress orally, aurally and sexually interrogate the sexual politics of the Jacobean period, students of English at An-Najah may recognise that Middleton's heroines subvert the Palestinian established roles of gender difference too, rather than criticise male figures' objectification of, and deafness to the female. The possibilities of interpretation are complicated by received ideas and traditions. Middleton's heroines' subversive plots that lead to their ultimate deaths can be read as a warning against disobeying male figures' dictates rather than a comment on the destructive practice of turning a deaf ear to female figures' voices. Many of my students, the majority of whom are girls coming from dif-

ferent rural areas, internalise the masculine construction of gender difference, based on the inferiority of women and the principle of male supremacy. Feminist views are taken by many students, especially those who are living in rural areas to, symbolise the immoral and blasphemous Western world. In fact, my feminist reading of early modern texts does not receive a welcome response or recognition from the majority of my students who spread rumours that I am an immoral and blasphemous instructor.

I deploy the critical line of new historicism and consider the subversion of gender roles in the performance of speech and silence on the Jacobean stage. I agree with Margot Heinemann's assertion that Middleton depicts his own theatrical culture not as 'a passive reflection of the world' but as 'purposeful and critical'.¹¹ For example, Middleton's censored play *A Game at Chess* (1624) capitalises on anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish feeling stimulated by the unpopular proposed match between Prince Charles and the Infanta of Spain which had broken down in the spring of 1624.¹² When James I learned of this play, he ordered it to be closed and issued a warrant for Middleton's arrest for portraying the reigning monarch onstage.¹³ In this chapter, I demonstrate that Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* criticise the absolute authority that shores up King James I's rule through a criticism of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to the female voice. King James I's first words in 1603 to England's Parliament were: 'I am the Husband, all the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife; I am the Head, and it is my Body'.¹⁴ While King James I encouraged his subjects to obey him as they would a father,¹⁵ I argue that Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women*

¹¹ Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 67.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 151-71.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

¹⁴ Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne and their Contemporaries* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University, 1983), p. 141.

¹⁵ See, Andrew Hadfield, 'The Power and Rights of the Crown in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*: 'The King: The King's to Blame'', *RES*, 54.217 (2003), 566-586 (p. 579-80).

suggest that absolute patriarchal authority breeds female characters' deployment of deceptive silence and speech to defy male figures' authority.

A new historicist reading would argue that the dominant male powers in both plays deliberately foster the subversive behaviour of others (Livia, Bianca, Beatrice-Joanna, Isabella, De Flores) in order to crush it publicly and so assert their dominance. However, in this chapter I will move beyond new historicism's conventional line to suggest that the fissures and weaknesses are actually located in the dominant figures themselves. While female figures are silenced in the plays' tragic closures, the equivocal nature of the representations undercut the accepted orthodoxies. Middleton shows that female figures' subversive speeches and silences are a response to the destructive masculine practice of enforced marriage and male figures' deafness to female figures' voices. However, male figures do not recognise that the masculine ideology of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence is the cause of female figures' destructive plots.

I argue that Middleton's heroines' subversive silences that defy male figures' voices are linked with theatrical performance. While Webster shows that the boy actors impersonating Vittoria's and the Duchess of Malfi's speeches are morally superior to male hypocrites' voices, Middleton's heroines subversively ally their voices and silences with male figures' authority. The boy actors impersonating Middleton heroines' voices bring emergent new young male voices to challenge the older men's voices. Beatrice-Joanna's inability to live up to the male-defined imperative to be and seem chaste emanates from the fact that a boy actor performs her role. The embodied character on stage cannot be an ideal woman because he is not what she seems. I contend that Middleton creates a space for the boy actor impersonating Beatrice-Joanna's voice and silence to turn the accusations that male figures bring against her

back upon them. In *Women Beware Women*, while Middleton gives the boy actors a subjective space within the masque to defy male figures' authority, the boy actors' voices are self-destructive ones. The boy actors' absorption into the roles of goddesses and nymphs expresses their self-negations as they transcend their imitative female roles.

The Changeling

Middleton's and Rowley's *The Changeling* reveals the inadequacy of the paradigm that associates woman's speech with sexuality and silence with chastity. While the main plot suggests that silence produces excessive transgression on the part of woman, the sub-plot reveals that the excessive speech of madness ultimately serves to contain female sexuality. The fact that Beatrice-Joanna is silenced at the end of the play as she voices her sexual desires and achieves them (like Webster's Vittoria) by means of adultery and murder may reveal that Middleton sanctions the stereotypical association between female speech and lasciviousness. Many twentieth-century critics have perceived Beatrice-Joanna's character as that of a 'dangerous tigress,' like Shakespeare's Tamora.¹⁶ However, following the critical line of feminism, I argue that Beatrice-Joanna's sexual transgression is a comment on the masculine practice of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to female figures' voices. As a result of her father's absolute authority and his deafness to her voice, Beatrice-Joanna chooses to murder Alonzo rather than appear disobedient. From a psychological perspective, I propose that De Flores represents Beatrice-Joanna's id that always urges the ego to rebel against the cultural super ego. Beatrice-Joanna's aural and sexual submission to De Flores is a transgression of gender and class conventions. However, her sexual desire towards De Flores originates from her desperate attempt to maintain a veneer of obedience to the male fig-

¹⁶ Robert Barker and David Nicol, 'Does Beatrice Joanna Have a Subtext?: *The Changeling* on the London Stage', *EMLS*, 10.1 (2004) < <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/10-1/barknico.htm> > [accessed 22 June 2013], 3.1-43 (para. 23).

ures' codes of honour and chastity, rather than from the fulfilment of any unconscious sexual desire.

I think a psychological approach is an appropriate method to read the play from my Palestinian presentist and pedagogical agenda. A psychoanalytic reading brings to the surface and makes explicit the ideas of gender construction via the binary opposites of speech and silence that are hidden, but perhaps deeply embedded in my students' and colleagues' ways of reading gender. While previous interpretations of texts consolidate the patriarchal misogynistic discourse, I propose that psychoanalysis is the best way of illuminating what has been repressed in previous readings. I argue that Beatrice-Joanna's sexual transgression is a response to Vermandero's deafness to her sexual desire that is relegated to her unconscious. Vermandero, the voice of the superego, functions as an alienating force in the psyche of Beatrice-Joanna who seeks to fulfil her sexual desires that her father censors and pushes into her unconscious. Many contemporary Palestinian readers may see Beatrice-Joanna's unconscious sexual desire towards De Flores as a critique of the oppressive patriarchal order that deliberately remains deaf to the female desiring voice rather than an indictment of Beatrice-Joanna's moral degradation.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Beatrice-Joanna's sexual transgression is a comment on male figures' deafness to female figures' voices. Beatrice-Joanna's operation amid the male voices of power dramatises a need to work within the traditional rules of Palestinian culture on the part of women who can, thereby, assert their power and agency. Beatrice-Joanna's attempt to keep the veneer of obedience reflects contemporary Palestinian constructions of honour as a public performance rather than an inherent signifier. I argue that the psychological reading of Beatrice-Joanna's hatred of De Flores as a sign of unconscious sex-

ual desires subverts the Palestinian construction of honour based on women's repression of their interests in men. The construction of Beatrice-Joanna as an agent of transgression resonates with contemporary Palestinian practices of scapegoating women for their sexual transgression that male figures initiate. Isabella's exercise of her agency in the madhouse without losing her chastity resonates with Palestinian women's assertion of their power within the household and the political sphere without compromising their sexual reputations. Isabella's self-control undermines the Palestinian perception of women as passive and weak creatures whose oral and aural openness to male figures is taken to symbolise sexual lasciviousness. Alibius's turning a deaf ear to Isabella's truthful voice and his insistence on imprisoning her is echoed in the traditional Palestinian construction of women as dishonest and untrustworthy creatures.

Middleton excuses the conduct of Beatrice-Joanna because she follows the scripts written for her by a more powerful male authority. Vermandero's deafness to Beatrice-Joanna's voice is a subtle political critique of James I as a king/father. Vermandero insists that he has his will with regard to his daughter's marriage in order to enhance his 'name' (2.1.20-23), because the marriage amounts to 'the addition of a son' (2.1.99). He is deaf to her expressions of coolness and 'dullness' towards Alonzo (2.2.124) and her desire to postpone the wedding (I.1.192-198), wishing that Piracquo did not exist (2.2.18-19). Moreover, he calls her fear of the 'violent' loss of her virginity to Alonzo 'a toy' (I.1.192, 199). Rather than a bond between a man and his wife, marriage is founded on the love between a man and his wife's father (4.2.1-2, 25-28, 5.3.180-81). From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Vermandero's deafness to Beatrice-Joanna's voice may provide a point of focus to my female students, especially those who are living in rural areas, who are treated as objects of exchange in the marriage market and whose voices are denied. However, Middleton shows that absolute

authority encourages deceit and subversive schemes rather than conformity. As a result of her father's absolute authority and his deafness to her desires, Beatrice-Joanna's defiance is associated with secrecy and silence, which opens up a space of self-authorship that subverts the conventional association between women's silence, obedience and chastity. Significantly, while Beatrice-Joanna guards her sexual desires from her father's hearing, she uses formal language in the company of others to achieve her sexual and murderous desires. When answering her father's question about whether her devotions at church are finished, she answers with '[f]or this time, sir' (1.1.156). However, her aside shows that she is not sincere in her religion, as she states that 'I shall change my saint' (1.1.156); and she acknowledges that she is guilty of 'giddy turning' (1.1.157).

The suitors' voices compete with each other as they play the roles of courtly lovers to Beatrice-Joanna. Vermandero's deafness to Beatrice-Joanna's speech gives way to the deafness of Alonzo, whose voice is a continuation of Vermandero's. Alonzo's and Vermandero's sense of possessing the exclusive patriarchal voice emanates from their blind perception of Beatrice-Joanna as a possession to be passed between them without her assent. They 'scarce allow [...] [Beatrice-Joanna] breath' (2.1.25). However, Tomazo, who speaks from outside the sphere of the patriarchal voices that cast Beatrice-Joanna as property, perceives her as a dangerously desiring woman. Because he can hear and perceive the direction of her desires, he warns Alonzo against marrying her, for he 'see[s] small welcome in her eye' (2.1.106) and remarks 'the dullness of her parting' (2.2.124), for she is in love with someone else (2.1.131-40). However, just as Vermandero forces Beatrice-Joanna to get engaged to Alonzo without having a sense of her feelings, Alonzo is deaf to Tomazo's voice that defies his perception of Beatrice-Joanna as a possession (2.1.144-53). Alonzo's silencing – which De Flores empha-

sises when he stabs him (3.2.16, 18) – is a result of his listening to Vermandero's voice and his deafness to Tomazo's.

The patriarchal speech that objectifies Beatrice-Joanna is symbolised by the domestic sphere of the castle in which she secretly enacts her desires. Beatrice-Joanna dissembles in order to further her desire for Alsemero (3.4.12), saying to her father, 'I find him much desirous / To see your castle' (1.1.160-61). Tomazo insists that the castle 'is the place [that] must yield account' for his missing brother (4.2.20). Furthermore, the revelation of Beatrice-Joanna's guilt (4.2.19) comes about through Jasperino's and Alsemero's discovery of her and De Flores in 'a back part of the house' (4.2.91). Beatrice-Joanna's concern that setting fire to the castle 'may endanger the whole house' (5.1.32) indicates her reluctance to let go of her former identity as an idealised possession and an unconscious internalisation of the patriarchal voices that suppress her own desiring voice. In addition to protecting her reputation, burning the house symbolises her refusal to be a silent property to be possessed by men. Middleton therefore portrays the domestic space of the castle as a stage of Beatrice-Joanna's control, where she voices and acts upon her sexual and murderous desires.

Alsemero, unlike Vermandero, is not deaf to the desire in Beatrice-Joanna's voice and her silences, but listens carefully to both. In an inversion of the wooing scene in *Othello*, Alsemero listens to Beatrice-Joanna's desiring voice (1.1.65-71) and encourages her to woo him by listening to her. In response to her speech that 'I have within mine eye all my desires' (2.2.8), he asserts that '[w]e're so like / In our expressions' (2.2.12-13). He is the courtly lover and the chivalric knight who offers to fight for her (2.2.27-28). Helen Gardner argues that 'Middleton makes Alsemero absolutely innocent of any complicity' and he is 'a standard

by which we see what has happened to Beatrice-Joanna'¹⁷ – a view with which other critics concur.¹⁸ However, while Alsemero opens and closes the play, Middleton suggests that he does not have the authority to judge Beatrice-Joanna, for his discourse reveals that he is hypocritical. Alsemero accedes to his sexual desire for her while he knows that she is engaged to Alonzo (1.1.200-01, 224-26). His response, '[y]ou teach wisdom, lady' (2.2.52) suggests his willingness to maintain a secret relationship with her. The audience may, therefore, perceive the dramatists' critique of Alsemero.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Alsemero's secret sexual relationship with Beatrice-Joanna may offer many Palestinian readers a critique of some Palestinian male figures' silencing of their female relatives' voices as an oppressive strategy to satisfy their own carnal desires. The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs notes that 'Women often mentioned situations where a female family member was known to have been sexually abused by a male relative but was pushed to remain silent, in order to preserve the family's honour'.¹⁹ This Palestinian example and Alsemero's secret sexual relationship with Beatrice-Joanna puts the Palestinian construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence into question.

While Alsemero and Beatrice-Joanna plot deceit, they express their affection, as Arthur Little has noted, 'in religious terminology' of purity and sanctity.²⁰ Middleton dramatises the deification of the beloved, a typical feature of courtly love discourse, when Alsemero sanctifies

¹⁷ Helen Gardner, 'The Changeling and The Tragedy of Damnation', in *Shakespeare's Contemporaries: Modern Studies in English Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Max Bluestone and Norman Rabkin, 2nd edn (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 363-67 (p. 366).

¹⁸ Heinemann, *Puritanism*, p. 59; N. K. Sugimura, 'Changeling and *The Changeling*', *EC*, 56.3 (2006), 241-63 (p. 260).

¹⁹ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 35.

²⁰ Arthur Little, "'Transshaped" Women: Virginity and Hysteria in *The Changeling*', in *Madness in Drama*, ed. by James Redmond (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 19-42 (p. 19).

Beatrice-Joanna by placing her in the position of Mary and prelapsarian Eve (1.1.5, 34-35, 41-42). From a psychological standpoint, this de-sexualisation of her speech and silence is a conscious rationalisation of Alsemero's lustful unconscious; he pushes his lust to something nobler than it is, as argued by Daalder.²¹ Significantly, the Bedlamites reveal the representation of male sexual desire as courtly love discourse (3.3.50-55, 184-91). Alsemero's virginity test to learn '[h]ow to know whether a woman be a maid or not' (4.1.41), reveals that he reads Beatrice-Joanna both as a goddess and as a dangerously desiring subject. While Alsemero believes that his scientific experiments (4.1.20-52) will offer him full access to Beatrice-Joanna's hidden secrets, she 'beguile[s] / The master of the mystery' (4.1.37-38) by producing the symptoms of virginity – gaping, sneezing, laughing and melancholy (4.3.141, 144, 147). Alsemero is convinced that she is '[c]haste as the breath of heaven, or morning's womb' (4.2.149), confirming his apparent mastery over her. However, while Beatrice-Joanna's performance (4.1.49-50) articulates the symptoms exhibited by a virgin, it reveals her sexual openness as illuminated through her oral gaping. The conjunction of sanctity and transgression in their relationship casts condemnation upon Alsemero, whose 'service' (2.2.22) is substituted for De Flores's 'service' (2.2.93). Calbi asserts:

The substitution of De Flores for Alsemero and Alsemero's cryptic bond of incorporation with De Flores superimpose upon each other to suggest that the play's finale is unable to present a proper and satisfactory closure or offer unproblematic instances of containment and ejection.²²

That De Flores replaces Alsemero is intensified by the fact that De Flores is referred to as Beatrice-Joanna's 'Lip's saint' (5.3.51).

²¹ Joost Daalder, 'Folly and Madness in *The Changeling*', *EC*, 38.1 (1988), 1-20 (p. 8).

²² Maurizio Calbi, *Approximate Bodies: Gender and Power in Early Modern Drama and Anatomy* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 55.

Middleton shows that the boy actor impersonating Beatrice-Joanna's voice is superior to Alsemero's hypocritical discourse. Alsemero asks Beatrice-Joanna, 'Are you honest?' (5.3.20) when he interrogates her about her infidelity (5.3.7-10). From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, I think that Palestinian readers may perceive that Alsemero's questioning of Beatrice-Joanna about her honesty (*sharaf* in Arabic) casts doubt about her sexual behaviour. As Diane Baxter notes, 'A *shareefa* is a woman whose sexual behavior and comportment is acceptable, but this remains largely unspoken. Indeed, asking if a woman is a *shareefa* is taken as casting doubt on a woman's sexual honor.'²³ In this conversation, there are echoes of Hamlet's and Ophelia's sarcastic conversation about her honesty (3.1.104-16). While Ophelia denies Hamlet's accusations (3.1.110, 121, 134, 141), Beatrice-Joanna questions the notion of honesty (5.3.21), answering with a laugh that she believes 'innocence that smiles' (5.3.24). Sugimura suggests that '[s]ince she never intended to be dishonest – her mental state blocks the emotional and moral value associated with the act'.²⁴ This coincidence between whore and virgin and the disparity between a pure appearance and a false hidden nature 'seem [...] to have been the assumption behind much male stage representation of the female from the earliest times'.²⁵ Beatrice-Joanna may act her part, but will be exposed as what she cannot embody: 'a series of negatives: not-virgin, not-wife, finally not-alive'.²⁶ Alsemero's pregnancy test (4.1.30) is a defence of Beatrice-Joanna against the very charges it seems to press, for it opens up a rift between the represented character and the representing actor that calls what the audience has seen and heard into question, as Hopkins argues.²⁷ From a contempo-

²³ Diane Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister: Selfhood, Gender, and Agency in Palestinian Culture', *AQ*, 80.3 (2007), 737-775 (p. 743).

²⁴ Sugimura, 'Changeling', p. 258.

²⁵ David Mann, *Shakespeare's Women: Performance and Conception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 5.

²⁶ Lisa Hopkins, 'Acting the Act in *The Changeling*', *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, 8 (1995), 107-11 (p. 109).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

rary Palestinian context of reading, this rift between Beatrice-Joanna's pure appearance and her false nature may represent the Palestinian concern with the veneer of public reputation in that secret desires can be fulfilled without challenging the appearance of reputation by gossip, as Amani Awwad notes.²⁸

In both the fictional world of *The Changeling* and contemporary Palestine, female figures are scapegoated for their sexual transgression that male figures beget. While Alsemero knows 'that cunning face' (5.3.47), she asserts that Alsemero's love 'has made me/ A cruel murd'ress' (5.3.62-63) and men's voices which have left no 'better means than that worst, to assume [Alsemero] to [her]' (5.3.70-71). While Beatrice-Joanna begs forgiveness (5.3.178-79), Alsemero will not listen to her. He adopts the role of the patriarch rather than courtly lover and debases her as a whore to disown his part in her subversive compliance. Alsemero's perception of her as a whore even though she shelters behind the language of morality and asserts that '[she is] true unto [his] bed' (5.3.81) is based on the masculine perception of the whore as the agent of exploitation. This practice of scapegoating women is by no means unique to early modern England: a Palestinian reader will recognise that men invariably pin their ills on women.

In contemporary Palestinian society, the female is blamed for the physical and verbal violence unleashed against her, for she is taken to stand for the source of temptation and aggression. The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs notes that 'Most families consider that the girl is responsible for being abused',²⁹ and remarks that some women 'indicated that women's obligation to maintain a modest appearance extends to the inside of their homes,

²⁸ Amani M. Awwad, 'Gossip, Scandal, Shame and Honor Killing: A Case for Social Constructionism and Hegemonic Discourse', *STR*, 24 (2001), 39-53 (p. 45).

²⁹ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 33.

sometimes implying that women are responsible for “provoking” men’s abusive behaviour’.³⁰ Thus, in the fictional world of *The Changeling* and contemporary Palestine, male figures cast women as the source of temptation to disown their parts in the sexual transgression, which they construct as purely as the woman’s.

De Flores’s speech is subversively inscribed within patriarchal voices and desires, which are sustained by silencing Beatrice-Joanna’s voice in turning a deaf ear to her protestations of innocence. De Flores’s voice is, like that of Tomazo, articulated from outside the sphere of the patriarchal power that casts Beatrice-Joanna as an undesiring, silent property. De Flores’s public voice is a continuation of and a substitute for Vermandero’s voice, as he is a carrier of Vermandero’s messages to Beatrice-Joanna (2.1.59-60, 73). Later, De Flores (like Vermandero) forces his voice upon Beatrice-Joanna and ignores her protestations of modesty. Smith describes De Flores’s and Beatrice-Joanna’s ‘relationship’ as ‘rooted in rape’ which is a violation and an extension of male bonds that are sustained by silencing the female voice.³¹ The fact that Beatrice-Joanna’s and De Flores’s carnal relationship models itself on the patriarchal discourse of enforced marriage and male deafness to the female voice indicates an ‘uncanny overlapping [...] between the position of De Flores and that of Vermandero [...] who implicitly refuses to countersign the two lovers’ specular desire’, as Calbi argues.³² While Beatrice-Joanna refuses to listen to De Flores and comply with his sexual discourse (3.4.103-04, 120-24), wishing she had married Alonzo rather ‘than to hear these words’ (3.4.129), De Flores’s language is filled with the rhetoric of masculine power and domination (3.4.93-95, 102).

³⁰ Ibid., p. 35.

³¹ Molly Smith, *Breaking Boundaries: Politics and Play in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Aldershot: Ashgate: 1998), pp. 112, 90.

³² Calbi, *Approximate Bodies*, p. 39.

De Flores is the uncanny double of Beatrice-Joanna who gets entangled by her unconscious rhetoric symbolised by the figure of De Flores.³³ When Beatrice-Joanna yields to her desire for Alsemero, she transforms her servant, who, like her sexual instincts, is supposedly beneath her and governed by her, into her master. Middleton seems to dramatise the myth of humanity's Fall by associating Beatrice-Joanna with Eve, Alsemero with Adam and De Flores with the Satanic 'serpent' (5.3.66) and 'viper' (3.4.166) that persuades Eve / Beatrice-Joanna to sexual activity, damnation and death. However, she assumes the role of Eve as a temptress, for she sets the plot of sexual and murderous desires into movement without any encouragement from De Flores. This suggests that, unconsciously, her desires are directed to De Flores rather than to Alsemero, the ostensible object of her desire.³⁴ Peter Morrison says that 'for sexually charged Beatrice, De Flores is truly the 'ultimate other', an ambiguous, monstrous manifestation of her secret self her social world has at once engendered and then forbidden her to explore'.³⁵ The implication is that De Flores represents Beatrice-Joanna's unconscious sexual impulses that lurk below her surface of obedience, the id always urging the ego to rebel against the cultural superego.

From a presentist context of contemporary Palestine, Beatrice-Joanna's sexual desire towards De-Flores is a criticism of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to the female voice in her choice of a partner. Beatrice-Joanna's submission to her unconscious desire is a response to the deafness of the superego symbolised by her father. This psychological reading opposes the conventional ways of reading early modern tragedies at An-Najah University.

³³ Dorothy M. Farr, *Middleton and the Drama of Realism: A Study of Some Representative Plays* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1973), p. 56; Peter Morrison, 'A Cangoun in Zombieland: Middleton's Teratological *Changeling*', in *'Accompaning the Players': Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980*, ed. by Kenneth Friedenreich (New York: AMS Press, 1983), pp. 219-41 (p. 232); Michael Neill, "'Hidden Malady": Death, Discovery and Indistinction in *The Changeling*', *RD*, 22 (1991), 95-121 (p. 96).

³⁴ Samuel Schoenbaum, *Middleton's Tragedies: A Critical Study* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), pp. 141-4; Sugimura, 'Changeling', p. 246; Joost Daalder and Antony Telford Moore, "'There's Scarce a Thing but Is Both Loved and Loathed": *The Changeling*', *ES*, 80.6 (1999), 499-508(508); Lisa Jardine, *Reading Shakespeare Historically* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 125.

³⁵ Morrison, 'Middleton's Teratological *Changeling*', p. 232.

While conventional Palestinian readers will perceive Beatrice-Joanna as an immoral female figure who transgresses social norms, students and teachers of English at An-Najah University may also recognise that her transgression is a response to the oppressive silence and obedience imposed upon her by her father.

The psychological reading that Beatrice-Joanna's loathing of De Flores is a sign of repressed sexual attraction undermines the Palestinian ideology of honour that is based on women's need to suppress their interests in men. The affinity between Beatrice-Joanna and De Flores is manifested by their speech as both make an extensive use of audience address through asides and soliloquies (2.1.52-55, 57-59). While Beatrice-Joanna's asides articulate her hatred and contempt of De Flores (2.1.52-54, 2.2.67-69), De Flores's asides reveal that he harbours sexual desire towards her (1.1.102-09, 1.2.26-51). Beatrice-Joanna's contempt of De Flores can be explained in Freudian terms as a sign of unconscious lust and repressed sexual desires that she has unconsciously pursued and subsequently comes to 'love anon' (3.4.170). She herself says that 'My loathing / Was prophet to the rest, but ne'er believ'd' (5.3.156-7). As Joost Daalder asserts, 'Beatrice and Alsemero think, wrongly, of love and loathing as two quite distinct feelings. The dramatists, however, draw attention to the connection between the two, and delineate that connection as something that we moderns would describe in Freudian terms: while the one feeling is in the conscious mind, its connected opposite is in the unconscious'.³⁶ From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, this psychological interpretation that Beatrice-Joanna unconsciously desires De Flores, whom she despises and pleads against, puts the Palestinian ideology of honour and morality that is based on women's repression of their interests in men into question.³⁷ However, many Palestinians may recognise that in a traditional society that is antagonistic to female voice and sexual desire, a woman's veneer of

³⁶ Daalder and Moore, 'Both Loved and Loathed', p. 508.

³⁷ Diane Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister', p. 751.

obedience and hatred of men outside the sphere of marriage can be read as a cover for repressed sexual desires which traditions, the superego in Freudian terms, hinder and prevent being realised.

In contemporary Palestine and the fictional world of *The Changeling*, a private dialogue between a man and a woman is deemed an erotic one embellished with unconscious sexual desires. This view is enhanced by the Arab saying that 'If a man and woman gather together the devil is the third person present.'³⁸ Because a Palestinian woman's talk to a man in private is taken to symbolise sexual looseness, many Palestinians may read Beatrice-Joanna's dialogue with De Flores as a sign of unconscious sexual desire. Beatrice-Joanna appears unaware of De Flores's sexual desires towards her, though he listens well to her own. Critics argue that she is the victim of myriad mishearings and misreadings of De Flores's puns.³⁹ Wittingly, she uses techniques of speech and silence to blackmail De Flores emotionally and to enlist him to murder Alonzo. He voices his excitement (2.2.70) because she calls him by his name (2.2.71, 93-94, 98) and 'calls [him] hers' (2.2.98). Her silence propels him to urge her to express her thoughts (2.2.100-01) and to let the 'sigh [...] have utterance' (2.2.106). De Flores finds that her speech is 'half an act of pleasure' (2.2.86). Beatrice-Joanna incites De Flores's desire for Alonzo's murder with exclamations:

Beatrice: Then take him to thy fury

De Flores: I thirst for him.

Beatrice: Alonzo de Piracquo (2.2.131-33).

³⁸ Eissa Atta Allah, (*Altorath Al-Adabywal-sha'by Al-Falastiniwal-Arabi: Aljoz'Al-awal: Amthal*, in Arabic) *Arabian and Palestinian Folklore and Literary Heritage, Volume 1: Proverbs* (Jerusalem: Dar Al-Kattib, 1985), p. 112, trans. by Bilal Hamamra.

³⁹ Christopher Ricks, 'The Moral and Poetic Structure of *The Changeling*', *EC*, 10 (1960), 290-306 (p. 302); Swapan Chakravorty, *Society and Politics in the Plays of Thomas Middleton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 154.

Sugimura proposes that this exchange reveals Beatrice-Joanna's 'deep thirst for sex' and 'thirst for blood,' placing evidence of her 'sexual excitement in her gasps of fear' and their 'exchange of half-lines,' which create 'a sense of breathlessness'. While De Flores's 'excitement is overt,' Sugimura argues that Beatrice-Joanna's is 'under the surface' but 'charged with double delight'.⁴⁰ However, she expresses her excitement that she will get rid of both De Flores and Alonzo (2.2.144-45) to fulfil her sexual desires for Alsemero (2.2.68). Ironically, her deafness to De Flores's sexual innuendos is a model of chaste refusal to be 'infected' by lascivious speech. While she thinks of reward in terms of money and provision for escape 'to live bravely in another country' (2.2.143), in accepting De Flores's suggestion of later talk about the reward (2.2.144), she is trapped by listening to him. Beatrice-Joanna 'catches neither the cynical quibble nor the tonal change' and she cannot grasp the sexual connotations of what he says (2.2.131, 3.4.105-19).⁴¹ In the classroom, I would not be able to get my students to act out the lines above with the suggested breathiness which will be taken to signify a thirst for lust by many students, the majority of whom are caught by traditions that curb such a performance of verbal pleasure.

Beatrice-Joanna's misapprehension of the bargain is rooted in her sense of social superiority. As Patricia Thomson and Dorothy Farr note, she exploits De Flores's social inferiority, believing that she can dispose of him.⁴² It can be argued that De Flores uses his 'service' to revenge his social dispossession and that his sexual violation of Beatrice-Joanna seals his rebellion against his master, Vermandero. Calbi proposes that 'Beatrice's aversion for De Flores can be re-read [...] as a kind of class abjection that cannot be safely carried out because of her own lesser "fortune" and socially coded "ill luck" within the patriarchal system of con-

⁴⁰ Sugimura, 'Changeling', p. 398.

⁴¹ Chakravorty, *Society*, p. 154.

⁴² Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Changeling*, ed. by Patricia Thomson (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1964), p. xiv; Farr, *Middleton*, p. 57.

straints in Alicante'. However, Calbi argues that Beatrice-Joanna's transgression of gender roles and De Flores's violation of class discourse 'show [...] once again the socially coded impossibility on Beatrice's part to uphold or re-create the boundaries of her body and identity through the abjection of, or the displacement of her gender abjection onto, De Flores'.⁴³ De Flores destroys her aristocratic belief that she can rid herself of both himself and Alonzo because he inverts chivalric discourse (2.2.141, 3.4.120-24). Chakravorty points out that De Flores 'subverts the language of chivalry by exploiting the anomaly between the polite and moral criteria or privilege', using her complicity in the murder as a bargaining tool to sleep with her (3.4.125-26).⁴⁴ While Beatrice-Joanna thinks that the social difference between herself and De Flores protects her from the crimes she has inaugurated (3.4.130-31), De Flores implores her to '[l]ook into [her] conscience,' and 'read [him] there [her] equal' (3.4.132-33) as 'the act' of murder has 'made you one with me' (3.4.135-36). Dollimore notes that De Flores teaches Beatrice-Joanna that identity is a construction of acts rather than of birth.⁴⁵ The finger and the ring become De Flores's phallic weapons to assert his authoritative voice over Alonzo and Beatrice-Joanna 'as the lunatics in the sub-plot bend to Lollio's "pizzle"'.⁴⁶ Once she 'hear[s] these words' (3.4.129), she submits to De Flores's sexual advances.

In deconstructing the triad of silence, obedience and chastity, De Flores and Beatrice-Joanna's carnal relationship is grounded upon silence (3.4.167). When De Flores, in an oral image, says that he has 'drunk up all, left none behind' (5.3.170), this is, as Sara Eaton suggests, 'wishful thinking'⁴⁷ of 'pleasure and continuance' (5.1.49) that De Flores enacts by murdering and thereby silencing her. From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, De-

⁴³ Calbi, *Approximate Bodies*, pp. 41, 45.

⁴⁴ Chakravorty, *Society*, p. 157.

⁴⁵ Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, 2nd edn (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 178.

⁴⁶ Chakravorty, *Society*, p. 155.

⁴⁷ Sara Eaton, 'Beatrice-Joanna and the Rhetoric of Love in *The Changeling*', *TJ*, 36.3 (1984), 371-81 (p. 376).

Flores's and Beatrice's silent carnal relationship and his verbal boast that he has sexual intercourse with Beatrice subverts the conventional Palestinian association of silence with chastity and the traditional way of teaching that is based on shunning sexual debates in the class.

Many Palestinian readers may recognise that Beatrice-Joanna pays De Flores with her virginity so as to silence his threats of exposing the murder of Alonzo and to keep the veneer of obedience to male figures' code of public honour and reputation. Beatrice-Joanna's attempt to keep the veneer of obedience reflects contemporary Palestinian constructions of honour as a public performance rather than an inherent signifier. Baxter argues that 'it is the general assumption that, unless there is evidence to the contrary, women who appropriately carry out their daily lives/tasks/routines are upholding honor's sexual ideals'.⁴⁸ Baxter notes that 'while virginity and fidelity are the central and overarching ideals for women' [...], killings are most likely to occur when these offenses are known to people outside the family, and therefore, have become public knowledge'.⁴⁹ Palestinian society is concerned with the public show of honour even though the female who bears the sign of honour is privately violated even by her male relatives.⁵⁰ While Beatrice-Joanna oscillates between three men, she is not a whore. De Flores's speech declaring that a woman false to one inevitably 'spreads and mounts then like arithmetic, / One, ten, a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand' (2.2.62-63) is the voice of a villain, as noted by Jardine.⁵¹ Her movement from Alonzo to Alsemero can be read as a criticism of enforced marriage and Vermandero's deafness to her voice. Furthermore, she is 'forced to love' De Flores because he helps her to maintain the appearance of chastity and 'honour' (5.1.47-48). '[T]he habituation of Beatrice to her sin', as T. S. Eliot puts it, enables her to operate amid the male voices of power, choosing the murder of Alonzo and aural and

⁴⁸ Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister', p. 751.

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 751, 753.

⁵⁰ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 35.

⁵¹ Jardine, *Reading*, p. 129.

sexual submission to De Flores rather than the public appearance of disobedience.⁵² Since she ‘must trust somebody’ (5.1.15), ‘she decides to pay De Flores the price he asks because doing so will enable her to preserve her life, her reputation, and her ability to marry Alsemero’, as Dolan argues.⁵³ From a presentist, Palestinian, pedagogical context, to discuss this rift between private sexual desires and the public show of honour is subversive, for it casts doubt about the sexual reputation of my students, the majority of whom are women from different Palestinian rural areas.

Beatrice-Joanna’s actions amid the male voices of power dramatises a need to work within the traditional rules of Palestinian culture on the part of women who can, thereby, enjoy considerable power and agency. While Beatrice-Joanna deploys silence and deception to defy her father’s deafness to her voice, many Palestinian women negotiate openly with male figures of authority and fulfil their desires without violating the code of honour. Baxter presents the example of Maha who gets married to Nassir even though her brothers oppose this marriage. She works and uses her income for herself, using it to buy clothes and make-up.⁵⁴ Baxter notes that ‘Maha says her brothers trust her and that she has given them no reason to question her sexual behavior’.⁵⁵ While Maha prioritises her needs over the needs of her family without violating her honour and that of her family, Baxter cites the example of Nadia who gets divorced twice and begins to look for another man to get married to. People attribute her divorce and her seeking to get married for the third time to her brothers’ inability to control her sexuality.⁵⁶ Baxter says that ‘Nadia’s powers also emerged from that set of authoritative relations, but they played out against, rather than in keeping with, the intent of them, thus leaving

⁵² T. S. Eliot, ‘Thomas Middleton’, in *Selected Essays*, 3rd edn (London: Faber, 1958), pp. 161-70 (p. 164).

⁵³ Frances E. Dolan, ‘Re-reading Rape in *The Changeling*’, *JEMCS*, 11.1 (2011), 2-27 (p. 19).

⁵⁴ Baxter, ‘Honor Thy Sister’, pp. 755-756.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 756.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 758-760.

her brothers disempowered rather than strengthened'.⁵⁷ Thus, Palestinian women are active agents who can strengthen male figures' honour as long as they exercise their agency within the patriarchal codes of honour. However, they can also weaken male figures' honour when they violate their honour and fulfil their desires outside the system of hierarchical relations. As Baxter argues,

Among Palestinians, then, women are not "bit players in a male drama," but principal actors within a complex and dynamic ideological construction [...] women's sexual reputations are crucially important: a woman can wreak havoc with her family's honor even if she is merely suspected of acting in a sexually inappropriate way. This gives women powerful leverage as they negotiate their relationship with male family members.⁵⁸

In the fictional world of *The Changeling* and in contemporary Palestine, female figures compete with each other to fulfil male figures' construction of honour. Beatrice-Joanna exploits Diaphanta to keep up the appearance of chastity and honour. As Lisa Hopkins argues:

the act [Beatrice-Joanna's deflowering] must be so completely erased from the visible fabric of her life that, from now on, everything she does must be an act in another sense: she must live a lie, acting out one role to conceal the act of darkness which has changed her true life into something quite different.⁵⁹

Beatrice-Joanna's treatment of Diaphanta as her substitute underscores the fact that she perceives servants as instruments with which to further her desires and keep to the script of pa-

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 762.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 747.

⁵⁹ Hopkins, 'Acting', p. 111.

triarchal codes of honour and chastity.⁶⁰ Beatrice-Joanna casts herself in the role of suspicious male figure like that of Alsemero and Alibius in testing Diaphanta's virginity (4.1.97-98, 102-03). Diaphanta's and Beatrice-Joanna's relationship is destroyed by the patriarchal rules controlling women. As Diaphanta gets 'the bride's place' (4.2.125), she, like De Flores, 'serves her own ends' (5.1.2) and thereby '[m]akes havoc of [Beatrice-Joanna's] right' (5.1.5). While Beatrice-Joanna casts Diaphanta in the role of the ventriloquiser, Diaphanta's action and speech undercut Beatrice-Joanna's voice. This dramatisation of competition between women in order to fulfil male ideas of honour reflects the culture of Palestinian women of the same household or village. Palestinian women compete and coerce each other into playing a patriarchal script. A schoolgirl from Ramallah justifies verbal and physical violence against women, saying that '*May be it is your fault if your father is maltreating you or humiliating you. It could be your fault and not always his. May be he is only trying to educate you*' (original emphasis).⁶¹ Roald observes that 'women often condemned other women's "bad behavior" or "indecent clothing" in front of their husbands'.⁶² Umm Khalid, a woman from the West Bank, 'taught her daughters to keep their voices low in public, and nagged them about proper clothing'.⁶³ These examples reveal that some Palestinian women internalise the masculine constructions of gender difference that is based on male supremacy and female subordination.

In contemporary Palestine and in *The Changeling*, the individuality of women is sacrificed for the sake of the reputation and honour of the extended family and community. While Beatrice-Joanna is the object for which the opposing voices of the male characters compete, they are united in their revenge against her. Alsemero encourages Vermandero to 'joy again'

⁶⁰ Heinemann, *Puritanism*, p. 177.

⁶¹ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 32.

⁶² Anne Sofie Roald, "'Benevolent Patriarchy': Palestinian Women between 'Ideal' and 'Reality'", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 24.3 (2013), 333-347 (p. 341).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

(5.3.187), assuring him that he has ‘yet a son’s duty living’ (5.3.216). Tomazo asserts, ‘Sir, I am satisfied; my injuries / Lie dead before me’ (5.3.190-91). Corporaal and Hopkins claim that the play ends by silencing the transgressive woman and asserting male voices.⁶⁴ These critics are following a new historicist angle on the play where subversion is contained. I think that this approach is useful in my teaching at An-Najah University to raise awareness of how forms of female transgression in contemporary Palestine may be produced deliberately so that they can be squashed and so display the power of the dominant patriarchal order. Diane Baxter points out that punishing the transgressive female characters in contemporary Palestine ‘demonstrates male control over female family members [...]; it serves as a stern warning to other females; reasserts cultural values; reduces [...] familial shame; and it limits the decline in the family’s reputation’. In terms of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, punishing the female who violates Palestinian gender codes ‘serves to reaffirm cultural identity by underlining perceived distinctions between Palestinians and Israelis and, by extension, the West in general’.⁶⁵ However, my students may read male figures’ verbal and physical attacks on Beatrice-Joanna as defensive projections to avoid recognising their own contribution to Beatrice-Joanna’s destructive plots unleashed because of her father’s deafness to her voice. As Sara Eaton points out, ‘the characters employ Courtly Love as a language of power to defend against internal psychological disorder’.⁶⁶ Likewise, while Palestinian women are subject to verbal and physical violence, occupation puts the Palestinian masculine ideology of honour into question. Palestinian male shame about occupation leads to greater violence towards women, as Shalhoub notes.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Marguerite Corporaal, “‘Thy Speech Eloquent, Thy Wit Quick, Thy Expressions Easy’: Rhetoric and Gender in Plays by English Renaissance Women”, *Renaissance Forum*, 6.2 (2003), 1-14 (p. 4); Lisa Hopkins, ‘Beguiling the Master of the Mystery: Form and Power in *The Changeling*’, *MRDE*, 9 (1997), 149-61 (p. 158).

⁶⁵ Baxter, ‘Honor Thy Sister’, p. 753.

⁶⁶ Eaton, ‘Beatrice-Joanna’, p. 381.

⁶⁷ Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *Militarization and Violence against Women in Conflict Zones in the Middle East: A Palestinian Case Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 35; Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, ‘Counter-Narratives of Palestinian Women: The Construction of Her-story and the Politics of Fear’,

The emergence of Beatrice-Joanna's speech — open rather than secret speech — reflects the opposite of what the prevalent patriarchal discourses represent and can control. Beatrice-Joanna stands for what Dollimore calls 'knowledge of political domination', a type of knowledge that 'was challenging [because] it subverted, interrogated, and undermined the ruling ideologies and helped precipitate them into crisis'.⁶⁸ Alsemero's confinement of Beatrice-Joanna and De Flores's stabbing of her are futile attempts to deprive her of her voice. Beatrice-Joanna's inarticulate cries are associated with subversion and instability: 'Oh, oh, oh!' (5.3.138). Vermandero's questioning, 'What horrid sounds are these?' (5.3.141) indicates that they are beyond the appropriation and control of male figures. As Hawkes puts it:

However ingeniously 'explained', those 'ah's and 'O's and 'thus's continue to subvert order, to disrupt sequence, to impede the linear flow of meaning because that is what their final referents—orgasm, disintegration, despair and death – finally do.⁶⁹

From a Palestinian context of reading, the evocative sounds 'ah, oh' are commonly taken to convey the speaker's sadness and pain and when they are uttered by female figures they signify orgasm and the pain of sexual intercourse (*ghannej*, in Arabic).

Beatrice-Joanna's and Palestinian women's transgression is a comment on male figures' deafness to their voices and a critique of the masculine ideology of honour. Beatrice-Joanna's speech seems to endorse the status quo of the ownership of women (5.3. 159–61).

in *Gender and Violence in The Middle East*, ed. by Moha Ennaji and Fatima Sadiqi (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 29-59 (p. 31).

⁶⁸ Dollimore, *Radical*, p. 34.

⁶⁹ Terence Hawkes, *That Shakespeherian Rag: Essays on a Critical Process* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 89.

She internalises the masculine rhetoric of honour, which is based on female chastity: ‘’Tis time to die when ’tis a shame to live’ (5.3.179). However, she is guilty only inasmuch as she has functioned unconventionally in a masculine ideology of honour, obedience and chastity. While her father condemns her for being the ‘host of enemies [that] ent’red [his] citadel’ (5.3.146), she turns this condemnation back on him. Her assertion that her blood is Verman-dero’s (5.2.151-54) implies that her corruption and devious discourse are parts of her father’s blood too. I think that this suggests a refusal on Middleton’s part to condemn her wholly for her actions. Beatrice-Joanna is the embodiment of patriarchal discourse in that she, in her silence, voice and action, is complicit in the very patriarchal structure that she seems to have foiled. Likewise some Palestinian women, despite transgressing gender roles, have internalised the ideology of honour through threats of violence and murder, and so fulfil their desires secretly.

Isabella and some contemporary Palestinian women unleash their voices without compromising their sexual reputations. While Beatrice-Joanna strives to show the appearance of chastity and obedience, Isabella expresses uncontrollable female sexuality even though she remains chaste. Isabella’s exercise of her agency in the madhouse without losing her chastity has a parallel with Palestinian women’s assertion of their agency within the household and the political arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict without losing their sexual honour. Shalhoub-Kevorkian notes ‘the interrelatedness of victimization and agency within the context of Empire’.⁷⁰ Palestinian women living under Israeli occupation transform their victimization into agency to resist Israeli violence. Shalhoub-Kevorkian observes that ‘Occupying the material space of the frontline, these women must [...] carry the burdens of the outcome of the fighting. These women survive both the daily assaults against their quotidian activities and the

⁷⁰ Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *Militarization*, p. 53.

psychological warfare that is endemic to a militarized zone'.⁷¹ Palestinian women's daily activities – going to school, getting married and cooking for their families – are politicised in a context of military occupation, where the lines between private and public spheres are blurred. Palestinian women create agency and break down the dominant discourses that silence them while submitting to the patriarchal codes of honour and chastity. In her discussion of honour ideology in contemporary Palestine, Baxter argues that 'women's agency and subjectivity [...] are embedded within and a reflection of structural, ideological, and experiential configurations, rather than as resistance to them'.⁷² Like Isabella who unleashes her agency without compromising her sexual reputation, some Palestinian women create a subjective space within the household and in their relationship with their male relatives without violating their honour and that of their male relatives, as Baxter notes.⁷³ Thus, Palestinian readers may recognise that Isabella articulates her expression of agency whilst conforming to the ideology of honour.

Isabella is a dangerously desiring subject who can voice and act on her desires (3.3.21-29). It is generally agreed that 'Rowley was responsible for the opening and closing scenes of the play and for the sub-plot set in Alibius's madhouse; Middleton wrote all the intervening scenes of the main plot'.⁷⁴ Bawcutt proposes that 'Rowley is using folly and madness for comic purposes, not to create horror'.⁷⁵ Because Isabella remains true to her marriage vows and resists her 'lunatic lover[s]'' seductive voices (4.3.4), this may reveal that she is a foil to Beatrice-Joanna.⁷⁶ However, the sub-plot reveals the madness of the patriarchal discourse

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 5.

⁷² Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister', p. 739.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 754-758.

⁷⁴ Bawcutt, *The Changeling*, p. 2.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

⁷⁶ David M. Holmes, *The Art of Thomas Middleton: A Critical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), pp. 181-82; Irving Ribner, *Jacobean Tragedy: The Quest for Moral Order* (London: Methuen, 1962), p. 135.

that seeks to control women's desires (1.2.27-29).⁷⁷ As Isabella resents Alibius's voice and turns his greeting into complaint (3.3.1-4, 6, 240-45, 247, 250), it seems that she will retaliate against him by having her will and cuckolding him. The confinement of Isabella (like that of Vittoria and the Duchess of Malfi) is a vehicle for misogyny; it is a defensive strategy of the masculine domination of female sexuality. Madness is regarded as corporeal and is controlled by the whip; madness is 'a body [...] without brains to guide it' (3.3.23-24). The asylum is a site of seduction and sexual expression. Salkeld notes that 'Franciscus enacts his own desire for the woman, her confinement and her evasion of male power [. . .] expos[ing] the fact that it is Isabella's gender difference that sets her up as the object of male desire and power in the sub-plot, and keeps her locked away'.⁷⁸ In his feigning of madness, Franciscus suggests that madness is associated with women, the body and sexuality: 'Now I'm a woman, all feminine' (3.3.72). Middleton shows that the performance of gender is based on language and costume through Franciscus's theatrical practice of putting on women's clothing so as to impersonate women. Female madness is a locus from which Isabella challenges male figures' hegemonic voices and releases her anarchic desire (3.3.40-44, 123, 214-19). From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, I think that Salkeld's historicist reading of Isabella's assertion of her agency by feigning madness the same way Franciscus and Antonio do may provide a point of focus to my female students who can resist male figures of authority by mimicking rather than opposing their discourse.

While Beatrice-Joanna's aural openness to De Flores leads to her sexual transgression, Isabella's aural openness enables her to resist male figures' seductive voices. Lollio echoes De Flores's speech on the consequences of the inconstancy of woman's affections when he observes Antonio's secret courtship of Isabella and reads Franciscus's letter. Like the madmen

⁷⁷ Daalder, 'Folly', p. 7.

⁷⁸ Duncan Salkeld, *Madness and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 139.

and De Flores, Antonio is 'bold without fear' (3.3.181). However, Isabella's acknowledgement that the appearance of the beast-like lunatics is 'of fear enough to part us' (3.3.193) shows that she recognises that if she were to succumb to Antonio's temptation, she would be vulnerable to the chaotic impulse of sexual appetite reflected by the mad (3.3.193-96). Daalder notes that '[h]er grasp of the contrast between insane and sane behaviour is clearly used by the authors to reveal to us that she will be able to exercise self-control, and this she does'.⁷⁹ From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Isabella's self-control is very important in helping women to uphold traditional values in contemporary Palestine. However, Isabella's self-control may subvert the Palestinian perception of women as passive and weak creatures ruled by their sexual desires and whose oral and aural openness to male figures' voices are taken to symbolise sexual looseness. The openness of Isabella's ears defies the gender convention, identified by Bloom, in which 'for the gentlewoman, aural generosity compromises honor'.⁸⁰ Isabella does not lose her chastity by listening to men's speech. While the dramatists show that Beatrice-Joanna is trapped by listening to De Flores, Lollio's speech is ineffective to provoke aural and oral alteration in Isabella due to her defensive listening (3.3.240-45). While Beatrice-Joanna fulfils the image of the fallen woman that the patriarchal speech creates, Isabella, in her disguise as a 'wild unshapen antic' (4.3.126), defies the patriarchal voices by turning their follies and madness upon them (4.3.133-36).⁸¹

Many Palestinians may compare Alibius's aural closure to Isabella's criticism of his decision to imprison her with the Palestinian construction of women as dishonest and untrustworthy creatures. The dramatists' condemnation of male figures' voices is illuminated by the fact that Isabella opposes Alibius's voice in uttering the last lines of the sub-plot. While Alibius

⁷⁹ Joost Daalder, 'The Role of Isabella in *The Changeling*', *ES*, 73.1 (1992), 22-29 (p. 26); Chakravorty, *Society*, p. 163.

⁸⁰ Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p. 115.

⁸¹ See Eaton, 'Beatrice-Joanna', p. 380.

voices his error and promises to treat her with respect in future, Isabella positions her voice against his, asserting that she is locked in a loveless marriage to a 'jealous coxcomb' (5.3.211). I agree with Eaton, who notes that Alibius interprets Isabella's actions as a reason to 'never keep / Scholars that shall be wiser than myself' (5.3.214-15), but not as reason enough to free her from the madhouse'.⁸² From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, I think that Palestinian readers may recognise that Alibius's intention to keep Isabella in the madhouse can be explained by Palestinian male figures' perception of women as untrustworthy, manipulative, and dishonest. Lila Abu-Lughod interviewed young women who 'complain about the unfair restrictions and suspicions to which they were subjected by brothers or cousins. They chafed against these restrictions, however, with the self-righteousness of those who think that, wrongly, they are not being trusted'.⁸³ While Isabella's words are associated with truth, Alibius does not recognise his destructive speech and judgement. Similarly, turning a deaf ear to the female voice and confining her is what sets the tragic schemes of Beatrice-Joanna into motion in the main plot. While most Palestinian women are not formally recognised in the formation of public, local and family policy, this tragedy may offer students a critique of male figures' deafness to the voices of female figures and feminist organizations and men's aural openness to stagnant traditions that oppress women's voices and individualities.

⁸² Eaton, 'Beatrice-Joanna', p. 380.

⁸³ Lila Abu-Lughod, 'Seductions of the "Honor Crimes"', *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 22.1 (2011), 17-63 (p. 20).

Women Beware Women

While *The Changeling* – a critique of the Renaissance practice of enforced marriage and of men's deafness to female voices – deconstructs the triad of silence, chastity and obedience, *Women Beware Women* shows that since men's appropriation of women is not absolute, their anxiety emerges from the contradictory claims of possession and desire. From a new historicist point of view, Middleton's *Women Beware Women* suggests that the sexual ideology of domestic relations is homologous to the ideology of absolute power structures embodied in King James I's reign. Following the critical methodology of feminism, I contend that *Women Beware Women* is a critique of the Renaissance practice of enforced marriage and of male figures' deafness to the female voice. As a result of male figures' absolute authority, the boy actors impersonating the female heroines deploy silence and secrecy to defy male figures' dictates. Contrary to the new historicist paradigm of resistance, subversion and containment, I argue that the tragedy locates subversion within the masculine construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. The male figures show no recognition of the destructive construction of gender difference and the court is left enveloped with immoral attitudes that are engrained in men's and women's tongues and ears.

From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, Middleton's *Women Beware Women* reveals striking parallels with contemporary traditional Palestinian areas where the male objectification of women in the marriage market and their deafness to women's voices breed the subversive complicity of women, which appears to conform but finally serves to undermine male figures' dictates. I argue that the Mother's alliance with powerful male figures to help Bianca fulfil her sexual desires challenges the role to which the Palestinian mother-in-law is assigned: of protecting her daughter-in-law's honour which is based on her chastity. Livia's al-

luring Bianca and Isabella to more rewarding relations is a comment on Palestinian male figures' deafness to the female voice. However, Livia's maternal role contrasts with that of Palestinian mothers who guide girls along a culturally established principle of female obedience to male figures. I consider that, for many Palestinian readers or spectators, the Duke's rape of Bianca may allude to the rape of girls and women by members of their own families. The emergence of Bianca's voice and her defiance of Leantio subvert the Palestinian hierarchy of social relations and the failure of Leantio to fulfil his role of controlling his wife's sexuality. Isabella's deployment of cunning and deception to resist gender restrictions may provide a point of focus to my female students who have no choice in their marriage partners. I also analyse Livia's manipulation of familial relations through language with reference to Palestinian male figures' disowning of Palestinian traitors by the means of verbal expression. I argue that, because in contemporary Palestine and the fictional world of *Women Beware Women*, male figures are concerned with the veneer of honour that is confirmed in the public sphere, the wedding masque is a key scene for Palestinian readers. Middleton's heroines' destructive participation in the spectacle of the wedding subverts Palestinian women's celebration of their honour and that of their male relatives in marriage ceremonies.

Women Beware Women (which, like *Othello*, opens after an elopement) presents the household as a playing space in which patriarchal perceptions of the female as an object are deconstructed. Leantio expresses his love using commercial imagery, which accentuates his perception of Bianca as property (1.1.12, 14, 43-44, 162, 166-67). However, the fact that Isabella '[has] forsook friends, fortunes, and [her] country' in order to marry him (1.1.131-33) negates his perception of her as a containable possession.⁸⁴ Leantio legitimates feminine authority in the household by asking his mother 'to look to [the] keys' (1.1.176) and to keep Isabella as

⁸⁴ Robert Ornstein, *The Moral Vision of Jacobean Drama* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p. 195.

‘lock[ed] chests’ (1.1.176). His reference to ‘keys’ can be read as a pun on the male penis, as illuminated by Bianca’s rape with the Duke’s phallus (2.2.275), which leads to what Parker calls ‘the sexual “turning” of women’.⁸⁵ While the Mother controls the household, she is one of those ‘old mothers [who] know the world’ (1.1.175) and may use that experience either to protect Bianca or to teach her rebellion (1.1.71-77). Leantio attempts to re-appropriate the stage and prevent it from providing women with a space to air grievances and infect other women with contagious words (1.1.71-75) which would make his rhetorical control precarious.

In the theatre, silence can be a site of exposure and immodest exchange. Bianca’s silence is, arguably, a deliberate strategy on Middleton’s part to position her as an object of Leantio’s gaze and voice. The dialogue between Leantio and the Mother emphasises Bianca’s apartness and their intimacy, as revealed by Leantio’s humorous acknowledgement of his mother’s sexual knowledge. Arguably, Bianca’s silence is a sign of dissatisfaction with the poor surroundings, for she criticises Leantio’s house after her rape (3.1.17-25, 45-50, 126-31). When Bianca tells the Mother that ‘there is nothing can be wanting / To her that does enjoy all her desires’ (1.1.125-26), spectators and readers may recognise that her desires are unlikely to be satisfied in Leantio’s house. Although Bianca’s appearance at the window seems innocent, Middleton uses a dramatic and cultural convention in which ‘women who look from a window onto a public place are to be suspected of harboring licentious wishes’.⁸⁶ Bianca’s silence after the rape is a sign of sexual violation. She hides her shame and appears ‘lively’ and ‘cheerful’ in front of the Mother (2.2.447). She denounces Livia as a ‘damned bawd’ for her ‘smooth-browed treachery’ and Guardiano as a ‘slave’ (2.2.426, 442). Bianca’s slandering of

⁸⁵ Patricia Parker, *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture, Context* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 9.

⁸⁶ Richard A. Levin, ‘If Women Should Beware Women, Bianca Should Beware Mother’, *SEL*, 37.2 (1997), 371-89 (p. 377).

Livia and Guardiano can be read as a means of projecting her own sense of degradation. From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, the appearance of the female at the window especially in rural areas may undermine her sexual reputation and cause gossip in the community. A working woman from a village in Ramallah says that when a woman 'is divorced, they [her family] start restricting her freedom, requesting her to stay at home, not even looking out of the window'.⁸⁷ Thus, I think that Palestinian readers, steeped in traditions, may attribute Bianca's sexual violation to her appearance at the window.

The Mother's assistance of Bianca to express and fulfil her sexual desires undermines the role that Palestinian mothers-in law play in protecting their daughters-in-law and maintaining male honour, based on women's chastity. The Mother speaks from outside the sphere of the patriarchal voice (like that of Leantio) that casts Bianca as a possession. She reveals what Leantio wants to be secret (2.2.225-26). Potter, Tricomi and Bradbrook claim that the Mother is innocently engaged in the chess game during Bianca's seduction.⁸⁸ However, I agree with Richard Levin, who sees her as a sophisticated schemer.⁸⁹ In saying that Bianca's loneliness 'is uncomfortable, / Especially to young bloods' (2.2.207-08), the Mother suggests that Bianca needs to express herself sexually. The Mother allies her voice with a powerful male figure's voice to help Bianca voice and act upon her sexual desires (2.2.292, 302-04), whilst 'cunning[ly]' (2.2.292) playing chess to lose (2.2.303).⁹⁰ I agree with Levin, who notes that the Mother 'may be living her own life through Bianca'⁹¹ as she cherishes the courtly flattery and hospitality she receives (2.2.212-17, 3.1.263-68). The Mother endorses Bianca's rape, for

⁸⁷ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 37.

⁸⁸ John Potter, "'In Time of Sports': Masques and Masking in Middleton's *Women Beware Women*", *PLL* (1982), 368-83 (p. 371); Albert H. Tricomi, 'Middleton's *Women Beware Women* as Anti-court Drama', *MLS*, 19.2 (1989), 65-77 (p. 68); M. C. Bradbrook, *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 228.

⁸⁹ Levin, 'Mother', pp. 373, 377, 380-85.

⁹⁰ Neil Taylor and Bryan Loughrey, 'Middleton's Chess Strategies in *Women Beware Women*', *SEL*, 24.2 (1984), 341-54 (pp. 346, 353); Levin, 'Mother', p. 381.

⁹¹ Levin 'Mother', p. 377.

the Duke's words of seduction echo her own (2.2.370-71, 380). The Duke says that Bianca's 'own mother' would praise her and 'command' her 'wit' to become the Duke's mistress (2.2.370-71). Furthermore, the Mother expresses her thanks to Guardiano, whose treacherous tongue helps the Duke to seduce Bianca (2.2.457). The play challenges the view that the Mother turns against Bianca. After the banquet in Act Three, Scene Two, the Mother disappears and she is the only major character not present at the masque. Her acoustic and physical disappearance from the masque of destructive voices can be read as Middleton's strategy to dissociate her from condemnation. The Mother's voice stands in contrast to Leantio's didacticism, possessiveness and romantic cliché. The Mother's realistic and concrete concerns (1.1.58-70) are consistent with Bianca's desire to regain the privileges that were hers before she renounced them by eloping with Leantio (1.1.131-22). This early modern representation of liberal family politics where the Mother helps her daughter-in-law to fulfil her sexual desires contradicts the conventional hyper-protective role of mothers and mothers-in-law in contemporary Palestine, which can lead to abuse. A working woman from a village in Hebron says: *'Many problems occur as a result of the constant inspection and interference of mothers-in-law with the wives and children of their sons. They practice verbal and even physical abuse'* (original emphasis).⁹² Furthermore, while the Mother allies her voice with Bianca's to defy Leantio's attempt to imprison his wife, in contemporary Palestine mothers-in-law often play the role of the patriarchy in the households to oppress and dominate their daughters-in-law. As Cheryl Rubenberg notes, 'the power relationship between the mother-in-law and the wife is one of pure domination and subordination'.⁹³

Livia subversively allies her speech with male figures' hypocritical voices so as to defy male deafness to female voices and to assist other men, such as the Duke and Hippolito, in acquir-

⁹² Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 33.

⁹³ Cheryl Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), p. 95.

ing the women that they want. Middleton shows that Livia's plots are a critique of the absolute authority that male figures espouse. Livia's bawdry serves as Middleton's comment on the tyranny of enforced marriage and male deafness to the female voice. Livia, 'one of the most consummately artistic bawds in the history of literature',⁹⁴ is often viewed by critics as a pawn of masculine authority because she 'can place her man well' and undo other women's chastity (2.1.178-79, 2.2.294), denying Bianca and Isabella control over their own voices. Livia challenges the audience, using language to undermine a good name in any other widow: '[w]ho shows more craft t'undo a maidenhead, / I'll resign my part to her' (2.1.178-79). She remarks on the 'injustice' done to 'maids' whose marriage choices are determined by men (1.2.29-37); she says that women owe men 'obedience', 'subjection', and 'duty' and men do not respond – a feminist perspective that Isabella and Bianca affirm (1.2.42, 158-60, 174). While Levin claims that 'Livia, Isabella, and Bianca share feminist thoughts and perhaps traits the play associates with their sex',⁹⁵ 'women are set against women and exploited for men's purposes', as Haselkorn suggests.⁹⁶ Middleton shows that Livia allies her speech with powerful male figures' voices so as to allure women to more rewarding relationships, resisting male domination and voices. Middleton's complex representation of women suggests the emergence of feminist ideas as Levin's new historicist reading suggests and the exploitation of women by a powerful female figure as Haselkorn's feminist reading reveals. This relationship between women raises awareness of entrapment and the dangers of complicity with a powerful female figure like that of Livia who lures Bianca and Isabella into relationships with powerful men. While this reading may reinforce rather than resist misogynistic discourses at An-Najah University, my students may recognise that women's exploitation of each other to

⁹⁴ Daniel Dodson, 'Middleton's Livia', *PQ*, 27 (1948), 376-81 (p. 379).

⁹⁵ Levin, 'Mother', p. 372.

⁹⁶ Anne M. Haselkorn, 'Sin and Politics of Penitence: Three Jacobean Adulteresses', in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. by Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990), pp. 119-30 (p. 128).

fulfil their desires is dangerous. Their reading may also recognise that the play raises criticism of male figures' lustful desires, their objectification of, and deafness to, women.

In the fictional world of *Women Beware Women* and contemporary Palestine, male figures are represented as the initiators of female figures' sexual transgression. Middleton criticises patriarchal discourse and its exercises of power for the satisfaction of personal pleasures. Haselkorn proposes that although 'male members of the court are also shown to be corrupt dissemblers, Middleton, nevertheless, seems more often to apply the idea of treachery and lack of loyalty to the female sex'.⁹⁷ However, the wickedness of women is undercut by men's hypocritical voices and their deafness to female voices. The Cardinal chastises the Duke's marriage to Bianca as a perversion of an 'immaculate robe of honour' into 'the garment / Of leprosy and foulness' (4.3.14, 16-17). This representation implies that the Duke bewhores Bianca and begets her 'treason' (1.3.43-44, 2.2.41, 3.1.13, 72, 4.1.79). The Duke manipulates Hippolito 'to purge the air' (4.2.14) of Leantio's voice in order to claim Bianca and avoid listening to the Cardinal's moral speech, which does not 'sanctify hot lust' (4.3.18). Bianca's defensive act of pleading and her attempt to shut her ears against the Duke's seductive rhetoric arouses him further (2.2.318, 325-36). The chess scene, which is 'the best example of wit in action and language', suggests that the Duke is a brutal patriarch who penetrates the defenceless Bianca's ears and rapes her.⁹⁸ Students of English at An-Najah University may easily read a parallel with what is a familiar phenomenon in the occupied territories in contemporary Palestine. The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs notes that while a large num-

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 128.

⁹⁸ Inga-Stina Ewbank, 'Realism and Morality in *Women Beware Women*' (1969), in *Three Jacobean Revenge Tragedies: The Revenger's Tragedy, Women Beware Women, The Changeling: A Casebook*, ed. by R. V. Holdsworth (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1990), pp. 196-207 (p. 204).

ber of Palestinian women are subject to physical and verbal violence, 'it is believed that the bulk of sexual violence against women and girls is located within the family'.⁹⁹

Such a presentist reading of the Duke's uncontrollable sexual appetite and his deafness to Bianca's voice of resistance to his tyranny continues an earlier, historicist perspective on the play as critical of sovereign tyranny with reference to James I's absolute political authority. James I's conflation of his body natural with his body politic in the construction of his relationship with his subjects as that of the husband/ head and wife/ body allowed little room for the subjects' intervention. The Duke's rape of Bianca suggests the Duke's conflation of his body natural and body politic in a figure of the tyrannical sovereign. Laurie Shannon notes that 'The exercise of a king's private will, unsubordinated to the good of the realm, 'unkings' the king; indeed, it locates him within one of the worst Renaissance categories of moral failure: tyranny'.¹⁰⁰ While the Mother says that the Duke's 'object' is 'only the public good' (1.3.110-11), the Duke's manner of governance proceeds not from love that 'like a good king [...] keeps all in peace' (1.3.46), but from lust that begets Bianca's 'treason' (2.2.441).

The emergence of Bianca's voice once the Duke rapes her verbally and physically challenges the Palestinian construction of gender roles where the female's identity is subsumed to that of her husband whose role is to control his wife's movement and sexuality. As Diane Baxter notes, 'males are charged with directing the lives of females (and younger men) while women are expected to serve the interests of the family's males'.¹⁰¹ Bianca's subjectivity, which is expressed in her disapproval of Leantio's discourse, is constructed by the Duke's authority and voice. While she has begged him to '[m]ake me not bold with death and deeds of ruin'

⁹⁹ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 10.

¹⁰⁰ Laurie Shannon, *Sovereign Amity: Figures of Friendship in Shakespearean Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 154.

¹⁰¹ Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister', p. 744.

(2.2.349), he makes her 'bold' by releasing her suppressed voice and making her 'wiser of [herself]' (3.2.132). Bianca's transgression beyond the walls of the house signals her progression from silence and self-effacement to outspokenness and hypocrisy. The Mother comments that since Bianca spent 'one day abroad', she has 'grown so cutted, there's no speaking to her' (3.1.3-4). Bianca rewrites her marital position and resists Leantio's order to 'mew [her] up / Not to be seen' (3.1.47-48, 219-20), stating that '[r]estraint breeds wand'ring thoughts' (4.1.32). Hearing of the Duke's invitation, she extends the invitation to the Mother (3.1.263) and controls the Mother's choice (3.1.263-68). Reproducing Leantio's logic, Bianca calls her new status as the Duke's mistress 'the best content / That Florence can afford' (3.1.121-22). She returns Leantio's demand of a kiss with her defiant speech, 'Let's talk of other business and forget it' (3.1.153), for her sexual desires and thoughts are directed at the Duke. From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, Bianca's challenge of Leantio is a grave offence that entails the disruption of Palestinian harmony in the hierarchy of social relations and the failure of Leantio to control his wife.

The sub-plot provides a commentary on the main plot's dramatization of enforced marriage and male deafness to the female voice, and both are united by Livia's speech. More verbally aggressive than Leantio, Fabritio, 'a foolish old man' (1.2.12), directs his household and daughter through speech, asserting that Isabella lacks a discourse of 'reason' (1.2.15) and thus her voice is circumscribed by his. From a historicist perspective, Fabritio's speech on behalf of Bianca and his deafness to her voice can be read as another indirect political critique of King James I's assertion of absolute authority. Middleton reveals similarities between Fabritio's and the Ward's voices on marriage (1.2.18-20, 60) to highlight the tyranny of enforced marriage and the absurdity of male figures' voices. Fabritio conceives of marriage as a mercenary agreement that brings the Ward's 'acres' (3.2.113) into his sphere. He

describes Isabella as ‘a-breeding’, a commodity for creating heirs (1.2.78). In Palestine, women are traded as commodities and transferred from the father’s household to that of the husband in order to increase the material wealth and symbolic power of men.¹⁰² The treatment of Isabella in the play would thus parallel the situation in contemporary Palestine and its dramatization could encourage critical discussion of the practice amongst my students. Fabritio repeatedly uses the modal verb ‘shall’ to convey Isabella’s absolute obligation to follow his command (1.2.2, 128, 137). Fabritio ignores Isabella’s voice, which contradicts his. No sooner does Isabella voice herself – ‘Good father!’ (1.2.79), than he silences her: ‘Tell me not of tongues and rumours [...]. I’ll hear no more; he’s rich’ (1.2.80, 83). Like Beatrice-Joanna, Isabella is spoken for rather than speaking, constructed rather than self-constructing (1.2.77, 127-28).

In terms of gender politics, from my own presentist perspective as a Palestinian critic and teacher, Fabritio’s deafness to Isabella’s voice and his construction of the role she has to play can enact a dialogue with my female students who assert that they have no choice of marriage partners. However, while there is a similarity of situations between both cultures, the notion that women, oppression and subversion mean the same thing in each is methodologically controversial. Magda Al-Nowaihi points out that ‘Although the general silencing of women appears to be an almost universal phenomenon, cutting across different periods and places, it is nevertheless a phenomenon that needs to be dealt with contextually’.¹⁰³ In analysing the masculine construction of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence, one should not generalise women into a homogenous group by obscuring differences between them in terms of class, religion, and geographic locations. In contemporary Palestine, while religion is

¹⁰² See, Shalhoub Kevorkian, ‘Counter-Narratives of Palestinian Women’, pp. 56-57; Palestinian Ministry of Women’s Affairs, ‘National Strategy’, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰³ Magda M. Al-Nowaihi, ‘Resisting Silence in Arab Women’s Autobiographies’, *IJMES*, 33 (2001), 477-502 (p. 479).

sympathetic to women, the construction of gender roles is enhanced by traditions and occupation that reinforce each other.¹⁰⁴ As the patriarchal structures are engrained in the fibre of Palestinian society and internalised by many women, I think that a traditional male Palestinian reader would perceive Isabella's silence as a sign of contented obedience to Fabritio's voice. Fabritio's speaking on behalf of Isabella and his insistence that she follow his dictates has striking affinity with contemporary Palestine where women's voices are wrested away from them when choosing husbands. The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs states that 'women's role and status in the society has been marginalized as women's power and control to decide of their fate and make their own decisions has been taken away from them'.¹⁰⁵ However, many examples show that female silence conceals subversive schemes and that many Palestinian women undertake machiavellian negotiations with the male voices around them.¹⁰⁶ Silence may thus conceal less conformist responses on the part of some female readers of the exchange.

An incident that happened in my own village illustrates how, in contemporary Palestine, the father still imposes his voice and will upon his daughter and remains deaf to her voice when it contradicts his choice of partner for her, thus leading to the disastrous dissolution of their household. I have preserved the anonymity of those involved in the following discussion. The girl showed superficial obedience to her father, who was unwilling to listen to her voice in the choice of her husband, but she subverted her father's dictates by eloping with another man in the dead of night. The citizens of my village are still talking about this incident of enforced marriage that led to female rebellion. While the girl was deemed sexually deviant and her elopement was a violation of Palestinian norms, people orally attribute her father's inabil-

¹⁰⁴ Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women*, pp. 52, 121; Nahla Abdo, 'Gender and Politics under the Palestinian Authority', *JPS*, 28.2 (1999), 38-51 (p. 41).

¹⁰⁵ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ See for example, Adam James, 'Case Study: "Honour" Killings and Blood Feuds', *Gendercide Watch* 1999-2013 (20 January 2008) < http://www.gendercide.org/case_honour.html > [accessed 22 August 2014].

ity to kill her in order to restore his own reputation to his complicity with her aberrant behaviour. While her father disowned her to deflect people's critical voices, he lost his reputation in the village. Many still avoid talking to him in order not to taint their tongues. People refrain from talking to him because he is responsible for the shame of his daughter and his inability to control her makes him shamed and diminished in relation to others. As Diane Baxter argues, 'A damaged reputation leaves a family vulnerable. Losing honor—particularly over the sexual misbehavior of its women—means families are exposed to ridicule and derision'.¹⁰⁷ For students and teachers of English at An-Najah University, people's abstinence from talking to a dishonoured patriarch is attributed to their immersion in stagnant traditions that oppress and silence women. It is important to realise the complexities of the equation and the everyday dangers of speaking out against it since, as Abu-Lughod argues, 'Westernized elites condemn honor crimes to stigmatize the lives of ordinary people, blaming violence against women on their backwardness and ignorance'.¹⁰⁸

While the Palestinian woman in the aforementioned example defied her father's voice, Isabella becomes caught between her belief that she has been 'born with that obedience / That must submit unto a father's will' (2.1.86-87) and her desire to choose her own husband. Arguably, her silence is more telling about her unspoken desire for her uncle. The female character's function as a listener or as a marginalized speaker opens the possibility of responses that would disrupt the authority of male voices. As a critical listener, Isabella can subvert the authority of Fabritio's dominant voice by providing a point of focus for off-stage female auditors whose experiences are also marginalized. While her father may 'force [outward] consent' (2.1.88), he cannot control her silent thoughts and feelings. I think that Middleton's text implies the existence of an alternative inwardness of dissent where grievances are con-

¹⁰⁷ Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister', p. 746.

¹⁰⁸ Abu-Lughod, 'Seductions of the "Honor Crimes"', p. 18.

cealed or '[l]ocked up in modest silence' (2.1.77); Middleton identifies female grieving subjectivity with inexpressible inwardness.

Middleton suggests that complaint can be a subversive form of speech for female characters, proving difficult to discipline once it is expressed openly, as Bloom suggests.¹⁰⁹ Isabella vocally constructs a position counter to Fabritio's, voicing her grievances (1.2.156-84) and protesting against a system that objectifies women as sexual and linguistic commodities traded among men. However, while Isabella decries Fabritio's voice of injustice, on his demand she dances and sings for the Ward, displaying her physical and vocal skills even though she does not revere a fool who 'has not wit' (2.2.189).

Isabella's struggle contrasts with Livia's authoritative voice. Livia begins the play as a privileged speaker. She criticizes Fabritio's absolute authority and his claim that Isabella should subsume her voice and choice to his (1.2.29-37), asserting that he cannot compel love (1.2.131-36). Modern editors have observed that Livia's affection towards Hippolito suggests an incestuous desire for her brother, as revealed through her speech (2.1.45-49, 50-52, 71, 5.2.86).¹¹⁰ Her procurement of Isabella is a game of substitution whereby she lives through her niece,¹¹¹ thus mirroring the main plot where the Mother lives through Bianca. However, Livia manipulates familial relations to usurp patriarchal discourse and shape the course of events. She tells Hippolito that she 'wears a tongue in Florence'¹¹² that can nullify Bianca's aversion to him with 'strong argument' (2.1.37, 39). Livia depicts herself as a physician

¹⁰⁹ Bloom, *Voice*, p. 109.

¹¹⁰ Roma Gill, 'Introduction', in Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, ed. by Roma Gill (London: Ernest Benn, 1968), pp. xiii-xxvi (p. xxiii).

¹¹¹ Richard Dutton, 'Introduction', in Thomas Middleton, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside, Women Beware Women, The Changeling, A Game at Chess*, ed. by Richard Dutton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. vii-xxxvii (p. xxiv); Dodson, 'Livia', pp. 378, 380.

¹¹² Gill reads this reference in terms of the commodification of speech. It alludes to the fact that 'jewellery in the shape of tongues was popular at this time'. Gill, *Women*, p. 27.

whose words are ‘ministered / By truth and zeal’ (2.1.28-29), assuming a nurturing vocal register while planning Hippolito’s and Isabella’s incestuous relationship. Middleton shows that the agency of the speaker emanates from the powerful material means of speech, as is noted by Bloom.¹¹³ Hippolito describes the influence of Livia’s rhetoric to transform Isabella ‘beyond sorcery this, drugs, or love-powders’ (2.1.232) which shows that Isabella, as a listener, is absolutely vulnerable to the seductive power of Livia’s speech.

Livia usurps both legal power and the masculine discourse of naming. Naming, as Butler notes, is an act that exerts authority and encodes a power structure: ‘The one who names, who works within language to find a name for another, is presumed to be already named, positioned within language as one who is already subject to that founding or inaugurating address’.¹¹⁴ Livia challenges Isabella’s identity through re-naming her. As Louis Althusser argues, ‘the fact of calling you by your name, the fact of knowing, even if I do not know what it is, that you ‘have’ a name of your own [...] means that you are recognized as a unique subject’.¹¹⁵ Livia takes up Fabritio’s masculine position of speaking for Isabella and aligning herself with Middleton as the instigator of the play’s subsequent action of incest grounded on deceptive silence. In a book-length study on ‘character-dramatist’ or ‘actor-playwright’, as she calls them, Lillian Wilds asserts that a character-dramatist ‘dramatises themselves’, ‘creates roles’, and even creates ‘plays-within-the play for other characters’.¹¹⁶ In this sense, Livia is a playwright-character who composes scripts for other characters like a playwright setting up his play.

¹¹³ Bloom, *Voice*, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performance* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 29.

¹¹⁵ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. by Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), p. 173.

¹¹⁶ Lillian Wilds, *Shakespeare’s Character-Dramatists: A Study of a Character Type in Shakespearean Tragedy Through Hamlet* (Salzburg, Austria: University Salzburg, 1975), p. 139.

Livia's manipulation of familial relations through language challenges Palestinian male figures' linguistic authority in disowning traitors and sexually transgressive women. In contemporary Palestine, some examples reveal that familial relationships and their dissolution depend on language and linguistic authority in that familial bonds are matters of speech rather than blood. For example, traitors are verbally disowned by their families – a disownment that is based on the father's or brother's public declaration that the villain is no longer their relative. For example, 'A Hamas leader has publicly disowned his son, days after he announced he had secretly spied for Israel and helped authorities hunt down members of the Islamic militant group'. The Mail Foreign Service says that this 'announcement means the family now considers their son to have never existed. He loses his inheritance and the family will never speak to him, or about him, again.'¹¹⁷ While most families kill their sexually transgressive female relatives, some families denounce and disown their sexually deviant women to rid themselves of shame. As Baxter notes, 'short of murder, a particularly harsh response is to renounce the female and cut her off from the family'.¹¹⁸ Therefore, from a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Livia subverts the patriarchal privilege of naming because it is male figures who verbally announce disownment as they are supposedly the guardians of honour.

Livia's role as an avid listener who understands the dynamics of patriarchal authority enables her to subvert men's voices. Livia's dissolution of familial relations could be a radical departure from the absolutist patriarchal regime that King James I inaugurated. While King James I insists on his possession of his subjects, Livia delegitimises the relationship between Isabella and Fabritio. While Isabella, by birth, is obliged to subordinate her voice to Fabritio's, Livia devalues his commands by delegitimising Isabella's relationship to him. She voices the fic-

¹¹⁷ Mail Foreign Service, 'Hamas founder disowns his eldest son after he confesses to spying for Israel' (2 March 2010) < <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1254809/Hamas-leader-disowns-son-spied-Israel.html> > [accessed 14 October 2013].

¹¹⁸ Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister', pp. 753-54.

tional tale that Isabella is ‘no more allied to any of us [the family], / Save what the courtesy of opinion casts’ (2.1.135-36). Livia (like Iago) is a magician of language, who conjures up the unheard with words. She ‘fill[s Isabella’s] ear with wonder’ (2.1.145), weaving a tale of Isabella’s mother’s confession of adultery (2.1.152-57) to ‘start [her] blood’ (2.1.134). Livia appropriates the masculine role of confessor and elicits ‘penitent confession’ (2.1.154) of adultery from Isabella’s mother. By insisting that the ‘Marquis of Coria’ (2.1.144) is Isabella’s father, Livia induces change in the listening Isabella, making her believe that she is no longer obliged to listen and obey Fabritio’s voice (2.1.158-61). Livia reveals the vulnerability of the male voice, as it depends upon a woman’s voice to confirm the paternity of the child. Isabella’s fictional father’s silent authority dislocates the incest prohibition originated by her real father’s voice, for Isabella’s family name is changed. Judith Butler notes that the name ‘functions as a kind of prohibition, but also as an enabling occasion [...] the name is a token of a symbolic order, an order of social law’.¹¹⁹ Isabella’s new familial relationship brings forth ‘the means to know [herself]’ (2.1.182).

Livia’s role as an active controller resonates with the maternal role in contemporary Palestine where girls turn to their mothers should they require assistance. A university student from Gaza says:

I would not advise [a woman] to refer to her family, because she may have aggressive brothers who may beat her husband or his family and the problem will be bigger, but the woman could speak directly with her mother who can advise what to do without informing anyone else.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of ‘Sex’* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 152.

¹²⁰ Palestinian Ministry of Women’s Affairs, ‘National Strategy’, p. 49.

While Livia allies herself with male figures to enable Bianca and Isabella to fulfil their sexual desires, Palestinian mothers guide girls and women along a culturally established principle of female obedience to male figures, assisting men to subjugate women. A housewife from a village in Ramallah says: 'I think that mothers have to raise their daughters and teach them to obey their husbands in order to be able to live with them and to have a family'.¹²¹

Middleton criticises patriarchal voices and their deafness to female voices through Isabella's incestuous relationship with Hippolito, which makes a mockery of the marriage that Fabritio has made. Molly Smith notes that 'Middleton, like Tourneur, presents incest as a direct result of abuses in the exercise of patriarchal authority'.¹²² Leantio's figurative buying of a 'horse' (1.3.52) is acted out by the Ward, whose inspection of Isabella's body is an example of male commodification of the female body that becomes an object of visual pleasure.¹²³ This voyeuristic examination by male figures (2.2.100-15, 3.3.40-42, 74-76, 90-92), which moves from Isabella's mouth to peep beneath her skirts, invokes the Renaissance conflation of mouth and genitalia.¹²⁴ In Sordido's advice to the Ward to view Isabella naked as women 'may hide a number [of flaws] with a bum-roll' (2.2.127), he calls attention to the boy's body as he enacts the female character. The discovery of a boy beneath Isabella's clothing enunciates a cultural anxiety 'that the basic, essential form of erotic excitement in men is homosexual'.¹²⁵ However, Middleton creates and sustains the illusion of woman that would hold spectators' conviction. Isabella's refusal to open her mouth for the Ward to inspect her teeth (3.3.87-88) deconstructs the Renaissance convention that equates silence with chastity and an open mouth with sexual lasciviousness. While the open mouth is akin to the openness of the genitals, Isabella's closed

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 33.

¹²² Smith, *Boundaries*, p. 118.

¹²³ Anthony B. Dawson, 'Women Beware Women and the Economy of Rape', *SEL*, 27.2 (1987), 303-20 (p. 307).

¹²⁴ Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 11.

¹²⁵ Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 30.

mouth is a sign of sexuality. She harbours sexual desires towards Hippolito. Indeed, she decides to marry the Ward as a cover for her relationship with Hippolito.

In early modern England protestant theologians described marriage as a type of friendship that depends on language. Robert Cleaver suggests that ‘there shall be in wedlock a certain sweet and pleasant conversation, without which it is no marriage, but a prison, a hatred, and perpetual torment of the mind’.¹²⁶ This marriage that is based on communication and mutual love is in opposition to absolute authority and lack of communication between King James I and his subjects. Guardiano voices the role of language in marriage; he tells the Ward, ‘I bring you both to talk together’ and ‘gr[o]w familiar in your tongues’ (3.3.7-8). However, the Ward cannot speak well. When Sordido tells the Ward ‘fall in talk with her’, the Ward says that ‘[i]t shall go hard’ (3.3.77, 78). The Duke asserts that there is no harmony of discourse between the speaker and listener in the relationship between the Ward and Isabella: ‘such a voice to such a husband / Is like a jewel of unvalued worth, / Hung at a fool’s ear’ (3.2.157-59). Middleton suggests that the Ward’s illiterate bawdy provides a contrast to Livia’s ‘tongue-discourse’ (2.2.150). As he ‘has no wit himself’ (3.2.189), he is ‘not so base to learn to write and read’ (1.2.124). In showing kindness and affection toward his niece, Hippolito has unleashed Isabella’s desiring voice just as the Duke has reawakened Bianca’s voice. The harmony between Isabella and Hippolito is that of affection and language (1.2.63-64). Isabella asserts that she and Hippolito ‘passed through so many arguments’ and ‘[w]alked out whole nights together in discourses’ (1.2.196, 198). Once Hippolito voices his sexual desire for her, Isabella not only turns a deaf ear to his protestations of love (1.2.220), but she also refrains from speaking about incest so as not to shame her tongue (2.1.75-78). However, as she hears Livia’s tale of her mother’s adultery, she loses all revulsion to Hippolito, urging

¹²⁶ Robert Cleaver, *A Godly Form of Household Government* (London: R. Field, 1621), p. 84.

him, 'pray make your love no stranger' (2.1.226) and kissing him (2.1.203). 'The virtuous Isabella' (2.1.58), therefore, speaks the words that the dramatist Livia breathes into her ears.

Isabella's deployment of deception to fulfil her desires to which her father turns a deaf ear offers a point of focus to many Palestinian girls whose voices have been stifled by male figures' dictates. Because Isabella is (like most Palestinian girls) unable to defy social conventions, she uses deceptive silence to pretend compliance (2.1.127, 141-42, 164, 169). Palestinian women are unable to defy violence against them and their acceptance of verbal and physical violence elicits their feelings of powerlessness and weakness. A schoolgirl from Ramallah said: 'I am afraid of being urged to marry at an early stage of my life or being urged to get married to someone who I do not like'.¹²⁷ A university student from a camp in Nablus says:

I have another friend who used to be in love with a man and before he could ask for her hand in marriage, her parents forced her to marry another man under the pretence that she was 21 years old and too old to marry (she was like an old maid); they forced her into another marriage. The marriage decision is not in her hands, not like the young men; they choose.¹²⁸

While these Palestinian women are unable to defy gender restrictions, I think that Isabella's deployment of cunning and deception to resist gender restrictions provide such Palestinian girls a point of focus to defy male figures' authority. Livia insists that Isabella 'call [her] aunt still' (2.1.167) to conceal Isabella's mother's adultery and not to, unknowingly, reveal Livia's deceptive speech. Isabella's decision that 'this marriage shall go forward' (2.1.206) and to

¹²⁷ Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 'National Strategy', p. 35.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 35.

have a secret relationship with Hippolito suggests that a woman's subordination to her father before marriage and to her husband in marriage facilitates her lasciviousness. Isabella's unquestioning acceptance of her new status shows that her desire for Hippolito has made her an easy victim to Livia, whose tale is in the mind of the listening Isabella. However, while Isabella thinks she is deceiving her husband, Isabella is herself deceived by a more powerful, seductive female voice (that of Livia) into transgressing even further.

Middleton endorses the stereotype of the widow as lusty (4.1.142) and outspoken (in contrast with Webster's depiction of the Duchess). Livia gets entangled by her schemes when she becomes enchanted with Leantio and uses her 'discretion', 'skill' and 'judgement' (3.2.308) to pursue a sexual relationship with him. While Leantio is immersed in imaginary conversation with Bianca, he is deaf to Livia's voice. She 'enjoy[s]' eavesdropping on his soliloquy (3.2.259). James Hirsh suggests that '[t]he proliferation in late Renaissance drama of self-addressed speeches indicates that, like Livia, playgoers were attracted by listening to what a character says when he thinks he has only himself for an audience'.¹²⁹ Livia initially experiences a sense of dislocation, 'I am as dumb to any language now / But love's, as one that never learned to speak' (3.2.136-37). However, she offers Leantio 'good counsel' which 'never could come better' (3.2.268-69), telling Leantio that Bianca is 'a strumpet' (3.2.271). Ornstein notes that Livia is 'a masterly seducer because she knows her victims far better than they know themselves'.¹³⁰ She uses the Duke's tactics from when he finally silenced Bianca (2.2.366), appealing to Leantio's love of wealth (3.3.281, 286-90).

¹²⁹ James Hirsh, 'Guarded, Unguarded, and Unguardable Speech in Late Renaissance Drama', in *Who Hears in Shakespeare?: Auditory Worlds on Stage and Screen*, ed. by Laury Magnus and Walter W. Cannon (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), pp. 17-40 (pp. 28-29).

¹³⁰ Ornstein, *Vision*, p. 193.

While Bianca resists the Duke's persuasive rhetoric, Leantio gives a too-credent ear to Livia's tongue. I think that Middleton shows the dangers of listening on the part of the male figure, who configures aural openness with personal and material growth. While Leantio criticises Bianca's 'guilt', he is unable to express and acknowledge his own. He accepts Livia's offer, turning into a male prostitute who will 'love enough, and take enough' (3.2.371), contradicting his earlier speech on marital content. Like Isabella, Leantio reproduces Livia's words, denouncing Bianca as 'a whore', a 'court saint' tied to a 'devil' (4.1.61, 77-79). He says that Livia is a 'beauteous benefactor', rich in 'the good works of love' (4.1.71-72). In an inversion of Renaissance conventions on listening: while Antonio dies because he is deaf to the Duchess's voice in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, Leantio dies because he listens to, and reproduces, Livia's speech.

Leantio's 'spiteful' and 'dangerous' utterances, which 'made [Isabella] almost sick' (4.1.109, 121-22) also undo him. His unfolding of Livia's letter and 'vows' (4.1.120-21) and threatening speech to Bianca and the Duke urge Bianca to use her position as the Duke's whore so as to get rid of Leantio and silence his complaints. Bianca's 'I love peace, sir' (4.1.125) shows a disparity between what she says and what she does, as she is persuading the Duke to silence Leantio.¹³¹ The Duke flatters Hippolito with an alleged favour to Livia of which he has conceived, 'but nev'r meant to practise / Because I know her base' (4.1.137-38). Hippolito, with 'a blood soon stirred' (4.1.131), holds the 'reputation of his sister's honour's / As dear to him as life-blood to his heart' (4.1.134-35). While honour is expressed in terms of wealth (4.1.160-61), the Duke and Hippolito are more concerned with reputation than with honour.

¹³¹ Bromham argues that the word 'peace' in the play is associated with deceit and sexual and murderous desires. A. A. Bromham, 'The Tragedy of Peace: Political Meaning in *Women Beware Women*', *SEL*, 26.2 (1986), 309-29 (pp. 314-19).

From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, this concern with the veneer of public reputation has immediate resonance in contemporary Palestine where the families whose female members voice and act on their sexuality keep the act out of the public sphere; they consider honour a signifier that is assigned and confirmed in public rather than inherent.¹³² In other words, secret desires may be indulged, provided the veneer of masculine honour and men's public voices are not challenged by gossip. In her discussion of honour killing and the forces of gossip, scandal and shame that perpetrate this violence in the Middle East, Awwad notes that '[o]nce the illicit sexual activities become public knowledge, the community will exert tremendous pressure on the family to correct the situation'.¹³³ Likewise, in Middleton's tragedy the killing is justified because, instead of making use of '[a]rt, silence, closeness, subtlety, and darkness' (4.2.7), Leantio has chosen to be 'an impudent boaster' (4.1.150) who 'tells the midday sun what's done in darkness' (4.1.152). Hippolito silences Leantio so that '[t]his place shall never hear thee murmur more' (4.1.178). As the word 'murmur' denotes, even Leantio's feminized, soft voice and complaining will not be heard; Leantio's death ends his performance on stage. However, Leantio's 'death is the catalyst which brings about the bloody purge of the death masque'¹³⁴ which could be a fulfilment of Leantio's curse that 'a plague will come' (4.1.104), as Hippolito affirms (5.2.151-52). Hippolito's killing of Leantio suggests the family's appearance of honour is restored by killing Leantio, who violated it by his verbal boast about his relationship with Livia.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Middleton's heroines' retributive and destructive voices in the masque scene are a foil to Palestinian women's celebration of male figures' authority and honour in weddings. While the majority of Palestinian women are deprived of their voices, they unleash their voices in weddings in the form of ululations and

¹³² Awwad, 'Gossip, Scandal, Shame and Honor Killing', p. 45.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 45.

¹³⁴ Potter, 'Sports', p. 378.

songs that celebrate the bride and the groom and their families. They praise the groom's sexual abilities and the bride's beauty, shyness and virginity which form the idealised Palestinian constructions of masculinity and femininity.¹³⁵ Baxter notes that 'virginity until marriage, and sexual faithfulness are highly valued by most Palestinian women and men. Women who uphold these values gain respect, credibility, and honor for themselves and for their female relatives'.¹³⁶ The wedding party is an arena of performing public honour between the families because marriage prevents girls from the shame of being spinsters and men from being bachelors. Palestinian women are subject to double systems of subordination – occupation and patriarchy. However, in weddings, they confront the former and submit to the latter. While Palestinian women celebrate the honour of the patriarchal family, they defy Israeli occupation, singing songs for the honour of Palestinian martyrs and Palestine. While Palestinian women uphold their honour and that of their male relatives in wedding ceremonies, Middleton's text shows how female figures' participation in weddings defies male figures' authority and that female figures destroy themselves in a process of verbal retribution.

The masque, an orgy of murder and suicide, is a locus for women's retributive voices. While the women's masque seems a masculine text designed to honour the Duke's marriage to Bianca (4.2.199-200), it is a female-dominated stage. Livia loses control over her plot after Leantio is silenced, since "'Tis harder to dissemble grief than love' (4.2.228). She retaliates against Hippolito and Isabella by revealing that Hippolito is Isabella's uncle, confirming the Arabic proverb that 'obeying women leads to remorse'.¹³⁷ In an aside, Isabella expresses her perception of Livia's feigned reconciliation (4.2.125-45), plotting her revenge (4.2.144-46) within the sphere of a court masque to restore her reputation and self-worth, as is argued by

¹³⁵ See, Na'ela Azzam Libbes, 'The Palestinian Wedding Practices and Rituals', *This Week in Palestine*, 105 (2007) < <http://archive.thisweekinpalestine.com/details.php?id=2013&edid=135> > [accessed: 27 July 2015].

¹³⁶ Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister', p. 751.

¹³⁷ Atta Allah, *Arabian and Palestinian Folklore*, p. 204.

Findlay.¹³⁸ Isabella casts Livia into the role of Juno, the panderer ‘that ru’lst o’er coupled bodies’ (5.2.74) while Isabella will play the ‘nymph / That offers sacrifice to appease [Juno’s] wrath’ (4.2.214-15). Livia is killed by breathing in a poisoned ‘precious incense’ (5.2.100-01); ‘the action’, Potter has noted, ‘is a kind of pun on incense / incest: like the incest, the incense is poisoned, so Livia dies from her own corruption’.¹³⁹ While Livia asserts that she will fund the masque, saying ‘the cost shall all be mine’ (4.2.206), she is destroyed by her own performance, discourse and transgression of gender roles (5.2.135). Isabella appropriates the formalised ritual of Livia’s false tale of her mother’s adultery so that ‘revenge [...] becomes ritual’, as Inga-Stina Ewbank noted in an early, perceptive feminist reading of the play.¹⁴⁰ While Isabella throws Livia’s words and text back at her, she is controlled by Livia’s plot.

While Livia’s control has been destabilised through Isabella’s and Bianca’s scripts and Hippolito’s restraint of her sexual endeavours, she reclaims authority, writing a script that ‘swerves a little from the argument’ (5.2.123) into a dance of death. She calls on the arrows of Cupid to kill Hippolito, and she drops Jove’s ‘burning treasure’ on Isabella, appropriating an Ovidian narrative in order to silence Isabella (5.2.116-19).¹⁴¹ Isabella’s death in a shower of flaming gold criticises Fabritio’s deafness to her voice and his financially motivated agenda for Isabella’s marriage to the Ward. Her death, wordless and unnoticed for ten lines (5.2.146), expresses her powerlessness throughout the play. As the Duke and Fabritio are frustrated by the unforeseen events (5.2.120-24), their deaths are a relief to their puzzled understanding. The Duke is not given a last speech of self-realization, only ‘my heart swells

¹³⁸ Alison Findlay, *A Feminist Perspective on Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), p. 55.

¹³⁹ Potter, ‘Sports’, p. 380.

¹⁴⁰ Inga-Stina Ewbank, “‘Those Pretty Devices’: A Study of Masques in Plays”, in *A Book of Masques*, ed. by Terence John, Bew Spencer and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 407-48 (p. 443).

¹⁴¹ Potter sees the ‘burning treasure’ as more directly symbolizing ‘Isabella allowing herself to be sold to the Ward [...]. Her father’s answer refers to her lapful of treasure (i.e. the pregnancy that exposes her incest?)’, ‘Sports’, p. 381.

bigger yet' (5.2.191) – 'his lust has destroyed him'.¹⁴² While in the seduction scene the Duke's language is filled with the rhetoric of masculine domination, this terrifying private space of seduction prophesies the emergence of the Duke's feminized voice and Bianca's powerful voice. While in *The Duchess of Malfi* Antonio's failure to assume a masculine public voice leads to his death, the Duke's publicising of his marriage dooms himself to failure. The Duke's silencing can be a criticism of his former sovereignty and absolute authority and his subordination of his body natural to the feminised domestic space. Middleton shows that the Duke is destroyed by his discourse; orally, he swallows the 'poisoned cup' (5.2.209), which devours his voice. Fabritio's silence undermines the authoritative voice he believes he has in enforcing Isabella's marriage. As the men think that the 'plot's drawn false' (5.2.131), Middleton reveals the women masquers as the authors and the male viewers as the ignorant interpreters (5.2.124-25, 130-01). Critics have noted that Middleton 'loses artistic control of the masque'.¹⁴³ Like a dramatist, Middleton's heroines are playwright characters who compose scripts and engage in manipulatory plots for others. Female figures interrogate Middleton's exclusive ownership of the text from within the performance. In this sense, female figures' participation in the wedding is a form of subversive complicity as they turn what is supposed to be a spectacle of honour to male figures into a dance of death. From a Palestinian context of reading, it subverts Palestinian women's construction of a wedding as a spectacle of honour to the bride and groom and their families that women uphold and perpetuate, as I pointed out earlier.

While Livia and Isabella claim authoritative positions on the masque stage, Bianca creates an antimasque that disrupts the 'model of /What's presented' (5.2.30-31). The male figures' puzzlement over what is presented (5.2.65) shows that they are marginalised spectators. As

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 381.

¹⁴³ Richard Levin, *The Multiple Plot in English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 169.

the three mythical figures ‘enter’, they address her: ‘[t]o thee, fair bride, Hymen offers up/ Of nuptial joys this the celestial cup’ (5.2.50, 51-52). Rather than operating as a passive viewer of the first scene, Bianca participates in the action, responding to Hymen, ‘[w]e’ll taste you, sure, ‘twere pity to disgrace/ So pretty a beginning’ (5.2.55-56). In authoring this dialogue, she articulates her position as a bride and positions herself within the sexualised masculine discourse of marriage that re-writes the Cardinal’s accusation of her as ‘a fair strumpet’ (4.1.244). She dies voluntarily as a loving wife, committing suicide by kissing the Duke’s poisoned lips (5.2.220-23); this is a suicide that eliminates any chance of further voicing and acting on her sexual desires. Bianca, therefore, is a self-fashioning figure who transcends Livia’s attempts to dictate the action of the whole play.

The masque and the macabre carnage it enacts have been read as Middleton’s attempt to resolve personal lusts by ‘creating a superficial impression of tragic doom’.¹⁴⁴ Sutherland observes that the ‘fatal nuptial masque [...] is not in any of Middleton’s known sources or analogues’.¹⁴⁵ By using a performance perspective and paying attention to the masque as a theatrical mode in which women could and did perform, it is possible to see how the masque, which concludes *Women Beware Women*, enables women to present themselves as authors and actors capable of retributive expression. They access a masculinised tradition of revenge instead of enlisting other male characters to carry out their vengeance as Tamora did in *Titus Andronicus* and Beatrice-Joanna in *The Changeling*. In her article on seventeenth-century court masques, Wynne-Davies argues that ‘[n]ot only were the ladies of the court able to commission the text they desired, they were also able to share the planning of its performance

¹⁴⁴ Ornstein, *Vision*, p. 191.

¹⁴⁵ Sarah P. Sutherland, *Masques in Jacobean Tragedy* (New York: AMS Press, 1983), p. 89.

and act in its presentation'.¹⁴⁶ The masque is a form that took place in the private arena, in which women were able to perform though not to speak. Findlay describes female masquers as 'silent objects of the court gaze'.¹⁴⁷ Orgel claims that 'Masquers are not actors; a lady or gentleman participating in a masque remains a lady or gentleman, and is not released from the obligation of observing all the complex rules of behaviour at court'.¹⁴⁸ However, while boy actors did not perform in court masques, Middleton employs the boy actors impersonating female figures as masquers who thwart male voices and gazes and negotiate a subjective space for themselves. However, while female figures attempt to wrest control of the play, they are punished by the dramatist, Middleton, who suggests that the female figures' defensive voices are self-destructive ones.

Middleton seems to reassert patriarchal voices in silencing the female characters whose speeches and licentiousness are intertwined. This ending demonstrates that 'unorthodox female behaviour must be exorcised'¹⁴⁹ to bring about order, while the 'tragic masque expounds the court's corruption and the abiding truths of individual responsibility and moral judgement'.¹⁵⁰ However, while the Cardinal, who voices orthodox moral authority (1.3.95, 5.2.224-27), may represent 'a grotesque phoenix' that 'ris[es] from the ashes',¹⁵¹ his position as the 'next heir' (5.2.20) complicates the ending. He can no longer govern a fallen court whose amoral attitudes are engrained in men's and women's tongues and ears. Furthermore, the stage is left with Fabritio and the foolish Ward, whose base voices embody the dehumani-

¹⁴⁶ Marion Wynne-Davies, 'The Queen's Masque: Renaissance Women and the Seventeenth-Century Court Masque', in *Gloriana's Face*, ed. by S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), pp. 79-104 (p. 81).

¹⁴⁷ Alison Findlay, *Playing Spaces in Early Women's Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 132.

¹⁴⁸ Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 39.

¹⁴⁹ Haselkorn, 'Sin', p. 129.

¹⁵⁰ Tricomi, 'Anti-court', p. 73.

¹⁵¹ Levin, 'Mother', p. 386.

sation of female characters and the tyranny of enforced marriage. Middleton thus suggests the root causes of tragedy may not finally lie with transgressive female voices.

My discussion of Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* has drawn on new historicist readings which argue that these are political dramas which critique Jacobean ideologies of sovereign paternalism, absolute authority and the tyranny which is closely allied to it. Within that political critique, Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* are also protests against the role to which women are assigned: the object of exchange between male lustful voices. Middleton shows that the patriarchal ideology of gender difference, based on male deafness to the female voice, encourages deceit and secrecy, which in turn undermines masculine control. In response to male figures' absolute authority (that, historically, shores up James I's rule), Middleton's heroines subversively inscribe their silences and speeches within the framework of masculine authority in that the agency of their voices and silences is made possible by their subversive subordination to the voices of male figures. Middleton, like Shakespeare in *Othello*, shows that the subversion caused by the masculine ideology is not contained. Had Othello listened to Emilia and Desdemona, there would have been no tragedy. Likewise, Middleton's *The Changeling* reveals that Vermandero, Alsemero and De Flores debase Beatrice-Joanna to disown their own parts in her disruptive speech and silence. In the sub-plot, Alibius does not recognise his foolish discourse and he, therefore, keeps Isabella locked up to protect her chastity. In *Women Beware Women*, the Duke, Fabritio and Hippolito do not acknowledge their contribution to the female figures' destructive speeches and silences.

From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, I have argued that Middleton's *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* offer a criticism of the Palestinian practice of enforced marriage

and male figures' deafness to female voices. As is the case in Middleton's tragedies, some Palestinian women seem to obey their parents' choice of prospective sons-in-law, but their silence is sometimes far from being a mark of complicity. It can be uncanny, opening an active subjectivity rather than a subjected position, because the female characters secretly channel their sexual desires towards men of their choice. In *The Changeling*, the male figures' debasing of Beatrice-Joanna enacts a dialogue with contemporary Palestine where women are perceived as the agents of sexual transgressions. I have pointed out that the male figures' attacks on Beatrice-Joanna are linked with the violation of their honour and reputation by their female relatives, and male shame about Israeli occupation that leads to greater violence towards women. Isabella's exercise of her agency in the madhouse without losing her chastity resonates with Palestinian women's assertion of their agency within the household and the political arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict without losing their sexual honour. In *Women Beware Women*, Middleton's unusual representation of sexually liberal family politics, where the Mother helps her daughter-in-law to fulfil her sexual desires contradicts the protection of family honour, sometimes to the point of verbal and physical abuse, by mothers and mothers-in-law in contemporary Palestine. Livia's role in enabling women to fulfil their sexual desires with powerful male figures subverts the role of mothers in contemporary Palestine where maternal figures advise girls to follow the established conventions of gender roles. Moreover, Livia's masculine manipulation of familial relations through language has parallels in contemporary Palestine where it is male figures who verbally announce the disownment of Palestinian traitors and sexually transgressive female figures. Finally, I have considered how Palestinian women's celebrations of their honour and that of their male relatives in wedding ceremonies are rewritten as subversively destructive forms of control in the tragic conclusion of the masque which is dominated by Middleton's heroines' retributive voices.

These tragedies, which have not been parts of the syllabus at An-Najah University, may work to challenge and upset cultural conventions and offer a model for contemporary Palestinian teachers and students to challenge the destructive traditions of enforced marriage and male figures' deafness to the female voice. However, this process of critical thinking will undoubtedly be difficult to foster. The majority of my students are not sympathetic to my aim in using early modern texts to change current thinking and traditions. My discussion of silence, speech and sexuality in class makes me vulnerable to students' accusations that I am an immoral and blasphemous teacher. Nevertheless, even when students vocalise their opposition to my teaching, and complicity with traditional viewpoints, I do not know what potentially different, developing views their silences may conceal. The seeds of change that my ideas may have sown in my students' minds may be an unrealistically optimistic reading of hope on my part, but it continues to inspire me for the future as I modify my teaching approaches in the present.

Chapter Five

Female Authors' Subversive Texts

I shall write, I shall write a lot. I feel I have been for some time living moment
by moment in a drama, moved by every act in it. All of a sudden I, myself, am a
poem burning with anguish, dejected, hopeful, looking beyond the horizon!¹⁵²

In these lines Fadwa Tuqan (1917-2003), an eminent Palestinian poet, equates her desire for writing with the erasure of her body, associating writing with textualising herself as a poem. Following the critical line of presentism, I argue that despite the historical and ideological differences between early modern England and contemporary Palestine, Tuqan's words on writing as a form of female expression constitute a Palestinian parallel to the situation experienced by early modern female writers. In contemporary Palestine and early modern England a select group of women have used writing, a silent form of speech, to express their thoughts in circumstances where their bodies and voices were subject to circumscription. Unlike previous chapters which are author-centred in focus, this one deals with a selection of plays spanning from 1555 to 1613, grouped together because they are by female dramatists. I analyse Lady Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia at Aulis* (1555),¹⁵³ the earliest English translation of a Greek play (Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*). I continue with Mary Sidney's *The Tragedie of Antonie* (1595),¹⁵⁴ translated from Robert Garnier's *Antoine* (1578). Subsequently, I will discuss the first original play by an English woman, Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*

¹⁵²Fadwa Tuqan, *A Mountainous Journey: An Autobiography*, trans. by Olive Kenney and Naomi Shihab, ed. by Salma Khadra Jayyusi (Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 1990), p. 191. Subsequent references to this book are cited in the text by page number.

¹⁵³Lady Jane Lumley, *The Tragedie of Iphigenia in Three Revenge Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, ed. by Diane Purkiss (London: Penguin, 1998), pp. 5-35. Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by line number.

¹⁵⁴Mary Sidney, *The Tragedy of Antonie*, in *Renaissance Drama by Women: Texts and Documents*, ed. by S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 19-42. Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act and line number.

(1613).¹⁵⁵ As a group, the plays constitute a significant alternative to the representations of gender, voice and silence already discussed in the thesis because of the continuity between author, actress, and character. I read these early modern tragedies alongside Fadwa Tuqan's *Autobiography, A Mountainous Journey* (1990). While the female authors under study differ in their methods – autobiography, translation, so-called closet drama – they raise issues concerning the conditions of women's speech, and the relationships between gender, silence and authorial identities. I argue that by writing it is possible for female authors to enter the Symbolic order and displace phallic power while reiterating their silencing process on the page. Don Ihde notes that '[w]riting creates the possibility of a word without voice'.¹⁵⁶ Female characters' silencing is an act of displacement in that female authors create heroines who are silenced to justify the authors' expression. I assert that the death of female heroines which signals their movement from the physical to the spiritual realm reveals the female authors' elimination of their sexual bodies so as to liberate their textual bodies.

My incorporation of these female-authored texts in the thesis emanates from my desire to bring female-authored texts from across the early modern period to Palestinian students. As I have pointed out earlier, female-authored texts are not part of Shakespeare and Drama courses. A Survey of English Literature 1 course which exposes students to English literature from 600 A.D to 1790s does not include any female-authored text.¹⁵⁷ While the 'Autobiography' course introduces students to Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* and Ibtisam Barakat's *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood*,¹⁵⁸ the instructor of this course emphasises that he does not

¹⁵⁵Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Mariam The Fair Queen of Jewry*, ed. by Ramona Wray (London: Bloomsbury, 2012). Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition cited in the text by act, scene and line number.

¹⁵⁶ Don Ihde, *Listening and Voice: A Phenomenology of Sound* (Athens: University of Ohio Press, 1976), p.154.

¹⁵⁷ See Appendix 8, 8, 10.

¹⁵⁸ See Appendix 11, 12.

focus on the relationship between speech, writing, silence and sexuality in this course.¹⁵⁹ Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* has never been taught in the English department at An-Najah University where I work.¹⁶⁰ This thesis helped me to introduce this text as a part of Literary Criticism Course. I analyse *A Mountainous Journey* as a feminist text that assaults traditional Palestinian discrimination against women. In subsequent semesters, I would introduce my students to the early modern female-authored texts under study. An examination of female-authored texts across periods alongside male-authored drama contributes to a critical examination of women's agency as speakers and writers and it is an attempt to integrate female-authored texts into a male-dominated tradition that continues to control the canon and the critical perspective in contemporary Palestine.

Before I begin with the analysis of speech and silence in female-authored texts, I will consider the critical readings that discuss how female-authored texts – so-called closet dramas and translations – subvert the masculine construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence and blur the lines between private and public spheres.

Female-authored dramas subvert a conceptual system grounded in dichotomies such as public/private, active/passive and masculine/feminine. Quilligan proposes that '[t]he very choice of closet drama would [...] seem to underscore the fact that the public theaters barred women'.¹⁶¹ However, as feminist critics of the 1980s and 1990s observed, closet drama gives women a voice and thus challenges traditional gender roles, opening up a space for female subjectivity. Karen Raber reads the genre of closet drama as 'highly duplicitous, using the

¹⁵⁹ Nabil Alawi, Private Communication, 15 April, 2015.

¹⁶⁰ Nabil Alawi, Private Communication, 14 April 2015.

¹⁶¹ Maureen Quilligan, 'Staging Gender: William Shakespeare and Elizabeth Cary', in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Images*, ed. by James Grantham Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 208-32 (p. 225).

pretence of deliberate containment to effect, not hinder, a woman's public voice'.¹⁶² Tina Krontiris notes that 'the acceptable literary areas for women were basically two: religion and domesticity. Religion was a woman's prerogative which did not jeopardize her chastity [...], while the domestic scene [...] was her granted dominion'.¹⁶³ However, writing on religion can 'be used as a strategy for approaching secular issues' as in the case of Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* which combines the praise of Christ and the defence of Eve.¹⁶⁴ Mary Sidney's translation of the *Psalms*, with her brother Philip Sidney's could also be seen as a stepping stone to her translation of Robert Garnier's tragedy *Antonius*.

In addition to religious writings, letters and mothers' legacies, translation was an acceptable field for women because it was considered to exclude women's creativity. Suzanne Trill suggests that 'one of the reasons that translation has been perceived to be an appropriate form of writing for women is precisely because it is deemed to preclude an expression of their own opinions'.¹⁶⁵ Translations were deemed appropriate for women 'since all translations are reputed femalls'.¹⁶⁶ While translation was gendered as feminine, it nevertheless gave the female author an opportunity to engage with the text she was translating. Trill has argued: '[t]ranslation [...] is not simply a passive reflection of a previous text, but a form of writing which, by establishing it within a new context, makes a claim about the status of the translated text'.¹⁶⁷ In the light of Trill's argument, translation can be seen as a creative means of establishing authorial identity. Far from being a form through which women writers were obliged to internalise and reproduce the ideas and voices of the male-authored texts they

¹⁶² Karen Raber, 'Gender and the Political Subject in *The Tragedy of Mariam*', *SEL*, 35 (1995), 321-43 (p. 325).

¹⁶³ Tina Krontiris, *Oppositional Voices: Women as Writers and Translators of Literature in English Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 17.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁶⁵ Suzanne Trill, 'Sixteenth-century women's writing: Mary Sidney's *Psalms* and the "femininity" of translation', in *Writing and the English Renaissance*, ed. by William Zunder and Suzanne Trill (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 140-58 (p. 147).

¹⁶⁶ Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*, trans. by John Florio (London, 1603), sig. A2r.

¹⁶⁷ Trill, 'Translation', p. 143.

translate, translation actually opens up a subjective space for subversive intervention, as will be shown in my discussions of Lady Lumley's translation of Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* (1555) and Mary Sidney's *The Tragedie of Antonie* (1595).

In this chapter, I use Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* (1990), and the publicity surrounding Palestinian female martyrs as presentist intertexts to read Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia at Aulis* (1555), Sidney's *Tragedie of Antonie* (1595) and Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam* (1613). Despite the historical and ideological differences between early modern England and contemporary Palestine, the tragedies under investigation draw attention to striking anachronistic affinities. I contend that Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia*'s emphasis on sacrifice forms a dialogue with contemporary Palestine where martyrdom is a legitimate speech act that asserts women's moral agency. The association of martyrdom and marriage in contemporary Palestine is the context from which I analyse the thematic and metaphorical association between marriage and sacrifice in Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia*. I demonstrate that for readers in contemporary Palestine, the Chorus's vocal complicity with Agamemnon's plan to sacrifice Iphigenia and Clytemnestra's opposition to this sacrifice has immediate resonance with contemporary Palestine where some mothers praise their children's acts of martyrdom while others oppose these acts. To read Mary Sidney's *Antonie*, I argue that both Fadwa Tuqan's and Mary Sidney's literary relationships with their brothers demonstrate the threshold of their journey towards constructing independent literary voices. I argue that Garnier's *Antonie* enables Sidney to construct a mourning narrative for her brother Philip Sidney, just as Tuqan mourns her brother Ibrahim in her autobiography, *A Mountainous Journey*. Both the phenomenon of Palestinian female suicide bombers and Sidney's translation open up a space for a virtuous female intervention without conflating sexuality with politics. I argue that Cleopatra's personal suicide out of loyalty to Antonie is a foil to Palestinian women's impersonal

acts of suicide bombing. The dissociation of Mariam's speech from lasciviousness and the association of Salome's private speech and silence with sexual looseness subvert the Palestinian discourse that equates public speech with lasciviousness and silence with chastity and obedience. I read the oppression that Tuqan is subjected to by her mother alongside Mariam's mother's railing against Mariam to win Herod's favour. I read Cary's representation of Graphina's silence in *The Tragedy of Mariam* as active and subversive alongside Tuqan's figuring of silence as an arena of contemplation and mediation that leads her to writing. I use the Palestinian discourse of female martyrdom as a presentist context from which to scrutinize the representation of death in female-authored texts as a strategy that female authors deploy to legitimise their writings. I suggest that writing and sacrifice are the means through which women create their legitimate authorial identities, for writing and sacrifice involve silencing women's voices and eliminating their sexual bodies.

The contradiction between the dominant social discourses that discouraged women from writing and public speech in both contemporary Palestine and early modern England and the fact that a small number of women wrote raises a lot of questions that this chapter ventures to answer. How did female authors overcome their silencing? How did these authors represent female speech and silence? Did they use specific discourses to legitimise their authorial identities? While women's speech and writing have been demonised for their association with the sexualised female body, I argue that women use their bodies to construct their agency as writers and speakers while evading the subject positions of phallic speakers and whores. I investigate how the death of the body, the means of writing and speaking, is inextricably linked to female authors and heroines, as well as to Palestinian martyrs' construction of authorial identity and heroic immortality. Thus, my analysis of the plays and of Palestinian women's suicide bombing affirms Judith Bennett's hypothesis that 'women have always been

both victims and agents [...]. Women have not been merely passive victims of patriarchy; they have also colluded in, undermined, and survived patriarchy'.¹⁶⁸ Female dramatists were victims in the sense that they were excluded from public theatres, yet they were agents in constructing their literary authorship and writing against the patriarchal constructions of speech and silence. In the following section, I argue that Tuqan, like early modern female dramatists, uses her voice in writing to criticise her family in particular and traditional Palestinian society in general despite her family's attempt to curtail her utterance.

Fadwa Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*

Of all Arab female writers whose works of literature I am acquainted with, Tuqan is the one whose attitudes towards, treatment of, and challenge to, patriarchal discourse and its ideology on female speech come closest to those of female authors in early modern England. Despite the harsh circumstances in which she lived and the overwhelming obstacles that she faced, Tuqan was able to transcend her physical and mental confinement so as to become a pioneering Arab female poet. Her collections include: *My Brother Ibrahim* (1946),¹⁶⁹ *Alone With The Days* (1952),¹⁷⁰ *Give Us Love* (1960),¹⁷¹ and *Before The Closed Door* (1960).¹⁷² Tuqan was tutored by her brother Ibrahim (1905-1941), a nationalist poet, playwright and radio director (57). His poems rallied Arabs during their revolt against the British who had controlled Palestine since 1922. Tuqan tells readers that 'Ibrahim has been the voice of the Palestinian people; his nationalistic and social conscience was vigilantly aware of a reality which he re-

¹⁶⁸ Judith M. Bennett, 'Feminism and History', *Gender and History*, 1.3 (1989), 251-72 (p. 255).

¹⁶⁹ Fadwa Tuqan, *Akhi Ibrahim (My Brother Ibrahim)*, trans. by Ibrahim Dawood (Jaffa: al-Maktaba al-Asriya, 1946).

¹⁷⁰ Fadwa Tuqan, *Wahdi Ma'a al-Ayyam (Alone with the Days)*, trans. by Ibrahim Dawood (Cairo: Lajnat al-Nashr Li-L Jami'iyyin, 1952).

¹⁷¹ Fadwa Tuqan, *A'tina hubban (Give us Love)*, trans. by Ibrahim Dawood (Beirut: Dar al-Adab, 1967).

¹⁷² Fadwa Tuqan, *Amam al-bab al-mughlaq (Before the Closed Door)*, trans. by Ibrahim Dawood (Beirut: Dar al-Adab, 1967).

jected. His poetry, laden with the fervour of this reality, is a profound exploration of this Palestinian consciousness' (71). Ibrahim was Tuqan's surrogate father and she described him as giving her 'a feeling of contentment as a human being' (52-53). Because Tuqan's family prevented Tuqan from receiving school education, Ibrahim began teaching her to write elegies (58). She asserts that 'He [Ibrahim] had chosen a collection of books for my self-education and I arranged my time within a schedule I had laid down for myself' (66). Her relationship with him was constantly marked by fears for his life, as he suffered from poor health. His death in 1941 was a great loss to her: 'When Ibrahim died and father was still living, I truly felt like an orphan' (112). She wrote her most emotional poetry when expressing her sadness at his death.

Tuqan started writing poetry under a pseudonym (Dananeer), a historical figure who was well known for her skill in reciting Arabic literature (7). Tuqan's writing under a pseudonym is explained by the fact that a women's writing and publishing, especially about love, is not acceptable in Palestinian culture. Tuqan tells the reader that 'the word "love" was associated with disgrace and shame – an association imprinted upon me from my infancy' (75). Tuqan explains that 'Dananeer was honorable and chaste' so the pseudonym helps to 'shield me from the shame of love and to convince the reader that love poetry did not remove the qualities of "chastity" and "honor" from the female writer of poetry' (73). Tuqan's association of poetry with chastity reveals her commitment to a form of self-censorship, indicating that she wants to avoid the conventional association of romance with sexual disgrace.

Furthermore, the example of Tuqan reveals that women combine romance with life writing, a feature that is also typical to early modern female writings. Early modern romance is gendered as feminine; it appealed to women readers because of proto-feminist narrative ele-

ments, like openness about sexual matters and the centrality of independent female characters. Mary Ellen Lamb and Valerie Wayne note that '[o]ne factor in the perceived appeal of the romance genre to women lay in the opportunities it afforded them through action and especially through speech'.¹⁷³ Renaissance romances were largely written by men, with exceptions such as Lady Mary Wroth's *Urania* (1621). Tuqan's choice of the name Dananeer can be seen as an attempt to construct a virtuous image of herself by repudiating the stereotypical images that are linked to the romance genre across time. In addition, like Renaissance female authors who tended to deprecate their own ability to write, Tuqan's choice of name reveals her interest in deflecting criticism and ensuring that what she writes is in the service of her male masters.

Tuqan is representative of the suffering, repression and victimisation of women in traditional Arabian society. Salma Jayyusi says that she chose Tuqan's autobiography to be translated for it is 'a testimony of Palestinian identity' and history and of 'great pathos as a work of literature'.¹⁷⁴ While Palestinian women have been treated as objects, autobiography gives Tuqan an opportunity to express herself as a self-defining subject. In voicing her grievances and defiance of oppressively patriarchal discourse by publishing her autobiography in 1990, Tuqan blurs the boundaries between public and private and between the political and the personal. Robin Ostle points out that '[t]he autobiography [...] [is] an instrument of strategy through which a position of relative powerlessness or marginality is transformed into something which is able to challenge or to occupy the centre'.¹⁷⁵ Tuqan's suffering is advertised in

¹⁷³ Mary Ellen Lamb and Valerie Wayne, 'Introduction: Into the Forest', in *Staging Early Modern Romance: Prose, Fiction, Dramatic Romance, and Shakespeare*, ed. by Mary Ellen Lamb and Valerie Wayne (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 1-20 (p. 13).

¹⁷⁴ Salma Khadra Jayyusi, 'Foreword: Mistress of the Two Gifts: Love and Pain', in Fadwa Tuqan, *A Mountainous Journey: An Autobiography*, trans. by Olive Kenney and Naomi Shihab, ed. by Salma Khadra Jayyusi (St. Paul, Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 1990), pp. vii-xiii (p. viii).

¹⁷⁵ Robin Ostle, 'Introduction', in *Writing the Self: Autobiographical Writing in Modern Arabic Literature*, ed. by Robin Ostle, Ed de Moor and Stefan Wild (London: Saqi Books, 1998), pp. 18-24 (p. 22).

her autobiography when she tells the reader that ‘my mother tried to get rid of me but despite repeated attempts she failed’ (12). She adds that she ‘emerged from the darkness of the womb into a world unprepared to accept me [...]. Mother had ten pregnancies [...]. She did not try to abort herself until my turn came’ (12-13). The incident indicates not only that the birth of a female child does not bring any maternal affection, but also that Arabian patriarchal society perceives a woman as a sign of dishonour. As a child, whenever Tuqan was accused of lying, her mother used to punish her orally ‘by rubbing red pepper seeds on my lips’. Tuqan says that ‘[n]ever once did I have the courage to raise my voice in protest’ (20, 79). Tuqan was upset because her father usually referred to her in ‘the third person’ even when she was within hearing (49). Tuqan tells the reader that ‘[s]ilence was [the] common language’ between her and her father (105). ‘And silence is the language of strangers, even strangers united by blood’ (85). She tells the reader that her paternal aunt used to berate her whenever she broke her silence (32). The aunt’s restrictions suggest that in traditional society some women internalised the dominant codes which demanded female silence and subordination and played the roles of tyrannical male figures in stifling female voices. Tuqan’s family stopped her from going to school and confined her to the house in order to restore the family’s honour after a ‘sixteen-year-old boy’ gave her a flower as she returned from a visit to her aunt’s house (48). A flower unveils one’s emotions and feelings and it is a mediator of emotional expression; accepting the flower was an expression of love that she was not allowed to voice (47). After that event, Tuqan explains:

The seeds of low self-esteem were planted in my tender young soul. I developed the habit of walking with my head bowed, not daring to raise my eyes to the faces that met me morning and evening with scowling aversion, they debased me in my own eyes (49).

For male and female Palestinian readers surrounded by a traditional culture, this double standard of Arab society where parents discriminate in favour of their sons is immediately recognisable. I think that Palestinian readers of Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* in 2016 will recognise that the construction of gender difference has not changed a great deal since 1978 when the autobiography was first written and published in Arabic. Arguably, the gap between traditional Palestinian culture and that in 1960s England has widened because sexual equality has become firmly embedded as a principle of British law and culture but in Palestine, traditional attitudes have continued to flourish especially in rural towns and in An-Najah University which has a large number of students coming from traditional rural areas. The constructions of gender difference that Tuqan depicts in the 1960s have been enhanced in Palestine because of the Israeli occupation which retards moves towards sexual equality. As I have pointed out earlier, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Palestinian women's roles are to reproduce the nation, and women are therefore purportedly in need of protection while men are cast as the protectors of women and Palestine. In an antagonistic culture to female expression, Tuqan deploys writing, a silent form of speech, to bypass the scrutiny and circumscription to which her voice was subject.

Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* reveals that silence is a subjective space of plotting and writing. Tuqan writes of '[s]ilence ... continual silence ... however, it is a conscious silence, aware and vigilant, not a silence of absence and emptiness'. She proceeds, '[t]he chain of silence has been broken; I have written five poems' (191). She writes her autobiography to immortalise herself and 'to create something more permanent than the self' (188). Writing can be described as a process of self-negation, or self-abstraction because the woman's body and her voice are not physically present in the written text. This construction of writing as a process of self-

negation that enables female authors to enter the public realm resonates with the legitimate discourse of Palestinian female political activists whose political participation demand their silencing through the acts of martyrdom. Elizabeth Bronfen argues that ‘the representation of a woman killing herself in order to produce an autobiographical text can serve as a trope for the relation of the writing process to death in general’. She proposes that writing is a kind of ‘dis-embodiment or absence of the writing subject, based on the notion that the image or symbol functions as the negation of the thing, be it the speaker, the addressee or the object of speech’.¹⁷⁶ Writing, therefore, constructs the author’s authorial identity and cancels out the author’s corporeal existence. Barthes, whose important essay ‘The Death of the Author’ is a seminal text for post-structuralist theory, regards as erroneous all appeals to authorial intention in determining the meaning of a text. He claimed that ‘[l]inguistically, the author is never more than the instance writing’, perceiving the ‘I’ as ‘nothing other than the instance saying I’.¹⁷⁷ Tuqan’s *A Mountainous Journey*, which immortalises her voice, challenges Barthes’s assertion that ‘writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin’.¹⁷⁸ Tuqan’s autobiography ends with her assertion that ‘I shall write, I shall write a lot’ (191). Tuqan’s textualisation of herself erases her life outside autobiography and poems (107, 191). The ‘I’ on which autobiography and subjectivity depend is transformed into words, text, the signature of authorial identity.

Tuqan’s *A Mountainous Journey*, which is a narrative of defiance and criticism of Palestinian patriarchal society, forms a useful intertext for reading women’s speech and silence in early modern England. The immortality of the author that autobiography entails has immediate relevance to female authors’ use of the trope of death as a strategy of self-assertion and rhetorical

¹⁷⁶ Elizabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 142.

¹⁷⁷ Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), p. 145.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

control stressed by the movement of the author / heroine from the physical realm / body into the textual / spiritual realm. While female dramas written for non-commercial theatres suggest the exclusion of female authors from public theatre, this genre (like autobiography) turns out to be disruptive to masculine constructions of the binary opposition between speech and silence. Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* is an appropriate intertext to read early modern female-authored texts because Tuqan too is a female author writing in a traditional society that equates a woman's writing with sexual looseness. In the subsequent section, I argue that early modern female authors were taking a radical step in writing the public genre of drama as a means of self-representation rather than a private genre like autobiography.

New historicism's focus on history in public terms largely neglected female-authored texts. Some feminist critics such as Mary Beth Rose shared the new historicist view that tragedy was phallogentric¹⁷⁹ in early modern England because it was a more public than, for example, the letter, or religious meditations and of higher status than comedy. Renaissance female dramatists were therefore taking a radical step by writing dramatic tragedies.¹⁸⁰ However, some critics viewed female-authored tragedies as removed from public discourse and dramatic performance. In Pearson's terms, '[t]he conventional view that women's lives should be essentially private worked against [...] the public performance of women's plays; aristocratic women especially wrote plays for the closet rather than the stage'.¹⁸¹ Karen Raber, a pioneering critic of closet drama, claims that the form's 'distance from the stage and other public domains of theatre allowed reflection on *women's tenuous and marginal relationship to the-*

¹⁷⁹ Mary Beth Rose, *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 95.

¹⁸⁰ Karen Raber, *Dramatic Difference: Gender, Class, and Genre in the Early Modern Closet Drama* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001), p. 23.

¹⁸¹ Jacqueline Pearson, *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists 1642-1737* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988), p. 120.

atrical domains'.¹⁸² However, these plays allow women both a 'space for analysis of dysfunction within marriages, families and governments' and 'an authoritative, public presence'.¹⁸³ Nancy Gutierrez notes that the convention that drama written for non-commercial theatres is gendered as feminine 'contradicts its literary history'.¹⁸⁴ She notes that Samuel Daniel and Fulke Greville wrote dramas as 'a vehicle for direct exposition of political ideas' and 'political dissent'.¹⁸⁵ In the subsequent sections, I will consider the different performance contexts for Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia*, Mary Sidney's *Antonie* and Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* before I analyse the representation of speech, silence and gender that these plays enact. Then, I will deploy Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*, the Palestinian construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence and the discourse of Palestinian female martyrdom to illuminate early modern female authors' challenge of the binary opposites of speech and silence.

Although women did not make their entry into the professional theatre until 1660, the lack of women's physical presence on the public stage did not necessarily prohibit women from performing at home. Critics have recently overturned the long-held assumption that the Elizabethan public theatre grew out of, and sustained (until 1660), a performance tradition that was exclusively male arguing that female-authored dramas are performable.¹⁸⁶ Gweno Williams argues that 'it [closet drama] is not a term frequently deployed by writers themselves, arguably no Early Modern woman ever sat down with the intention of writing a "closet drama"'.

¹⁸²Raber, *Difference*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁸⁴ Nancy A. Gutierrez, 'Valuing *Mariam*: Genre Study and Feminist Analysis', *TSWL*, 10.2 (1991), 233-51 (p. 238).

¹⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p. 237.

¹⁸⁶ Alison Findlay, Gweno Williams and Stephanie J. Hodgson-Wright, "'The play is ready to be acted": Women and Dramatic Production, 1570-1670', *Women's Writing*, 6.1 (1999), 129-48 (p. 129).

Instead it is ‘an often gendered term imposed by later critics’.¹⁸⁷ While the lack of stage directions and action is used to classify a closet drama, Lumley’s *Iphigenia*, Sidney’s *Antonie* and Cary’s *The Tragedy of Mariam* include many implicit and explicit stage directions which provide evidence that female authors had performance in mind when they adopted the genre of drama. Lumley’s *Iphigenia*, for example, is replete with internal stage directions that indicate the female performers’ actions, such as singing, kissing, embracing and crying that can be presented by the combination of actions seen and words heard. *Iphigenia* is a performance text and it was recently successfully staged by The Rose Company. I watched a performance of the play, which used an all-female cast, at Lancaster Castle on 20 November 2013. The production toured to different places – Homerton College Cambridge University, University College London, The Kings’ Arms Theatre Salford, The New Continental Preston, and the Lantern Liverpool — from November 2013 to January 2014.¹⁸⁸ Such a range of performances in different settings which bring Lumley’s *Iphigenia* to a wider audience reveals the public consensus about the performability of the play. Sidney’s *Antonie* is marked by the word ‘play’ (4.40). *Antonie*’s association with ‘courtly bowers’ is ‘reminiscent of the elaborate contemporary pastoral entertainments devised for Elizabeth I when she visited her subjects’.¹⁸⁹ While some critics claim that *The Tragedy of Mariam* is notactable, Cary includes more theatrical elements than Lumley’s and Sidney’s plays.¹⁹⁰ Herod’s remark, ‘[a]nd here she comes indeed’ (4.1.87), is an internal stage direction which suggests that Mariam is enter-

¹⁸⁷Gweno Williams, “‘Why May Not A Lady Write A Good Play?’: Plays by Early Modern women reassessed as performance texts”, in *Readings in Renaissance Women’s Drama: Criticism, History, and Performance 1594-1998*, ed. by S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London: Routledge, 1998), 95-107 (p. 97).

¹⁸⁸*The Tragedy of Euripides called Iphigenia*, trans. by Lady Jane Lumley, dir. by Emma Rucastle, The Rose Company, November 2013 - January 2014 <<http://therosecompany.posthaven.com/>> [accessed 11 May 2014].

¹⁸⁹Gweno Williams, ‘Translating the Text, Performing the Self’, in *Women and Dramatic Production 1550-1700*, Alison Findlay, Stephanie Hodgson-Wright and Gweno Williams (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2000), pp. 15-41 (p. 35).

¹⁹⁰Betty Travitsky, *The Paradise of Women: Writings by Englishwomen of the Renaissance* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981), p. 215; Yvonne Day Merrill, *The Social Constitution of Western Women’s Rhetoric before 1750* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), p. 193; Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985), p. 175.

ing the stage. Cary's text includes many references to sight (4.7.86-95, 129, 5.1.149-52).

Hodgson-Wright notes:

Whilst the sword fight and the cup demand realisation in performance, closer investigation of the text reveals a more deeply inherent physical dimension. One of the most striking features of the characters in *The Tragedy of Mariam* is the extent to which they see and look at each other.¹⁹¹

One could argue that *The Tragedy of Mariam* is a text written for performance and it has indeed been performed, first as directed by Stephanie Hodgson-Wright in 1994 at the Alhambra Theatre, Bradford.¹⁹² Elizabeth Schafer's 1996 production of *The Tragedy of Mariam* at Royal Holloway in London places female characters in the limelight, using an all-female cast (with the exception of Antipater who was played by a boy) to realise the woman-centred focus of Cary's play.¹⁹³ While on the public stage female characters' subversive voices and actions were regulated by the playwrights and the boy actors who performed their roles, this production responded by using female actresses who play the roles of both male and female characters. The female actress who takes the role of the Chorus reads the misogynist discourse of the third Chorus from a conduct book that the play subverts. Rebecca McCutcheon directed two productions of *The Tragedy of Mariam*: the first on 12 June 2013 in Burford church, where Cary used to worship and where her family were entombed, and the other on Copeland Park, Peckham on 13 August 2013.¹⁹⁴ This theatrical framework suggests that fe-

¹⁹¹ Hodgson-Wright, 'The play', p. 133.

¹⁹² For a detailed account of the work done for the production of *Mariam* at the Alhambra Studio, Bradford, UK, including discussions of costumes, cast, and staging, see Alison Findlay, Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, and Gweno Williams, '(En)gendering Performance: Staging Plays by Early Modern Women', in *Crossing Boundaries: Attending to Early Modern Women*, ed. by Jane Donawerth and Adele Seeff (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000), pp. 289-308.

¹⁹³ Elizabeth Schafer, dir., *The Tragedy of Mariam*, Royal Holloway, University of London (1996).

¹⁹⁴ Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Mariam*, dir. Rebecca McCutcheon, St John's Church, Burford, June 2013 <<http://laharrisonmusic.co.uk/theatre-work/the-mariam-project>> [accessed 21 July 2014]; Elizabeth Cary, *The*

male authors had performance in mind when they took the genre of drama and highlights the importance of dramatic performance as a means of women's self-representation.

How does the performance of gender differ in female-authored plays from those written by men? In male-authored plays, female figures' voices are constructed according to masculine rhetoric and ideologies textually and physically, in that the boy actors impersonating female characters articulate the voices scripted for them by older men. Female-authored texts constitute a shift in the representation of gender, speech and silence in early modern drama because the continuity between author, actress, and character evokes gender sameness rather than difference. Whereas a male-authored female voice advertises its performative nature, the continuity between character and role when performed by a female actor demonstrates the performative nature of gender within proper male and female bodies. Female-authored plays give an opportunity for the realisation of female voice in corporeal terms. Lynette McGrath observes that because closet drama escapes cross-dressed male actors' appropriation of female roles, 'it allows an evasion of the binary choices set up culturally for women's theatrical as well as social roles – either to be represented by men or to be publicly, and therefore shamefully, 'staged''.¹⁹⁵ Masculine voices in the scripts are feminine constructions and are made subject to the controlling female authors' voices.

Female-authored tragedies deconstruct the conventional masculine representation of speech and silence as binary opposites. While male-authored plays deconstruct this stereotype, female-authored tragedies form a crucial counterbalance to the canonical texts I have already considered because of the continuity of the actor and character. The female authors under

Tragedy of Mariam, dir. Rebecca McCutcheon, Peckham, 13 August 2013 <http://laharrisonmusic.co.uk/theatre-work/the-mariam-project> [accessed 21 July 2014].

¹⁹⁵ Lynette McGrath, 'Elizabeth Cary, the Nomadic Subject: Space and Mobility in the Life and *Mariam*', in *Subjectivity and Women's Poetry in Early Modern England: 'Why on the Ridge Should she Desire to Go?'* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 167-208 (p. 185).

study associate male figures' voices and silences with deception and political hypocrisy and female figures' voices and silences with truth and dramatic authority. From a theatrical convention of the public stage, female figures' silences are associated with the boy actor's lack of space to articulate the female voice. Christina Luckyj begins her study, *'A Moving Rhetoricke'* by asserting that 'there is a difference between being silent and being silenced'.¹⁹⁶ Arguably, all female characters are silenced at some points on the public stage. This silencing of female characters is linked with theatrical performance in that the boy actors impersonating female characters lack a space for the articulation of female voices because their voices are always haunted by the possibility of 'breaking' into a male register, as Gina Bloom points out.¹⁹⁷ In contrast, the heroines of 'closet drama' can speak continuously without losing their voices because of the continuity between author, actress and character. While female silence in male-authored texts is a sign of oppression, in female-authored texts female silence turns out to be a register of authority, as exemplified by the figure of Graphina in *The Tragedy of Mariam*. Graphina's name, which is derived from the word 'graphein', to write, suggests that her silence is a cover for Cary who expresses her thoughts through writing.

Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia*

Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia* is a contest of deceptive, hypocritical patriarchal voices and truthful, authoritative matriarchal voices. Lumley's female characters and actors criticise patriarchal voices and undo the ideology of male supremacy. Clytemnestra's maternal, moral and authoritative voice challenges and interrogates those of the male figures. While Iphigenia's voluntary death, which is a substitute for marriage, can be read as a validation of patriarchal

¹⁹⁶Christina Luckyj, *A Moving Rhetoricke: Gender and Silence in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. vii.

¹⁹⁷Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p. 18; Dymphna Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing Gender and Race on the Renaissance Stage* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 52.

voices, I consider that her sacrifice exposes the problems of a society constructed solely through masculine discourses. I argue that sacrifice in *Iphigenia* comments critically upon the political and religious concerns of sixteenth-century England that were immediately related to Lumley's family. Lumley's proximity to the tragic manipulation and execution of her cousin Lady Jane Grey illuminate her translation. Jane Grey, through the machinations of Jane Lumley's father and uncle, had been manipulated into claiming the throne of England, then imprisoned and executed so that the Catholic monarch Mary I could ascend the throne.

Following the critical line of presentism, I argue that the play's emphasis on sacrifice interacts with contemporary Palestine where nationalism and religion motivate Palestinian women's practice of suicide bombing as an assertion of female agency. Nationalist and religious motives provide a cover and legitimation for more subversive challenges to the gendered status quo. Palestinian nationalism is a potential springboard for women's emancipation from patriarchal boundaries. While Palestinian women are normally confined to the private sphere, they participate in the nationalist struggle against Israel, appropriating masculine heroic acts of suicide bombing as martyrdom.¹⁹⁸ This idea of nationalism that lets Palestinian women transgress their conventional roles is referred to as the concept of 'land before honour'.¹⁹⁹ I read the play's exploration of the thematic and metaphorical association between marriage and sacrifice alongside Palestinian female martyrs. I propose that the discourse of mourning and laments that the play dramatises has chilling relevance to this discourse in Islam. I argue that Iphigenia's political speech and defiant heroism and Agamemnon's wavering indecisions have a chilling parallel with contemporary Palestinian female martyrs whose voices and actions are set in contrast to the wavering indecisions of Palestinian and Arab leaders to defend

¹⁹⁸ Cheryl Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), p. 218; Gluck Sherna Berger, 'Palestinian Women: Gender Politics and Nationalism', *JPS*, 24.3 (1995), 5-15 (p. 8).

¹⁹⁹ Kitty Warnock, *Land before Honour* (London: MacMillan Education Ltd, 1990), p. 23.

Palestine. I assert that Lumley's association of male figures' silences and speeches with deceit and political and religious hypocrisies is similar to Tuqan's criticism of the nationalist masculine discourse that curtails women's aspiration to the Western ideals of freedom which men are licensed to imitate. The Chorus' vocal complicity with Agamemnon's plan to sacrifice Iphigenia illuminates the obedience of women and the submission of their wills and voices to male figures of authority in Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* and the complicity of some Palestinian mothers with the sacrifice of their children for Palestine.

The historicist reading of Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia* maintains that this tragedy consolidates the patriarchal ideology of gender difference. Lady Lumley was the eldest child of Henry Fitzalan, twelfth earl of Arundel, 'one of the great humanist families of the English Renaissance'.²⁰⁰ Both her father and her husband John Lumley encouraged her in her studies. Her father had a large library and her husband possessed 'probably the largest private library in Elizabethan England'.²⁰¹ Lumley's translation of *The Tragedie of Euripides called Iphigenia translated out of Greek into Englisshe* (1555) is the first drama work by a woman in English.²⁰² Beilin suggests that 'using Erasmus's Latin, as copy text or as aid, assured an entirely "safe" impersonal voice for a play about female heroism. Drama, especially a translated drama, might indeed have interested a young woman because of its very impersonality'.²⁰³ Lumley provides feminised English parallels to Erasmus's Christian diction, producing 'a female version of the selfless prince' and transforming Iphigenia into 'a crypto-Christian', as Beilin notes.²⁰⁴ Lumley designed her play as a performance text in her use of Erasmus's text. Hodgson-Wright suggests that 'Erasmus had advocated the performance of plays as a way of

²⁰⁰ Robert Garland, *Surviving Greek Tragedy* (London: Duckworth, 2004), p. 115.

²⁰¹ Sears Jayne, *Library Catalogues of the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956), p. 45.

²⁰² Elaine V. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 154.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 154-55.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

developing oratorical skills in schools and universities, and his translations of *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia at Aulis* became key texts in the curriculum'.²⁰⁵ Furthermore, Hodgson-Wright proposes that Lumley used both Latin and Greek versions from a volume originally owned by Thomas Cranmer. She proposes that Lumley 'must have been at least 16 when she wrote her version of the play. Therefore, her *Iphigenia at Aulis* can neither be devalued as merely a poor translation, nor be condemned as a childish exercise'.²⁰⁶ Diane Purkiss claims that Lumley's translation is 'a sign of [Lumley's father's] wealth, prestige, power and fashionable-ness'.²⁰⁷ This historicist reading is useful for my pedagogical approach at An-Najah University where girls are advised to uphold the masculine construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. Contrary to Purkiss's historicist reading that claims that Lumley's 'masculine' education inhibits her from opposing patriarchal ideology, I use Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* and the discourse of Palestinian female martyrdom as presentist intertexts that illuminate my argument that Lumley's *Iphigenia* disrupts gender roles and binary constructions of speech and silence

From my presentist, Palestinian context of reading, there are striking parallels between Lady Lumley's dismantling of the ideology of male supremacy and the masculine construction of the binary opposites of speech and silence and Tuqan's criticism of the patriarchal institution of the family, customs and traditions as expressed in *A Mountainous Journey*. Lady Lumley associates male speech and silence with deceit and political and familial hypocrisy. Agamemnon is a changeable, deceptive (32-39, 195-242) and hypocritical man whose 'doinges do not agre withe [his] wordes' (620-21). Proclaiming to Iphigenia that 'of all my children I love you beste' (382-83), he nevertheless conceals his devious plan of sacrifice from Clytemnestra

²⁰⁵ Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, 'Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia At Aulis*: Multum in Parvo, or, less is more', in *Readings in Renaissance Women's Drama: Criticism, History, and Performance 1594-1998*, ed. by S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 129-41 (p. 137).

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 130.

²⁰⁷ Purkiss, *Three*, p. xv.

and Iphigenia (427-34). Menelaus's speech is also deceptive, for he speaks 'fainedlye' (30) against Agamemnon's plot of sacrificing Iphigenia while knowing that Agamemnon cannot defend her once she arrives at Aulis (320-31). Lumley's association of male figures' silences and speeches with deceit and political hypocrisy may offer my students a point of focus to make comparisons with Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* where she reveals the contradictions and hypocrisies within the patriarchal discourse of nationalism and the limitations of seemingly feminist passages to emancipation. Tuqan tells the reader that 'My constant dream was to break off all association with whatever represented authority in the family: Father, male cousins, paternal aunt. I avoided them all and thus learned to loathe whatever represented despotic domination and unjust authority in all social institutions' (81). Tuqan tells the reader that her father and uncle 'represented, in the most flagrant manner possible, the rigidity of the Arab male and his absolute inability to maintain a personality that was healthy and whole' (78). Tuqan says that her father and uncle send their boy children to acquire Western education and prevent girls from this privilege even though these male figures are motivated to oppose Western ideas and education from religious and political discourses (36). Many Palestinian girls, especially those who are living in rural areas, are still deprived of a university education. Traditional Palestinian readers may recognise that this deprivation of girls from the privilege of education emanates from the fact that education enhances girls' individualities that contradict the collective web of stagnant traditions that oppress and silence women. By contrast, boys from the same rural areas are open to Western culture and education.

The play advertises how male figures repeatedly silence female characters' voices. This silencing of female figures resonates with Tuqan's experience as discussed in her autobiography. Tuqan tells the reader how she has been unable to defend herself against the injustice she suffers from in her home by male and female members. Tuqan says that 'The right to ex-

press her feelings or views was prohibited' (36) and that '[n]ever once did I have the courage to raise my voice in protest' (79). She tells the reader that her paternal aunt used to berate her whenever she broke her silence and tried to write poetry (32). This constraint on Tuqan's speech and writing is also a feature of Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia*. Jocelyn Catty notes that Lumley's *Iphigenia* alludes to the limitations placed on female speech, emotion and writing.²⁰⁸ Agamemnon resorts to a patriarchal injunction about feminine decency to subjugate Clytemnestra and silence her voice; he blames her for speech and thought when she reveals her knowledge of his plan of sacrificing Iphigenia: 'you have spoken thos thinges, whiche you oughte neither to saye, nor yet to thinke' (633-34). Iphigenia's heroism, which Agamemnon praises (402-03), is defined as 'the stoutenes of her mind' (932). Ironically, as Catty says, 'Agamemnon commends Iphigenia's intelligence at the very moment that he withholds information from her': 'Leave to enquier of suche thinges, for it is not lawfull that women shulde knowe them' (422-23).²⁰⁹ The play, therefore, undercuts patriarchal authority as deceitful, insecure and morally questionable.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, this representation of masculine authority as deceitful, insecure and morally questionable has present affinities with the representation of male figures in Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*. While Agamemnon praises Iphigenia's wit and expresses his love towards her, Tuqan remembers no signs of affection on the part of her father towards her. Tuqan says that 'He has no feelings for me except indifference, as though I'm nothing, as though I'm a nonentity, a vacuum, as if there is absolutely no need for me to exist' (59). While Agamemnon praises Iphigenia's wit and conceals his devious plans from her not to be subject to her voice that will question his authority, Tuqan's father uses his aloofness from Tuqan as a technique to circumscribe her voice and aspirations to freedom

²⁰⁸Jocelyn Catty, *Writing Rape, Writing Women in Early Modern England: Unbridled Speech* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 135-36, 138, 140.

²⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p.138.

that may question Palestinian patriarchy and stagnant traditions that still oppress and silence Palestinian women. As Tuqan tells the readers, ‘He used his aloofness and inflexibility towards me as bridle to curb my aspirations for change and transcendence, and to prevent me from overstepping the boundaries set for a young woman belonging to an extremely conservative family’ (105).

The Chorus’s verbal complicity with Agamemnon’s plan to sacrifice Iphigenia resonates with Tuqan’s female relatives’ submission to male figures’ dictates and parallels some Palestinian mothers’ acceptance of the sacrifice of their children for Palestine. Lady Lumley extends the injunction against female speech to the Chorus, whom she styles, after Euripides, as a group of women. The Chorus, who function as internal audience, eavesdroppers and spectators, highlight the aural and visual dimensions of the play. Their function ‘mirrors the manner by which the audience participates through the same activity’, to borrow Jennifer Holl’s words in discussing ‘the gentlemen’s introductory conversation’ in Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*.²¹⁰ The Chorus’s first line, ‘What is this? methinkes I see Menelaius strivinge with Agamemnons servante’ (133-34), is an internal stage direction that ‘serves to cue the entrance of Melenaus and Senex’.²¹¹ Male figures turn deaf to the Chorus’s interjections despite the Chorus’s sympathy with Agamemnon: ‘[w]e also lament your chaunce, so much as it becometh women to lament the miserie of princes’ (312-13). Agamemnon addresses the Chorus to silence them: ‘And I praye you also, O ye women, not to open this matter’ (365). Catty argues that ‘[t]he Chorus’s awareness of the constraints on their utterance is fitting for this adaptation, which omits all the choral odes’. It is an omission that allows Lumley ‘to align the Chorus with the

²¹⁰ Jennifer Holl, “‘If This Be Worth Your Hearing’: Theorizing Gossip on Shakespeare’s Stage”, in *Who Hears in Shakespeare?: Auditory Worlds on Stage and Screen* ed. by Laury Magnus and Walter W. Cannon (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), pp. 61-80 (p. 69).

²¹¹ Hodgson-Wright, ‘Aulis’, p. 130.

female protagonists in terms of their verbal autonomy'.²¹² The Chorus greet Iphigenia and Clytemnestra (370-71) without violating Agamemnon's prescription against their speech (365). While they urge Agamemnon to listen to his wife's very critical voice (692), they are unable to affect the outcome of events. Once Iphigenia yields herself to death, they mark her exit, upon Iphigenia's injunction (891-93), with a song which celebrates Iphigenia's heroism and public glory (908-14). They accept that Agamemnon 'can tell the truth of all this matter' (961-62). Hodgson-Wright points out that '[t]he conclusion of the play requires their ultimate complicity just as the events of 1553/4 required the complicity of Jane Lumley'.²¹³ Like Iphigenia, Lady Jane Grey addresses her father in language similar to Lumley's:

Father, although it hath pleased God to hasten my death by you [...] I may account myself Blessed, that washing my hands with the innocence of my fact, my guiltless blood may cry before the Lord, Mercy to the innocent.²¹⁴

For students and teachers of English at An-Najah University, the Chorus's vocal complicity with Agamemnon resonates with the many injunctions to women's obedience and the submission of their wills and voices to male figures of authority recorded in Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*. While Tuqan and her sister Fataya defy male figures of authority, Tuqan's mother and aunt comply with the dictates of male voices and play the role of the oppressive patriarchy in the household. Furthermore, the complicity of the Chorus with Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia parallels contemporary Palestinian discourses on martyrdom where some women receive the acts of female suicide bombing with admiration and praise.²¹⁵

²¹² Catty, *Rape*, p. 140.

²¹³ Hodgson-Wright, 'Aulis', p.136.

²¹⁴ Lorraine Helms, *Seneca by Candlelight and Other Stories of Renaissance Drama* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), p. 20.

²¹⁵ Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 'Liberating Voices: The Political Implications of Palestinian Mothers Narrating their Loss', *WSIF*, 26. 5 (2003), 391-407 (pp. 396-99).

Hodgson-Wright observes parallels between Jane Lumley and Jane Grey in that they ‘shared a Christian name, were virtually the same age and had received a similar education’. Hodgson-Wright notes that Lumley’s choice of ‘a play which is disturbingly reminiscent of the death of her cousin’ and her father’s duplicitous activities reveal Lumley’s deft engagement with political affairs and her opposition to destructive patriarchal voices.²¹⁶ I, therefore, agree with Wynne-Davies who asserts that *Iphigenia* ‘contains sufficient contemporary political allusions to reveal it as the work of an independent author’.²¹⁷ Neither Lumley nor her translation of *Iphigenia* can be reduced to instances of subordinate inscription. Many contemporary Palestinian readers may read Iphigenia’s decision of self-sacrifice as an assertion of masculine agency, heroism and defence of one’s country and a challenge to gender roles.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, the discourse of mourning that *Iphigenia* embodies expands into the Palestinian audience’s recognition of her tragic martyrdom. Most Palestinians do not lament, weep and pray over martyrs because they die for Palestine and they are purified from sin, living in paradise with prophets.²¹⁸ Iphigenia’s verbal opposition to her mother’s mourning resonates with the Islamic teaching that forbids the discourse of mourning, revealing affiliations of religious traditions. Iphigenia warns her mother not to be angry with Agamemnon (794-96) and disgrace herself in her grief (799-800, 848-50). I think that there is a striking affinity between Iphigenia’s pleading with her mother to ‘be of good comforte’, ‘do not teare your clothes’ or ‘mourne for my cause’ (848-49, 901) and Islamic teachings concerning mourning ceremonies. The Prophet Muhammad said, ‘[h]e is not of us who beats his face, tears his clothes and bewails loudly when misfortune happens to him, as

²¹⁶ Hodgson-Wright, ‘Aulis’, pp. 134, 136-37.

²¹⁷ Marion Wynne-Davies, *Women Writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance: Relative Values* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 76.

²¹⁸ Laleh Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 128.

was done before, during the days of ignorance'.²¹⁹ Iphigenia, like Palestinian female martyrs, abrogates her family's performance of mourning, lament and emotion.

Iphigenia moves herself beyond the rhetoric of mourning into one of political activism. Iphigenia's speech is important in the process of translating herself from oppressed victim to a Christ-like martyr. Ros Ballaster proposes that '*Iphigenia* dramatically identifies the importance of the exchange of women in the masculine sphere of military glory and state politics and the struggle of the daughter to acquire a voice in that exchange culture'.²²⁰ However, I agree with Hodgson-Wright who asserts that 'rather than struggling to acquire a voice, Iphigenia possesses one which has considerable moral authority and dramatic power'.²²¹ Iphigenia's eloquence distresses Agamemnon and evokes his paternal tenderness for her: 'Trulye daughter the more wittely you speake, the more you troble me' (398-99). She begs Agamemnon to spare her life dropping on her knees like a suppliant (695-98). In a reversal of parent – child relationships, Iphigenia's voice takes on the form of motherly counsel to her parents (873, 848, 882). Allyna E. Ward notes that Lady Lumley takes care when transcribing the word "counsel" twenty times in the 1,408 lines of the play and the marginal gloss highlights the political truths that emphasize the role of counsel for readers'.²²² Both Agamemnon and Clytemnestra respond to Iphigenia: 'I will folowe your counsell daughter' (391, 856). Thus, Lumley suggests that Iphigenia has a powerful spiritual and political voice to which Agamemnon and Clytemnestra should listen obediently.

²¹⁹ Quoted in Hafsa Ahsan, 'The Final Journey', *Hiba Magazine* (21 November 2012) <<http://www.hibamagazine.com/the-final-journey-2/>> [accessed 2 May 2014].

²²⁰ Ros Ballaster, 'The first female dramatists', in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1500-1700*, ed. by Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 267-94 (p. 270).

²²¹ Hodgson-Wright, 'Aulis', p. 133.

²²² Allyna E. Ward, *Women and Tudor Tragedy: Feminizing Counsel and Representing Gender* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2013), p. 59.

For Iphigenia, Palestinian female martyrs, Lady Jane Lumley and Tuqan, the actions of sacrifice and writing are the means of immortalising themselves and defying gender roles in spite of fixed historical circumstances. While Tuqan liberates herself from the confines of gender roles through writing, Iphigenia and some Palestinian women assert their agency and emancipation from the conventional gender roles through their acts of sacrifice. Palestinian female martyrs are idolised and immortalised verbally. For example, songs honouring Wafa' Idris have been broadcast celebrating her martyrdom.²²³ During the symbolic funeral for Wafa' Idris, one of the Fateh council members eulogised her in the following words: 'Wafa's martyrdom restored honour to the national role of the Palestinian woman, sketched the most wonderful pictures of heroism in the long battle for national liberation'.²²⁴ Likewise, Iphigenia's immortality is achieved through her narrative of heroic sacrifice. As Michel Foucault noted, 'the hero accepted an early death because his life, consecrated and magnified by death, passed into immortality; and the narrative redeemed his acceptance of death'.²²⁵ Lady Lumley immortalises Iphigenia by writing, telling and performing this heroic narrative through which Iphigenia's sacrifice is remembered. By sacrificing themselves to Palestine and Greece, the Palestinian female martyrs and Iphigenia negate the corporeality of their bodies in exchange of rebirth of Palestine and Greece. Tuqan is a literary martyr whose liberation 'from the psychological constraints of traditional family' (3) lies in the words of her autobiography and poetry rather than in her actions. The first appearance of the author's name is Tuqan's writing of her name on the cover of her notebook: 'Name – Fadwa Tuqan. Teacher – Ibrahim Tuqan. Subject – Learning poetry. School – The House' (58). In linking her name with its first appearance with poetry, Tuqan links her identity with her creative writing, as

²²³ Ammal Maher, 'My sister Wafa', 'youtube.com', *Palestinian Authority Television* (1 May 2002) <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ajldc3gtblQ>> [accessed 20 April 2012].

²²⁴ Barbara Victor, *Army of Roses: Inside the World of Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers* (Rodale: U.S.A., 2003), p. 54.

²²⁵ Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, trans. by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, ed. by Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p.117.

Malti-Douglas notes.²²⁶ Her creative impulse was thus the impetus in her voyage of becoming, self-discovery, and of self-definition. Palestinian female martyrs' images, stories and songs and Tuqan's poetry and autobiography, circulated all over Palestine and the Arab world, are their lasting agency.

The persuasive speeches of Palestinian female martyrs and Iphigenia fashion narratives of heroic sacrifice that challenges the supremacy of masculine identity and discourse. In playing the public role of serving her country, Iphigenia is an alter ego of Elizabeth I who eschewed marriage and devoted her life to the service of her country. As Findlay observes, 'Lumley's translation of the Greek play offers a compliment to the self-declared virgin queen who offered herself on the stage of the world for the good of her country'.²²⁷ The identification of Queen Elizabeth I with the chaste Diana intensifies the view that Lumley's *Iphigenia* is a compliment to Queen Elizabeth I. As Findlay notes, the setting of the play 'near the temple of Diana at Aulis could thus have been one of the earliest examples of the cult of Diana so central to Elizabeth's iconography'.²²⁸ While Agamemnon renounces the heroic code as it brings danger and grief (18-21, 74-75), Iphigenia becomes the governing dramatic voice (734-36) deciding that she 'must needs die, and will suffer it willinglye' (800) to solve domestic and national verbal conflicts:

Dothe not bothe the destruction of Troie, and also the welthe of grece, whiche is the mooste frutefull countrie of the worlde hange upon my death? [...]. I shall [...] get a glorious renowne to the grecians for ever [...]. Wherefore I will offer my selfe will-

²²⁶Fedwa Malti-Douglas, 'Introduction: A Palestinian Female Voice against Tradition', in Fadwa Tuqan, *A Mountainous Journey: An Autobiography*, trans. by Olive Kenney and Naomi Shihab, ed. by Salma Khadra Jayyusi (Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 1990), pp. 1-9 (p. 6).

²²⁷ Alison Findlay, *Playing Spaces in Early Women's Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 77.

²²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 77.

ingly to deathe, for my countrie: for by this means I shall not only leave a perpetual memorie of my deathe, but I shall cause also the grecians to rule over the barbarians, which dothe as it were properly belong to them (802-04, 807-08, 819-22).

The succession of first-person pronouns positions Iphigenia as the active agent who will be responsible for the Grecians' 'glorious renowne' and the restoration of the natural order which bespeaks the fact that 'the grecians bi nature are free, like as the barbarians are borne to bondage' (822-23). Hodgson-Wright notes that 'Iphigenia's decision to die is expressed in terms which effectively erase Agamemnon from the scenario'.²²⁹ In a similar presentist, Palestinian context, Palestinian female political activists' voices and actions are set in contrast to the wavering indecisions and failure of Arab leaders to defend Palestine. Andaleeb Takatka said, prior to her suicide, that 'I've chosen to say with my body what Arab leaders have failed to say [...]. My body is a barrel of gunpowder that burns the enemy'.²³⁰ Palestinian female martyrs appropriate masculine attributes of bravery in contrast to the emasculated Arab leaders who turn deaf to Palestinian trauma, destabilising the construction of men as the defenders of Palestine and women as the defended.

Iphigenia's rhetorical ability elicits a marriage proposal from Achilles, awakening his desire to play the role of the courtly lover and chivalric knight, and thwarting its fulfilment. Iphigenia's voice enchants Achilles and arouses his love. While Achilles says to Clytemnestra that 'in dede I never desired the mariage of your daughter' (509), Iphigenia's speech (828-29) makes him admit that he is 'stirred up more with love towardses you, desiringe to have you to my wife' (831-32). Arguably, Achilles strives to wrest agency and heroic voice from Iphigenia rather than express sincere affections for her. He recognises Iphigenia's authoritative

²²⁹ Hodgson-Wright, 'Aulis', p. 133.

²³⁰ Quoted in Frances Hasso, 'Discursive and Political Deployments by / of the 2002 Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers / Martyrs', *FR*, 81 (2005), 23-51 (p. 29).

voice – ‘I shall desire you O Achilles, not to put your selfe in daunger for my cause’ (837-38) – to the extent that he subordinates his voice to hers: ‘I can not speake againste you’ (841-42). However, despite her opposition to his service, Achilles asserts ‘I will promise to helpe you still, leste you shulde happen to chaunge your minde’ (842-43). In constructing her own voice without the manipulation of patriarchal authority, Iphigenia’s sacrifice usurps his military and political role as a hero.²³¹

In contemporary Palestine and Lady Lumley’s *Iphigenia*, female sacrifice and martyrdom are represented as marriage to the homeland in spite of historical and ideological differences. Lady Lumley suggests the conflation between sacrifice and marriage; Iphigenia’s marriage to Achilles is replaced by marriage to Greece (111-13, 394-97, 894-95). Iphigenia asks the Chorus to sing a song celebrating her heroism and marriage in heaven (891-93, 908-14). Likewise, in contemporary Palestine, the Palestinian female suicide bomber is frequently represented as a bride.²³² Female martyrdom is eulogised in expressions such as ‘betrothal in death’ and ‘the brides of Palestine’ as they are wedded to the soil of Palestine and married in heaven. The Qur’an says that martyrs marry the virgins / maids (*Houris*, in Arabic) of paradise.²³³ Arguably, marriage in paradise reserves male virgins for heterosexual female martyrs, for God condemns homosexuality.²³⁴ David Cook and Olivia Allison note that ‘Even the female suicide attackers have these “wedding celebrations”, although it is not clear to whom they are married’.²³⁵ After the martyrdom of Andaleeb Takatka, a symbolic wedding was

²³¹ Marta Straznicky, *Privacy, Playreading, and Women’s Closet Drama, 1550-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 39.

²³² Dorit Naaman, ‘Brides of Palestine / Angels of Death: Media, Gender, and Performance in the Case of the Palestinian Female Suicide Bombers’, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 32.4 (2007), 933-955 (p. 945).

²³³ That Which Is Coming, 56.22; The Cow, 2.25.

²³⁴ The Heights, 7.81, 83-84.

²³⁵ David Cook and Olivia Allison, *Understanding and Addressing Suicide Attacks: The Faith and Politics of Martyrdom Operations* (Westport, CN: Praeger Security International, 2007), p. 38.

made to honour her and ‘her father accepted congratulations, as fathers of brides do’.²³⁶ The connection between the celebratory nature of martyrdom and weddings is illuminated in Palestinian women’s ululations at weddings and martyrs’ funerals.²³⁷

Martyrdom is a form of moral agency and a legitimate speech act in both early modern England and contemporary Palestine. Palestinians perceive female acts of martyrdom as promoting equality between men and women, as revealed by Yassir Arafat’s speech to a crowd of women who rushed to Ramallah to volunteer for suicide for the good of their country: ‘Women and men are equal [...]. You are my army of roses that will crush Israeli tanks’.²³⁸ Arafat, the most powerful voice in Palestine in 2002, listened carefully to women’s public nationalist speech. Palestinian women, in turn, submitted to Arafat’s nationalist discourse. This is revealed by the fact that Wafa’ Idris, who became an inspiration to other female martyrs, carried out her self-sacrifice in the centre of Jerusalem in Jaffa Road following Arafat’s speech. Wafa’ killed herself and an Israeli in the operation and injured more than 100 Israelis.²³⁹ Arafat’s appropriation of the rhetoric of equality in order to encourage women’s participation in suicide bombing/martyrdom points to the problems inherent in this discourse. While martyrdom gives a voice to female subjects who otherwise lack a political voice, it also involves the inevitable silencing of those voices. Palestinian women’s religious and national struggle against Israel demands their deaths. Boaz Ganor, the director of The Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT), defined suicide bombing as an ‘operational method in which the very act of the attack is dependent upon the death of the perpetrator. The terrorist is fully

²³⁶ Bob Simon, ‘The Bomber Next Door’, *CBC News* (2003) < <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-bomber-next-door/> > [accessed: 31 August 2015].

²³⁷ Khalili, *Martyrs of Palestine*, pp. 124-25; Joseph Massad, ‘Conceiving the Masculine: Gender and Palestinian Nationalism’, *Middle East Journal*, 49.3 (1995), 467-483 (p. 474).

²³⁸ Quoted in Victor, *Army of Roses*, p. 33.

²³⁹ Katerina Standish, ‘Human Security and Gender: Female Suicide Bombers in Palestine and Chechnya’, *PCR*, 1.2 (2008), 1-40 (p. 9).

aware that if she/he does not kill her/himself, the planned attack will not be implemented'.²⁴⁰ Amal Amireh's reference to Kevin Toolish's observation confirms that Palestinian women's deaths are inextricably linked with their political participation. Toolish says that, before carrying out her suicide, Hanadi Jaradat declared: 'By the will of God I decided to be the sixth martyr who makes her body full with splinters in order to enter every Zionist heart who occupied our country'.²⁴¹ Female acts of martyrdom are narratives of defiance to patriarchal constructions of the female body as a passive and vulnerable object; the female body is an explosive speech act that penetrates Israeli bodies. Moreover, Iphigenia's and Palestinian women's sacrifice suggests that the body is a medium of communication that must shatter in order to impart its message and receive response and recognition.

In both contemporary Palestinian culture and early modern England, religion and patriotism are inseparably linked and they are the legitimate arenas for women's political participation and their emancipation from gender roles. As Rosemary Sayigh has argued in the Palestinian context, 'social changes adopted as part of national struggle are the main legitimating context for women's individual struggles'.²⁴² Islam explicitly forbids personal suicide. The Qur'an states, '[a]nd do not kill yourself, for God is indeed merciful to you'.²⁴³ However, Palestinian female suicide bombing is generally sanctioned as just and holy. The Qur'an states that those who die for God win immortality: '[d]o not say that those who are killed in God's cause are

²⁴⁰ Boaz Ganor, 'The First Iraqi Suicide Bombing: A Hint of Things to Come?', *ICT* (2003) <<http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/595/currentpage/28/Default.aspx>> [accessed 10 November 2013]. Ganor's definition illustrates the opposing Western and Palestinian voices as regards the nationalist, religious and social dimensions of martyrdom. Israeli media undermine the nationalist and religious reasons for women's acts of suicide bombing and place emphasis on personal and social aspects. Palestinian suicide bombers are really victims of their oppressive culture, which shows that their death amounts to suicide and not martyrdom. Anne Marie Oliver, 'Brides of Palestine', *Salon* (2006) <http://www.salon.com/2006/07/20/suicide_bombers/> [accessed 19 January 2012].

²⁴¹ Quoted in Amal Amireh, 'Palestinian Women's Disappearing Act: The Suicide Bomber Through Western Feminist Eyes', in *Arab and Arab American Feminisms: Gender, Violence, and Belonging*, ed. Rabab Abdulhadi, Evelyn Alsultany and Nadine Naber (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), pp. 29-45 (p.43).

²⁴² Rosemary Sayigh, 'Palestinian women: A case of neglect', in *Portraits of Palestinian Women*, ed. by Orayb Aref Najjar and Kitty Warnock (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992), pp. 1-26 (p. 19).

²⁴³ Women 4.29

dead; they are alive, though you do not realize it'.²⁴⁴ The Qur'an promises Heaven for those who fight and die for God's cause: 'God has purchased the persons and possessions of the believers in return for the Garden—they fight in God's way: they kill and are killed—this is a true promise given by Him in the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an. Who would be more faithful to his promise than God?'²⁴⁵ Palestinian readers and spectators will, therefore, recognise the resonance of Lumley's diction with the Qur'an's. The Nuncius tells Clytemnestra, 'this daie your daughter hath bene bothe alive and deade,' and the Chorus remarks that she is 'taken into heaven' (954-56). Iphigenia's body disappears just like Christ's from the tomb, to be replaced by a white hart whose colour signifies purity and virginity (943).²⁴⁶ The absence of the body marks Iphigenia's transition from daughter to a capricious sign of political resonance. As Rabinowitz points out: 'Euripides [...] grants her this stereotypically masculine and public fame without disturbing her femininity, by moving the private goals to a new register [...] she achieves fame – that is, male success – by self-sacrifice, by submitting herself to her superior opposite', the goddess Diana.²⁴⁷ This has parallels with Palestinian female martyrs as they submit themselves to God apart from the fact that Iphigenia resigns herself to a feminine deity while Palestinian female martyrs submit themselves to a masculine deity.

Teaching Lumley's *Iphigenia* would therefore contribute to debates about female self-sacrifice in contemporary Palestine and the cause for which it is enacted. While Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia* expresses its historical moment of composition in 1555, the play collapses the temporal binary between past and present. It is an anachronism that opens up Lumley's *Iphigenia* to its present meaning in contemporary Palestine. As Nicholas Moschovakis has ar-

²⁴⁴ The Cow 2.154.

²⁴⁵ Repentance 9.111.

²⁴⁶ Purkiss, *Three*, p. xxxi; Beilin, *Redeeming*, p. 157. This representation of a Christ-like martyr is reminiscent of Jane Grey's heroic death and Lumley's father's villainy, as I pointed out earlier.

²⁴⁷ Nancy Rabinowitz, *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 48.

gued, anachronism opens up a 'reevaluation in present terms of subjects regarded as past'.²⁴⁸ Palestinian readers may perceive Iphigenia's sacrifice in the light of some exceptional Palestinian women who also award themselves with the military and political honours reserved for men. Thus, I think that the incorporation of Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia* into Drama Course at An-Najah University will enhance my students' awareness of the collective Palestinian discourse of martyrology and the discursive nationalization of Palestine. This tragedy may engage with my students' views of martyrdom, national identity and gender. While Palestinian women are traditionally confined in the domestic sphere of the house, sacrifice in *Iphigenia* may offer scholars of English at An-Najah University a point of focus to the active discourses of nationalism and religion that enable Palestinian women to transcend gender roles. However, while sacrifice in Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia* may emphasise the role Palestinian women play against Israeli occupation of Palestine through their acts of martyrdom, some students and I may find discussions concerning sacrifice and martyrdom difficult to debate. Praising Iphigenia's sacrifice and Palestinian female martyrs may be read as subversive by my male students who may feel emasculated and threatened by Palestinian female martyrs who put the Palestinian construction of gender roles into question. This praise may also be read as a call to action on the part of women – an action that many Palestinians oppose because it subverts the established gender roles. Furthermore, my students may recognise that in both the fictional world of *Iphigenia* and contemporary Palestine, sacrifice enables women to assume a public voice which evades the speaking positions of a whore and a phallic woman, for it involves ultimately silencing women's voices and their movement from the physical realm to the spiritual one.

²⁴⁸Nicholas R. Moschovakis, "'Irreligious Piety' and Christian History: Persecution as Pagan Anachronism in *Titus Andronicus*", *SQ*, 53.4 (2002), 460-86 (p. 461).

Lady Lumley's translation of *Iphigenia*, Iphigenia's sacrifice, Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* and the public discourse surrounding Palestinian female martyrs suggest that writing and martyrdom are the means through which female figures create their legitimate authorial identities. In both the fictional world of Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia* and contemporary Palestine, female writing and sacrifice open up subjective spaces that deconstruct the masculine construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence. Luckyj argues that conventional assumptions of silence as 'impotence' and as 'eloquence' often coexist.²⁴⁹ While women were ordered to remain silent out of reverence for masculine authority, men 'were enjoined to avoid talking too much to safeguard their own secrets' and deliver effective speech.²⁵⁰ Lady Lumley associates male figures' verbosity with hypocrisy and weakness, disrupting the construction of male speech as the locus of power. Agamemnon's compulsive verbosity, revealed in his dialogue with Senex, suggests his desire to take up the whole linguistic space to prevent the emergence of his deceptive and hypocritical voice. Agamemnon endeavours to keep silent because his verbal opulence reveals its flaws (18-21, 74-75, 303). His role is feminised, as he walls himself 'secretly within [his] house' (207) away from the host's public cause and voice. Agamemnon is afraid of meeting Clytemnestra and Iphigenia, for his voice will be subject to the controlling female voice that will reveal his guilt (299-308).

The feminised voice of Agamemnon and the outspoken voice of Clytemnestra are analogous to the shaking and feminisation of Tuqan's father's vocal authority. While Tuqan did not have 'the courage to raise [her] voice in protest' (79) against her father's oppression, she tells the reader that her sister Fataya challenges her father's authority and criticises his aural openness to the public voices of gossip, a discourse conventionally gendered feminine in contem-

²⁴⁹Luckyj, *Moving*, pp. 16-17.

²⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 46.

porary Palestine. For example, when Tuqan's father changes his mind over sending Tuqan and Fataya to a school so as to learn English, Tuqan tells the reader that 'Fataya stood up to Father, protesting against his change of position over our learning English. "I know the reason", she said angrily. 'It's they ... they ... they are the ones who advised it! What have they to do with us since you have given your permission?'"(79). Fataya casts her father into a feminised position, condemning his wavering decisions and his aural openness to the public voices of gossip.

Agamemnon's inability to protect his daughter and his powerlessness may, therefore, offer my students a ground to attribute Palestinian male figures' oppression of Palestinian women to Israeli occupation. Palestinian male figures transfer their emasculation and loss of their physical and vocal authority by Israeli occupation onto Palestinian women, as Diane Baxter notes.²⁵¹ Therefore, from a Palestinian perspective, sacrifice in Lumley's *Iphigenia* is a criticism of Agamemnon's authority and his submission to the demands of the Greek army that his daughter be sacrificed. His powerlessness erupts in the form of subjugating women and circumscribing their voices. This reading of Agamemnon's wavering decision, his inability to defend Iphigenia and Iphigenia's decision to sacrifice herself may offer Palestinian students a point of focus to the phenomenon of Palestinian female martyrs. The discourse of Palestinian female martyrs suggests that these women gain masculine attributes of bravery and defence of one's honour while Palestinian male figures are emasculate figures who are unable to defend Palestine and their female relatives themselves.

The sacrifice of Iphigenia unleashes Clytemnestra's verbal criticism of Agamemnon. From a Palestinian context of reading, Clytemnestra's verbal criticism of Agamemnon's devious plan

²⁵¹Diane Baxter, 'Honor Thy Sister: Selfhood, Gender, and Agency in Palestinian Culture', *AQ*, 80.3 (2007), 737-775 (p. 750).

to sacrifice Iphigenia is in contrast with Tuqan's mother's attempt to 'get rid of me' during the early months of pregnancy because her husband does not like female children (12-13). Tuqan's mother's ability to protect Tuqan is depicted as 'debilitated by [her own] subjugation' (50). Clytemnestra's domestic authority as a mother and wife is subject to her husband's authority. She submits to Agamemnon's command to bring Iphigenia to Aulis. When Clytemnestra asks about the place of Iphigenia's wedding feast (451-53), Agamemnon demands her obedience and silence (455). Clytemnestra responds by emphasising her obedience (456-57), but ignores Agamemnon's command (470) and insists on staying to make sure that 'all things made redie for the mariage' (472). Agamemnon's plan to sacrifice Iphigenia prompts more aggressive interventions by Clytemnestra. Once Senex reveals that Agamemnon 'hath determined to sleye Iphigeneya his daughter in sacrafice' (527-29), authority is shifted to the listening Clytemnestra. She casts Agamemnon into a receptive, feminised listening position, in which his silence speaks his deceit and weakness (647-69). When Clytemnestra confronts him about the 'false tale' (505) of marriage, she speaks of a tyrannical patriarch who 'had slaine [her] other husbande Tantalus' (658). From a Palestinian context of reading, Clytemnestra's voice challenges the supremacy of male figures' voices and undermines the Palestinian construction of gender roles where wives should subsume their voices to those of their husbands.

From a Palestinian perspective, Clytemnestra's feminisation of Agamemnon resonates with some Palestinian mothers who criticise Palestinian leaders who exhort Palestinians to commit acts of martyrdom while saving the lives of their children. As a martyr's mother says,

Do you think that the Palestinian Authority could bring him back? . . . Do you think they even know the kind of pain and suffering I am going through? Does

anyone know what it means for a mother to sleep in her bed when her own son is sleeping on the stones in that ugly cemetery?²⁵²

Salwa, a mother of a martyr, opposes the death of her son for the sake of homeland: 'I don't want a son who is a hero. ... I want my son back. ... He is my son. ... I want him back'.²⁵³ Clytemnestra's opposition to the sacrifice of her daughter enacts a dialogue with the above mentioned Palestinian examples which express the primacy of individualized motherhood over nationalised motherhood. In contrast to these mothers, some Palestinian mothers promote death for Palestine and praise their children's acts of martyrdom. For example, Wafa Idris's mother is described as "tearful...[yet] proud of her daughter [hoping] more women will follow her example."²⁵⁴

The female character's speech reveals there was no justification for what Agamemnon (chief of state) and Calchas (religious authority) did to Iphigenia. The appearance of the white hart as a substitute for Iphigenia suggests that she is taken into heaven and that the goddess Diana does not want her as a sacrifice. As the Nuncius says to Clytemnestra, 'she wolde not have hir aulter defiled with the blode of your daughter' (945-46). Hodgson-Wright observes that '[t]he reported miracle of Iphigenia's bodily assumption into heaven frustrates the male characters' truth-claims, for it demonstrates that Calchas's interpretation of Diana's wishes, and therefore the subsequent [discourse] and actions of the men, are totally erroneous'.²⁵⁵ The messenger's speech, describing Iphigenia's rescue, is undercut by Clytemnestra's doubts

²⁵²Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 'Liberating Voices', p. 398.

²⁵³Ibid., p. 397.

²⁵⁴Quoted in Michael Loadenthal, 'Reproducing a Culture of Martyrdom: The Role of the Palestinian Mother in Discourse Construction, Transmission, and Legitimization', in *Motherhood and War: International Perspectives*, ed. by Dana Cooper and Claire Phelan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 181-206 (p. 189).

²⁵⁵Hodgson-Wright, 'Aulis', p. 137.

(958-59).²⁵⁶ Therefore, Iphigenia's spiritual sacrifice reveals male figures' faulty discourse of sacrifice. This interpretation is affirmed by the fact that Iphigenia's sacrifice initiates the process by which the family is destroyed by internal violence. While Orestes is spoken of rather than speaking (710-15, 868-70), the fact that he is on stage probably reminds spectators that Agamemnon's cruelty will be avenged. Lumley, therefore, uses the cover of translation to dismantle the ideology of male supremacy.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of teaching, by reading Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia* alongside Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*, my students could read both texts as linguistic retribution against male figures' voices. As *Iphigenia* raises the possibility that Agamemnon will be punished, Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* can be read as a verbal revenge against the discrimination from which Tuqan suffered. Tuqan punishes her father verbally in her autobiography by criticising and depicting him as a tyrannical father and then by excising him from the text. Metaphorically, Tuqan castrates her father's voice by narrating his death and ending his story in her autobiography. It is the death of Tuqan's father that permits the birth of Tuqan's voice and joy. She asserts that '[e]ventually my tongue was freed' and she was able to write political poetry because she engaged with the public world of politics (113). Lumley's deconstruction of the supremacy of male figures and the principle of women's subjugation may offer students and teachers of English at An-Najah a critique of the Palestinian traditions and legal systems that are dominated by male figures.

²⁵⁶ Hodgson-Wright notes that 'Clytemnestra's doubt, albeit misplaced in the larger context of the Iphigenia story, constitutes her own, independent challenge to the masculine version of the truth which she is presented, and is clearly motivated by Agamemnon's earlier duplicity', 'Aulis', p. 140.

Mary Sidney's *The Tragedy of Antonie*

Mary Sidney's *The Tragedy of Antonie* repudiates the assumption that translation impedes the female translator's critical voice. Like Lumley's *Iphigenia*, Sidney's *Antonie* interrogates the conventional definitions of masculine and feminine virtue and the entanglement of gender and politics. Krontiris suggests that 'Mary Herbert chose to translate the work of an author who might be called "feminine" in his approach'. She notes that Garnier 'uses strategies which could be employed also by women writers'.²⁵⁷ Garnier and Sidney use the enfranchising discourses of domesticity, motherhood, sexual purity, marriage and death to deconstruct the conventional association of female speech with sexuality in relation to Cleopatra. Following the methodology of presentism, I am going to analyse Mary Sidney Herbert's text alongside that of Fadwa Tuqan. Tuqan uses the feminine discourses of domesticity, sexual purity and death in her autobiography to legitimise her voice and construct her authorial identity. I contend that Garnier's *Antonie* enables Sidney to construct a narrative of mourning for her brother Philip Sidney, just as Tuqan mourns her brother Ibrahim. I demonstrate that it was Sidney's and Tuqan's close relationships with their brothers that led to their active participation in literary work and construction of authorial identities. Sidney's and Tuqan's mourning for their brothers has a political dimension. While Cleopatra's loyalty to Antonie will lead the Egyptians to a life of bondage, Sidney endorses Cleopatra's political choice of suicide to impede Caesar's aim of humiliating her. While Sidney dissociates Cleopatra's speech from lasciviousness, I agree with Margaret Hannay and Paulina Kewes who suggest that Cleopatra's suicide carries a veiled political message to Queen Elizabeth.²⁵⁸ Sidney's translation of Garnier exhorts Elizabeth to fulfil her obligations as monarch by supporting the Protestant cause

²⁵⁷Krontiris, *Oppositional*, p. 77.

²⁵⁸Margaret P. Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 120-21, 119, 126; Paulina Kewes, "'A fit memorial for the times to come...': Admonition and topical application in Mary Sidney's *Antonius* and Samuel Daniel's *Cleopatra*", *RES*, 63.259 (2011), 243-64 (pp. 245-48, 250, 253, 260).

in the Netherlands. Garnier suited that purpose, because he was ‘a magistrate who used his drama to criticize the state’ and whose ‘dramas were at the forefront of the contemporary movement in Continental historical tragedy, the avant-garde of the theatre’.²⁵⁹ Mary Sidney honours her brother’s memory by using words (since she could not fight like he did) to persuade Elizabeth to continue to support Protestant military intervention in the Netherlands. Tuqan honours her brother Ibrahim by continuing his journey of writing nationalist poetry and in her double critique of the Palestinian traditions and Israeli occupation that reinforce the dynamics of each other. I argue that Cleopatra’s suicide, to prevent her public humiliation and to be reunited in death with Antonie, is in a direct contrast to the Palestinian female martyrs who sacrifice themselves for Palestine rather than for personal desires as Cleopatra did.

Sidney’s and Tuqan’s entries into writing and construction of authorial identities emerge from their brothers’ voices. Sidney was engaged in preparing and publishing the first authorised version of Philip Sidney’s romance, *The Countess of Pembrokes Arcadia* (1593). Sidney also published Philip Sidney’s *The Defence of Poesie* in 1595 and the complete sonnet sequence of *Astrophil and Stella* in 1598. Likewise, Tuqan’s path towards constructing an autonomous identity for herself comes through finding a voice that emerges from her brother Ibrahim’s voice. Tuqan tells readers that ‘[d]uring the period between 1933 and the beginning of 1937, I occasionally tried to clothe myself in Ibrahim’s poetical robes and to imitate him by writing patriotic verse’ (71). Because Ibrahim was Tuqan’s teacher of poetry, many believed that Ibrahim had a hand in Tuqan’s poems (68, 95). The fact that he was the most distinguished poet of his generation and ‘the voice of the Palestinian people’ (71) made her vulnerable to such accusations. However, in constructing her literary voice, she usurps her

²⁵⁹Hannay, *Philip’s Phoenix*, pp. 126, 119.

brother's fame as a poet by surpassing him.²⁶⁰ In a similar situation, Mary Sidney articulated her subject position as a female author first by ventriloquism and then by developing her own literary personae. While she overstepped the bounds of feminine silence in producing 'To the Angell Spirit' (1590) and 'The Doleful Lay of Clorinda' (1595), these original literary texts belong to the genre of elegy, which 'provided non-threatening outlets for their author's learning and poetic skills'.²⁶¹ Elegy augments the writer's relationship with her male relatives – dead brothers in the case of both Tuqan and Sidney. As Salma Khadra Jayyusi notes, '[w]hat we all remember about Fadwa the moment her name is mentioned is her elegiac voice'.²⁶² Apart from the fact that Ibrahim was Fadwa's teacher of poetry, he left her no literary legacy. In contrast, Philip Sidney left a literary legacy for Mary to publish and edit. In addition to completing and publishing Philip Sidney's literary work, Mary translated texts such as Philippe Du Plessis Mornay's *Excellent discours de la vie et la mort* (1577) and Robert Garnier's *Antonie* (1578) – translations which her brother deemed more refined than public drama in his *Defence of Poesy* (1595). Because Sidney locates her voice as a writer in a familial context, Kim Walker claims that Sidney has been effaced as a writer.²⁶³ However, I agree with Paulina Kewes, who argues that *Antonie* is a direct intervention into European, Protestant politics and that it is directed towards Queen Elizabeth.²⁶⁴

In Sidney's *Antonie* and Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*, mourning is a legitimate form of self-expression because it suggests that women retain their shadow roles. Mary Ellen Lamb observes that Mary Sidney 'creates her authorship as a form of mourning'.²⁶⁵ Cleopatra's

²⁶⁰ Jayyusi, 'Love and Pain', p. x.

²⁶¹ Mary Ellen Lamb, 'The Cooke Sisters: Attitudes toward Learned Women in the Renaissance', in *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent: Kent University Press, 1985), pp. 107-25 (p. 120).

²⁶² Jayyusi, 'Love and Pain', p. x.

²⁶³ Kim Walker, *Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996), p. 72.

²⁶⁴ Kewes, 'Memorial', pp. 245-46, 250, 253.

²⁶⁵ Mary Ellen Lamb, *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), p. 116.

mourning for Antonie and in extension Sidney's mourning for her brother Philip resonates with Tuqan's mourning and memorialising of her brother, Ibrahim. Garnier and Sidney suggest that mourning is a narrative through which Cleopatra expresses her love, authority and self-memorialisation. Cleopatra expresses her grief through the feminine expressions of crying, wailing, 'tearing off [her] hanging hair' and '[o]utrag[ing] [her] face' (5.195-96). As a woman of sentiment, Cleopatra boldly expresses her love to Antonie through emotionally moving rhetoric of tears and laments. While Cleopatra's mourning for Antonie is located in the domestic sphere, it is a speech act of public effect. Sidney uses the play to mourn and memorialise Philip Sidney,²⁶⁶ reminding Elizabeth of Sidney's death and, verbally, continuing his mission to influence Elizabeth toward a protestant cause. Sidney's narrative of mourning to Philip Sidney resonates with Tuqan's memorialising, mourning and expressing of her sadness at the loss of her brother Ibrahim (58-77, 112) that caused her 'grief', 'estrangement' and 'inner exile' (105).

Sidney's *Antonie* subverts the masculine construction of gender difference. Sidney published *Antonie* in 1592, putting the text into the public realm, and deconstructed the stereotypical association between female speech and lewdness in the figure of Cleopatra. Krontiris suggests that Sidney spoke 'from behind curtains' of the male-authored texts she translated. Krontiris notes that '[to] translate literally is to seek protection in the idea of conveying the author's meaning exactly'.²⁶⁷ While Lumley's *Iphigenia* is a free translation that does not reiterate patriarchal ideology, Sidney's *Antonie* is a close translation, whose subversion is effected through her choice of Garnier's text into which she weaves her subversive meaning.

²⁶⁶ Findlay, *Playing Spaces*, p. 23.

²⁶⁷ Krontiris, *Oppositional*, pp. 65, 68

From a masculine perspective, Sidney's *Antonie* seems to accredit the conventional association between women's speech and lust. Antonie, like his Shakespearean analogue (4.14.24),²⁶⁸ claims that Cleopatra, whose 'words' (1.100) and wiles (1.11-16) have tempted him into a 'wanton love' (1.120), is 'disloyal' (1.141) to him. He describes her as a 'cruel *traitress*, *woman* most unkind' (1.17, my emphasis), accentuating her political and sexual treachery. Antonie's claim that 'too wise a head she wears, / Too much inflamed with greatness, evermore / Gaping for our great empire's government (3.20-22) implies Cleopatra's sexual openness as well as her political ambition. Antonie arouses the traditional views of Cleopatra's speech and sexuality (3.20-22) that Shakespeare's Cleopatra exemplifies (1.1.13, 2.2.233-35, 2.7.26).

Sidney engages with two opposing discourses on women's voice and sexuality. While Antonie associates Cleopatra's speech with licentiousness, other characters contradict him, emphasising her political dexterity. Diomede says that Cleopatra expresses herself in several languages (2.483-88) and is gifted with 'a sweet voice all Asia understood' (2.463). This verbal description makes Cleopatra an alter ego of Elizabeth. She is virtuous, for she avoids using her speech to 'make a conquest of the conquerer' (2.501). Her 'enchanted skills' are physical and spiritual, for she has a 'celestial spirit' and is possessed of 'grace' (2.483-85). While Garnier's Cleopatra's 'amoureux charmes' (1.736)²⁶⁹ suggest the association between Cleopatra's speech and her sexual and political transgression, Sidney's translation notably mutes the speech-sexuality link.

²⁶⁸William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra: Authoritative Text, Sources, Analogues, and Contexts, Criticism, Adaptations, Rewritings, and Appropriations*, ed. by Ania Loomba (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).

²⁶⁹Robert Garnier, *Marc Antoine*, in *Two Tragedies: Hippolyte and Marc Antoine*, ed. by Christine M. Hill and Mary G. Morrison (London: Athlone Press, 1975), pp. 109-66.

Sidney's deconstruction of the association between woman's speech and sexuality in the figure of Cleopatra has present relevance with contemporary Palestinian silencing of sexual debates. For example, in her study of sexuality and politics and 'the attitudes of Palestinian women in Israel toward their sexuality', Manal Shalabi notes that 'Sexuality is considered a taboo subject'.²⁷⁰ During my teaching at An-Najah University, I have always been advised by staff members not to allude to sexuality in classes, for sexual debates subvert Palestinian traditions that silence such salient taboos. In the course of Cleopatra's decision to commit suicide, Eras and Diomede encourage her to use her sexual power to protect Egypt and her subjects (2.181-88, 193, 287-97, 458-64). From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, this equation between Cleopatra's political intervention and sexual transgression espoused by Diomede and Eras challenges conventional ideas of modesty in contemporary Palestine. Clarke points out that '*Antonie* suggests that female political power is always mediated, either by sexuality, whereby it becomes transgressive, or by death, whereby it becomes a sign which enacts its own erasure'.²⁷¹ Cleopatra's decision to commit suicide may provide many Palestinians with a model of virtuous female action. Cleopatra evades the troubling positions of a phallic woman and a whore by stressing her loyalty to Antonie and killing herself (2.297-302). Danielle Clarke notes that 'Cleopatra's death can, like Iphigenia's, be viewed as a kind of substitute marriage'. It is 'a kind of inverted martyrdom which expiates her past life, and absents her troublesome and tempting body'.²⁷² From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, while *Antonie* reveals Cleopatra's resistance to the conflation of sexuality with politics, Cleopatra's personal suicide is a foil to Palestinian female martyrs who sacrifice themselves for a nationalist cause. Some Palestinian women are motivated to kill themselves in their killing of Israelis by their love and devotion to Palestine to which they metaphorically

²⁷⁰ Manal Shalabi, 'The Sexual Politics of Palestinian Women in Israel', in *Displaced at Home: Ethnicity and Gender among Palestinians in Israel*, ed. by Rhoda Ann Kanaaneh and Isis Nusair (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), pp. 153-168 (p. 166).

²⁷¹ Danielle Clarke, *The Politics of Early Modern Women's Writing* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), p. 96.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 89.

get married. In contrast, Cleopatra kills herself to be reunited with Antonie and to avoid Caesar's potential humiliation of her rather than to ally herself with Egypt as Palestinian women ally themselves with Palestine in their acts of martyrdom.

Sidney and Tuqan use the discourses of domesticity which enable them to justify their speeches and writings and to cleanse themselves from the taint of sexuality inherent in female authorship and expression. In confining Cleopatra's speech primarily within the domestic realm of the palace, Sidney further mitigates condemnation of the character. Belsey argues that when women speak, they 'threaten the system of differences which gives meaning to patriarchy'.²⁷³ However, in Garnier's text, Cleopatra's speech is dramatised within the confines of the domestic sphere within earshot of Charmian and Eras. This dramatisation of Cleopatra's speech within the domestic sphere and within the earshot of female listeners compares with Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* which is a domestic and intimate text even though it is projected into the public arena by the act of publication. Tuqan's telling of the reader that 'Dealing with people in the public world was not in my nature' (124) suggests 'that Journey de-emphasises the political in favour of the personal'.²⁷⁴

The familial relations between Cleopatra and Antonie and the accusations unleashed against Cleopatra may offer my students a point of focus to Tuqan's domestic autobiography which charts her struggle against the discrimination and circumscription of her voice in the domestic sphere. While Cleopatra is unable to respond to Antonie and Caesar's accusations, her rhetorical questions (2.152-54, 156, 164-66), addressed to the audience, enable her to claim autonomy by imagining herself being examined, scrutinising herself under surveillance. In an echo of Eve's fate, Cleopatra would rather be 'fall[en]' into the earth if she deceived Antonie

²⁷³Belsey, *Subject*, p. 191.

²⁷⁴Malti-Douglas, 'A Palestinian Female Voice', p. 7.

(2.158-59). While Caesar says that the relationship between Antonie and Cleopatra is based on 'lewd delights' (4.37), Cleopatra dissociates herself from lewdness, refusing to live on as Antonie's widow (2.297-310). Sidney's *Antonie* does not include any conversations between Antonie and Cleopatra and communication between them is mediated through male messengers, as Findlay notes.²⁷⁵ The first time that Cleopatra addresses Antonie is when he is a corpse that neither hears nor speaks (3.159, 5.157). She gives burial rites to Antonie (5.183) and entombs her own body along with his (5.175), enclosing, in doing so, her body and speech from the public sphere. That Cleopatra's 'overtly sexual lines are delivered only over Antony's dead body' and express her 'desire for death' (5.173-77, 200-08) contradicts stereotypical representations of Cleopatra, as Lamb argues.²⁷⁶ While Cleopatra confines her speech in the domestic sphere to defend herself against the accusations of political and sexual transgression, Tuqan, unable to speak publicly against the oppression she is subject to, deploys writing, a silent form of speech, to criticise patriarchal oppression of women in Nablus in 1930s. Cleopatra's private speech and Tuqan's writing, a silent form of speech, are legitimate discourses that enable Cleopatra and Tuqan to subvert the masculine construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence.

Sidney's translation of Garnier challenges the conflation of women's speech with wantonness by divorcing Cleopatra from Antonie's fall, which is attributed to his own susceptibility to women, rather than to Cleopatra's seductive speech (1.165-80). Instead of associating performance with power and self-fashioning, Sidney shows that Antonie, in his mournful tone and self-pity (1.51,62), is feminised. His first soliloquy dramatises his conflicting impulses from different subject positions (1.1-148). While he aspires to die like a warrior on the battlefield (3.225-32), Sidney suggests that there is a disparity between his words and his actions.

²⁷⁵ Findlay, *Playing Spaces*, pp. 25-26.

²⁷⁶ Lamb, *Gender and Authorship*, pp. 131-32.

The rift between Antonie's words and actions is similar to Agamemnon's praise of, affection towards, Iphigenia and his plan to sacrifice her. This disparity between Antonie's and Agamemnon's words and actions has chilling parallels with Tuqan's representation of the rift between her father's words and actions in spite of historical and ideological differences. Tuqan tells the reader that while her father opposed Western culture, he sent his boy children to English schools (36).

Cleopatra creates a tragic narrative that celebrates her and Antonie, making Antonie's idealized masculinity rest on the incorporation rather than the exclusion of femininity. In an inversion of Renaissance conventions, Antonie asserts his subjectivity by retreating into Cleopatra's domestic sphere as Acheson observes.²⁷⁷ Paradoxically, Antonie's determination that he must die bespeaks his self-assertion (3.369-76). His death is counter to Caesar's plot of humiliating him (3.373-77). He dies in Cleopatra's arms, not on the battlefield. His dying speech enables him to construct his narrative of love and to mourn his own death. Dircetus delivers the news of Antonie's 'hard mishap' (4.202) that temporarily stifles his voice (4.206) to Caesar, the Chorus and Agrippa. Dircetus's reproduction of Antonie's speech (4.195-97, 242-61) underlines that Antonie's speech outlives his silencing, in that his voice is carried through the voices of others. Students of English at An-Najah University may find parallels between Cleopatra's construction of Antonie's tragic narrative and the literary memorialisations of brothers created by Sidney and Tuqan in their own editing and writing.

Garnier's representation of Cleopatra as a mother enables Sidney to dissociate Cleopatra's speech from lewdness and to deliver a political message to Elizabeth. Even though Antonie is married to Octavia, Cleopatra speaks with the authority of a mother and a wife to Antonie so as to legitimise her speech. Antonie regrets his disrespect for 'Octavia and her tender babes'

²⁷⁷ Katherine O. Acheson, "'Outrage your face': Anti-Theatricality and Gender in Early Modern Closet Drama by Women", *EMLS*, 6.3 (2001), 1-16 (pp. 3-4) <<http://purl.oclc.org/emls/06-3/acheoutr.htm>> [accessed 27 March 2013]; see also, Findlay, *Playing Spaces*, pp. 25-26.

(1.122). I agree with Krontiris, who observes that Sidney's sympathetic reference to Octavia 'enables a woman like Mary Herbert to publish the play without running the risk of appearing to endorse the abandonment of wives in favour of romantic lovers'.²⁷⁸ Cleopatra prioritises romantic love above political power and even motherhood (2.317-20). Sidney dramatises Cleopatra's parting from her children in very moving terms (2.73-74, 78-79) which demonstrate the suffering Cleopatra is willing to endure for Antonie. Although Cleopatra's children only speak four words (5.77, 82), their eloquent silence arouses Cleopatra's distressing conflict until they exit with Euphron (5.83). Unlike Sidney's Cleopatra, Daniel's Cleopatra emphasises her 'lascivious Court' (1.159) and refers to her children as 'the wretched pledges of a wanton bed' (1.84).²⁷⁹ Comparisons to the other mother figures studied so far show that Sidney dissociates Cleopatra's speech from lasciviousness. While the articulate and transgressive Tamora is deprived of her maternity and the vocal and virtuous Duchess of Malfi dies as a mother, Sidney's Cleopatra is not a worthless mother, but a tragic figure of fated love: Antonie's love is '[m]ore deare then Scepter, children, freedom, light' (2.174) to Cleopatra. While Cleopatra's constant love deconstructs the association between her speech and sexuality, in Sidney's translation, Garnier's words enable Sidney to exhort Elizabeth to fulfil her role as a mother of England rather than satisfy personal desires. Perhaps, Sidney is reminding Elizabeth of Sidney's death, which can be attributed to Elizabeth's failure to act and attempt to free the Protestant Netherlands from Catholic Spain. Thus, Sidney's description of Cleopatra as a mother emphasises her sexual purity while wrapping within this discourse a political message to Elizabeth.

²⁷⁸Krontiris, *Oppositional*, p. 71.

²⁷⁹Samuel Daniel, *The Tragedie of Cleopatra in The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Samuel Daniel, Vol. III: The Dramatic Works*, ed. by Alexander B. Grosart (New York: Russell, 1963), pp. 31-94. Subsequent references to the play are taken from this edition and cited in the text by act, scene, and line number. Significantly, Samuel Daniel's patron was Mary Sidney, and it is to her that *The Tragedy of Cleopatra* is dedicated. See Krontiris, *Oppositional*, p. 67.

From a presentist context of reading, Sidney's political interventions and Cleopatra's rhetorical skills can be compared to Tuqan's engagement with politics and political leaders. Sidney's own use of speech (in the form of drama) to argue a political point to Elizabeth I, who was herself a learned and skilled orator, enables me to scrutinise Tuqan's rhetorical interventions with politics. Tuqan puts her pen in the service of Palestine and writes nationalist poetry to stimulate Palestinian resistance against occupation. Tuqan tells the reader that 'With the winds of change and revolt, poetry felt its ivory tower to march along with the Arab masses, expressing their aspirations for freedom from repression and exploitation' (117). Tuqan receives admiration and praise by Arab leaders and Israeli ones. Jayyusi says that Tuqan 'had in the late sixties a long meeting with president Jamal Abd al-Nasser, which extended for one hour and forty minutes (a dream of every Arab intellectual at the time)'.²⁸⁰ Jayyusi says that the president of Palestine, Yassir Arafat expressed his admiration and affection for Tuqan on many nationalist occasions.²⁸¹ Even an eminent Israeli figure, Moshe Dayan, sought to meet and talk to her more than once. 'And it was Dayan who said about her that one of her poems is enough to create ten fighters for the Palestine resistance'.²⁸²

From a political presentist perspective on territory and occupation like that of Cleopatra's Egypt, I contend that Sidney's urging of Cleopatra to save Egypt illuminates my analysis of Palestinian female martyrs' critique of Arab leaders due to their failure to save and defend Palestine. However, Sidney problematises gender in association with the political sphere in that Cleopatra's involvement with politics demand her use of her sexuality. I consider that Cleopatra's choice of personal suicide to escape the positions of being a whore or a phallic woman and to avoid Ceasar's potential humiliation of her, a contrast to Palestinian women's

²⁸⁰ Jayyusi, 'Love and Pain', p. ix.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. ix

²⁸² Ibid., p.ix

martyrs, has present anachronistic implications with some contemporary Palestinian women who redeem their lost honours through their acts of suicide bombing.

In comparison to Mary Sidney's *Antonie* that urges Queen Elizabeth I to fulfil her duty of defending protestant cause, contemporary, Palestinian female political activists convey a political message to Palestinian male figures of authority and Arab leaders. Palestinian female martyrs assert masculine virtues of bravery, courage and willingness to sacrifice and male figures gain the traits of weakness, empty talk and inability to defend their honour, Palestine. As the female suicide bomber Ayat al-Akhras said, 'I say to Arab leaders, stop sleeping. Stop failing to fulfil your duty. Shame on the Arab armies who are sitting and watching the girls of Palestine fighting while they are asleep'.²⁸³ While Palestinian female martyrs challenge gender roles, Ayat al-Akhras's words are a wake-up call to Arab leaders to occupy the masculine gendered realm of war. While Cleopatra resists the conflation between politics and sexuality in her decision to commit suicide, she, unlike Palestinian female suicide bombers, prioritises personal interests and loyalty to Antonie over the integrity of Egypt.

Sidney's dissociation of Cleopatra's speech from sexuality and her criticism of Elizabeth as a monarch are illuminated by Sidney's representation of Cleopatra as a prince. Sidney characterises Cleopatra as 'princely' to dissociate her speech from licentiousness (3.19) and (like Elizabeth) to strengthen her authoritative discourse. Catty claims that '[t]he characterisation of Cleopatra as 'princely' is a feature specific to Sidney's translation [and it is not Garnier's]'.²⁸⁴ This depiction of Cleopatra as prince 'is likely to elevate Cleopatra, rather than denigrate Elizabeth'.²⁸⁵ However, the Egyptians realise that Cleopatra's private decisions (3.422-35) will subject them to Caesar, expressing their worry that Dircetus exclaims, 'greater misery / In sacked towns can hardly ever be' (4.320-21). Kewes proposes that

²⁸³ Quoted in Frances Hasso, 'Discursive and Political Deployments', 29.

²⁸⁴ Catty, *Rape*, p. 147.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

Egypt's loss of its statehood to Rome is 'the fulfilment of the nightmare scenario which haunted forward Protestants' in that '[i]n the event of the queen's sudden death without a clearly designated Protestant heir, England, they feared, would succumb to conquest by Roman Catholic Spain, and [...] would degenerate into a mere province of the Iberian empire'.²⁸⁶ Sidney exhorts Elizabeth to fulfil her obligations as a monarch by listening to the voices of the Protestants and defending their cause against Catholic Spain. However, while Cleopatra's decision to commit suicide can be seen as a failure to act in a legal, authoritative way as a prince, Sidney admired Cleopatra's decision to avoid public shame and retain her dignity.²⁸⁷ Lamb proposes that Cleopatra is the key protagonist of the art of dying, which elucidates the 'heroics of constancy as these concerned women'.²⁸⁸ Sidney's *Antonie* seems to have initiated Shakespeare's representations of Cleopatra's heroism, as John Wilders suggests.²⁸⁹ Raber proposes that 'it is Caesar who determines the direction Cleopatra's last moments must take'.²⁹⁰ However, while Cleopatra's suicide emerges from her fidelity to Antonie, it prevents Caesar's aim to:

wholly get

Into our lands her treasure and herself

[...]

That by her presence beautified may be

The glorious triumph Rome prepares for me (4.362-63, 366-67).

While Caesar perceives Cleopatra as a 'treasure' to possess and represent, Cleopatra defies his potentially controlling discourse.

²⁸⁶Kewes, 'Memorial', pp. 245-46.

²⁸⁷Krontiris, *Oppositional*, p. 76; Clarke, *Politics*, pp. 89, 93, 95; Kewes, 'Memorial', p. 254.

²⁸⁸Lamb, *Gender and Authorship*, pp. 119, 129-32.

²⁸⁹William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. by John Wilders (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 62.

²⁹⁰Raber, *Difference*, p. 86.

Cleopatra's suicide out of loyalty to Antonie complicates the Palestinian nationalist and religious discourses that are perceived by many Palestinians as the motives for Palestinian female acts of martyrdom. I think that Palestinian readers steeped in the discourse of nationalism and religion would interpret Cleopatra's suicide out of loyalty to Antonie and subversion to Caesar's plan to humiliate her alongside the Israeli and the Western interpretation of suicide bombing within the context of the Palestinian social agenda. Many Palestinians perceive Palestinian women's acts of suicide bombing as acts of martyrdom because the perpetrators of these actions are motivated by religious and nationalist discourses. However, Israeli and Western feminist critics such as Barbara Victor and Anat Berko suggest that Palestinian women commit suicide bombing to redeem themselves and escape the humiliation they brought against themselves and their families due to their loss of sexual reputation.²⁹¹ While in the *Iphigenia*'s section above I argued that some Palestinian women sacrifice themselves for the sake of Palestine, Cleopatra's self-centred suicide and her lack of political expediency is a contrast to such Palestinian female martyrs. Cleopatra's personal suicide is an antithesis to Iphigenia's and Palestinian women's national and religious sacrifice. While Charmion says that man's fate is governed by the gods (2.273-76), Cleopatra opposes God's word by dying for her love. Thus, Cleopatra's personal suicide may provide students of English at An-Najah University a ground to interpret her suicide alongside some Palestinian women who commit suicide bombing in an attempt to redeem their honour, as Western and Israeli media would suggest.

Sidney's translation of Cleopatra's dying speech suggests that a female authorial voice emerges from the shadow of her brother's voice. Female authors immortalise themselves

²⁹¹ Victor, *Army of Roses*, pp. 41, 45, 47; Anat Berko, *The Path to Paradise: the Inner World of Suicide Bombers and Their Dispatchers* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007), 147.

through the process of writing and creating authorial identities. As Williams has pointed out, Sidney has adopted ‘the present tense of Garnier’s directly phrased last lines “mon ame vomissant”, to a more lyrical and indirect future subjunctive, “forth my soul may flow”’²⁹²:

That in this office weak my limbs may grow,
Fainting on you, and forth my soul may flow. (5.207-08)

These lines highlight Cleopatra’s loyalty to Antonie, representing her death as an act of love. In this conjunction between love and death, the above mentioned lines suggest Sidney’s aspiration to mortality and immortality as well. The fact that female authorial identity emanates from the weak limbs of the body, the means of writing, suggests that Sidney uses her body to write so as to create her authorial identity and immortalise herself, as does Tuqan who writes her autobiography ‘to create something more permanent than the self’ (188).

Furthermore, the fact that woman’s soul ‘may flow’ from death suggests that Sidney constructs her independent literary authority after Philip Sidney’s death in a similar manner to that in which Tuqan’s literary independence emerges after Ibrahim’s death. As Findlay argues, ‘The power of female creativity grows out of the weak limbs, so that woman’s soul can flow forth from death, as Philip Sidney’s death had been the catalyst for Mary’s independent literary creativity’.²⁹³ Likewise, Tuqan’s independent authorial identity emerges after the death of her brother Ibrahim. As Fedwa Malti-Douglas says, ‘It is, in fact, the death of a male that permits the establishment of the birth of a female’.²⁹⁴ Tuqan’s claim to authorial identity is challenged when some people ascribe her early work to her brother Ibrahim. Tuqan

²⁹² Williams, ‘Translating’, p. 32.

²⁹³ Alison Findlay, ‘Women and Drama’, in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, edited by Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 499-512 (p. 506).

²⁹⁴ Malti-Douglas, ‘A Palestinian Female Voice’, p. 4.

tells the reader that the educated circle of female teachers in Nablus treated her with enmity and arrogance: ‘With the exception of Sitt Fakhriyyeh, that privileged female community of teachers was bent on hurting me and facing me with negative feelings which were reflected in the hostile arrogance with which they treated me’ (95). Tuqan suffered deeply at their repeated accusations that her brother Ibrahim wrote the poetry for her: ‘Their sharp tongues would repeat: “Her brother Ibrahim writes the poetry for her and puts her name at the end of it”’ (95). In her evolution from victimisation to self-assertion, Tuqan had to overcome social and cultural obstacles rooted in patriarchal expectations about herself as a woman and a poet. As Jayyusi says, Tuqan’s *A Mountainous Journey* ‘delineates, poignantly, the struggle of a gifted woman born into a very conservative society where women were kept in tragic isolation away from the male world of success, eminence and intellectual endeavour, but who succeeds in forging her way to fame despite unbelievable difficulties’.²⁹⁵ Tuqan achieves her creative self-assertion after the death of Ibrahim. As Jayyusi remarks, ‘[b]y 1960 she had become a renowned poet, standing completely on her own, and despite her brother Ibrahim’s lasting fame in Palestine and outside, her standing as a poet was quickly superseding his’.²⁹⁶ While Ibrahim taught Tuqan to write elegies, her autobiography signifies a break with the male poetic tradition to which Ibrahim introduced her. Tuqan silences all opposing voices over the course of her autobiography by narrating their deaths while she pushes her narrative forward without opposition to create her authorial identity.

Cleopatra’s control over narrative is illuminated in Sidney’s dramatisation of Cleopatra’s dying speech. The present tense of the verb ‘flow’ underlines Cleopatra’s agency in the moment of death, which, dramatically, is extended to an off-stage future. While Iphigenia’s and Mariam’s deaths are not staged, and their deaths are reported by messengers, Cleopatra ap-

²⁹⁵ Jayyusi, ‘Love and Pain’, p. viii.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., p. x.

pears on the stage, expressing her desire for suicide. Unlike Antonie's death, Cleopatra's is not described. While in other acts, the characters' speeches are followed by the Chorus's voices, as Gweno Williams has noticed, the final act 'significantly [...] is the only act which does not conclude with a chorus'.²⁹⁷ Cleopatra's unrestricted and unbound speech suggests the possibility of woman to express herself beyond the confines imposed upon her voice by patriarchal society. The appearance of Antonie's dead body in the final act signifies an inversion of gender roles (5.144-52); in Breitenberg's words, Antonie 'takes the feminine position of interpreted object rather than the masculine position of interpreting subject'.²⁹⁸ Antonie is playing the role of the dead corpse who can hear without affecting the course of action. Apart from the fact that Antonie's silence prompts Cleopatra's desire for death, Sidney presents him as a silent spectacle that Cleopatra interprets. In inverting gender roles of speaker and listener, Sidney (like Tuqan and Lumley) writes against the patriarchal construction of, attitudes towards, women.

Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*

Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613), the first known original play in English written by a woman, appropriates the story of Antony and Cleopatra and the transition from republic to monarchy focusing on the intersection of family and politics. Some critics, such as Beilin and Lewalski, interpret *Mariam* and the conflicting voices that the play enacts in relation to Cary's problematic marriage and her conversion to Catholicism, though it is important to recognise that the play precedes these.²⁹⁹ By contrast, I read Cary's *Mariam* (like Tuqan, Lumley and Sidney's texts) as Cary's way of constructing authorial identity. I contend that

²⁹⁷Williams, 'Translating', p. 32.

²⁹⁸Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 161.

²⁹⁹Beilin, *Redeeming*, p. 164; Barbara Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 186, 194.

Mariam (like *Othello*) is a tragedy of speaking and hearing. Cary uses the discourse of maternity to justify female figures' public voices that offer a critique of Herod's absolute authority. However, Cary suggests that in the tyrannical patriarchal society, women are set against each other. Cary dissociates Mariam's speech and listening from sexuality, presenting this association as a projection of Herod's evil mind. The link between Mariam's speech and sexual unruliness results from Mariam's resistance to performance and using deception. Following Nandra Perry, I argue that Mariam's outspokenness and defiance of Herod's tyranny link her to protestant martyrs and her transformation into a silent heroine in the end of the play associates her with Catholic martyrs. I read Mariam's silencing in martyrdom as a strategy on the part of Cary to liberate her heroine from the body, the cause of female circumscription. Furthermore, Mariam's silence is a powerful political force that purges Jerusalem of tyrannical voices.³⁰⁰ This subversive silence is illuminated in the figure of Graphina who stands for Cary's authorship of *The Tragedy of Mariam* which deconstructs the binary opposites of speech and silence. I investigate how Cary subverts the masculine construction of the deceptive and transgressive woman in the figure of Salome, whose sexual and political transgression is not contained.

Following the critical line of presentism, I think that Mariam's public speech and her disobedience of her husband can be read by my students as signs of sexual and political transgression, for she violates the prescribed virtues of silence and obedience. Salome's subversive adherence to the Chorus's insistence on females being silent and obedient to male figures

³⁰⁰*The Tragedy of Mariam* is preoccupied by the conflict between two Jewish lines of descent, proto-Christian virtuous ones, deriving from the pure line of David and epitomised in Mariam, and racially impure, inferior ones, enemies of Jesus and epitomised in Herod and Salome. Mariam stands as the embodiment of the Jewish nation and of the city of Jerusalem that Herod strives to control to consolidate his authority. While Cary suggests that Jerusalem shapes the play's racial, national and socio-political interactions, I am not dealing with place here in a thesis about speech and silence as I did this in my MA dissertation. Bilal Hamamra, 'The Negotiation between Bodies and Spirits in Early Modern Tragedies' (unpublished master's dissertation, Lancaster University, 2011), pp. 44-51.

subverts the Palestinian construction of female speech and silence and gives a point of focus to Palestinian women who can work within the traditional rules of Palestine to fulfil their desires. The power of Mariam's final speech interacts, through anachronism, with Palestinian female martyrs' powerful speeches before they perform their heroic acts of martyrdom. Herod's loss of his authority once Mariam is executed speaks to me as a Palestinian teacher of some Palestinian patriarchs who are threatened by female martyrs who undermine the traditional masculine construction of women as the cultural producers of Palestine and men as the protectors of Palestine. I read Graphina's voluntary silence which opens up a space for female subjectivity and patriarchal challenge alongside Tuqan's representation of silence as an active arena that enables her to write and defy her family's attempt to enclose her in the household and separate her from public interaction.

Cary employs the discourse of maternity to legitimise her female characters' voices. Cary's female characters, excluding Salome and Graphina, are mothers who unleash their pent-up voices in the absence of the men who wield authority over them. The rumour of Herod's silencing by Caesar's order nurtures male and female characters' desiring and subversive voices (1.4.57-58, 2.1.9-20). Alexandra's maternal curse of Herod's 'breathless trunk and spirit' (1.2.5) is a logical consequence of Herod's murder of her son and father. However, female figures' voices are opposed in the tyrannical society. For example, Doris, whom Herod divorced in favour of Mariam, ineffectively curses Mariam and her children rather than Herod (4.8.85-100). Similarly, Mariam verbally assaults Salome because of her race and its illegitimate access to patriarchal succession (1.3.25-32). Miller notes that 'Cary demonstrates the mutually destructive potential of female homosocial bonds in the face of masculine

oppression'.³⁰¹ Alexandra curses Herod within earshot of female listeners and commentators when she supposes that Herod is dead. However, as Salome says, Alexandra would not 'have given [her] tongue the rein / If noble Herod still remained in life' (1.3.13-14). Alexandra's assertion that Herod does not have a direct blood claim to the throne (1.2.6-12) demonstrates the possibility of woman's autonomy in Herod's absence. However, the women's destructively competitive voices betray the idea of a common, female agenda. Indeed, Herod's presence converts Alexandra into a pitiless mother who 'did upon her daughter loudly rail' (5.1.36) to win Herod's voice.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Alexandra's railing against Mariam to save her life and show obedience to Herod has present parallels with Tuqan's mother who is a major agent in Tuqan's oppression in her childhood. While Tuqan's mother was one of the first women to unveil in Nablus and a member of the women's committees, she was also forbidden from public demonstration by Tuqan's father, and subject to the same domestic seclusion as Tuqan, a seclusion that caused deep depression that she became complicit in Tuqan's oppression by unleashing her pent-up frustration against Tuqan through emotional, verbal and physical cruelty (22-23, 109). Tuqan tells the reader that 'Mother was not cruel by nature. She was extremely sensitive, as quickly moved to tears and sorrow as she was to fun, singing and laughter' (22). Tuqan says that 'the source of that hidden unhappiness was the social restraint and subjugation imposed on the women in our household' (22-23). In spite of historical differences, both Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* and Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* suggest that in an oppressive patriarchal society, the mothers unleash their oppression against their daughters so as to win male figures' favour.

³⁰¹ Naomi J. Miller, *Changing the Subject: Mary Wroth and Figurations of Gender in Early Modern England* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), p. 367.

Mariam's speech and behaviour define her integrity and self-definition. Mariam's marriage to Herod is a form of imprisonment (1.1.16, 3.3.33) that stifles her voice. In Herod's absence, she expresses her ambivalent thoughts and feelings in a soliloquy, a conventionally masculine form of discourse.³⁰² Cary justifies Mariam's speech because it discloses Herod's tyrannical tongue that has sentenced her brother and grandfather to death so as to secure his own authority (1.1.39-40, 1.2.14-15, 92-94, 3.2.20). Furthermore, Herod gives Sohemus orders that Mariam should be killed in the event of his death. The first line Mariam speaks — 'How oft have I with public voice run on' (1.1.1) — links women's 'public voice' with transgression 'run on' and 'censure' (1.1.2), which points to the anxiety Cary may have felt about writing in the face of social constrictions.³⁰³ Alexandra Bennett observes that '[t]he fact that a woman chooses to begin her play with her heroine musing upon the significance of public utterance is highly suggestive of the metadramatic possibilities of the text, the transgressive nature of both Mariam's and her creator's public words'.³⁰⁴ From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Mariam's acknowledgement of her transgressive speech and in extension Cary's anxiety over the authorship of this tragedy may provide my students especially those who are coming from rural areas a ground from which to scrutinise Palestinian antagonism to female speech and writing. Perhaps Cary accepted silence as a feminine ideal or felt constrained to comply with it, even while scripting her heroine to speak with 'public voice' (1.1.1) about affairs of state, expressing her love for Herod and her loyalty to her family (1.1.1-78).

Mariam's refusal to dissemble, verbally or physically, constructs her subjectivity, which resists Herod's definition of her as an 'object' that 'suffice[s]' his 'desire' (4.1.35) and fixes his

³⁰²See, Linda Bamber, *Comic Women, Tragic Men: A Study of Gender and Genre in Shakespeare* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), pp. 7-8.

³⁰³ Margaret W. Ferguson, 'Running On with Almost Public Voice: The Case of "E.C."', in *Tradition and the Talents of Women*, ed. by Florence Howe (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), pp. 37-67 (pp. 43, 46); Guttierrez, 'Valuing', p. 238; Beilin, *Redeeming*, p. 168; Quilligan, 'Staging', p. 230.

³⁰⁴ Alexandra Bennett, 'Female Performativity in *The Tragedy of Mariam*', *SEL*, 40.2 (2000), 293-309 (p. 298).

authority. When Mariam learns from Sohemus that Herod is still alive, she says that '[w]ith solemn vows I have forsworn his bed' (3.3.16), replacing the vows of marriage with her vows of divorce, which heralds her transition from being a subject to Herod to being a self-defining subject.³⁰⁵ As Findlay argues, Mariam 'refuses to construct herself as her husband's extension, asserting an identity independent, even contrary to his'.³⁰⁶ While Straznicky and Ferguson attribute Mariam's tragic fate to her resistance to dissemblance and flattery,³⁰⁷ Mariam's construction of a unified self is an act of dignity and a means of constructing her agency away from the female hypocrisy, like that of Salome, that the play condemns. The presence of a female voice and body articulating these lines suggests that Mariam is antitheatrical. In male-authored plays, female figures' bodies, because they are also the boy actors', will always remain performing bodies. However, Acheson has explained that women's drama displays a resistance to performance, an 'anti-theatricality' shared by female protagonists who refrains from performing and using deception and sexuality to gain power.³⁰⁸

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, my students may find a parallel in situations between Cary's dissociation of Mariam's public speech from lewdness and Tuqan's maintaining a 'veil' over her 'private affairs' (12). Tuqan shuns sex and sexuality from her autobiography and poetry, for sexuality is a taboo subject in contemporary Palestine. As Jayyusi notes, 'The bold bravado and loud audacity of some later women writers in Arab speaking about sexuality and love could never be shared by her'.³⁰⁹ Dalya Abudi notes that Tuqan's A

³⁰⁵ Clarke, *Politics*, p. 96.

³⁰⁶ Findlay, *Perspective*, p. 155.

³⁰⁷ Marta Straznicky, "'Profane Stoical Paradoxes': *The Tragedie of Mariam* and Sidnean Closet Drama", *ELR*, 24.1 (1994), 104-34 (p.127); Margaret W. Ferguson, 'Allegories of Subjection: Literacy as Equivocation in Elizabeth Cary's *Tragedy of Mariam*', in *Dido's Daughters: Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 265-332 (p. 295).

³⁰⁸ Acheson, 'Anti-theatricality', p. 8.

³⁰⁹ Jayyusi, 'Love and Pain', p. xii.

Mountainous Journey ‘exclude[s] references to sex and sexuality’.³¹⁰ I think that many Palestinian Scholars of English may recognise that female authors dissociate themselves and their heroines from sexual looseness and avoid sexuality in their writing to legitimise their speech and writing in cultures antagonistic to female self-expression. Herod’s claim that Mariam’s ‘mouth will ope to every stranger’s ear’ (4.7.78) means that she will speak to anyone (4.7.78-82). Commenting on this line, Ferguson notes, ‘[t]he image of a female mouth promiscuously opening to a male ear rewrites Mariam’s fault as one of double excess or “openness”, whereas what the play actually shows is that Mariam’s verbal openness is a sign of sexual closure’.³¹¹ Although Sohemus says that ‘unbridled speech is Mariam’s worst disgrace’ (3.3.65), he exalts her ‘so pure heart’ (3.3.90) and describes her as a ‘[p]oor guiltless queen’ (3.3.63) of ‘grave majesty’ (3.3.91). The Nuntio’s lament that with her die ‘beauty, chastity and wit’ (5.1.4) suggests that she is both vocal and modest. While Constabarus identifies the whole female sex with Eve (4.6.37-72), he associates Mariam with ‘grace’ (4.6.34) and with the Virgin Mary, and so spares her from his incriminations against the ‘wavering crew’ (4.6.33) of postlapsarian women (4.6.34-35).

Like Sidney, Cary characterises Mariam as ‘princely’ to legitimise her public speech as Queen (5.1.49). Moreover, while Sidney dissociates Cleopatra’s speech from lewdness and represents her as a model of virtuous womanhood, Cary deploys a defamatory image of Cleopatra to sanction Mariam, commenting critically upon Sidney’s representation of extra-marital love, which leads Egyptians to subjugation. Furthermore, while Salome claims that ‘Mariam hopes to have another king’ (1.3.3), Cary asserts Mariam’s sexual and political fidelity by placing her in contrast to Cleopatra, who exchanges sexual for political favours

³¹⁰ Dalya Abudi, *Mothers and Daughters in Arab Women’s Literature: The Family Frontier* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 92.

³¹¹ Margaret Ferguson, ‘The Spectre of Resistance: *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613)’, in *Readings in Renaissance Women’s Drama: Criticism, History, and Performance 1594-1998*, ed. by S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 182-93 (p. 188).

(1.2.121-24). Bloom, paraphrasing Paster's argument, says that 'views of women's natural lack of bodily control helped justify early modern gender hierarchies' and the necessity of women to listen to male figures of authority because they 'cannot control their own speech'.³¹² However, Mariam's constancy dissociates her speech from sexual availability. Her autonomous speech is a response to Herod's murderous actions rather than a sign for her adulterous relationship with Sohemus.

The Chorus's criticism of Mariam's public speech and her defiance of her husband's authority parallel the situation in contemporary Palestine where wives should subsume their identities to those of their husbands. The Chorus, who speak with one voice but offer contradictory opinions, may represent the voice of early modern England, criticising women's speech and listening. Bell notes that the Chorus 'speaks for society at large, subjecting individual characters to the prevailing ideology' and that 'we can infer that it is made up of men who feel that they and their male peers have the right to control their wives, body and mind'.³¹³ While the female Chorus in Lumley's *Iphigenia* criticise male figures' voices, Cary's Chorus reiterate the dictates of the conduct literature by condemning female public speech. They equate Mariam's speech with unbridled sexuality (3.3.1-6), asserting that wives are the property of their husbands, body and mind so that 'their thoughts no more can be their own / And therefore should to none but one be known' (3.3.23-24). The Chorus's criticism of Mariam's public speech and her assertion of independent identity affirm the Palestinian traditional construction of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence. Many Palestinian women who speak in public are accused of being whores and are blamed for the verbal and physical violence unleashed against them, as the Palestinian Women's Affairs Technical

³¹² Bloom, *Voice*, p. 11.

³¹³ Ilona Bell, 'Private Lyrics in Elizabeth Cary's *Tragedy of Mariam*', in *The Literary Career and Legacy of Elizabeth Cary, 1613-1680*, ed. by Heather Wolfe (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 17-34 (p. 30).

Committee notes.³¹⁴ Palestinian Christian and Muslim women ‘are socialized with the same norms about their bodies, their honor, and modesty as Muslim girls. They too move directly from the control of their natal family to the control of their husbands and in-laws without any opportunity for independence’.³¹⁵ A housewife from a village in Ramallah asserts that ‘*I think that women have to understand their husbands and obey them in all cases. (...) You have to know how to deal with [your husband] to avoid his anger*’ (original emphasis).³¹⁶ Therefore, from the perspective of Palestinian traditional readers, I think that Mariam’s public speech and her disobedience of her husband can be read as signs of sexual and political transgression, for she defies the prescribed advice for wives that is to curtail their tongues.

However, Cary subverts the Chorus’s ideology on female speech and listening; indeed, the Chorus end by naming her ‘guiltless Mariam’ (5.1.14). Cary challenges the Chorus’s assertion that Mariam wishes Herod dead because of her desire for sexual ‘variety’ (1.6.25-26). Mariam keeps her chastity and constancy despite Herod’s tyranny (1.1.27-28). The Chorus’s claim that Mariam’s tragedy would have been thwarted had she spoken to none but to her husband (4.8.31-36) is problematised. What causes Mariam’s death is her private speech to Herod, yet this is the kind of speech that the Chorus allow.³¹⁷ Thus, the pronoun ‘one’ in the Chorus’s speech (‘none but one’) refers to the wife, in that she ‘would be wiser to keep them (such thoughts) to herself, precisely because in marriage they are no longer her own’.³¹⁸ Belsey describes the Chorus’s admonition of Mariam’s speech and listening as a complete renunciation of the ‘wife’s right to speak,’ while Findlay asserts that it ‘dramatizes the wife’s

³¹⁴Women’s Affairs Technical Committee, ‘Facts on Violence against Women in Palestine’ (2012) <<http://www.watcpal.org/press/facts-violence-against-women-palestine>> [accessed 10 June 2014].

³¹⁵Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women*, p. 93.

³¹⁶Stephanie Chaban, Reema Daraghme and Garance Stettler, *Palestinian Women and Security: Why Palestinian Women and Girls Do Not Feel Secure* (Switzerland, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2010), p. 33.

³¹⁷Belsey, *Subject*, p. 173.

³¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 173-74.

imprisonment in the family’.³¹⁹ The Chorus’s rationalisation that wives seem as others think they are is manifested in the ever-listening, never chaste Salome who survives by keeping her thoughts to ‘none but [herself]’ (3.3.24) as the Chorus’s speech implies.

From a Palestinian context of reading, the contradictory nature of the Chorus who asserts that wives should submit their voices to their husbands and that women should keep their thoughts to themselves dramatises a need on the part of Palestinian women to deploy deception so as to fulfil their ambitions. Palestinian traditions deprive women of the right to speak in public and emphasise their place within the household. Those who step out of the house and speak in public are subject to verbal and domestic violence and murder in the cause of honour killing. Salome’s determination to divorce Constabarus and her conversation and adultery with Silleus as I will discuss below would be read as subversive by my students. However, her apparent submission to Herod’s authority while overtly plotting against Mariam dramatises a need to work within the traditional rules of Palestinian culture on the part of women who can, thereby, fulfil their desires.

The play deconstructs the association between female listening and sexual openness through the figure of Mariam. Constabarus berates Salome for conversing privately with Silleus (1.6.1-3), foreshadowing the Chorus’s claim that Mariam loses her chastity as she opens her ears to Sohemus’s speech (3.3.12-15, 33-34). Reina Green argues that Herod and others condemn Mariam not for her ‘unbridled speech’ but for listening to men other than her husband, an act Herod perceives as proof of her adulterous affair with Sohemus.³²⁰ The openness of Mariam’s ears leads to Bloom’s assertion that ‘for the gentlewoman, aural generosity com-

³¹⁹Belsey, *Subject*, p. 171; Findlay, *Perspective*, p. 152.

³²⁰Reina Green, “‘Ears Prejudicate” in *Mariam* and *Duchess of Malfi*, *SEL*, 43.2 (2003), 459-74 (p. 463).

promises honor'³²¹ in spite of her innocence (4.8.37, 43-44). While Mariam's refusal to listen to Herod's speech silences Herod (4.3.53), his refusal to listen to her protestations of innocence (4.4.35-36) causes tragedy. Herod will not listen to Mariam's voice, which he believes is tainted by her listening to Sohemus, whom Herod silences (4.4.14, 72-73). However, Herod's deafness to Mariam's voice is due to the fact that his own ears are tainted by Salome's voice, the way that Othello's ears are tarnished by Iago's speech.

The Tragedy of Mariam is what Showalter calls a "double-voiced discourse" that always embodies the social, literary, and cultural heritages of both the muted and the dominant'.³²² While Cary depicts similarities between Salome and Mariam in breaking their silence, she employs the conventional discourse that associates woman's speech with licentiousness in the figure of Salome and deconstructs this equation in the figure of Mariam. Salome consciously uses her sexuality to establish a speaking position, telling the audience that her sexual looseness is a text that is 'written on my tainted brow' (1.4.23). She personifies the 'adulterous, murderous, and cunning' (4.6.56) woman. Salome's speech suggests that all relationships are constructed and thus open for manipulation by the individual. She employs her 'wits' (1.4.36) against 'the principles of Moses' laws' (1.4.39) to 'divorce' Constabarus (1.4.57). Because of the continuity between gender and role, Salome's multifaceted image constitutes a fluid sense of female agency that can modify speech and behaviour to fulfil her sexual and murderous desires. Salome (like Iago) is a verbal chameleon who knows how to speak. While she defies Constabarus's voice, she keeps the veneer of verbal subjection to Herod. She instructs Pheroras to speak with Herod about Constabarus's alleged betrayal, aware that words 'from [her] mouth would lesser credit find' (3.2.50). While her divorce from Constabarus to get married to Silleus is prompted by her sexual desire, she is able to use his disobedience to blackmail

³²¹ Bloom, *Voice*, p. 115.

³²² Elaine Showalter, 'Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness', in *The New Feminist Criticism*, ed. by Elaine Showalter (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), pp. 243-70 (p. 263).

him (3.2.37-40). Belsey claims that Cary ‘admits no sympathy with’ Salome³²³ by showing that her inversion of gender roles shatters the divinely constructed world (1.6.47-58). However, Salome’s soliloquy – shocking as it would have been to those with conventional ideas about marriage – may have appealed to some spectators precisely because of its subversive character. Significantly, unlike the transgressive female characters of the public stage, Salome is not punished for her verbal and sexual transgression. Cary, therefore, creates a controversial but dramatically appealing image of women’s success in the patriarchal order.

This double voiced discourse of speech and silence that *The Tragedy of Mariam* dramatises has present implications for readers in contemporary Palestine where the outspoken woman is accused of sexual looseness and the silent one is deemed chaste and obedient. Palestinian women are ordered to ‘remain silent to protect their families’ reputations and “honor”³²⁴. A university student from Jenin asserts that

*When her brother learned that she was talking to this man, he brutally beat her. (...) He also tore all her books apart and forbid her to go back to college. She is not allowed to leave the house. She has a strong personality, but what happened to her is beyond reason (original emphasis).*³²⁵

While silence is figured as a sign of virtue and chastity, female speech is perceived as a sign of sexual openness even though the World Wide Web has broadened the possibilities for public self-expression. For example, Aya Baradiya from Hebron and another lady from Dheisheh were killed in the cause of honour killing because they called and received calls from men.

³²³Belsey, *Subject*, p. 175.

³²⁴Hannah Bought-Brooks, Salwa Duaibis, Soraida Hussein, ‘Palestinian Women: Caught in the Cross Fire between Occupation and Patriarchy’, *FF*, 22.3 (2010), 124-145 (p. 128).

³²⁵Chaban et al, *Palestinian Women and Security*, p. 34.

While both ladies were mourned as innocent, ‘young women were still barred from using the telephone and often from leaving their homes’.³²⁶ Cary’s Mariam and these Palestinian examples which deconstruct the association between female oral and aural openness and wantonness and the association of Salome’s silence with sexual looseness subvert the Palestinian conventional construction of the binary opposites of speech and silence.

Salome’s tongue is a type of a venomous serpent. She contaminates her listeners the same way that the biblical Serpent contaminates Eve’s ears and Eve’s tongue infects Adam’s ears. Constabarus asserts that Salome’s mouth is ‘serpent-like’ and ‘like a serpent, poisons where it kisses’ (2.4.49-50). Green notes that ‘Constabarus quite rightly notes the insidious nature of Salome’s venom, for it is not found in what she says, but rather in how she listens, as is demonstrated when Herod struggles with the idea of Mariam’s execution’.³²⁷ While Constabarus can see through Salome’s deceptive and destructive voice (2.4.29-50), Silleus, the courtly lover and chivalric knight who fights for her, cannot (2.4.13-16, 25-28). Salome (like Aaron, Iago and Bosola) is an active listener who manipulates what she hears in order to promote the idea of Mariam’s sin and enact her own revenge.³²⁸ She uses misogynist discourse to turn Herod’s praise of Mariam’s beautiful hair into a symbol of entrapping deceit: ‘[s]he lays them out for nets / To catch the hearts that do not shun a bait’ (4.7.61-62). Salome’s line resonates with Joseph Swetnam’s misogynistic generalisation that women ‘lay out the folds of their hair to entangle men into their love’.³²⁹ While Othello projects his otherness onto the otherness of the boy actor impersonating Desdemona, Mariam’s beauty (5.1.65, 149-52) that dis-

³²⁶ Penny Johnson, ‘Unmarried in Palestine: Embodiment and (dis) Empowerment in the Lives of Single Palestinian Women’, *IDS Bulletin*, 41.2 (2010), 106-115 (p. 108).

³²⁷ Green, ‘Prejudicate’, p. 465.

³²⁸ Findlay, *Perspective*, p. 79.

³²⁹ Joseph Swetnam, *The Arraignment of Lewde, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women* (1615), in *Half Human-kind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640*, ed. by Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), pp. 189-216 (p. 201).

sociates her speech from wantonness expresses inner perfection, for she is not a reflection of the otherness of the boy actor.

Herod's perception of Mariam's duplicity is expressed through his apprehension of the rift between Mariam's seeming and being (4.4.20, 32-33, 45-46), which simultaneously affects his perception of the relationship between Mariam's speech and her supposed adultery. Herod perceives Mariam's protestations of innocence as a sign of her licentiousness, for he projects onto Mariam the conventional association between female speech and sexuality that Salome breathes into his ears. When Herod asserts, 'I'm glad that she for innocent is *known*' (4.7.56, my italics), Salome claims that Mariam's 'beauteous language' (4.7.73) 'allure(s) the auditors to sin' (4.7.75) and Herod agrees, 'tis so. She's unchaste' (4.7.77-78). From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Herod's aural openness to Salome's insinuations can be read as a comment on the Palestinian destructive practice of gossip that may lead to killing the accused women of sexual transgression.³³⁰ As the act of listening shifts authority to Salome, she exchanges roles with Herod and demands an answer from him concerning the means of Mariam's death. 'Why, let my love be slain' (4.7.29), says Herod. In a reflexive response, Salome carries his command to the executioner (4.7.42). While Herod affirms that his 'word, though not [his] sword, made Mariam bleed' (5.1.189), he curses Salome's voice (5.1.157-58), making it clear that his aural openness to her voice leads to his loss of authority and control. He cannot control his murderous speech, which Salome hears.

From a presentist, Palestinian context of reading, Salome's outspokenness and villainy challenges traditional conduct and prejudices for my students, for she is confining her speech in the domestic sphere and allying her speech with that of powerful male figures like Herod to

³³⁰Sharif Kanaana, 'The Arab Ear and the American Eye: A Study of the Role of the Senses in Culture', trans. by Ibrahim Muhawi, CA, 4 (2005), 29-45 (p. 41).

fulfil her sexual desires. However, for scholars of English at An-Najah University where transgressive girls are perceived as prototype feminists, I think that though Salome commits adultery, her claim for equality to men and her criticism of the inequality in Mosaic Law (1.4.45-50) might nevertheless appear to my students as a very feminist assertion. Salome's speech and silence that show the way to freedom's door in a tyrannical patriarchal society may provide my students a ground to scrutinize Tuqan's depiction of her struggle against familial oppression and discrimination in spite of historical and ideological differences. Su'ad Qaraman argues that Tuqan is the first woman 'to express frankly and truthfully the problems of the Arab women. Arab women before had only referred to such problems symbolically and by means of allusion. Tuqan said everything openly and in an exquisitely sweet style'.³³¹ Furthermore, it could be argued that Tuqan, in her deployment of the veneer of obedience and silence to find her poetic voice in a culture that perpetuates the oppression of women, clears the way for other women who may undertake their own mountainous journeys towards self-discovery. Ironically, Salome is making a similar claim nearly 400 years earlier apart from the fact that Salome is a villain who achieves freedom through murderous and sexual means while Tuqan fulfils her independence from the masculine construction of gender roles through the non-violent means of writing.

From a presentist, Palestinian perspective, Graphina's silence subverts the Palestinian association of female silence with obedience and content. Despite historical and ideological differences, Graphina's silence and that of Tuqan are subversive sites of plotting and subjective spaces of writing. Cary's deconstruction of the speech-silence binary is embellished by the figure of Graphina. As 'the only character whose name is not found in Josephus's text or in Lodge's translation of it' Graphina, whom Pheroras marries against Herod's orders, and the

³³¹Quoted in Miriam Cooke, *Women and the War Story* (California: University of California Press, 1996), p. 194.

‘strange little scene’³³² in which she appears are full of meanings on dramatic and biographical levels. On a dramatic level, Graphina’s silence is troubling and problematic. Most critics thus read Graphina as an embodiment of the early modern ideal of feminine silence.³³³ However, Pheroras asks the silent Graphina, ‘[w]hy speaks thou not, fair creature? Move thy tongue, / For silence is a sign of discontent’ (2.1.41-42) which echoes Herod’s reading of Mariam’s silence as an expression of ‘discontent’ that is beyond his rhetorical control (4.3.10). I think that Pheroras’s reading of Graphina’s silence as a sign of discontent goes against the conventional Palestinian patriarchal construction of female silence as a sign of content. Graphina escapes the Chorus’s critical voice, for she is an undecipherable and unknowable text. I think that Graphina’s silence may offer my students a ground to destabilise the Palestinian constructions of silence as a sign of powerlessness and weakness. In Tuqan’s response to the discrimination she suffered from in her household, she represents silence as a sign of ‘hate and aversion,’ emotions that ‘were assuming huge proportions in the depths of my soul, like a satanic tree’ (79). The silences of Graphina and Tuqan show that silence is a subjective space that enables women to challenge masculine authority, protect and express their thoughts in writing. Graphina’s silence which stands for Cary’s authorship of *The Tragedy of Mariam* is similar to Tuqan’s representation of silence as an ‘aesthetic genius that bespeaks a thousand thoughts and emotions’ (181). While Tuqan was deprived of her right to express her thoughts and ideas, she deploys silence and retreats into the private sphere of reading and writing which signals her journey of self-discovery and self-definition as an eminent figure in Arab literature.

³³²Ferguson, ‘Running’, p. 47.

³³³Beilin, *Redeeming*, p. 169; Lewalski, *Writing Women*, p. 196; Dymphna Callaghan, ‘Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary’s *The Tragedie of Mariam, Faire Queen of Jewry*’, in *Women, ‘Race’, and Writing in the Early Modern Period* ed. by Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 163-77 (p. 177).

Graphina's speech is problematic, signifying a female agency that lies beyond the linguistic control of male figures. Graphina wins Pheroras's adoration because of her speech (3.1.15-18). Pheroras prefers her to the bride Herod had chosen for him because that 'baby' has an '[i]nfant tongue' which cannot '[h]er name distinguish to another's ear' (2.1.16-18). In response to Pheroras's request that she speak, her articulation of the words 'silence' and 'silent' four times within a 28-line speech is a gesture of defiance rather than acquiescence.³³⁴ She criticises Pheroras's role as a listener and a speaker, asking him to '[m]istake [her] not' (2.1.45). Indeed, Pheroras 'never studied eloquence' (3.2.47). Graphina's active interpretation of his speech shows that she is an active listener (3.1.25-28) who constructs herself as a signifying text beyond masculine interpretation. While on the public stage female characters' voices are silenced, Graphina's voluntary silence, which Pheroras reads as 'a sign of discontent' (2.1.42), conceals uncontrollable speech that ranges from desire, to fear, to contemplation (2.1.46, 49-50, 53). Graphina's request, '[t]hen be my cause for silence justly weighed' (2.1.68), suggests that her speech is an expression of resistance (2.1.61-63) and her silence is a strategy of maintaining a hegemonic self. In response to her troubling speech, Pheroras desires that Graphina 'need only smile' (2.1.73), foretelling Herod's request, 'smile, my dearest Mariam, do but smile' (4.3.57) when Mariam's speech does not reflect his superiority. Pheroras demands a smile from Graphina, whose speech and silence foreshadow Mariam's subversive disembodied voice and uncontrollable silence (5.1.52, 84). For scholars of English at An-Najah University, Mariam's powerful disembodied voice has immediate resonance with the disembodied voices of Palestinian female martyrs. While Palestinian women's voices are condemned, their speeches before their acts of suicide bombing and their silences in martyrdom transform them into a capricious sign of political resonance and it becomes a heroic expression of the Palestinian collective desire for resistance, freedom and independence.

³³⁴ Miranda Garo Nesler, 'Closeted Authority in *The Tragedy of Mariam*', *SEL*, 52.2 (2012), 363-85 (p. 374).

Mariam's disembodied voice (5.1.24) and Palestinian martyrs' speeches conceive a female agency that undermines Herod's and Palestinian male figures' control and their fantasy to reduce female figures to contaminated physical bodies. While Mariam and Palestinian women find difficulty in finding a public speech because this exposes them to gossip and to a misconceived relation between their speech and sexuality, the power of Palestinian female martyrs' speeches before they carry out their acts of martyrdom is similar to Mariam's speech before execution. My students may find a similarity in situations between Mariam's articulation of one line in the messenger's whole narration – '[t]ell thou my lord thou saw'st me lose my breath' (5.1.73-74) – and Palestinian female martyrs' videotapes and speeches before they commit their acts of martyrdom. Gregg Zoroya notes that Andaleeb Takatka employs religious discourse as a motivation of her heroic acts: "I am prepared to sacrifice my life for the cause. This (bombing mission) is the highest level of Jihad (holy war), and I hope God will give me the honour of doing it."³³⁵ Mariam's dying speech and that of female martyrs suggest that these embodied speeches are acts of virtuous assertion, suggesting the subordination of the body to religious and national cause.

Mariam is described in political terms as 'noble Mariam' (5.1.46) and 'princely daughter' (5.1.49) who resigned herself to death 'not debased by fear' (5.1.26). Her death (like that of Iphigenia, Cleopatra and Palestinian female martyrs) verifies her subjectivity and the moral ground upon which it is based. While Herod associates Mariam's speech with sexual looseness, it is her silence that undermines his authority and devastates his subjectivity. Like Webster's Ferdinand, Herod believes that in killing Mariam and imposing silence on her, he can eliminate her challenging subjectivity and fix his own position (4.4.66-68). Having silenced

³³⁵ Quoted in Lucy Frazier, 'Abandon Weeping for Weapons: Palestinian female Suicide Bombers' (2002) <<http://www.nyu.edu/classes/keefefer/joe/frazier.html>> [accessed: 31 August 2015].

Mariam, Herod commands the Nuntio to feed his ears with Mariam's speech (5.1.65-66, 72), which sustains Herod's authority. Herod's doubt of who is being addressed (5.1.68) by Mariam's words – '[t]ell thou my lord thou saw'st me lose my breath' (5.1.73-74) – suggests the loss of his position as a ruler and his authority over her speech. This interpretation is substantiated by Herod's grief and lament, which reinforce his feminisation and his inability to signify except in relation to Mariam's voice. As the Duchess's silence elicits the Cardinal's and Ferdinand's self-condemnation and their confession that their association of the Duchess's voice with lust is flawed, Mariam's silence in death elicits Herod's words of self-condemnation and realisation that he had Mariam killed unjustly (5.1.76, 149, 187-88).

Herod loses his authority and 'doth [...] strangely, lunaticly rave' (5.1.29). From a Palestinian context of reading, I think that Herod's loss of his authority has parallels with some Palestinian patriarchs who are threatened by female martyrs. Ahmad Yassin (1936-2004), the founder of Hamas movement, declared that women's place is the house and that their bodies are 'primarily maternal, sheltering, grieving, and suffering', as Hasso notes.³³⁶ Ahmad Yassin states that 'The woman is the second defense line in the resistance to the occupation. She shelters the fugitive, loses the son, husband, and brother, bears the consequences of this, and faces starvation and blockade'.³³⁷ Some Palestinian women challenge the masculinity of the political domain espoused by Yassin in their participation in the political domain through their acts of martyrdom that repudiates the patriarchal norms of womanhood. Dareen Abu Aisheh challenged Yassin's argument insisting in her martyr videotape that women's roles 'will not only be confined to weeping over a son, brother, or husband instead, she will be-

³³⁶ Hasso, 'Discursive and Political Deployments', p. 31.

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 31.

come a martyr herself'.³³⁸ For students of English at An-Najah University, Herod's loss of authority once Mariam is sacrificed may offer them a point of focus to the phenomenon of Palestinian female martyrs who destabilize the possibilities for hegemonic patriarchs. Herod's madness suggests that he (like Ferdinand) occupies a subservient position within the very patriarchal structure that he seeks to sustain, and his value exists at a corporeal level. In withdrawing to the domestic sphere, Herod excludes himself from the discourse of the rational and political realm. His confinement implies a claustrophobic selfhood with its impossibility of communication (5.1.247-48). Herod is, arguably, silenced by the refusal or inability of others to hear him. Mariam's powerful silence summons the citizens' active resistance in the public sphere of Jerusalem to resist Herod's tyrannical authority (5.1.173-78).

Mariam's disembodied voice replicates the representation of female voices on the public stage, where female bodies are absent and boy actors impersonate their voices. Herod realises that Mariam is a 'pure unspotted ghost' (5.1.115) when she loses her ability to speak. Her innocence emerges from the Nuntio's reproduction of her voice. Unlike the Duchess of Malfi's disembodied voice, which speaks itself without interlocutor or speaker, Mariam, who in the words of Jennifer L. Heller 'becomes a narrative cut from her body', assigns a body to carry her voice.³³⁹ Ulrike Tancke claims that 'Mariam's subjectivity is effectively cancelled out' as 'she is merely spoken about by the male messenger who reports her death'.³⁴⁰ However, Mariam's mediated voice is an act of autonomy as she 'picked [the Nuntio] out from all the crew' (5.1.60), 'usurp[ing]' Herod's 'right' to represent her (5.1.29). The Nuntio (very much like the boy actors) is the mouthpiece of the truthful and authoritative female voice. Mariam

³³⁸Roja Fazaeli, 'Martyred Women and Humiliated Men', in *Exploring Masculinities: Feminist Legal Theory Reflections*, ed. by Martha Albertson Fineman and Michael Thomson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 39-54 (p. 45).

³³⁹Jennifer L. Heller, 'Space, Violence, and Bodies in Middleton and Cary', *SEL*, 45.2 (2005), 425-41 (p. 436).

³⁴⁰Ulrike Tancke, 'Bethinke Thy Selfe' in *Early Modern England: Writing Women's Identities* (Amsterdam: New York, 2010), p. 135.

enters the speaking body of the Nuntio, confusing subject and object positions and the relationship between speaker and words. The words are Mariam's, while the tongue is the Nuntio's.

Graphina's silence suggests that Mariam's death / silence is pivotal to Cary's construction of authorial identity. Death drives women to the writing 'from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies'.³⁴¹ Mariam's death (like Iphigenia's and Cleopatra's) cleanses Mariam's speech and Cary's writing from the contamination of sexuality inherent in female speech and authorship.³⁴² The erasure of the body, the cause of social constraints, enables Cary to bypass the scrutiny to which women were subject as speakers and as writers. In her discussion of the discourses of protestant and Catholic martyrs, Nanda Perry argues that bold speech is a feature of protestant martyrs while silence is a sign of Catholic martyrs. In this sense, Mariam's outspokenness and her defiance of Herod connect her to the Protestant heroes and heroines of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563), as Perry notes.³⁴³ Perry points out that 'Indeed, thanks in part to Foxe, bold speech was such a recognizable element of Protestant martyrology that English Catholics point to it as one of the chief distinctions between true (Catholic) and false (Protestant) martyrs'.³⁴⁴ While Mariam's outspokenness makes her anti-heroine and links her to protestant martyrs, it is her silence that makes her a heroine and redeems her. Perry remarks that Mariam has transformed 'from a willful (talkative) anti-heroine into a stoical (silent) heroine'.³⁴⁵ Cary subverts the patriarchal paradigm of the relationship between female speech / text and body and male speech / text and soul, instead asso-

³⁴¹ Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', trans. by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, *Signs*, 1.4 (1976), 875-93 (p. 875).

³⁴² Beilin, *Redeeming*, p. 175; Betty Travitsky, 'The *Feme Covert* in Elizabeth Cary's *Mariam*', in *Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. by Carole Levin and Jeanie Watson (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987) pp. 184-96 (p. 186).

³⁴³ Nandra Perry, 'The Sound of Silence: Elizabeth Cary and the Christian Hero', *ELR* 38.1 (2008), 106-141 (pp. 123-24).

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-24.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

ciating Mariam's speech with the tongue of the spirit and Herod's with the tongue of the flesh (5.1.133-34). Cary suggests that Mariam's death redeems womanhood as Christ's sacrifice redeems humanity.³⁴⁶ Cary replaces the conventional image of the dangerous, tempting, eloquent female as represented by Eve and Salome, the women of the Old Testament, by the vocal and chaste woman symbolised by the New Testament woman Mary. In associating Mariam with Christian discourse, and more specifically with a feminised Old Testament through the figure of Sarah, Cary undoes the allegedly spiritual superiority of man over woman and warns against hearing 'a tale with ears prejudicate' (2.4.1). She exposes the lies of Herod and of any other reader / listener who misreads or suppresses the text / voice of a virtuous woman. The association of Mariam with Christian discourse may offer Palestinian scholars of English who are studying, reading or watching the play in contemporary Palestine a ground from which to consider that Tuqan and some Palestinian women create their legitimate authorial identities through writing and martyrdom. The death of Mariam, Palestinian female martyrs and the representation of writing as a process of self-negation in the case of Tuqan suggest that female political agency and authorial identities require that female figures remove their bodies in order to serve a higher political and spiritual purpose.

Female authors' dramas are playing spaces in which it is possible to subvert gender roles and masculine constructions of speech and silence. Female authors use the discourses of domesticity, motherhood, marriage and death to justify and legitimise their writings and their heroines' voices. They associate female figures' speech with truth and dramatic authority, which exposes male figures' villainous, treacherous and murderous voices. Their performable plays challenge the cultural assumption that the male-authored female voice in drama is the exclusive cultural form of female expression. As the identities of characters are fashioned in the act

³⁴⁶Beilin, *Redeeming*, pp. 171, 175.

of performance, the continuity between role and character allows female authors to dismantle the theory which held that women were inferior to men theologically, intellectually, physiologically and psychologically. While Webster employs these discourses to dissociate the Duchess of Malfi's voice from lewdness, female dramatists' use of these discourses is more subversive because of the continuity between writer, character and actor.

Following the methodology of presentism, I have argued that early modern female-authored texts chosen here have present implications for readers in contemporary Palestine. I used Fadwa Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* (1978), the Palestinian construction of gender roles via the binary opposites of speech and silence, and the publicity surrounding Palestinian female martyrs as presentist intertexts to read Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia at Aulis* (1555), Sidney's *The Tragedie of Antonie* (1595), and Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam* (1613). This presentist, Palestinian context of reading reveals that female-authored texts entangle the domestic and public spheres, showing that the domestic violence and the circumscription of the female voice are a result of male figures' loss of physical and vocal authority in the public sphere. I have shown that Lumley's association of male figures' voices with hypocrisy and deceit enacts a dialogue with Tuqan's criticism of male figures' hypocritical and deceptive voices. In *Iphigenia* and contemporary Palestine, religion and nationalism are the arenas for women's emancipation from the convention of gender roles. In both the fictional world of *Iphigenia* and contemporary Palestine, sacrifice enables women to assume a public voice, for it involves ultimately silencing women's voices and their escape from the body, the cause of social constraints. The Chorus's complicity with, Clytemnestra's opposition to, Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia has a chilling parallel with Palestinian women's congratulatory acceptance of, opposition to, their children's acts of martyrdom. I demonstrated that both Tuqan's and Sidney's literary relationships with their brothers demonstrate the threshold of their

journey towards constructing literary voices that emerge from the shadows of their brothers' voices. I have argued that Tuqan's political interventions through the medium of writing bear similarities to Cleopatra's rhetorical skills. Cleopatra's suicide which contradicts Palestinian women's acts of martyrdom endorses Israeli and Western feminists who assert that Palestinian women commit suicide to redeem their tainted honour. In contemporary Palestine and early modern England as revealed in Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey* and Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*, mothers are set against their daughters to win the favour of male figures of authority. The dissociation of Mariam's public voice from sexuality and the association of Salome's silence and guarded speech with licentiousness subvert the Palestinian association of female speech with wantonness and female silence with chastity and obedience. Herod's loss of his authority once Mariam is executed may allude to Palestinian female martyrs' challenge of hegemonic patriarchy.

Conclusion

Silence, Speech and Gender in Early Modern Drama: A Presentist, Palestinian Perspective has offered readings of the contested sites of silence, speech, hearing and gender in early modern drama from the perspective of readers in contemporary Palestine in which I live and teach. This thesis has deployed the critical lines of new historicism, feminism, psychoanalysis and presentism to interrogate the masculine construction of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence in both early modern England and contemporary Palestine.

My historicist approach to the early modern texts and the contexts of early modern England has drawn on early feminist approaches by critics such as Karen Newman, Peter Stallybrass and Catherine Belsey who have shown how early modern gender ideology associated women's speech and writing with sexual looseness. The thesis has departed from new historicist readings that would argue that the dominant male powers deliberately foster the subversive behaviour of others in order to crush it publicly and so assert their dominance. Instead, I have drawn on feminism, performance studies and psychoanalysis to argue that subversion is maintained as a challenge to the prevalent power structures in early modern dramatic texts. Furthermore, my presentist approach, using intertexts from contemporary Palestine, including the context of my own teaching, has helped me to offer an additional critical perspective which challenges traditional Western and traditional Palestinian perceptions of gender via the binary opposites of speech and silence.

Following the feminist studies of Findlay, Luckyj, Bloom, Callaghan and Butler and the critical line of presentism, my thesis has revealed that Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello*, Webster's *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*, and Middleton's *The Change-*

ling and *Women Beware Women* are critiques of the dominant ideology based on highly artificial and fragile binary opposites of male and female, speech and silence. While Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* endorses the association between female speech and sexual looseness, possibly in connection with cultural anxieties about Elizabeth's public role, the tragedy subverts the associations between female silence, chastity and obedience in the figure of Lavinia. The second chapter has shown how the Palestinian gendering of nationalism as female in Palestinian national narratives, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, honour killing, and the construction of nation as narration casts new light on the role of Lavinia and the conflict between patriarchal and matriarchal voices in *Titus Andronicus*. While the fictional world of *Titus Andronicus* and contemporary Palestinian traditions suggest that women's bodies signify nation and national identity, the rape of Palestine and Lavinia problematise the masculine construction of the female as a silent icon of the nation. I have pointed out that the rape of Lavinia and Palestine suggest the violation of Roman and Palestinian wills and voices, raising the spectre of a horrifying hybridity of Romans and Goths and Palestinians and Israelis. The rape of the female that embodies the power of patriarchy suggests the rhetorical impotency of Romans and Palestinians, undercutting the masculine construction of men as the defenders of women and nations.

I argued that Shakespeare's *Othello* is a conflict between female figures' moral and honest voices and male figures' villainous, treacherous and murderous voices. My use of the Palestinian intertexts the *Romance of Antar* and Nizzar Qabbani's castigation of Arab traditions has revealed the ways in which traditional Palestinian culture can be more liberal than that of early modern England. Nevertheless, in practice this more liberal culture does not operate in contemporary Palestine. Whereas Antar was a courageous warrior who defended his land and honour, many Palestinians project their defeat by the Israeli occupation onto women,

playing the role of the colonizing power in domestic relationships. I have shown that in this presentist Palestinian context, the fictional world of *Othello* can offer a tragic commentary on contemporary Palestinian male figures' openness to the destructive male voices of gossip and deafness to female voices, leading to greater verbal and physical violence against women. My psychoanalytic reading of *Othello* has sought to open up the reasons for such behaviour in the play and, by parallel, in contemporary Palestinian society. I showed that Othello's susceptibility to dominant colonial and patriarchal discourses are signs of his verbal castration, in that he projects his internalisation of Iago's misogynist and racist discourses onto Desdemona. For contemporary readers in an occupied Palestine, *Othello's* psychological dramatisation of political impotency and masculinity in crisis is resonant.

I contended that the voices of Webster's heroines' in *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* speak out explicitly against the corruption and abuse of political power. My historicist reading argued that both plays critique the court of James I, where monarchs' and courtiers' voices are associated with flattery, spying, revenge, lasciviousness, murder and political and religious hypocrisies. While male figures of political and religious authorities are left unpunished in *The White Devil*, female figures reveal the corruption of their voices and their manipulation of judicial systems. *The Duchess of Malfi*, by contrast, maintains its subversive critique because it ends in affirming the Duchess of Malfi's voice. I showed that Palestinian intertexts produce a powerful presentist reading of these Jacobean tragedies. In *The White Devil*, Vittoria's exposure of male figures' hypocritical voices can offer a critical analysis of Palestinian traditions and legal systems that are dominated by men. In *The Duchess of Malfi* the eponymous heroine's voicing of and acting on her sexual desires subverts the Palestinian construction of women as objects of exchange in the marriage market. Moreover, the association of Ferdinand's voice with incestuous desires strongly critiques the Palestinian ideology

of honour which is based on controlling women's sexuality and voices. The Duchess's voice from beyond the grave challenges the Palestinian gendering of the soul as male and the body as female. I have pointed out that male figures deploy the traditionally feminine virtues of silence, chastity and obedience as an oppressive and defensive strategy to keep women submissive to male erotic and political desires, in both the fictional worlds of Webster's tragedies and in contemporary Palestine.

Middleton's tragedies *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* continued my investigation of Jacobean royal absolutism, patriarchal sovereignty in arranged marriages. I argued that Middleton's tragedies locate subversion within the dominant patriarchal discourse, in the subversive complicity of the female figures. As a presentist intertext, I deployed the Palestinian practices of enforced marriage, male figures' deafness to the female voice and the Palestinian constructions of honour as a public performance rather than an inherent signifier. These allowed me to scrutinise how Middleton's heroines use subversive silences and speeches to bypass patriarchal authority, and how they function as an alienating force of destabilisation and subversion.

In Chapter Five, the thesis took an important turn by investigating gender, speech and silence in early modern female-authored texts and in an important modern Palestinian autobiography, Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*. I argued that Tuqan's autobiography and the discourse of Palestinian female martyrdom vividly illuminate our understanding of speech, silence and gender difference in Lady Lumley's *Iphigenia*, Sidney's *Antonie* and Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*. The thesis argued that in cultures antagonistic to female expression, writing and sacrifice are means through which women create their legitimate authorial identities, for writing and sacrifice involve silencing women's voices and eliminating their sexual bodies. My

analysis showed that early modern female authors often used the discourses of domesticity, motherhood, marriage and death to legitimise their heroines' speech and their authorial identities. I pointed out that, more unconventionally, the early modern women dramatists under study and Tuqan associate male figures' voices with religious and political hypocrisies and female figures' voices with truth and dramatic authority. I argued that religion and nationalism are discourses that both early modern female authors and contemporary female Palestinian political activists engage with to transcend gender roles. While Iphigenia's and Mariam's sacrifices resonate with Palestinian female martyrs, Cleopatra's personal suicide implicates Palestinian discourses of religion and nationalism that conventionally prompt Palestinian women's political activists to carry out suicide bombing. I argued that many Palestinians may read Cleopatra's suicide alongside Palestinian women who carry out suicide bombing to redeem their tainted honour, as Western and Israeli critics suggest.

A study of early modern performance conditions has been essential to my work on silence, speech and gender in drama. My thesis, following Bloom's, Luckyj's, Callaghan's, Findlay's and Butler's research on the performance of gender, has revealed that the boy actors can be the mouthpieces of female characters who overthrow gender stereotypes, opening up spaces for interrogating the male voice. Furthermore, this thesis has considered that the theatrical performance of silencing the boy actor opens up an uncanny subjective space that challenges male voices and their fantasy of female passivity. As I have argued in Chapter Two and Chapter Three, the silences of Desdemona and the Duchess of Malfi, in death, elicit Othello's and Ferdinand's words of self-condemnation and self-annihilation. The playwrights' condoning of female voices is substantiated by situations where boy actors playing innocent female characters are given a subjective space from which to defend themselves. Chapter Three argued that the boy actor's broken voice signals his movement from playing a perfect female

role and voice to his playing male roles characterised by hypocritical voices in the future. The boy actors' transcendence of their imitative female roles punctuated by their broken voices opens up a further question for investigation that this thesis does not have space to investigate: is there any equivalency between female characters' oppressive subordination and the abuse and exploitation of young apprentices by their masters?

The continuity between author, actress, and character in female authored drama evokes a different pattern of gender sameness, as the thesis explored in Chapter Five. My analysis showed how, in performance, the heroines of 'closet drama' can speak continuously without losing their voices, with powerful effect. I showed, moreover, that female figures' chosen silences are subjective spaces of authority as exemplified by the figure of Graphina in *The Tragedy of Mariam*. Furthermore, I explained that the silencing of the female heroines in the tragic closure is a strategy on the part of female authors to dissociate their writing from the stain of sexuality inherent in female authorship.

These questions about performance and self-expression have particular relevance at An-Najah University where I live and teach. The exclusion of female voices and bodies from the early modern professional stage, where boy actors took the women's parts bears similarities to the situations of many of my female students who regard female performance as something of a taboo because it will be interpreted by many as a sign of lewdness. The decision to speak out, or to write as did the female dramatists studied in Chapter Five, arguably requires just as much courage from my own students, as that shown by their early modern sisters.

This thesis has pointed out that the Bible and the Qur'an offer very different views on the position of women. The Bible endorses the subjection of women as illuminated in the story of

creation and fall in Genesis, while the Qur'an does not blame women for original sin and it emphasises the equality of women and men before God. Such differences suggest that enlightened Islamic re-readings of the early modern drama can produce a new critical perspective on the Christian traditions that dominate early modern English culture. Nevertheless, Palestinian practices of honour killing, arranged marriage, the degrading ideal of female silence and male deafness to female speech pose a challenge to God's authority, for they depart from the enlightened mode of the Qur'an's ideas of equality. Enlightened Islamic re-readings of the early modern drama produced from that conservative Christian tradition may offer many contemporary Palestinians a critical perspective on the masculine construction of gender difference that operate in Palestinian traditional practices even they are incompatible with Islam and analogous with the most conservative Christian traditions.

From my pedagogical agenda, the conflict between female and male voices in the tragedies examined in this thesis offers analytical frameworks for mounting critical challenges to contemporary Palestinian political institutions and the nationalist discourse they deploy to buttress the patriarchal oppression and silencing of women. The representation of female figures as innocent victims of the ills of male figures stimulates intense motivations for change, a rethinking and re-examining of the Palestinian practices of enforced marriage and of male figures' aural closure to the female voice. It can perhaps break into readers' blind adherence to the status quo and the established constructions of gender roles. The cultural hybridity that this thesis creates may enable my students to challenge the gendered form of oppression imposed by the patriarchal authority and to spotlight the gender inequalities generated by Israeli occupation. This thesis castigates and interrogates Palestinian traditions and expresses consciousness of oppressive gender relations and dedication to their change.

However, my presentist reading of early modern texts has not received a positive response from many of my students, especially those living in rural areas, who spread complaints that I am an immoral instructor. Some female students' complaints against me and my ideas can be explained by the fact that such women internalise their inferiority or they are unaware of their oppression. Furthermore, other staff members' focus on male fictional characters and their consolidation of the discourse of misogyny in their analysis of early modern texts makes my approach in explaining the dynamics of silence and speech in relation to sexuality and politics abnormal. However, many students who have excellent academic records find my presentist approach appealing because of its challenge to mainstream norms and they have chosen to write their graduation projects on a variety of subjects such as honour killing, gossip, revenge, bodies and spirits, exile, cannibalism and colonialism, silence, speech and gender that I have introduced in Drama and Shakespeare courses.

For Western critics as well as Palestinian readers and critics, these cross-cultural dialogues between contemporary Palestinian society and early modern English texts may contribute to the developing interest in cross-cultural narratives and gender studies and help both to spin different threads of argument. The context of contemporary Palestine may suggest new avenues of investigation for feminist debates about early modern England's texts. My presentist approach may appeal to feminists and postcolonial feminists who strive to bring women to public attention and think that the present has a crucial role in studying historical texts and deconstructing gender stereotypes to effect social and cultural change. Such juxtapositions between early modern tragedies and contemporary Palestine and the representation of gender difference via the binary opposites of speech and silence within different historical and ideological contexts refute a unitary vision of academic feminism and yield a fertile field of read-

ings. I hope that this thesis has opened up entry-points into contemporary Palestinian culture and voiced a rationale for interdisciplinary investigation, and further, fuller, comparative studies between the two cultures.¹

¹ Many thanks to Professor Alison Findlay who assisted me in redrafting and nuancing this conclusion.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Ala- Najah National University,
Faculty of Arts,

Department of English-

E32360 - Drama (Compulsory) -

Prereq: E32260 - Introd. to Lit.

1st Semester 2014/2015

Cr. Cuen = 3 units Km. # 3040

A Syllabus

I- Course description

Course intends to expose student to classic samples of drama over the ages:
From 500 B.C. thru - present times.

II - Course overall goals

First, to help student understand, appreciate, explicate and evaluate a dramatic text, and second, to help student practice the above skills in correct and clear prose.

III - Major objectives

To introduce student to

- A- classic specimens of Western and English drama,
- B- the developments, and evolutions, of Western and English drama,
- C- the principles, laws, relations, and constituents of a dramatic structure, and
- D- strategies, techniques and tips in drama teaching.

IV - Necessary background

- A. evolutions, and revolutions, of Western (including English) drama,
- B. pontifications of drama theoreticians and practitioners on the dramatic art,
- C- a note on the structure of a play, and
- D- a view of drama in the classroom.

V- Intended learning outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this course, student should be able to

- A - locate big plays and playwrights by ages, concerns, themes, styles and visions,
- B - have an adequate idea of the life of drama (first, Western, then, English) over the ages,

- C – explicate , analyse and evaluate a play by its structure elements / relations ,
 D – synthesize analysis of parts in a text of writing (i.e. , paragraph or essay of reasonable length) , and
 E – apply knowledge and methods achieved to drama student's own .

VI- Plays

To read 6 – 8 plays that represent drama during two millenia and a half of years ; their names appear on the distribution – of - work chart , below-

VII – References

- 1- Boulton, Marjorie.(1983). *The Anatomy of Drama* . London Camongst other places) : Routledge and Kegan Paul .
- 2- Brooks ,Cleanth, and Robert Heilman. (1948). *Understanding Drama*. New York, :HRW .
- 3- *Encyclopedia of World Drama*: McGraw-Hill.
- 4- Esslin,Martin. (1976). *An Anatomy of Drama* .New York : Hill and Wang.
- 5- Hatlen ,Theodore .(1975).*Drama : Principles and Plays*, 2nd ed. , Prentice – Hall.
- 6- Holden , Susan .(1981) .*Drama in Language Teaching* . Harlow (Essex): Longman .
- 7- Lamme, Linda, and Suzanne L. Krogh .(1992) .*Literature – Based Moral Education* . Phoenix (Arizona): Oryx Press.
- 8- Maley , Alen, and Alan Duft .(1979) *Drama Techniques in Language learning* Cambridge :Cambridge University Press.
- 9- Pickering ,Kenneth .(1998) . *How to Study Modern Drama* , London ; MacMillan.
- 10- Scholes, Robert , et. al.(1982) *Elments of literature*. New York and Oxford : Oxford Univ. Press.
- 11- Online sources

VIII – Student performance evaluation

- A – The traditional two midterm exams : 50 % ,
 B – A possible up to 10% bonus- grade analysis report pf a play outside the syllabus,
 C- Final exam: 50 % -

IX - Course procedure (by week)

<u>Week #</u>	<u>Work to done *</u>
1	Necessary background
2, 3, 4	Sophocles's "Oedipus at Colonus" 1 st midterm exam
5,6	Aeschylus's "Prometheus Bound"
7,8	Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night " 2 nd midterm exam
9,10	Shaw's <i>St. Joan</i>
11,12	O' Casey's "The Shadow of a Gunman "
13	Synge's " Riders to the Sea "
14,15	Pinter's <i>The Birthday Party</i> or "The Room "
16	An end -of-the- course – view and concluding thoughts

Note :

Rhythm of Course procedure varies depending upon class. Schedule of plays, above , is rather an ambitious one .

I should add the following plays in case time enough is left to select out of

- Shakespeare's " A Midsummer Night's Dream"
- Wesker's " Roots"
- Beckett's *Waiting for Godot or Endgame*
- Griffiths's *The Gulf Between Us*

Appendix 2

English Department

E32360(10306225)/3-Drama -1st Semester -2014/2015

Exam Final (50%)-18/12/2014

Subject of Question A: Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night " and Beckett's *Waiting ...*

Subject of QB : besides the two above , Sophocles's "Oedipus at ..." and Aschylus's "Prometheus ..."

QA(25%)

In a few sentences for each quotation , below , first identify speaker and context , then comment –essentially- on prominent structure elements , therein :

1. I'll confine myself no finer than I am . These clothes are good enough to drink in , and so be these boots , too ; and they be not , let them hang themselves in their own straps .

2.- What ?/- Suppose we repented. /- Repented what ?/- Oh ...

3.- We're not tied !/- I don't hear a word you're saying . /- I'm asking if we're tied ./- Tied ?/- Ti – ed ./- But to whom . By whom ?

4. "I may command where I adore " / A fustian riddle ... She may command me... I serve her .../- He's now at a cold scent .

5. ... fear to find / Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind . / What is decreed must be ...

QB(25%)

First , study the words of Estragon and Vladimir , below , then phrase out the problem (theirs) that their words demonstrate . After that , see if the Duke (plus Olivia and Viola) , Prometheus and Oedipus speak similar , or different , words . Illustrate the words of each character (or of two or three similar characters)_ in a paragraph (in an essay of six paragraphs);

- Well, shall we go ?/- Yes, let's go ./ (They do not move .)

Appendix 3

English Department

E32360 (10306225) / 1+3 – Drama – 1st Semester -2014/2015

Midterm Exam 2nd (25%) -4/11/2014

Subject of Exam :Aeschylus's "Prometheus Bound "

Question A (15%)

In 2-4 sentences for each quotation , below , first , identify speaker and context , then , comment on prominent structure elements , therein :

- 1.Glad you will be to see the night /Cloaking the day with her dark spangled robe ; and glad /Again when the sun's warmth scatters the frost at dawn .Each changing hour will bring successive pain to rack /Your body ...
- 2.A new king rules among the gods .Then know yourself /And take upon yourself new ways to suit the time ./If in this way you fling out edged and angry speeches .../Throw off your angry mood and seek deliverance /From all your suffering .
- 3.Come , bring yourself , perverse fool , while there is still time ./ To weigh your situation , and so turn to sense ./-Like an unbroken colt you try your strength , and take / The bit between your teeth , and fight against the reins .

Question B(10%)

First , study the quotations , below , then , in a paragraph , see

- 1.if between them they demonstrate the shape of the plot of the play , and
- 2.what implications this shape has for the pattern , meaning and vision of the play :

_O divinity of sky .../ O Earth ...!/On you ...I call ,/See what is done ...to me ...

_Now it is happening ;threat gives place to performance ./The earth rocks .../

O Earth.../O sky , where sun and moon /Give light to all in turn ,/You see how I am wronged !

Appendix 4

An- Najah National University
Faculty of Arts
English Department

- E32462 –Shakespeare- A Syllabus –1st Semester -2011/ 2012
- Compulsory ;Prereq . : E32360
- O . Odeh
- Office Rm . # 23040

I. Course in Brief

It covers Shakespeare's dramatic career in the context of the English Renaissance and Western drama .

II. Over-all Goal of Course

It is to train students in the understanding , appreciation , explication and evaluation of the structure of dramatic poetry , with meticulous regard to text and discriminating awareness of the development of dramatic poetry in the West .

III. Course Objectives

They are to

- A . help student place Shakespeare in the historical context of poetic theatre in the English Renaissance , English drama and the West ,
- B . help student first , understand , then , appreciate and enjoy reading, and third , explicate , analyze and evaluate verse drama ,
- C. encourage /urge student to apply acquired knowledge and standards to the understanding and evaluation of Arabic dramatic poetry ,and
- D. instill into the student a desire to search for his / her own tradition (s) of dramatic poetry and a respectful awe for the social value and potential of the art.

IV. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this Course , student should be able to

- A . locate clearly enough Shakespeare in the history of English drama (and Literature) ,
- B. explain , explicate and analyse the big components of a play , e.g . , plot , grammar , syntax , language , image , character , dialogue ,conflict , rhythm , theme , pattern (s) , style , technique , vision ,etc, and
- C. evaluate a (verse) play in relatively correct and lucent prose .

V. Student Achievement Evaluation Criteria

- A. Midterm Exams : 50 %
- B. Final Exam : 50 %

... A possible up to 10 % bonus- grade assignment .

VI. course Procedure .

<u>Week #</u>	<u>Work to be done</u>
1.	- A background to , and a sketching of the (Renaissance) framework of the course, and - Shakespeare : life , work , career, plays , development and dramaturgy
2+3 +4	"Coriolanus " (1607) - 1st midterm exam
5+6+7	" Julius Caesar"(1599) - 2 nd midterm exam
8+9+10	"Othello"(1604)
11+12+13	"Hamlet"(1600-1)
14+15	"Macbeth"(1606)
16	" The Tempest"1611) +An end – of – the course view and concluding thoughts

- Exam Final

- possible other plays for selection:

- 1."Measure for Measure" (1601),
- 2."King Lear" (1606)
- 3."Antony and Cleopatra" (1607),
- 4."A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1595)

VII.Sources and references

A. Main textbook

- *The Riverside Shakespeare. (1974) .*

Boston and London (amongst other places): Houghton Mifflin Co .

B . References

-
- 1- Bradley . (1992) . *Shakespearean Tragedy* , 3rd ed . London ;Macmillan.
 - 2- Knight , Wilson . (1993) . *The Wheel of Fire* . London and New York: Rutledge .
 - 3- Kott , Jan. (1991) . *Shakespeare our Contemporary* . London: Routledge
- C. Electronic / Online material.

Appendix 5

E32462- Shakespeare -

1st semester-2009/2010

Final Exam (50 %)

17 December 2009

Subject of Question A : "*Hamlet*" and "*The Tempest*" .Subject of QB : Besides three above , "*A midsummer Night's Dream*" and "*Coriolanus*"Question A (25%)

1. Holla, Barnardo ! / - Say - / What, is Haratio, there ? / - A piece of him.

2. These are our actors/ As I foretold you) were all spirits, and / Are melted into air,
into thin air, / And like the baseless fabric of this vision, / The cloud-capp'd
tow'rs, the gorgeous places / the solemn temples , the great globe itself,/yea, all
which it inherit, shall dissolve, /And like this insubstantial pageant faded/ leave
not a rack behind ./We are such stuff/ as dreams are made on ; and our little life /
Is rounded with a sleep.

3. That we with wisest sorrow think on him / Together with remembrance of
ourselves. / Therefore our sometime sister ... , / have we , as" twere with a
defeated joy , / With mirth in funeral , and with dirge in marriage, / Taken to wife
* ...

4. I pray thee mark me / I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated / To closeness
and the bettering of my mind / ... / Hence his ambition growing - / Dost thou hear
?

5. O, 'tis too true ! / How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience ! / The
harlot's check , beautied with plait ring are , / Is not more ugly to the thing that
helps it / Than is my deed to my most painted word. / O heavy burthen !

6. A devil, a born devil , on whose nature / Nurture can never stick ; ...

Q B(25 %)

Hamlet , in the play bearing his name , speaks of enterprises " of great pitch and
moment " " their currents " turning a way and losing " the name of action " .

Now , in your introductory paragraph , explain what he means , then , make a
generalization in regard to enterprises in the four plays, subject of this exam .

After that , illustrate your generalization , in a paragraph , for each play.

Appendix 6

An-Najah National University,
Faculty of Arts,
English Department

E 32462- Shakespeare

2nd Semester-2008-2009

Final Exam (50 %)

16th May 2009

- Subject of Question A: "*Antony and Cleopatra*" and "*Hamlet*"

- Subject of Question B: Besides the two above, "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*" and "*Julius Caesar*"

Question A:

In a short paragraph of 3-4 sentences for each quotation, below, first, identify Speaker and Context, then, comment on Significance/ Signification of Structure, therein:

1. -For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold, And I am sick at heart.

- Have you had quiet guard?

- Not a mouse stirring.

2. -This is the news: he fishes, drinks and wastes

The lamps of the night in revel;

- I must not think there are

Evils enow to darken all his goodness;

His faults, in him, seem as the spots of heaven,

More fiery by night's blackness; hereditary

Rather than purchas'd; what he cannot change,

Than what he chooses.

3. Though you can guess what temperance should be,

You know not what it is.

4. Whether it's nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

And by opposing, end them.

5. O, from Italy!

Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,

That long time have been barren.

6. - The goods confound thee, dost thou hold there still?

- Shall I lie, madam?

- O, I would thou didst;

So half ... Egypt were submerge'd and made

A cistern for scald'd snakes!

Question B:

First, in your introductory paragraph, explain the quotation, below. End your introduction with a thesis statement, as it were, in regard to the image in the quotation, that is, if the image is also at the center of each of the four plays, subject of this exam.

Then, in four paragraphs, illustrate the workings of the image (if it is there) in each of the four plays. Of course, you will conclude your illustration in a short paragraph.

- Wars 'twixt you twain would be

As if the world should cleave and that slain men

Should solder up the rift.

Appendix 7

English Department

E32462/1- Shakespeare – 1st Semester -2014/2015

1st Midterm Exam (25%) -28 September 2014

Subject of Exam : "Coriolanus"

QA(15%)

In a few sentences for each quotation, below, first, identify speaker and context, then, comment – essentially – on prominent structure elements, therein :

1. What authority surfeits on would relieve us... The leanness that afflicts us .. is as an inventory to particularize their abundance ... let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes

2. You are no surer, no, / Than is the coal of fire upon the ice, / Or hail stone in the sun .

3. Are these your herd? Must these have voices, that can yield them now, / And straight disclaim their tongues? What are your offices? / You being their mouths, why rule not their teeth? / Have you not set them on?

4. Like a dull actor now / I have forgot my part, and I am out, / Even to a full disgrace .

QB(10%)

In a paragraph, answer 1 or 2 :

1. Examine the quotation, below, then decide which is Coriolanus .

_ He's a lamb indeed, that paces like a bear .

_ He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb .

2. Examine the quotation, below, then see if it demonstrates a big pattern of imagery in the play :

_ Where is this viper/ That would depopulate the city and/ Be every man himself .

Appendix 8

An- Najah National University**Faculty of the Humanities****English Department**

- E32361 – A Survey of English Literature – I –A Syllabus –
2nd Semester -2014/2015

- Compulsory ;prereq .: E32261 and – 262

- O.Odeh

-Office RM. # 23070

I. Course in Brief

Course helps student towards a general , and adequate , view of English literature from its beginnings (around 600 A.D.) to the end of the neo-classic age (in the 1780s and 190s) .

II. Course Goal

It is to make student feel and see the intriguing progress of literature in its ineluctably dialectical interplay with its socio –politico-religio- intellectual milieu , and to acquaint him/her with the most seminal artists / thinkers who charted the course of the progress and can thus be said to have shaped the life , culture and , of course some of the history in their relevant periods . It is hence hoped that student will become better able to account for the evaluation of forms, styles , subject matter and vision (s) in the literature his / her own .

III. Major Objectives

They are (on the part of student)

first , the detection of interrelationship between societal development of forms , techniques , styles , subject matter and visions of literature ,
second , the acquaintance of markstone writers in the history of English literature ,
and third , the knowledge – albeit brief – of literary and perhaps other texts that show , and embody , the developments and evaluations of English literature through the ages.

IV. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this Course , student should be able to .

A . reach a clear and adequate perception of the development , and evolution , of English Literature in successive ages,

B . appreciate and glean a clear understanding of the dialectical , and reciprocal , interplay between changing societal conditions in the widest sense of the word , on the one hand , and literature : forms, styles , techniques , themes , concerns , attitudes and vision (s) ,on the other, and express all such in essay length , and express all such in essay length, and

C. gather , and express in essay length , a clear idea of the writers , poets and thinkers who have shaped the literature , culture and spirit of periods their own .

V. Sources and References

A. Main Textbook is

- Abrams , M.H. General Ed . (1979) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* , 5th ed , Voll. London and New York : W.W. Norton.

B. References

- 1 . Anderson , G. and W. Buckler . (1967) . *The Literature of England* . Glenview , Ill. : Scott, Foresman and Co.
2. Baugh, A.C. Ed. (1967) . *A Literary History of England* . London : Rutledge and Kegan Paul .
3. Burgess, Anthony. (1979) : *English Literature A Survey for Students*, 6th imp. London: Longman.
- 4- Economic , George . (1975) . *Geoffrey Chaucer: A Collection of Original Articles* . New York : McGraw – Hill .
5. Evans , B.I. (1940) . *A short History of English Literature* . Harmondsworth (England) and New York : Penguin .
6. Thornley , G () . *An Outline of English Literature*

D . Electronic . On line material

VI. Student Achievement Evaluation Criteria

A . Midterm Exams : 50 %

B. Final Exam : 50 %

C. A possible up to 10 % bonus- grade assignment

VII. Course Procedure

<u>Week #</u>	<u>Work to done *</u>
1 - 2	Necessary background : the human community and literature ; British and English
3 - 6	Medievalism: OEP(7 th C-1066) _____ ; MEP(1066-1485 - 1 st midterm exam
7 - 11	The Renaissance (1485-1660) – 2 nd midterm exam
12 - 15	the Neo-classic Age (1660-1798) - Exam Final

* Authors, texts and works to be studied under each Period , are to be attached to Plan.

7. Carter, Ronald, and John McKee. *The Routledge History of Literature in English: Britain and Ireland*. London: Routledge, 1997.
 8. Daiches, David. *A Critical History of English Literature*, Vols. I-V. London: Secker and Warburg, 1969.
 9. Economou, George. *Geoffrey Chaucer: A Collection of Original Articles*. New York: McGraw - Hill, 1975.
 - 10. Evans, B.I. *A Short History of English Literature*. Harmondsworth (England) and New York: Penguin, 1940.
 11. Ford, Boris. ed. *The Pelican Guide (s) to English Literature*, Vols. 1, 2, 3, 4. Harmondsworth (England): Penguin, rptd. 1980.
 12. McCallum, James D. *English Literature: The Beginnings to 1500*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960.
 13. Robertson, JR. D. W. ed. *The Literature of Medieval England*. New York: McGraw - Hill, 1970.
 - (J 14. Thornley, G. *An Outline of English Literature*.
- Course Procedure in Detail:
- Weeks 1-6
- I. Middle Ages (Sixth Century - 1470s)
 - A. The Old English Period (Sixth Century - 1066)
 1. The Old Tradition: Poetry
 - a. Courtly
 - The Battle of Maldon
 - b. Religious
 - The Dream of the Rood and Caedmon's Hymn
 - c. Secular
 - Beowulf
 - The Wanderer and The Seafarer
 2. Prose
 - The Venerable Bede
 - King Alfred and Others
 - B. The Middle English Period (1066 -- 1470s)
 1. Alliterative Revival: Traditionalism
 - a. Romance
 - Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
 - b. Allegory
 - Piers Plowman

- c. Dream - Vision
 - Pearl (and her sisters)
- 2. Tremors of Change: Modernism
 - a. Chaucer
 - **The Canterbury Tales (and the "General Prologue")**
 - **Miller's and Wife of Bath's Tales**
 - **"Complaint to His Purse": a lyric / "Gentilesse" / "Truth"**
 - b. Chaucer's Contemporaries and Imitators
 - c. Beginnings of Drama
 - (The Second **Shepherd's Play** and **Everyman**)
 - d. The Ballad

1st Exam

Weeks 7-11

II. The Renaissance (1485-1660)

A. Early Tudor Period (1485-1558) I. Malory

Morte D' Arthur

2. More: Utopia

3. Interlude/Courtly Love/Blank Verse

4. Wyatt

- "My Lute, Awake"

- "They Flee from Me"

- "In Spain"

5. Surrey

- "Love, That Doth Reign ... "

* Holy Sonnets

- Others

3. Milton: pre-and post - Restoration - Comus

- Lycidas

- Areopagitica

- Paradise Lost

- Samson Agonistes

- "When I Consider "

4. Prose

a. Bacon

- Novum Organum b. Hobbes

- Leviathan c. Locke

- An Essay Concerning Human Understanding d. Pepys

- The Diary e. Newton

- A Letter

2nd Exam

Weeks 12-15

III. The Restoration and Eighteenth Century

Neo-Classicism in criticism and literature: rise and disintegration (1660-1798)

A. Socio - political and intellectual background

B. Poetry

1. John Dryden

a. "Absalom and Achitophel"

b. "MacFlecknoe"

c. Essay of Dramatic Poesy

d. The Author's Apology

2. Alexander Pope

a. The Rape of the Lock

b. An Essay on Criticism

c. An Essay on Man 3. Samuel Butler

- Hudibras 4. Samuel Johnson

- "The Vanity of Human Wishes"

- Dr. Faustus b. Shakespeare
- King Lear 2. Non-Dramatic Poetry

a. Spenser

- The Faerie Queen b. Others

3. Verse Narrative

a. Marlowe

- Hero and Leander b. Shakespeare
- Venus and Adonis

4. The Sonnet

- Shakespeare:
- "Shall I compare thee "
- "Pour soul "
- "Like the waves "

5. Prose and Prose Narrative

- Lyly and others
- Bible translation

C. The Stuarts and the Commonwealth Period (1603-1658)

1. Jacobean and Caroline Drama

a. Jonson

- Volpone
- "To the Memory of My Master Shakespeare"

b. Webster

- The Duchess of Malfi

c. Others

2. Poetry

a. Courtly (Cavalier) - Marvell

- "To His Coy Mistress"
- Others

b. Metaphysical –

Donne

* "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" *

"The Ecstasy"

- Dr. Faustus b. Shakespeare
- King Lear 2. Non-Dramatic Poetry

a. Spenser

- The Faerie Queen b. Others

3. Verse Narrative

a. Marlowe

- Hero and Leander b. Shakespeare
- Venus and Adonis

4. The Sonnet

- Shakespeare:
- "Shall I compare thee "
- "Pour soul "
- "Like the waves "

5. Prose and Prose Narrative

- Lyly and others
- Bible translation

C. The Stuarts and the Commonwealth Period (1603-1658)

1. Jacobean and Caroline Drama

a. Jonson

- Volpone
- "To the Memory of My Master Shakespeare"

b. Webster

- The Duchess of Malfi

c. Others

2. Poetry

a. Courtly (Cavalier) - Marvell

- "To His Coy Mistress"
- Others

b. Metaphysical –

Donne

* "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" *

"The Ecstasy"

Appendix 9

32361- A Survey of English Literature- I- Summer Session – 2011/2012

- Final Exam (50%) 04 August 2012

Question A (10%)

In one sentence, sum up the essence of each of the following:

1. *The Canterbury Tales*,
2. The neo-classic Age,
3. *Dr. Faustus*,
4. *Paradise Lost*,
5. The mock-heroic,
6. *Gulliver's Travels*,
7. *Everyman*,
8. *An Apology for Poetry*,
9. "A Valediction : Forbidding Mourning",
10. "Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day"

Question B : (10 %)

1. In a paragraph, illustrate the place of Shakespeare in English Literature.
2. In another paragraph, illustrate the place of John Dryden (in English Literature).

Question C : (30%)

1. In a paragraph, sketch the facts of English poetry starting with the Renaissance and ending with C-18th, relating them to societal change.
2. In another paragraph, sketch the facts of English prose from the late Middle Ages through C – 18th, relating them to societal conditions.

Appendix 10

E 32361/1+3 A Survey of English Literature 1st semester - 2012/2013

- Final Exam (50%) 05th January 2013

Question A (10%)

In one sentence only, reduce each of the terms /names/ titles, below into biggest essence :

1. Age of Reason,
2. Age of Milton,
3. "The Millers's Tale"
4. Mericiless Beauty"
5. Mystery cycle,
6. High interlude,
7. Earl of Surveŷ's contribution to English Lit.,
8. "An Apology for Poetry",
9. *The Faerie Queen*,
10. The Periodical.

Question B (40 %)

In a quick but illustrative one-paragraph sketch, elaborate on each of the topics, below, relating your sketching as far as possible to societal conditions/ changes:

1. The dominating literary form (i.e., literature kind) in the Renaissance,
2. The prevailing literature between the 1610s- 1660s,
3. The dominating literary form in the Neo-Classic Age,
4. Prose from the late MAs thru the late C-18th.

Appendix 11

An-Najah National University
Course Outline 2nd Semester 2009/2010

Department of English
Autobiography 32338

This course aims at introducing students to autobiography as an independent genre and to the autobiographical impulse as it is presented in other literary genres especially fiction. Whereas biography is not the focus of the course at least one notable biography will be introduced for the purpose of contrasting the two genres. A quick introduction leads students to other personal forms of writings such as letters, memoirs, diaries and journals along with a brief survey of the history of Autobiography. The focus, however, is on autobiography as a modern genre and the autobiographical impulse in fiction; autobiography in the guise of fiction. Further, students are invited to attempt writing their own autobiography through a compilation of their own diaries. Students are expected to prepare the assigned reading and to write their diaries before they come to class. They are urged to prepare their critical evaluations for frequent class presentations.

Schedule: Monday & Wednesday 9:30 – 11:00

Instructor: Dr. Nabil Alawi

Requirements

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. First exam 20% | 2. Second exam 20% |
| 3. Final Exam 50% | 4. Class presentations and diaries 10% |

The timely reading of the assigned material according to the following plan is strictly important.

Week

Material Assigned

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1. | Introduction to the course: a study of the genre. The autobiographical impulse (journals, diaries, memoirs, personal narratives) |
| 2-3 | Spiritual & sacred autobiography: the encouragement of morality.
James Weldon Johnson, <i>The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man</i>
Ibtisam Barakat: <i>Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood</i>
The debate on fiction and autobiography (White lies, Black autobiographies)
*In-class readings of students' autobiographies
St. Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> |
| 4-6 | *In-class readings of students' autobiographies
Boethius, <i>The Consolation of Philosophy</i>
*In-class readings of students' autobiographies
First-Hour Exam |
| 7-10 | Autobiography as a genre.
Franklin, Benjamin, <i>Autobiography</i>
*In-class readings of students' autobiographies
Twain, <i>Innocents Abroad</i>
*In-class readings of students' autobiographies
Abinader, Elmaz, <i>Children of the Roojme</i> (Home Assignments)
*In-class readings of students' autobiographies
Second-Hour Exam |
| 11-15 | Autobiography in the guise of fiction.
Wright, Richard, <i>Native Son</i> .
*In-class readings of students' autobiographies
Plath, Sylvia. <i>The Bell Jar</i> (Home Assignment)
Booker T. Washington <i>Up From Slavery</i> (Home Assignment)
*In-class readings of students' autobiographies
Biography: Irving, Washington. <i>The Life of Mohammed</i> (Home Assignment) |
| 16. | Review and Final Examinations . |

Appendix 12

An Najah National University
 Department of English
 Autobiography (32338)
 The Final Examination – 2nd Semester 2010

Key

Name-----

Part I (25pts)

Read the following quotations and answer the questions following them; your answers should give direct reference to the source texts:

1. "Some of his Reasoning not appearing to me well-founded, I wrote a little metaphysical Piece, in which I made Remarks on them, It was entitled, *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*"
 Whose reasoning is referred to?

What is the significance of writing the metaphysical piece?

2. "Dirt flew up in a cloud as I hit the ground. I felt a curtain of darkness close in my head. A giant ache rippled through my body. [He] emptied my bag on the dirt and tossed it into the thornbushes."
 Discuss the dilemma of the speaker.

3. "You say I am scared. It is *you* who is scared. You scared I am going to say yes and you'll have to go through with the job----"
 What job is referred to? Explain

4. "I found this Method safest for my self and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it, therefore I took a Delight in it, practis'd it continually and grew very artful and expert in drawing People even of superior Knowledge into concessions the Consequences of which they did not foresee"
 What method is referred to and how did the speaker acquire it?

Describe the habit of expressing oneself by using the referred to method.

5. "He looked at *Trader Horn* unfold and saw pictures of naked black men and women whirling in wild dances and heard drums beating and gradually the African scene changed and was replaced by images in his own mind of white men and women dressed in black and white clothes."
What is *Trader Horn* and what do you make of the pictures and images?

6. "No one seemed to recognize him. There are three other unidentified bodies there. I saw him. I recognized his face. I kissed him good-by. He was so cold. He was wearing the green jacket and the blue shirt I gave him."
Who is the speaker and who is the subject of the above quote?

7. "'Well, Mohannad, what do you say? Shall we go back?' I said, my voice trembling. I was really hoping he would think about little Marcel and say yes. Perhaps that is why I asked Mohannad and not Yara, who was now leading the way up the hill."
Who are the speakers? Where are they going?

8. "I must record one Trait of this good Man's character. He had formerly been in Business at Bristol, but fail'd in Debt to a number of People, compounded and went to America. There, by close Application to business as a Merchant, he acquir'd a plentiful Fortune in a few Years"
Who is the good man? What did he do after acquiring a plentiful fortune?

Part II (16pts)

Write short paragraphs on the following:

The image of the city in Richard Wright's *Native Son*

Franklin's moral virtues

What does Suad Amiry mean by "The Bold and Not-So-Beautiful"?

The nomadic life of the Barakat Family

Part III (9pts)

Write a well-organized essay on the differences between Autobiography and fiction with reference to some Autobiographies and novels that you know.

Appendix 13

An-Najah National University
Faculty of Arts
Department of English

E32360- Drama

1st Semester 2015

Instructor: Bilal Hamamra

A Syllabus

Course Description

This course intends to expose students to samples of drama across time: From Elizabethan era to present times.

Course Overall Objectives

Students will become familiar with different dramatic genres and will be asked to consider questions of genre, gender, revenge, bodies and spirits and language, among others. Students will analyze the plays chosen within their cultural and historical context and from their presentist perspectives.

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- Adelman, Janet, 'Iago's Alter Ego: Race as Projection in *Othello*', *SO*, 4.2 (1997), 125-144
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- Hopkins, Lisa. "The Part with Ne'er a Bone in't: Webster's Women and the Politics of Speech", *Journal of Gender Studies*, 4.2 (1995), 181-87.
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- Matz, Robert, 'Slander, Renaissance Discourses of Sodomy, and *Othello*', *ELH*, 66.2 (1999), 261-276
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- Prosser, Eleanor. *Hamlet and Revenge* (London: Oxford UP, 1967).
- Rose, Mary Beth. *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).
- Smith, Bruce. *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England: A Cultural Poetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
- Snow, Edward. 'Sexual anxiety and the male order of things in *Othello*', *ELR*, 10.3 (1980), 384-412
- Stallybrass, Peter, "Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed", in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Differences in early Modern Europe*. Ed. by Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 123-42.
- Whigham, Frank. *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
- _____. "Sexual and Social Mobility in *The Duchess of Malfi*". *PMLA*, 100.2 (1985), 167-86.

Course Procedure

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2, 3, 4: Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*
First Hour Exam

Week 5, 6, 7, 8: Shakespeare's *Othello*
Second Hour Exam

Week 9, 10, 11: Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

Week 11, 12, 13: Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*

Week 14: Synge's *Riders to the Sea*

Week 15, 16: Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*

An-Najah National University

Faculty of Arts

Department of English

E 32459-Literary Criticism

2nd Semester 2015

Instructor: Bilal Hamamra

A Syllabus

Course Description

This course is intended to expose students to the major schools of literary criticism. Students will be introduced to the various ways in which scholars of literature have tried to interpret literary texts, and will learn how to analyze selected texts using critical approaches they are taught. The course proceeds along two threads of study: the critical theory and the analytical one which will be the outcome of this course.

Course Overall Objectives

It is to train students in understanding, scrutinizing, and evaluating a literary text and to enable them to practice a variety of literary theoretical approaches.

Requirements

Independent reading is very crucial and the following books on literary criticism are particularly useful:

Eagleton, Terry, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986)

Leitch, Vincent, ed., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (W. W. Norton, 2001)

Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar, "The Madwoman in the Attic", in *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. Mary Eagleton (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1996)

Showalter, Elaine, 'Towards a Feminist Poetics', *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. K. M Newton (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1988)

Vice, Sue, ed., *Psychoanalytic Criticism: A Reader* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996)

Attendance and Evaluation

Regular attendance is mandatory. Absences exceeding 7 hours will result in your deprivations of the course. Excused absences on medical grounds may be granted.

There will be two midterms of 20 points each, a representation of 10 points and a final exam of 50 points.

Schedule(subject to change):

Week 1: Introduction to literary critical theory

Start reading Traditional Approaches

Week 2: Types of traditional approaches

Historical- biographical and

Moral-philosophical

Week 3: The Traditional approaches in Practice

'To His Coy Mistress'

'Young Goodman Brown'

Week 4: The Formalistic approach

Week 5: The Formalistic Approach in Practice

'To His Coy Mistress'

'Young Goodman Brown'

'The Chariot'

First Hour Exam

Week 6: The Psychological Approach

Freud's Theories

Weeks 7-8: The Psychological Approach in Practice

'To His Coy Mistress'

Young Goodman Brown

Othello

Hamlet

'To His Mistress Going To Bed'

Week 9: Mythological and Archetypal Approaches

Week 10-11: The Mythological Approach in Practice

'To His Mistress Going To Bed'

'To His Coy Mistress'

Hamlet

Riders to the Sea

Second Hour Exam

Week 12: Feminism

Week 13: The Feminist Approach in Practice

Emily Dickinson's 'The Chariot', 'Devine is Mine', 'I Gave Myself to him'

Qabanni's 'A Diary of an Indifferent Woman'

Fadwa Tuqan's *A Mountainous Journey*

Week 14-15: To be assigned

Week 16: Revision

Final Exam

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