

‘Gazing in hir glasse of vaine glorie’: negotiating vanity

Faye Tudor

This chapter explores the problems that mirrors presented for women, at whom they were often directed, and discusses the potential for women to circumvent some of the mirror’s negative associations. This essay will present three self-portraits by Sofonisba Anguissola and Artemisia Gentileschi which will reveal the different approaches of these women to the problem of representing themselves. These women seek out a new method of either sidestepping the issues of self-representation, often through a redirection of the gaze, or by presenting themselves as adhering to a particular set of societal conditions.

Herbert Grabes’s seminal work *The Mutable Glass: Mirror-imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance* explores comprehensively the multiple meanings applied to the mirror in the early modern period, covering a vast number of exemplary texts from the period. He notes that the ‘various properties of mirrors’ were ‘frequently the chief stimulus for employing the mirror-metaphor’, and includes the ‘false or flatt’ring’ glass, which makes the individual appear more attractive, the ‘true’ or ‘pure’ mirror, which is ‘closely associated with [...] knowledge of the Divine’, the tarnished or darkened mirror, which is ‘an expression of a lack of moral integrity [...] relating to knowledge of the Divine’, and the brittleness of the mirror, which was used to signal transience.¹ The mirror metaphor, however, has yet more uses and Grabes describes instances in which ‘man, or specifically another human being’ is reflected in the mirror, and examples are frequent in literature which ‘can offer us a mirror-image of human existence’.²

William Rankins’s *A Mirrovr of Monsters* (1587) is just such a text. Rankins’s focus is on the *dangers* of ‘show’ and his text addresses the ‘manifold vices’ and ‘spotted enormities’ that are the result of the ‘infectious sight of Playes’.³ Rankins is particularly concerned with pride, and notes that players ‘colour their vanitie with humanitie [...] because vnder colour of humanitie, they present nothing but prodigious vanitie’.⁴ Rankins expands his thoughts on pride and ‘lecherie’, using the character of Luxuria:

Amongst y^e rest to make hir séeme more amiable to hir best beloued shée painted
hir faire face w^t spots of shadowed modestie: not fro~ *Apelles* shop, whose colours

are counterfeit, nor yet from *Zeuxes* famous in portraitures. But sent from *Proserpina* wife to *Pluto*. A welwisher to this wedlocke: better coulours then *Psyches* carried to *Venus* quicklie decayed, but these last longer then they should. After shée had hanged at hir cares manie costlie fauours of follie farre set from the Indians of *Anglia*, [Note: Wherein is noted the pride that is caused by plaiers, the beholders framing themselues to their leude life.] she embrodered hir haire with embossed brouches of beastlie desire, then gazing in hir glasse of vaine glorie, shée concluded as fine as may be.⁵

Here Rankins draws upon the stories of *Apelles* and *Zeuxes*, Greek painters celebrated in antiquity for the illusion of realism in their works, to illuminate the themes of the ‘counterfeit’ and the fake, since the lady has to paint on the ‘spots of shadowed modestie’. However, the implication is that her choice of ‘colours’ for painting her face is even worse than this, because they are compared in quality to those used by *Venus*, a goddess classically associated with eroticism and vanity. The theme of painting is apparent throughout the entire passage, with Rankins using terms such as ‘shadowed’, ‘painted’, ‘portraitures’, ‘coulours’, ‘beholders’ and ‘framing’. All of these words are set within a framework of sin, shame, vanity and pride, and associated with fakery and the counterfeit, placing the creative arts in a negative light, and Rankins concludes this section by noting that *Luxuria* ‘seemed vnto hir selfe a second *Narcissus*’.⁶ Female artists who represent themselves are hampered by the mirror’s classic, symbolic associations with women which regularly portrays them in an unfavourable light.

‘She held a mirrhour bright’

In *The Faerie Queene* Edmund Spenser addresses the traditional emblems of vanity – the mirror and the (often naked) young woman transfixed by it – to generate a negative exemplary mirror which serves to warn:

So proud she shyned in her Princely state,
 Looking to heauen; for earth she did disdayne,
 And sitting high; for lowly she did hate:
 Lo vnderneath her scornefull feete, was layne
 A dreadfull Dragon with an hideous trayne,
 And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,
 Wherein her face she often vewed fayne,
 And in her selfe-lou’d semblance tooke delight;
 For she was wondrous fair, as any liuing wight
 (I.IV.10)

In *Lucifera*’s ‘sinfull house of Pride’, which contains all of the sins (in the form of *Lucifera*’s advisers) – idleness, gluttony, lechery, avarice, envy and wrath – and where visual excess means that the ‘mayden’ *Queen*’s ‘bright beautie

did assay | To dim the brightness of her glorious throne, | And envying her self, that too exceeding shone' (i.iv.8), the bright mirror is emblematic of self-love and vanity. The use of the word 'wondrous' links to the Latin word for the mirror, 'mirari', which means to 'wonder at', yoking together the sense of wonder with the looking glass, while 'semblance' reminds the reader that the self reflected in the mirror is not a 'real' self, but a likeness. *Lucifera* is presented as a warning against pride and its associated sins.

The warnings we see in literature such as Spenser's *Faerie Queene* are replicated in the commonplace texts of the period – for example, Thomas Salter's *A mirrhor mete for all mothers, matrones, and maidens, intituled the Mirrhor of Modestie* (1579), Robert Greene's *Mamillia, A mirrour or looking-glasse for the ladies of Englande* (1583), *My ladies looking glasse* (1616) by Barnabe Riche, Richard Brathwaite's *The English Gentlewoman* (1631), *A looking-glasse for women, or, A spie for pride: shewing the unlawfulness of any outward adorning* by T.H. (1644) or *A looking-glasse for good vvomen, held forth by way of counsell and advice to such of that sex and quality* written in 1645 by John Brinsley. The majority of these texts offered guidance to young women on how best to dress themselves, fix their hair and make-up, and to conduct themselves in society. The typical 'mirror text' directed at a female readership used the mirror as a metaphor: the 'exemplary mirror' is the place where the woman will find her example, not her flawed real self. The mirror that is used to produce multiple images, or is angled to redirect the gaze, transformed from its associations with pride and vanity, simultaneously allowed women to circumvent the male gaze, which flowed freely upon them, and allowed them to gaze back. In the case of the exemplary mirror, it (and its message) was often directed specifically at women, with warnings against vanity and sinfulness.

The predominant themes in literature produced for women, then, were warning, instruction and direction. As Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus observe, from the 'pulpit and the printing press, Renaissance Englishwomen were enjoined to avoid contentious discourse and persuaded that silence enhanced their femininity'.⁷ Not only was this a problem for women in everyday life as it limited virtually every aspect of their behaviour and modes of expression, but it problematized the nature of any work women chose to produce. Women often had no option but to create their art or literature within the constraints imposed by a patriarchal society. As we shall see, the works of female artists such as Sofonisba Anguissola, considered within this context, illustrate that 'what was a fundamental problem for the Renaissance female artist' was 'the differentiation of herself as artist (the subject position) from her self as trope and theme for the male artist (the object position)'.⁸

James Shirley's (1596–1666) short poem 'To a Lady Upon a Looking-Glass Sent' (1646) concentrates on the mirror's association with self-love and pride: its speaker advises the young lady on the appropriate use for the mirror that

[Image not available in this digital edition due to restrictions
from the rights holder]

10 Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait* (1554), Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna

has been gifted to her.⁹ He tells her that the mirror will ‘present your beauty to your eye’ (l. 2), perhaps suggesting that until now she was unaware of her physical beauty. She is urged to consider this beauty as something that can be used to help her better herself and the speaker warns her against allowing the mirror to generate pride: ‘think that face was meant | to dress another by’ (l. 4). Instead, the mirror is a tool for comparison – the viewer must use the mirror to determine whether or not her ‘inward beauty’ matches with her ‘outward grace’. She must endeavour to make herself ‘fair in soule as well as face’ (l. 10). Acknowledging the potential for vanity, the speaker points to the mirror’s alternative uses: it is not just for gazing at one’s own beauty but can be a practical tool for self-improvement. The mirror is not something to be feared but it is an object that can offer the woman assistance in finding her inner self and matching it to her external beauty. The mirror is the tool for showing the inward self so that the woman who gazes upon her soul can beautify herself to ensure that she is as inwardly perfect as she is outwardly so.

The didactic theme of Shirley’s poem encompasses, in part, the sense of trepidation surrounding women and mirrors. The woman requires proper direction in order for her to make appropriate use of the mirror and thus avoid its potential pitfalls. Without this instruction, the woman will fall victim to the sins of vanity, pride and self-love. A woman’s most intimate moment, alone with her mirror, is interrupted. She may not gaze on herself without guidance, and thus even her personal, private sphere is not her own. As Shirley’s poem illustrates, the creation of self is particularly fraught with difficulties for women who must manage and negotiate a series of negative emblems and associations. The regularly developing and advancing mirror technology was not enough to push forward new meanings, metaphors and emblems. While technology allowed writers and artists new ways of exploring themselves and the world around them, the mirror metaphors they used rarely altered.

Sofonisba Anguissola, daughter of Amilcare Anguissola, was afforded the opportunity of ‘training in humanist studies’, alongside her five similarly talented sisters – they studied topics such as Latin, music and painting.¹⁰ Anguissola’s father paid for additional professional painting lessons with the Mannerist painter Bernadino Campi and Anguissola later produced a number of works for Philip II of Spain.¹¹ In the self-portrait the boundaries between subject and object naturally collapse: an early self-portrait by Anguissola, *Self-Portrait* of 1554, demonstrates these key issues (Figure 10).¹²

Anguissola presents herself, but if she is ‘self-fashioning’, her image is not created by means of objects, by presenting wealth or grandeur; rather the lack of adornment focuses the viewer’s attention on Sofonisba herself, as the single most important aspect of the portrait. Her demure appearance shows a careful attempt not to seem showy – she looks ‘pious and decorous’ as society advises.¹³ Her appearance is in accordance with the recommendations to be found in

conduct texts such as *The English Gentlewoman* (1631) by Richard Brathwaite. Brathwaite argues that clothing is nothing more than a practical necessity, essential for the human being after Adam and Eve sinned and ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. This sin left all humans subsequently vulnerable to the elements and therefore clothing became necessary but, 'to glory then in these necessities is to glory in sinne'.¹⁴ For a woman to have pride in her appearance, in her clothes and in fashions, is to revel in the sins of Adam and Eve. Brathwaite picks at the flimsy fashions of contemporary society:

Was apparell first intended for keeping in naturall heat and keeping out accidentall cold? How comes it then that you wear these thinne Cobweb attires which can neither preserve heat nor repell cold. Of what incurable cold would these Butterfly-habits possess, the wearer were pride sensible of her selfe? [...] No necessity, but mere vanity.¹⁵

Anguissola's self-portrait shows her dressed appropriately by Brathwaite's standards as she is covered against the elements to the neck and wrist in plain, practical clothing. Mary D. Garrard suggests, however, that this is not purely for the purposes of necessity, for appearing as a proper gentlewoman. Instead, Anguissola is making a deliberate effort to minimize her femininity, to seek a 'safe position between "not woman" and "like a man"', her black clothing, a colour more frequently worn by men, and her lack of adornment supporting this theory.¹⁶ In this way, Anguissola manages her image, carefully negotiating herself a space in a society, in a working environment that did not readily admit women – Anguissola 'transformed the limitations imposed upon her as a woman into an opportunity'.¹⁷ Anguissola's self-portrait demonstrates ways for a woman to express herself, but also illustrates that the woman who creates a portrait of herself must adhere to a number of societal rules which direct her in the appropriateness of her appearance. More than the simple creation and exploration of the self, the woman's self-portrait concerns wider issues of her position in society and of the female artist's place in the early modern environment. In presenting herself to be looked upon, the female artist who painted herself had to negotiate a male-dominated system of looking:

The gaze, then a metaphor for worldliness and virility, made of Renaissance woman an object of public discourse, exposed to scrutiny and framed by the parameters of propriety, display and 'impression management'. Put simply, why else paint a woman except as an object of display within male discourse?¹⁸

As Cheney and colleagues remind us, 'humanism [...] was long in liberating the "man-feminine" from her subordinate status' and Anguissola uses the 'outward' to represent an appropriate 'inward'.¹⁹ In her hand Anguissola holds a small book, the text of which reads, 'Sophonisba Angussola virgo seipsam fecit, 1554'.²⁰ Having presented herself in modest attire against a plain background, she uses the text of the book to declare her status as 'virgo' – maiden – which

may be a 'conscious reference to the famous woman painter of antiquity called [...] Marcia by Boccaccio'.²¹ Anguissola's overall image in her self-portrait is 'highly determined, constrained and serious, unadorned and stern' but she has a 'very impressive gaze [...] in which humility and self-confidence combine' to form 'a distinctive artistic-professional self-image'.²²

In order to present this image of herself, Anguissola has negotiated a number of potential difficulties that the female will encounter in any interaction with the mirror. The mirror, in writings with mirror-titles, was alternately portrayed as an object of revilement and an object of (potential) glory. In *The Mirrhor of modestie* (1579) by Thomas Salter, the author instructs us that there are two types of mirror: one is a 'Christall Mirrhor [...] by whiche Maidens now adaies, dooe onely take delight daiely to tricke and trime their tresses' (the literal mirror), and the other is 'made of an other maner of matter, and is of mucche more worthe then any Christall Mirrhor' (the metaphorical or exemplary mirror).²³ For the woman, the literal mirror is fraught with dangers, and is associated with sin and pride, whereas the metaphorical mirror, often exemplary in flavour and therefore safe, reflects not the individual woman but the ideal at which she should aim. It is the second mirror that is of interest to Salter and to his female reader: 'for as the one teacheth how to attire the outward bodie, so the other guideth to garnishe the inwarde mynde'.²⁴ The young woman must be taught how to be virtuous and pure or she will easily fall into pride and sinfulness.²⁵ Salter argues that a woman need not be taught to read for if she can 'reade and vnderstande the Christian Poetes' she will 'also reade the Lasciuious bookes of Ouide [...] and of their wicked adulteries and abhominable Fornications'.²⁶ Women were aligned with 'carnality, weakness and nature, with 'womanishness', while the male was associated with 'spirituality, strength, and mind or reason'.²⁷

Phillip Stubbes also comments on the adornment of the female body: 'For what a dotage is it (saith hee) to chau~ge thy naturall face which God hath made thee, for a painted one which thou hast made thy self.'²⁸ One of the key ways for a woman to alter her appearance, through the 'dying and colouring of faces with artificiaall colours [...] is most offensiuue to God', and clothing is similarly frowned upon since Stubbes proclaims that it is 'vnpossible to take away pride, except sumptuose apparell be taken away'.²⁹ Stubbes categorizes pride and apparel as 'two collaterall Cosins, apparell, and Pride (the Mother and Daughter) which can 'hardlie be dyuorced from the other, without the destructio~ of them both'.³⁰ Hamlet pauses to address this situation with Ophelia, when he discusses truth, love and beauty with her saying, 'I have heard of your paintings, too, well enough, | God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves | another' (3.1.145–47). The distinction is drawn between the real and the forged but the suggestion, as with Stubbes, is that it is sinful for her to paint herself, to make herself more beautiful. Ultimately, Hamlet

returns to his original point that ‘tis not alone [his] inky cloak [...] that can denote [him] truly’ (1.2.75–83), when he claims that the external cannot fully express the internal. The demoniacal portrayal of the adornment of the female via clothes, hairstyles and make-up, begins to hint at the problems facing the female artist; unable to express herself on a personal level, how could she begin to fashion herself on canvas?

The female body was, in particular, a site of deviance: ‘If a good woman’s essence was an obedient body, then the very sexuality of that body suggested possible means of deviant behaviour through the excessive demands of female sexuality.’³¹ Anguissola, in choosing to represent herself, was forced to negotiate this dialogue of sin, reproach, fear and weakness, in order to place herself in society both as woman and artist. The mirror in her painting is implied, not shown, absent from the pictorial space but implicit in the self-portrait and, as such, has no bearing on the depiction. The mirror presents particular problems for the woman; problems which are due, at least in part, to its classical associations with the sins of pride and vanity, and with the figure of Venus. The woman’s experience with her mirror therefore has certain limitations set upon it, as illustrated in Shirley’s short poem – a woman must make use of the mirror to improve herself in deeper and more spiritual ways, *not* for fixing her hair or make-up. Anguissola’s self-portrait demonstrates the ways in which a female artist can negotiate certain societal norms in order to produce an image of herself: she presents herself to be looked at, dressed appropriately, holding a prayer book, but she stares back, therefore returning and perhaps challenging the viewer’s gaze on her.

Given the warnings detailing the dangers for women gazing at themselves in the mirror, such as those seen in Salter, the female self-portrait becomes yet more intriguing. I have thus far established some of the problems of the mirror for Renaissance women and the ways in which the exemplary mirror characterized gazing into the looking-glass as sinful, while the extracts from Salter and Stubbes in this essay have reinforced the fact that these issues prevent a woman gazing in the mirror freely. Anguissola had to negotiate a number of social expectations in order to create a self-portrait. Another example by Anguissola, *Bernadino Campi Painting the Portrait of Sofonisba* (1550), illustrates her approach to depicting the art of painting, her skill, and herself, in which she uses the social expectations as a tool in her self-imaging (Figure 11).

In this image, the mirror is again only implied: obvious from the fact that Anguissola has depicted herself, yet there is no trace of the object in the painting. In fact, Anguissola’s painting at first appears not to be a self-portrait at all, since it includes a participant rather than focusing solely on the artist. Anguissola paints herself being painted by her master, Bernadino Campi: her image, as represented on the canvas on the easel, is considerably larger than

[Image not available in this digital edition due to restrictions
from the rights holder]

11 Sofonisba Anguissola, *Bernadino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* (1557–79),
Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena

Campi's, who paints her. It is Anguissola who fills much of the pictorial space, as her master stands by her side. The artist, then, pushes herself forward, foregrounding her abilities over those of her master and presenting herself through the trope of the painting that is in fact a self-portrait.³² By presenting herself alongside a master, she aligns herself with the skills and talents of an artist, though by including Campi in her self-portrait, Anguissola 'seems self-effacing' and it 'has the effect of cancelling or concealing her own pride and ambition.'³³ Garrard offers this interpretation as 'an elaborate deferential conceit' which Anguissola uses as a 'kind of disguise' in which she 'distinctly one-ups Campi'.³⁴ While this may be the case, it seems that the woman must carefully negotiate the area of self-portraiture: Anguissola did not directly portray herself but drew upon her relationship with Campi to offer herself as a

female artist of skill. This style of portraiture allows Anguissola to displace the male gaze and subordinate its power over the female body: Campi looks at her for practical reasons in order to produce an accurate portrait. Anguissola stares out from the painting, ‘rivet[ing] the viewer, making the outsider complicit in deconstructing the teacher-pupil relationship’ and the ‘inscribing of male authority on the body of the female’.³⁵ The self-portrait allows women painters more control over their appearance so that rarely do they depict themselves as objects of eroticism or lust.

As Felicity Edholm describes, there are problems of perception that a woman must overcome in order to portray herself:

Women are [...] constructed, in part at least, by the gaze, by others. Women in Western culture are always aware of being looked at, they are the object of the look, and the look is essentially male. Women therefore experience their own bodies and faces from outside as well as from within – a woman must continually survey herself. A woman has, then a split relation to her body and her face; she is both inside and outside, both self and other’.³⁶

This suggests that the very process involved in creating a self-portrait is problematic for the woman artist. In a period when the mirror is, for the woman, enmeshed in symbols of pride, vanity, excess and shame, the very act of looking at herself is sinful. It seems that, for the early modern woman, the examination of the self is bound up with particular problems. Such is the import of the imagery and symbolism surrounding the mirror that any woman holding a mirror is, to Stubbes, carrying with her, the ‘deuills spectacles’ which ‘allure vs to pride, & co~sequently to destructio~ for euer’.³⁷ Certainly, the mirror is associated with Venus, whose negative associations make her a poor example for women: the women whose tables were ‘littered with combs, perfume, and cosmetic vases and jars and “similar tools of Venus” [...] were in fact not ladies’ and ‘the association of the mirror with courtesans and with Venus has antique roots’, claims Cathy Santore.³⁸ A woman holding a mirror had already established, negative connotations, and the female artist must negotiate these associations if she wishes to portray herself. It seems prudent, for example, to exclude the mirror altogether, as Anguissola does. The woman who makes a self-portrait must also steer a path through society’s guidelines and expectations of women.

Artemisia Gentileschi, in *Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting* (1630), depicts herself allegorically, a trope that avoids her being directly associated with the idea of self-imaging (Figure 12).³⁹ Gentileschi was the daughter of Orazio Gentileschi, one of the Caravaggisti, and she was ‘one of the first female Italian artist[s] determined to compete with the male artists of her time’.⁴⁰ Her paintings often draw on mythological and mythical themes and are characterized by ‘Caravaggesque realism’ and chiaroscuro, a technique which uses light and dark to create a particularly dramatic style.⁴¹

[Image not available in this digital edition due to restrictions
from the rights holder]

12 Artemisia Gentileschi, *Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting*
(1630), Royal Collection, Windsor

A lavishly dressed Gentileschi, adorned with pieces of jewellery, leans into the pictorial space, her low neck-line revealing an expanse of cleavage. Gentileschi presents herself in the midst of artistic creation, her hair flicking out of her haphazard bun and her sleeves bunched up around her elbows. Her hands are occupied with the tools of her trade, the brushes and palette, and her awkward pose shows her in the act of painting. As her intent gaze suggests, the purpose of this painting seems to be to focus on the act of creation, rather than the artist herself. Gentileschi, by presenting herself as in the midst of action, not looking at a mirror or at the viewer, avoids the male gaze and therefore its dominating force; Gentileschi, as the allegory of painting, is neither passive nor accepting of the gaze. Just as in Anguissola's portrait, Gentileschi presents herself indirectly, via the trope of allegory. In creating this side-view of herself, it is most likely that Gentileschi used 'two mirrors, placed at nearly right angles', a technique that would be more difficult to execute than a traditional frontal self-portrait, and this may have been a deliberate act on Gentileschi's part, offered to 'demonstrate her virtuosity in creating a complex picture'.⁴²

Gentileschi, in choosing to paint herself as an allegory, thus elides the traditional issues, for women, of subject and object.⁴³ Judith W. Mann argues that it is obvious that 'Artemisia did think about her anomalous role as a female painter in a male profession' and that 'she would recognise a strictly female opportunity to fuse her own image and that of the profession of painting (traditionally portrayed as a female figure)'. R. Ward Bissell also considers that the *Allegory of Painting* 'presented Artemisia with an opportunity not afforded male painters: to feature her self, in all her recognisability, as the personifications, and to cement this connection with a full and prominent signature'.⁴⁴ However, Bissell feels that Gentileschi did not accomplish this – 'in type the female is more Polyhymnia than Artemisia, and the modest initials "A.G.F." on the right hand corner of the tabletop are threatened by shadow'. Instead, claims Bissell, 'what Gentileschi has done is to vitalize an abstract construct, and through a dazzling technique, to acclaim her mastery as *La Pittura's* sister'.⁴⁵ It seems, then, that Gentileschi's self-portrait is successful in allowing her to avoid the typical restraints imposed upon women, and avoiding the themes often associated with women, mirrors and self-imaging. However, the painting's success is limited in that it fails to truly move beyond the expectations and constraints that women face. Anguissola and Gentileschi both create images of themselves, they both use tropes to escape the fact of their self-imaging, but they both do so within the boundaries set for them. For example, Anguissola's first image portrays her demurely dressed holding a prayer book, signifiers that meet with social expectation; while the image of herself painting her master, and Gentileschi's allegorical self-portrait both play with notions of self-representation but do so in a way that does not threaten social order.

While the technologies of the mirror and theories of vision developed rapidly throughout this period, the images of Anguissola and Gentileschi, combined with the discussion of Shirley's 'To A Lady Upon a Looking-Glass Sent', illustrate that the mirror is still being used in its traditional context of sin, pride and vanity, and blended with Platonic theories of vision to fall in line with the Pauline directive in I Corinthians, 'For now we see through a glasse darkely: but then shal we se face to face. Now I knowe in parte: but then shal I knowe euen as I am knowen.'⁴⁶ Mirrors are implicated in the struggles for definition and power, particularly as they relate to women, who are at the centre of representation in their self-portraits but who are short of institutional and formal power. In the development of ways of seeing, the mirror appears as a tool of self-improvement, as a means of gazing into the truth of the soul, or what the soul ought to be, and as a motif for true self worth. The mirror and its reflection both expands and limits the possibilities of the gaze, whether by offering the woman an opportunity to redirect the gaze that falls upon her, thus securing her privacy, or by inhibiting the content and composition of the female self-portrait.

Notes

- 1 Herbert Grabes, *The Mutable Glass: Mirror-imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 104–05.
- 2 Grabes, p. 116.
- 3 William Rankins, *A Mirrovr of Monsters*, (1587), A1r; Janet Clare, 'Marlowe's Theatre of Cruelty', in *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by James Allan Downie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) pp. 74–88 (p. 86).
- 4 Rankins, fol. 2r.
- 5 Rankins, fol. 4r.
- 6 Rankins, fol. 4v.
- 7 Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus, *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England 1540–1640* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), p. 54.
- 8 *Self-Portraits by Women Painters*, ed. by Liana De Girolami Cheney, Alicia Craig Faxon and Kathleen Lucey Russo (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 556.
- 9 James Shirley, 'To A Lady Upon a Looking-Glass Sent', in *Ben Jonson and the Cavalier Poets*, ed. by Hugh Maclean (New York: Norton, 1974), p. 193.
- 10 Jo Eldridge Carney, *Renaissance and Reformation 1500–1620* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 14.
- 11 Carney, pp. 14–15. Julia K. Dabbs describes Anguissola as 'undoubtedly the most documented and celebrated woman artist of the early modern period' and notes that 'her fame was first proclaimed by Giorgio Vasari in his 1568 edition of *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori* even though [...her...] career was in its early stages' (Julia

- K. Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists, 1550–1800* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), p. 107).
- 12 Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait* (1554), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, *Web Gallery of Art* www.wga.hu/index1.html [accessed 22 May 2009].
 - 13 Fredrika H. Jacobs notes that the ‘prescriptives for the ideal *gentil-donna* [were] set forth in an ever-increasing number of sixteenth century texts’ including Giovan Giorgio Trissino’s *I Ritratti* (1524), Lodovico Dolce’s *Della institution delle donne* (1554), and Domenico Bruni’s *Difesi delle donne* (1559). ‘Woman’s Capacity to Create: The Unusual Case of Sofonisba Anguissola’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 47 (1994), 74–101 (p. 75).
 - 14 Richard Brathwaite, *The English Gentlewoman* (1631), p. 3.
 - 15 Brathwaite, pp. 3–4.
 - 16 Mary D. Garrard, ‘Here’s Looking at Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 47 (1994), 556–622 (p. 586).
 - 17 Carney, p. 15.
 - 18 Patricia Simons, ‘Women in Frames: The Gaze, the Eye, the Profile in Renaissance Portraiture’, *History Workshop*, 25 (1988), 4–30 (p. 8).
 - 19 Cheney and others (eds), p. 28.
 - 20 Sylvia Ferino-Pagden and Maria Kusche, *Sofonisba Anguissola: Renaissance Woman* (Washington, DC: National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1995), p. 19.
 - 21 Ferino-Pagden and Kusche, p. 18.
 - 22 Ferino-Pagden and Kusche, p. 18.
 - 23 Thomas Salter, *The Mirrhor of modestie* (1579), A6r–v.
 - 24 Salter, A6v.
 - 25 Kate Aughterson finds that ‘most of the texts were not actually addressed to women, but to men who had responsibility for women, whether as fathers, husbands or brothers’ and that ‘conduct literature ... had a booming market share in early modern England’ (p. 67). However, Aughterson argues that ‘even if filtered through the reading of men’, most conduct literature is ‘addressed ultimately to women’ (p. 67). She finds that conduct literature is ‘exhortative, claiming certain rules for the public and private behaviour of women’ and that ‘the content of the exhortation is structured around certain characteristics, described as ideal feminine virtues: chastity, obedience, humility and silence’ (p. 67). However, while ‘it is safe to argue that conduct literature shows us how and what women were asked to be, it does not ... tell us what they were’ (p. 68). Aughterson finds two images of women emerging – the ‘picture of women in need of counselling, instructing and leading’ and ‘accounts of active and successful women struggling with both this ideology and other economic, social and political troubles’ (p. 69). See *Renaissance Woman: A Sourcebook: Constructions of Femininity in England*, ed. by Kate Aughterson (London: Routledge, 1995). Particularly, see the introduction to Chapter 3, ‘Conduct’, pp. 67–69.
 - 26 Salter, B7v.
 - 27 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Pan Books, 1985) p. 63.
 - 28 Phillip Stubbes, *The anatomie of abuses* (1583), F1v.
 - 29 Stubbes, F2r.

- 30 Stubbes, D2r. It is worth noting that the writings of authors like Stubbes and Salter, in which women are advised to be uninterested in appearance, sumptuous clothing and accessories, appear to conflict with ideas of rank, which would suggest that higher ranking women should have expensive, well-made lavish clothing.
- 31 Irene Burgess, “‘The Wreck of Order’ in Early Modern Women’s Drama”, *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 6 (2001), 6.1–24 <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/06-3/burgwrec.htm> [accessed 1 October 2010].
- 32 John T. Paoletti and Gary M. Radke argue that this painting is a ‘wry commentary on the very structures of artistic production (a story within the story, so to speak, that points to male construction of female form), as well as a witty reference to the standard imagery of St. Luke painting the Virgin’ – *Art in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by John T. Paoletti and Gary M. Radke (London: Laurence King, 1997), p. 16.
- 33 Garrard, p. 560.
- 34 Garrard, pp. 561–62.
- 35 Paoletti and Radke, p. 16.
- 36 Felicity Edholm, ‘Beyond the Mirror: Women’s Self-Portraits’, in *Imagining Women: Cultural Representations and Gender*, ed. by Francis Bonner and others (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 135.
- 37 Stubbes, G1v.
- 38 Cathy Santore, ‘The tools of Venus’, *Renaissance Studies*, 11 (1997), 179–207 (p. 179).
- 39 Artemisia Gentileschi, *Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting* (1630), Royal Collection, Windsor, *Web Gallery of Art* www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/g/gentiles/artemisi [accessed 22 May 2009].
- 40 Carney, p. 159.
- 41 Carney, p. 159.
- 42 Judith W. Mann, ‘The Myth of Artemisia as Chameleon: A New Look at the London *Allegory of Painting*’, in *Artemisia Gentileschi: Taking Stock*, ed. by Judith W. Mann (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 51–77 (p. 57).
- 43 See Mann, pp. 51–77 (p. 55).
- 44 R. Ward Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi and the Authority of Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 65–69.
- 45 Bissell, pp. 65–69.
- 46 *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1969), I Corinthians, 13:12, p. 81. [Note at ‘now we see’ which reads ‘the mysteries of God’ – now we see (the mysteries of God) through a glasse, darkly.] St Paul’s words are considered particularly difficult to translate. The use of ‘through’ has often led critics to suppose that the ‘glass’ St Paul invokes is a clear pane of glass, a window. For example, Debora Shuger argues that ‘one looks through rather than at’ some mirrors, including the Pauline mirror, which is treated as a window rather than as a mirror – see Debora Shuger, ‘The “I” of the Beholder: Renaissance Mirrors and the Reflexive Mind’, in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, ed. by Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 21–41 (pp. 30–31). However, in I Corinthians in the Vulgate, the word ‘speculum’ is used, that is, a mirror – ‘Videmus nunc per speculum in ænigmatē : tunc autem facie ad faciem. Nunc cognosco ex parte : tunc autem

cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum'. *Biblia Sacra juxta Vulgatam Clementinam 1598*, ed. by Michael Tweedale (2005) <http://vulsearch.sf.net/html> [accessed 24 March 2008]. The glass is a mirror and the use of 'through' indicates that the mirror is the medium by which the individual must analyse the religious self.